

Original Research Article

Pre-Colonial Stance in Hanif Kureshi's My Son the Fanatic

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ABSTRACT

This research is about finding out the pre-colonial stance in Hanif Qureshi's short story 'My Son the Fanatic' which will reveal how the people after colonization are trying to find out their lost identities. In the modern world with the increase of immigrant numbers, hybrid nations, and constitution of countries with different cultural diversities the question of finding out to the lost identity came to the surface. The researcher will explain what pre-colonial stance actually is who is its beneficiary and how he can be rationalized and justified. This research is unique in its essence as no allied work has been found on the particular text or the writer. The research will make an attempt to critically analyze the text of the selected short story and provide a deep insight into the conflicts encompassing the mind sets of the characters that will help us to understand the pre-colonial stance depicted by the writer in the selected story.

Introduction

This study aims to specify the "Precolonial Stance" in the short story "My son the fanatic" that is one of the most celebrated works by the Anglo-Pakistani author Hanif Kureshi. Born on December 5, 1954 in Bromley, England, to an Indian father and an English mother, Hanif Kureishi grew up experiencing first-hand the racial and cultural clashes that he addresses in most of his work. The inspiration for his work has been drawn from his own life's trials and tribulations as a culturally hybrid individual of two different races and cultures. Kureishi decided that he wanted to be a writer from a young age, and began writing novels that were considered for publication while he was still a teenager. His story "my son the fanatic", was first published in The New York on March 28, 1994. It tells us the story of an Asian father Parvez and his son Ali. Hanif Kureshi claims that he has written this story to understand the relationship between a father and his son as he says:

"To understand what is to be a son, what is to be a father? What is to be live in a world where there is radical Islam?" In this story Parvez is a Pakistani settler living in England. He works by way of a taxi motorist and has integrated to Western conducts of life. His child, Ali, appears to have incorporated the lifestyle of his British peers. Parvez, though, is growing further and extra apprehensive of his son as he notices ostensible fluctuations in Ali's comportment. The taxi driver dialogs about his qualms to his equals and to Bettina, a prostitute who has developed Parvez's associate (the association between the two is wholly developed into an extra-marital affair in the film). All his "dreams of doing well in England" (which take in a content nuptial and a benign career in accountancy for Ali) smash when his son acknowledges that he is repulsed by his father's disregard for Muslim teachings about supplications and his father's neglect of the prohibition on liquor and ham meat. Progressively distressed by his son's religious fundamentalism and scorn for integration, Parvez one night recurrently knockouts Ali. The son responds with only a query: "So who's the fanatic now?"

Literature Review

The story "My Son the Fanatic" has been reviewed by different researchers from different dimensions. In Colonial and Postcolonial Fiction: An Anthology it is stated that this story comes from the collection Love In A Blue Time (1997) , whose ten stories provide a far-reaching look at contemporary life in London. This narrative takes an ironic stance by reversing the

predictable conflict between father and the son and it offers no solution to their dilemma.

Eva Christ in *Don Bosco* penned that the short story is well written and informative. It does discourse an imperative theme; the longing for us to fit in anywhere, might lead us on top of an unforeseen boulevard and that we ought not be too swift to convict other people's prerequisite to do the identical, albeit it might be in a dissimilar mode than we had been on. While not projected as such upon its publication nearly fifteen years back, Hanif Kureishi's "My Son the Fanatic" can now be observed as an unusually clairvoyant and certainly predictive inspection of home-based fanaticism and radicalism. Kureishi's is a story that contracts with the incredibly compound ideas of discrete and national identity, culture and race, amid many others, through the affiliation between a father and his son is extolled in a scrapbook "Sound Affects".

The researcher work regarding to this short story is to reveal pre-colonial stance in "My Son the Fanatic". It will be revealed with the help of characters in this story and their behavior and struggle towards the prevailing situations in the story in order to identify themselves in the colonized environment.

### **Statement of the Study**

Once colonized, people from all over the world crave to get back the lost identity. They want to live in their real self instead of adopting the other's culture or being Others. The research seeks to answer different questions, raised in context of identity reclamation. The readers of literature sometimes miss the implied meaning behind the words and actions of different characters, causing lack of understanding. As this study deals with language and its interpretation, telling the true meaning of a reading through the analysis will be possible for the reader in this research paper.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is pre-colonial stance and who is the beneficiary of this in the prescribed story?
2. How can he be justified and rationalized in his pre-colonial stance?

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out what pre-colonial stance actually and to analyze the beneficiary i.e. how he is trying to find out his identity in the colonized world.
2. To rationalize and justify his behavior

### **Methodology**

This research will help us to know about the sufferings of the colonized people and their efforts to find out their individual identity with the help of pre-colonial stance. Apart from this, the task of this research is to give an inner view of the foreign writers to Pakistani readers or Oriental ones which will help in making their understanding better than before. Moreover, this research will be a contribution to the existing literature and provide a ground for further researches in the respective field. The methodology is qualitative and best suits the structure of the research. The current research is interpretative and analytical in its approach and provides a detailed analysis of the selected texts with references. Textual analysis and references of the text have been made to support the arguments of the researcher

### **Analysis**

The short-story *My Son the Fanatic* is inscribed by the British playwright Hanif Kureishi. He nurtured up in England in the 1950s and 1960s, being the child of a Pakistani settler and an English lady. He studied philosophy and instigated lettering novels at an initial age. Being the youngster of an émigré, a mainstream of his novels disentangles the complications and encounters a giant volume of settler's face in their novel country, particularly the snags tangled in finding a dwelling to fit in. Some of Kureishi's most renowned writings and narratives are amid others *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*. Parvez, the pater of the adolescent boy Ali, commences observing fluctuations in his son's conduct and at first perceives this as an upright entity. He trusts that his lad is lastly growing out of his adolescent defiance and captivating additional responsibility. Though, when Ali starts flinging out treasured possessions and his friends starts dodging him; Parvez becomes extremely apprehensive, and senses as if his son is ungracious and that he himself has done somewhat erroneous by way of a father.

Lastly, he opens up to his equals who promptly trust that Ali has a drug problem and that he is vending his possessions to pay for drugs, which later is exposed to be unfitting, sighted that he is giving his possessions away to charity. Parvez starts

inspecting each measure Ali makes, but cannot find that anything is actually incorrect with his son. He presently afterwards finds out that Ali has developed attentive and riveted by the conviction Islam, and that he devotes all his stretch praying or going to the mosque. Even though Parvez feels revived, he cannot support feeling upset and scared at the matching time. After an incongruity amid Ali and his father, in which Ali pronounces his aversion on the way to his father's alliance with an English woman and his consuming of alcohol, Parvez tops up thumping his son, to which his son's solitary repose is the declaration; "So who's the fanatic now?". Keeping the story in his mind, the researcher has to find out the pre-colonial stance in it. So, the first thing to know is what is pre-colonial stance? It's the social, cultural and ideological standpoint of former colonies like India, China, etc before the arrival of the colonizers. It's the individual and collective perception of identity when they were not colonized yet and were still free.

### Findings

Before colonization and justifying and rationalizing it can be called the pre-colonial stance. Now, the researcher finds out that it's Ali, son of Parvez who is undergoing this process. While living in England he is in the search of his own identity that he had before colonization. The utmost palpable clang in the story is that of identity, and undeniably the struggle is positioned on challenging philosophies of Ali's identity. Parvez perceives his son as the nirvana of his 'British dream', outshining at cricket, swimming and football, attaining straight A's in institute, learning accounting at seminary and on pathway to "get a respectable career...espouse the true adolescent and start a family". The skirmish ascends once Ali initiates to go away from his father's vision, flouting up with his "English girlfriend" and flinging away his belongings, affirming that "there are more important things to be done", of utmost importance his identity that he has lost somewhere while living in England. Nevertheless, it is not just Parvez's 'British dream' that generates skirmish, but likewise his outset of what 'Britishness' is: Parvez orders his spouse to boil bacon and ham sausages, prohibited by Islam, saying "this is England. We have to fit in!" Ali, on the contrary, perceives Britain and the West as depraved, tyrannical, and crooked and "a sink of hypocrites, adulterers, homosexuals, drug takers and prostitutes." Ali's identity is not British, nor does he actually understand himself as his father's son. In its place, Ali appears to express himself in antagonism to his father's superlative: additional than the "Western materialists" with which his father is "implicated", contrary to drinking, betting and partying with women, and as victimized and fraught by a nation he has never left.

So, keeping in mind, all these circumstances the researcher finds out that Ali is not happy with the western culture and he wants to go back to the prevailing values before colonization. He wants to have his own identity, being a Muslim while living in West. He is trying to find out his own religious values abhorring the western culture as well as his father Parvez who desires for his son to completely absorb in the western values as he himself has done. Ali is occupied of wrath at the professed transgression of Western philosophy, and states of the "millions and millions of people" that stake his beliefs. In the story Parvez is struck dumb and makes no additional effort to comprehend these beliefs, or even to converse or argument them. His response is, as an alternative, to contemplate dislodging his son from the family home, and in due course his incapability to comprehend primes him to recourse to vehemence. Ali is rationalized and justified in finding the environment same as before colonization as the colonizers don't consider them more than the dogs. They abhor them as told by Ali "the western materialists hate us". And he told his father that there would be Jihad and no more oppression will be bored.

### Conclusion

The researcher concludes that Kureshi as a postcolonial author tries to redefine English national identities in Britain. His story shows that the roots of today's problems related to the pre-colonial stance can be found in the colonial history of the West and it is not easy for the colonized to forget what the colonizers did in the past. He tries to attract the attention of the British Muslims on Islamic religion and its appliances in the modern world. With the help of this story he shows that an old religion in the modern world may cause a great deal of problems. He also observes that we expect the old generation to be close to the religion but here in this story its reverse. The young generation is trying to stick its religious values in order to have their own unique identity in this modern world while the old ones want to assimilate in the western environment for living an up-to-grade life.

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