

**GLOBALIZATION AND YOUNG ADULT
SOUTH ASIAN FICTION: AN IDEOLOGICAL
CRITIQUE**

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Globalization and Young Adult South Asian Fiction: an Ideological Critique

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ABSTRACT

Title: Globalization and Young Adult South Asian Fiction: an Ideological Critique

This research study has attempted to discover the role of fetish cultural products in the process of globalization. Owing to the stronghold of capitalism, globalization is now a mechanical process carried out by a systematically laid out framework as per the vested interest of the proprietors of capitalism. The sustenance of globalization is indebted to the tripods of economics, politics, and culture, whereupon culture is the most effective of these three as it is less coercively laid out and more hegemonically accepted by masses only because it has emerged as a culture industry. The culture Industry is not only a major source of economic benefits but also a cradle to project the ideology of the dominant capitalist groups. The tremendous influence of the culture industry has commoditized every cultural entity including art and craft. The major focus is upon six young adult fictions *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chaddha, *The Skunk Girl* (2009) by Sheba Karim and *Wanting Mor* (2009) by Rukhsana Khan the Pakistani origin writers, and *Born Confused* (2003) by Tanuja Desai Hidier, *Bamboo People* (2011) by Mitali Perkins and *Blue Boy* (2009) by Rakesh Satyal, the Indian origin writers. I have applied a theoretical framework formed by adapting certain tenants of critical theorists as Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Slavoj Žižek in combination with certain post-colonialist theorists as Lisa Lau and Graham Huggan to analyze the selected fictions. The major characteristics of culture products found in these novels are i) standardization, ii) pseudo-individualization, iii) estrangement and iv) multiculturalism along with reassertion of stereotypes and postcolonial exotic. These major dynamics provide a fetish aspect to any cultural product to be assimilated in capitalist-controlled globalization. The study also reveals that it is not the outer factors as packaging, branding, merchandising and extensive distribution that make any cultural product a fetish, a cultural product has to transform/ modify internally to align with the product of the external factors. Literature in general and young adult fiction, in particular, are the artifacts of culture. Young adult fiction by South Asian origin writers has regularly been nominated for international awards and have won prestigious laurels which are again controlled by capitalist entrepreneurs. The selected novels have either won or have been nominated for the awards. They have been critically acclaimed and aesthetically established. The analysis focuses that

the fame and recognition of this Young Adult Fiction are partly due to their extensive merchandising, packaging, and merchandising but mostly because have internalized the ideology of the dominant capitalist groups. By applying the adapted theoretical framework, it is evident that these novelists have very successfully propagated the ideology of the superiority of the West over the East.



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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my entire family for their love, endless support and encouragement.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research aims at exploring the impact of capitalist globalization with special emphasis upon culture as a vital and integral component of globalization. The primary but foremost emphasis of this research is to highlight that globalization is not a naturally occurring phenomenon rather a meticulously controlled process originated and sustained by globalized capitalists using culture as a key factor.

Globalization is a process by which “people of the world are incorporated into a single world society” (King 8) through international assimilation arising from the interchange of worldviews, merchandises, concepts, perspectives, and other aspects of culture. Over the past 50 years, technological development has resulted in diminishing national or geopolitical boundaries, the homogenization of the consumers’ taste, the amalgamation and extension of communal control, radical proliferations in wealth and poverty, and the internationalization of food and culture in the name of globalization. *The Oxford Dictionary(OED)* has defined the term globalization as “the process by which business or other organizations develop international influence or start on an international scale”. This simple yet cohesive definition declares emphatically that the phenomenon of globalization owes much to businesses, corporates, industries, and organizations to draw and invite universal influence on the global scale. The cognition of the term globalization is not simply restricted to products and approaches, it has rather a holistic and comprehensive connotation. It is also used to describe the variety of economic, social, cultural, and political changes taking place internationally to obscure, conceal, blur and even diminish the geographical boundaries resulting in the extension and the free movement of “goods, services and capital” (Guttal 524).The

standardization of taste, the uniformity of food and culture, the striking difference between poverty and richness, are all products of globalization. Moreover, this frenzied and the contested term owes much to its multifaceted connotation and multidimensional prospects that have glorified a lot to its aura alongside the contribution of scientific, technological, and communicative industry in its recognition giving it a status of the most popular term. Undoubtedly, the contemporary restructured and capitalist extended globalization has resulted in the blurring of geographical boundaries of the nations which have caused the “external trade and finance, deregulation of the economy, export-driven economic growth, removal of controls on the transnational mobility of finance capital, expansion of portfolio capital, privatization, and the restructuring of local and national economies to facilitate free-market capitalism. (Ibid 524) The present-day social and cultural norms and standards are fashioned and wrought by globalization. The validity of the notion of globalization as a naturally occurring phenomenon in due course of historic time is dubious and in the words of Guttal (2007):

It is shaped by complex negotiations and interactions between institutions of transnational capital (such as corporations), nation-states, and international institutions charged with bringing coherence and order in an increasingly interdependent world. The economy does not exist outside the actions and choices of individual and collective actors, be they private corporations, sovereign governments, United Nations (UN) agencies, the WTO, or international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The detailed description quoted above provides an insight into the role of international organizations, groups, and agencies in retitling globalization and synonymizing it with that of internationalism. This fallacy is dubious and misleading as globalization is only the sequential extension of local social, cultural, or political organization. The wholesale fusion of the ideology of the dominant capitalist group makes globalism a hegemonic process whose framework is very systematically laid out to be effusively accepted by all under the delusion of freedom of capital, culture, or economic. It is, in fact, analogous to the monoculture, mono-economics, and mono-socials of the existing multi-organization effectively projected in

the mask of multiplicity and diversity. Following the path of other tenants of late capitalism, globalization primarily propagates and ensures the free movement of the capital but ironically not the free movement of labor. Moreover, the increased unemployment has restored and re-established a wide gap between different strata of society. In a nutshell, globalization has directly benefited the rich, affluent and the educated who though in minority is from the dominant capitalist groups. On the other hand, it has affected the labor class which though owns a quantified majority but they do not have authority. The frame of globalization strives symbiotically upon the global capitalism which cannot survive on ethnicity, family, poverty, or the lower classes, it needs the shoulder of those who are dominant, influential, and who are dominant, influential and who directly influence and benefit the capitalist.

The critics and the historians unanimously agree that spread of interconnectivity and infrastructure, the nation and directly influence and benefit the capitalists. the nation-states have been closely interconnected. But for some researchers and particularly historians, globalization can be traced back to ancient civilization and particularly to the trade link between those of the Sumerian civilization and the Indus Valley Civilization. Consequently, were regular business links between the Parthian Empire, Roman Empire, and Han Dynasty. The importance of trade and led to the development of various trade routes like the Silk Road. Globalization took a boost in the medieval age, particularly, the Islamic period in the medieval strengthen the process of globalization. Soon china introduced the first postal service. as traveling became popular, the communication between people increased. Similarly, Columbus and Vasco Da Gama sailed in search of new trade. industrial revolution in the 19th century led to another hallmark in the process of globalization. . Due to the industrial revolution, and increase in the quantity and quality of the products. steered better trade and business relations. Eventually, due to colonization, lots of countries across the world became consumers of the European market. The phase received a setback after the First World War.

The redefinition of globalization emerged after Second World War. One of the main factors for this was the plan by the world leaders to break down the borders for fostering trade relations between nations. It was also in this period that major countries like India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and some countries in South America gained independence. As a result, these countries started having their economic systems and established trade relations with the rest of the world. The speed of globalization was lubricated by the establishment of the United Nations Organization (UNO) and the creation of the World Trade Organization which led to the growth of a uniform platform to settle trade and commercial disputes. some other factors which have put a positive impact on globalization are: Promotion of free commerce and trade, abolition of various double taxes, tariffs, and capital controls, reduction of transport cost and development of infrastructure, creation of global corporations and blend of culture and tradition across the countries

Nevertheless, owing to its multidimensionality, globalization has tremendously changed our views about the social world in general and human culture in particular resulting in the rise of globalized studies. Zygmunt Bauman (1998) in his work has traced that the emphasis on globalized studies is indebted to three factors:

- Firstly, the emergence of the globalized economy, focusing upon the new system of consumption and production based upon the international system.
- Secondly, the occurrence and the sustenance of the uniform globalized culture.
- Thirdly, the implementation of the international and universal political process.
- Lastly, the multidirectional movement of the people, their migration, identities, and the emergence of the new communities, etc. due to which “the new, increasingly worldwide, social, political, economic and cultural hierarchies are built and rebuilt” (Bauman 9).

Hubbart and Miller's seminal work *Arguments against G8 (2005)* has elaborated in detail about the flourishing of globalization. According to them “Globalisation has not popped out from the womb from the structure of capitalism, On the contrary, every ruling class ‘is compelled, merely to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common

interest of all the members of society ... it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones.” (222). Globalization thrives on corporate front groups, and these corporate groups and the elite policy networks are specifically designed to safeguard the interests of the corporate. While conferring the process of globalization, Hubbart and Miller are of the view that the socialist movement of global capitalism is done by inculcating consumerist ideology. consumerism is manufactured by transnationals but spread “by the viruses of branding, marketing, advertising, and public relations, pre-eminently via television” (227). Thus television which is assumingly taken as a mere source of entertainment is one of the easiest and viable tools of global capitalism. As there exists a symbiotic relationship between culture and consumerism which can be verified from the masses' obsession with the brands. Though the outcome of the influence of global capitalism is not idealistic, it is also a fact that “addiction to the gear sold by the pushers of the consumer industries encroaches on the space for progressive politics” (229) which keeps globalization as an ongoing process

Globalization is an inevitable phenomenon as stated by Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel Prize winner in economics in the year 2001 and as the advisor of [ex] President Clinton, and also as [ex] Chief Economist of the World Bank in his work *Globalisation and its Discontents*(2002) the most important thing is how “the globalization is dealt with” (214):Part of the problems, according to Stiglitz, was instigated by or rests upon the IMF, World Bank, and WTO constituting the rule of the games of globalization. Regrettably, the rule of the games is more likely favorable for developed countries, and more specifically for the interest of faction in internal politics and administration of developed countries, rather to the interest of developing countries The phenomenon is not merely an economic terminology. It also contains political, technological, cultural, and religious dimensions. It is erroneous to assume globalization only relates to the main system, such as the worldwide economy constellation. Globalization is not what is out there, truly apart, and far from everyday life. It also represents the phenomenon of culture, which directly influences the system of our life and belief.

The complicated aspect of the notion of globalization is explained by Ian Clarke in his work *The Great Divide* who dismisses the passive role of a state in the process of globalization and argues that “the state is both shaped by and the formative of the process of globalization” (483) As globalization is evitable, it has given birth to two striking debate, either it is taken as some kind of autonomous force, driven by technology, economic organization, communications or cultural patterns, or reflects actual states of international relations and distributions of international power Liberal versions of globalization adhere to the former point of view insofar as states and governments are bystanders to globalization, the real driving forces are markets', whereas the latter standpoint denies that globalization has its existence. Nevertheless, it is a fact that globalization is not a wholly autonomous force and, historically, has been shaped, encouraged, and thwarted by wider currents of international relations and fundamentally “been mediated through the activities of states” (498). The states are not mirrors of external processes, nor are they merely filter mechanisms but are active participants in globalization. which they carry out more subtly through culture. The multiplicity of the globalized studies has given rise to the proliferation of the scholarly articles of multidimensional topics and themes ranging from ethnic, literature, tourism, criminology and laws, etc. making it a widely contested and a debated term. The detailed argument strengthens this notion that globalization is, in reality, a camouflaged process possessing the dual ability of new exploitation, domination, and marginalization and as a process of new emancipation, liberation, freedom, and prosperity. This generates a general interest in the onset of a debate regarding the occurrence, evolution, and the nature of this process, as a naturally occurring phenomenon that has evolved with the passage of time or a controlled condition that has been brought about as per the interest of the business organization. The answer and the verification of this debate can be traced in the earlier definition by *The Oxford Dictionary* where the focus is upon the commercial or global organization which openly proclaims globalization as a condition rather than a process that has been imposed by the capitalists. The capitalist economy has made such an extensive network that has ultimately brought the entire world into a single logic and a unified structure. In a capitalist world system, the world has been categorically divided into a strong, powerful, and hierarchical Centre and a subordinate periphery controlled by the Centre. The

maintenance of this vicious cycle is carried out through a systematic procedure so as “values flow from the periphery to the semi-periphery, and then to the core, as each region plays a functionally specific role within an international division of labor that reproduces this basic structure of exploitation and inequality” (Robinson 289).

The capitalist-dominated globalization has modified and altered the previous capitalist system but only to strengthen it through various means ensuring the retention of its aims and objectives but altering it with new and multiple diversions paving the new way for the effective domination of capitalism. Sklair in his *Theory of Global System (2002)* has identified ‘Transnational Practices (TPs) as the key actors playing considerably at three levels, the economic level with the capital as the singular agent, the political level with the ruling class playing a pivotal role along with capitalists and lastly the cultural level where the cultural elites serve the major purpose in strengthening the capitalism. The three levels appear to be diverse in their nomenclature and their actions but within all these three levels the capitalism is of significance whose influences can be seen in all three levels proving the dynamic aspect of globalization. Sklair sums up the three levels as “globalizing bureaucrats, politicians, and professionals, and consumerist elites bring together various social groups under the false impression of seeing their interests under the globalized capitalism interest” (82-83).

William I. Robinson (2007) while further modifying the notion of Sklair adds that the new capitalist globalization has accelerated the process of production at a tremendous rate, this success is being controlled by a specific class that mediates not only globally but also within the countries where they reside. Although for Sklair, the role of the state in this regard is negligible but for Robinson and other critics, the state does apply and utilizes its apparatuses successively because globalization is deeply political. The global tenants need to carry out their tasks through the accord of the states which utilize and maneuver their State Apparatuses, particularly the essential tripods i.e. military, economics, and culture. Unlike the capitalist expansion which took place in the era of European Imperialism where the Centre was of significance, this recent globalized expansion has emphasized more upon the de-centered economy. Their apparent focus is upon the non-existence of the geographical,

economic, or political boundaries but in reality penetrating very successively into the very being of an individual. The contemporary economy based on free trade and open movement of capital and finances has liberated itself from the totalitarianism of the state, but has significantly affected and diversified its contenders, the military, and culture.

It has now reshaped the military as military globalization by forming a network through which it develops a connection at a global level through technological developments. Similarly, the transmogrification of traditional cultures and beliefs and the beginning of consumer-oriented beliefs, religions, traditions, and the birth of this cyber-culture is but the birth of this new culture. ,

During the colonial regime, the proponents of global entrepreneur emphasized the concept of *Universalization* emphasizing upon the rubrics and synchronization whereupon the Centre was motivated and the notion was “to make similar the life conditions of everyone and everywhere, and so everybody’s life chances; perhaps even make them equal” (59) Globalization, on the other hand, propagates *internationalization* which focuses upon the “unruly and self-propelled character of world affairs; the absence of the center, of the controlling desk” (59). The plurality of this globalization diversifies it along with assimilating and altering it as per the requirement of postmodernism, a notion, prophesized by Jean-Francois Lyotard, who declared the postmodern era as the era of a global society. Whatever is said about postmodernism seems to be true for globalization, because if postmodernism is the theoretical concept based upon the philosophical ideas of intellectuals, globalization is the reality possessing the universal power. Yet the two are interdependent, strengthening and empowering each other, undoubtedly, postmodernism differs in ideology and practice from globalization. Accordingly, the process of globalization owes to modernism but more to capitalist expansion whose influence in shaping and changing the social and cultural dimensions is incontestable. The mechanism of globalization is driven by hunger and the aspiration for the accumulation and control of material wealth making it ideologically framed and politically driven. Capitalism provides a rational ideology and operational framework which is extensively and coercively laid out to successfully alter the cultural and social dimension of globalization. Secondly the extensive utilization of ideology by the capitalist

entrepreneurs of the elitist results in converting the conventional conscious into received consciousness using various superstructures, a notion self-evident in the transformation of entities of culture as food, clothing, and behavior over time. The culture of elitists is also strongly applied as “at all times they tended to create a culture of their own which made little of the same border-----and had more in common with the elites across the border” (12). This integration of culture and ideology has not only made the expansion of globalization possible but also as a means to exert social control.

From the above discussion, it can be asserted that globalization is not a naturally occurring phenomenon rather a meticulously controlled process based upon materialism and capitalism, and like all other structures of globalization as military and politics, it is carried out through an elaborately formulated framework and ideology as per the vested interest of the capitalist group.

1.1. Globalization and Culture

Globalization has significantly affected politics, the economy, and culture across the globe. According to Deepak Nayyar (1943), globalization is the expansion of economic activities across the continents which have been done by increasing the transport of goods, trades, and information across the border. Corporations that were once vertically linked are now finding new horizons and new partnerships, alliances, and mergers to cater to the needs of producers and consumers. Traditionally, politics was based on geographical and societal norms and behavior. National governments were responsible for the economic development and welfare of humans as per their borders. Due to a globally controlled economy, political activities are also globally monitored and maintained. Politics now takes place above the state through political integration schemes as European Union or through intergovernmental schemes as IMF, World Bank, and WTO, and even through organizations, NGOs, etc. Even within the states, due to the reduction of the interference of the states, the political culture has been altered drastically, peace, justice, a free election following a universal election pattern is but a gift of globalization. Undoubtedly, globalization has a tremendous impact upon the economic

and political sphere of the globe, but its influence on culture has gained major interest recently.

The pivotal role of culture in the process of globalization is incontestable, thus it is necessary to define the term culture and the way it is used. The initial definition of culture has been provided by A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1963) as “all that in human society which is socially rather than biologically transmitted” (Hout 94). The emphasis of these scholars on culture as a socially transmitted process accentuates that culture transmutes an organic individual to a societal entity. They further emphasized that culture is “a learned complex of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and custom . . . learned patterns of behavior, aspects . . . that act below conscious levels . . . and patterns of thought and perception” (134-140). This further reinforces that culture is a learned process that is not instinctively attained but is comprehensively learned not only at one level but in almost all levels of life. For them, culture is not the way an individual acts, works, or performs but the way an individual contemplates and meditates.

Raymond Williams (1958) redefines culture as social culture and describes it as “a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behavior” (57). Williams’ focus has not been on society only but upon the role of organizations, groups, and institutions in the indoctrination of culture entirely circulated and dictated by society. He acknowledges culture as one of the most intersecting terms which may be applied to a nation, an organization, the approaches or the way of living, the taboos or even the ethnicity, and the list goes on making it the most widely cited term.

William’s societal culture has been taken by Peter Marcuse (2007), whose primary focus has been the penetration of this culture into this society as either generic or the humanistic culture and for him “generic culture focuses on habits of thought and patterns of behavior, whereas humanist culture is concerned with the arts and humanities in the various aspects” (17). In short, this generic culture depends upon the politics, economics, or the social aspect, having a material base giving it an authority to be manipulated by the economic,

political, or social power. For Peter Marcuse, the generic culture is ultimately converted into the "regime culture" (17). The supremacy of regime culture enables it to internalize the ideology of the dominant and to inculcate the feeling of submission and obligation within the followers of the specific culture. This vague notion can be historically reconfirmed from the incidents and the records of the events from The French Revolution (1789-1799) where the ideology of nationalism was unconsciously internalized by the general masses by a well-organized culture of patriotism. In the era of expansion, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) propagated the notion of the oriental culture as *other* than the occident culture and strengthened the notion of colonization. The regime culture has to be reproduced and instrumentalized through the museums or the culture centers including high, low, or the mass culture as music, opera, dance, painting, etc. In a capitalistic commodified society, it is the capitalist mode that governs and controls all artistic productions. The dramas are broadcasted only after heavy investments, the paintings are sold in the galleries or the auctions often at a prenominal price and the music itself is an industry now.

The process of commodification in the material culture takes place through one or many of the following ways. the first being socialization. it can be defined as the process by which any activity or any relationship is carried out in public it is more precisely used when a private business is converted into a public business or for the economic purpose of socialization. though occurs on a limited scale is yet very important in the process by which the commodification of material culture takes place. Secondly, it is privatization, in which labor along with assorted culture moves out of the public sector into the private sector. it is mostly associated with the sale of public assets and associated services. this movement due to the involvement of the government helps in the commodification of culture. thirdly it is commercialization in which labor is oriented away from public services and is involved in the process of production of commodities. commercialization has been at work since the rise of the concept of bourgeoisie society. Can be taken as the best form in which under the mask of socialization pave ways for the interest of the capital. fourthly is Professionalization, which is the transformation of activity bor the area of the activity into the industry. Professionalization is an aspect of Commodification. Finally, it is a corporation, which is the process of

reshuffling labor. In any corporation usually, a public service organization or small business is converted into a larger business. In the contemporary era, Commodification today must spread to the cultural economy because, over the years, commodification in the cultural arena has turned out to be the most fruitful.

The rationale of globalization was initially given by David Held and Anthony McGrew, who stated that “the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interactions”. For another sociologist Robertson, globalization arises because of division between sociology, which deals with society comparatively, and international relations and political sciences which deal with society interactively. Arjun Appadurai has argued that globalization has produced complex interactions between cultures which can be divided into five scapes. The act of consumption has resulted in the convergence of all cultures. The globalization of culture has always been in vogue because according to Malcom Waters (1995) “material exchanges localize, political exchanges internationalize and symbolic exchanges globalize” (153). And among all symbolic exchanges, it is the cultural symbolic exchange that is first to globalize. Jan Nederveen Pieterse(2004) had identified three positions into which culture has been globalized up till now. For him, the process of globalization of culture started in the colonial era where the diversity of cultures was highlighted and institutionalized politically. He considered the first era as the “Clash of civilization” (1389). The geopolitical invasion and the European desire for expansion had already created the division between the west and the rest of the world. This geopolitical division was ideologically cultivated by creating cultural relativism resulting in “The velvet curtain of culture has replaced the iron curtain of ideology as the most significant dividing line in Europe” (Huntington 59). In a nutshell, it was the notion of difference that was utilized for globalization paving the way for the colonial expansion. Next, the globalization of culture took place in the name of homogenization which Pieterse has termed as “Macdonalisation” (1389). The notion was effectively institutionalized by the multi-organizational institutes and the organizations whereupon the notion of sameness or standardization prevailed under the slogan of the West along with the rest of the world blurring the so-called boundaries created in the era of the expansion. The sameness or the Macdonalisation proved to be popular as “McDonald's formula is successful because it is

efficient (rapid service), calculable (fast and inexpensive), predictable (no surprises), and controls labor and customers' ' (1389). It successively inculcated the idea of the evolution of a single universe where each nation is progressing equally no matter if the progress of some is faster than others. The international success of the well-known chains and brands as KFC, Levis, Polo, and their penetration into every country and nation of the globe affirm the validity of Pieterse's notion of homogenization of culture. Ironically the penetration of these brands into the local market is not without their modifications and adaptations as per different nation or culture. The contemporary mode of globalization of culture created by late capitalism is what Pieterse called the Hybridization of culture. The heterogeneity of culture has resulted in the blurring of the geographical boundaries making crossing-over potential and practical. This approach provides diversity to the culture transforming it into a post-modernist notion. If the first two forms of globalization were diverging in their aspects creating a difference, the last form of cultural globalization is converging and inclusive in its approach.

From the above discussion, it is clear that culture has always been globalized in one way or the other, it has been globalized as a heterogeneous, homogenous, or as hybrid culture. The glorification of the notion of globalization of culture is indebted to the point that through culture the ideology of the dominant ruling class can be profoundly stated and effusively internalized by the masses hegemonically making it the most popular of the other two forms (political and military) of globalization.

1.2. Historical Account of the Term *Ideology*

As globalization is a social process of capitalism, it operates on the ideological arena which according to Steger is filled “with a range of norms, claims, beliefs, and narratives about the phenomenon itself” (98). A heated debate on whether globalization portrays a positive or negative aspect is fought around the parameter of this ideology. Ideologies are shared beliefs, ideas, and patterns that are accepted by the wide masses of the world because they not only provide a concrete image of what a world is but how it ought to be. To bring the society in alignment with the preferred pattern, the codifiers of these ideologies, usually the elite of the

society, provide prescribed narratives that persuade the masses to see the truth from falsehood, and the good from the bad. Before connecting ideology with globalization, it is important to trace the historical account of the term ideology.

The origin of the term ideology is from the French word '*ideologie*' which has been coined by combining a prefix '*idea*' and a suffix '*logy*' from *logos*. From the combination of prefix and suffix, the implied meaning generated is that ideas that are rationally or logically produced. The *Online Oxford English Dictionary* has defined ideology as "the body of doctrine, myth, belief, etc., that guides an individual, social movement, institution, class, or large group". Consequently, ideology is not merely a cluster of facts or images rather it is a complete code of life as it encompasses every aspect of life. The historical account of the term dates back to The French Revolution (1789-1799) where it was mostly taken as the scientific study of ideas, or to be precise, as the science dealing with the origin and the studies of ideas. The term is now conventionally used with the political notions and is inferred as ideas of the western powers or transnational/multinational groups or corporations. Their ideology would be the hegemonic ideology, which would be then programmatic to regulate a uniform world order.

The term ideology principally in the literary and critical domain was initially used by Karl Marx and Fredric Engels in their *The German ideology (1846)* as the "production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness.... and all that what men say, imagine conceive or concept ... Politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc." (Engels 47). The ideology for them was the false consciousness that prevents or hinders the proletariat from analyzing the material reality of their exploitation by the bourgeois' class. The ideology is always the ideology of the dominant ruling class as "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of the society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force" (Turner 172). Accordingly, ideology grounded specifically in material production not only authorizes the dominant group's legitimacy but it complicates and mystifies any manipulation and exploitation that might question the authority of the dominant group. For Marx ideology as a set of false beliefs concealing the truth is similar to

Plato's mirror cave allegory in the Republic (514-521). Their camera obscura is but a simile of Plato's cave. As in *The German Ideology* Marx speaks as:

If in all ideologies men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process. (164).

These shadows on the wall are the ideologies and in the very next pages he elaborates clearly that from where these ideologies come from as:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it The individuals composing the ruling class . . . rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. (174)

There exists an interesting contrast and parallel between Plato and Marx, both see ordinary common sense consciousness as part if not fully false though for different reasons,

Lukacs(1885-1997) extending Marx's notion of ideology provided the two other dimensions by initially linking it with commodity fetishism as the basis of the capitalist society and by introducing the concept of totality and class consciousness. Lukacs standpoint has been criticized as "idealistic" (Eagleton 99-100). Moreover, the ideology for Lukacs establishes the 'form of objectivity' which forms the basis of knowledge. For that purpose, the role of science is significant in converting an absolute reality into a historical process and the obvious transformation of the economical facts into a mere delusion. The result is the alteration of the individuals into a "social becoming, that the being itself can appear as a product, so far unconsciousness, of human activity and this activity, in turn, as the decisive elements of the transformation of being" (Lukacs 5). The notion further summarized by Terry

Eagleton in his work *Ideology: an Introduction (1991)* as “ideology according to Lukacs is not exactly a discourse untrue to the way the things are, but one untrue to them only for the limited, superficial way, ignorant of their deeper tendencies and connections” (Eagleton 99). Lukacs notion can be summed up as ideology is both a critique of capitalism and hope through which capitalism can be challenged.

Antonio Gramsci's (1893-1937) notion of ideology is more rational, logical, and practical than Marx and Lukacs. With the notion of hegemony as the key concept to understand ideology, ideology was given an entirely new dimension. Stuart Hall while elaborating Gramsci notion of hegemony implies the ways by which the ruling elite structure out the framework to get the consent of the masses for their rule implying that “ideology is one of the means or the level along with the political or the economic one through which through which hegemony is established, thus hegemony includes ideology but cannot be reduced to it” (12-13). For Eagleton, ideology for him is not merely a system of arbitrary ideas but a “lived, habitual, social practice” (115). The major focus of which is to create “the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc” (Gramsci 355). By ‘terrain’ Gramsci meant both the civil society and the ordinary common sense which for Eagleton is “the whole range of institutions intermediate between state and economy” (377). For hegemony, the role of ideology is quite significant as “it organizes the human masses” (Gramsci 1492). Ideology has to harmonize the masses, but it is done in hegemony by employing the aid of other political or social hegemony making the ideology of the ruling class far more powerful and effective for it has a strong footing in both politics and economics of the society. Secondly, for ideology to be objectively laid out, a concrete philosophy and appealing intellectual common sensibility must be framed out. Ideology, for Marx and Lukacs, is the ideology of the upper class whereas for Gramsci it has a more dynamic and evolving nature. Being not static, it is constantly produced within a social sphere which provides an ideological battleground. Gramsci did not focus upon the moral or the ethical value of ideology or upon the authenticity of ideology but upon the effectiveness of the ideology and its diffusion within the society.

In a nutshell, it can be concluded that even though Marxist literary theory might have faced changes over time but one variable has remained unchanged and that is the role of ideology of the ruling class and the dominant values. This idea has been summed up by Eagleton as:

For some thinkers, like the late Karl Marx, ideology is less a matter of thought or discourse than of the very objective structure of class society itself. For others like Althusser, it is less consciousness than unconsciousness; for others again, ideology is less a 'tool' of a ruling power than an effect of a social and political situation as a whole, a complex field in which different groups and classes ceaselessly negotiate their relations rather than a well-bounded form of consciousness which can be neatly assigned to this group or the other...For the moment, however, we can stay with the conception of ideology as a set of discursive strategies for legitimating a dominant power, and enquire more precisely into what these strategies consist in. (234)

In a nutshell, it can be concluded that The word ideology does not have a single clear definition and can be used in a variety of ways the most common of that definition can be taken as a set of political ideas and beliefs, the common understanding of ideology is purely neutral as the goodness or the badness of this term is purely subjective. However, the Marxist concept of ideology is slightly different as for them an ideology is a word to describe a set of ideas and beliefs that are dominant in society and are used to justify and authenticate the authority and license of the ruling class. By ideology is used by them to obscure and to obscure the truth, to give people a false picture of governing and manipulating the world. For that purpose according to the Marxist critics, ideology is mostly deployed in a political system as Ideological State Apparatuses. Some traditional Marxists are of the view that there is just that one ideology in society, others, particularly the neo-Marxists argue that this is just the dominant ideology. There are other competing sets of ideas in society, some of which can be developed in opposition to the ruling class.

Although how the concept of ideology is perceived by them, they were unanimous that “ideas are the weapon of struggle” (234). Ideology has always been propagated by

literature and the writers, academicians, and professors are all ideologues. From the historical account, the cultural theorist Raymond Williams in his work, *Marxism and literature* (1977) has pointed out two main interpretations of the term ideology. According to him, ideology is explained by the Marxist critics as an idea of a particular social group, as a system of illusionary belief, or as the general process of the product of meanings and ideas (55). It is the second interpretation form of ideology that was more commonly adopted by the traditional Marxists.

1.3. Culture and Ideology

There is an integral relationship between structure and ideas, between socio-economic and ideological, between institutional and cultural. There isn't a deterministic relationship between the two, but a real and a practical relationship and they are the product of time and space. As culture is projected through various cultural products as books, paintings, music, sculpture, etc. Though these cultural products are influenced by many factors, these products present, oppressors reveal certain ideology which is projected as per need of the time to be hegemonically accepted by the masses.

Gramsci's concept of ideology was effectively taken by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (BCCS) (1964), with Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall as key thinkers whose endeavors were to link hegemony with the Althusserian concept of ISAs. As Louis Althusser's notion of ideology was "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of the individual to the reality" (Brewster 109) Whereby emphasizing that ideology embodies the illusionary rapport to the tangible world and "Ideology has the material existence" (102). And it needs the mediums and tools through which it can be propagated. Moreover, "ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals into the concrete subject" (115). Ideology plays such an effective role that it is accepted universally as a reality. Finally, he was of the view that the "individuals are always ready subjects" (109). To these subjects, the production and propagation of ideology are carried out through the *Ideological State Apparatus* commonly known as the ISAs. His postulates were to show how class domination worked and what means and ways had been adopted by the dominant class to control the subordinate class. The

notion of ISAs paved the way for the culture theorists to declare culture as one of the fundamental state apparatuses used by the state to propagate the ideology of those in power. The extensive methodologies and practices are carried out by various organizations and systems which work in harmony with the state to make massive productions and distributions of the culture of the masses. With the triumph of the contemporary technological and industrialized era, the manufacturing industry ensures the massive production of cultural products with a uniform and repetitive formula.

The concept of the assertive role of the manufacturing industry in the commoditizing culture was taken up by the thinkers of The Frankfurt School of Thought (1923) comprising Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. Interestingly, these theorists both rejected and endorsed Marxism, by linking culture with the ideology they certified the role of capitalism as a key concept of Marxism. Though in the subsequent arguments their notions break away from the debate of Marxism. Having focused upon the theories of modern capitalism, they consolidate the theme that culture exerts control over the mind as well as the action of the people which is done by creating a false need. This false need reunites the people to capitalism thereby maintaining its sustenance and continuation. For Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), the ideology proliferated by the culture industry is not as per consumer demand but is effectively communicated by the industry resulting in the creation of specific behavior and pattern in consumers so as not to feel alien or altered from the others but to blindly align with others. The culture industry ensures the creation of a uniform pattern of incorporating the working class in a system to regulate the ideology. The false needs created by the culture industry implant a desire within the working class to buy more of the capitalist mode of production enabling them to remain oblivious of the atrocities of capitalism. The excessive availability of commodities ensures the sustenance of the false needs that curbs the other real needs enabling the capitalist to dominate the consciousness of the masses. The most prevalent false need is the illusionary creation of the notion of freedom/independence /emancipation which the masses believe that they enjoy but in reality, they are simply restricted to choose between one product or the other, or one brand or the other, or even one cultural form over as disseminated by the interest of proprietors of the culture industry. For

Adorno culture industry differs from the mass industry as the latter certifies the role of masses whereas the former merely highlights the obligation which masses have to undergo as per capitalists' interests as he stated:

In all its branches, products which are tailored from consumption by masses, and which to a great extent determine the nature of that consumption, are manufactured more or less according to plan... This is made possible by contemporary technical capabilities as well as by economic and administrative concentration. The culture industry intentionally integrates its consumers from above. To the detriment of both, it forces together with the spheres of high and low art, separated for thousands of years. The seriousness of high art is destroyed in the speculation about its efficacy; the seriousness of the lower perishes with the civilizational constraints imposed on the rebellious resistance inherent within it as long as social control was not yet total. Although the culture industry undeniably speculates on the conscious and unconscious state of the millions of objects of calculation, an appendage of the machinery, the customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object (85).

Culture as an industry now embraces different elements including film, televisions, and magazines, making a uniform whole. On one hand, it proclaims the emancipation of all but on the other hand, makes each subservient to the system either in the form of employment or entertainment. The system is governed by technology which ensures clarity and perfection even to the minutest details to make the individual focus upon the techniques and not upon the major content. The ostensible changes apparent in the due course of historical culture openly validate the above-mentioned notion. The variation in the technicalities provides the loopholes and gaps for the commencement of ideology. Thus the novice and modern ideas in the culture entities including both arts and crafts openly substantiate the discussed notion

The culture industry not only lays out a framework for the smooth conduction of the ideology but ensures the uniformity of cultures by removing the distinction between any two cultures. Ideology enforced by the culture industry is operative enough not to leave any

possibility for any kind of deviation ensuring the complete subjugation of masses making them stranded, as all powers are vested in the proprietors of the culture industry. Herbert Marcuse (1964) further emphasized the role of technology in the culture industry and confessed that the seventeenth and the eighteenth century celebrated the idea of individualism. Although individualism was thoroughly bounded with social or economic conditions, yet the notion of freedom and emancipation dominated as the liberal economic model supported individuals' works. In the contemporary new liberal era, due to the influence of the capitalist-controlled organization, groups and industry have focused more upon the productivity of the individual which is quite controlled and directed. Those standards are based on logical and rational reasons and for Marcuse upon technological reasons. Every aspect of human life from the business methods, rules of the game, and the behavior codes are all judged by the scientific layouts all prescribed by technological norms to affirm their validity. The technological framework serves multiple purposes, it gives the mechanical means to the given products and it ensures the wholesale production of every entity firmly rooted in reason leaving no room for objection or violation. The smooth circulation is ensured by both public and private agencies that ensure the "rational course and order" (57). The rational and the logic are synonymized with the coordination and harmony and the end of which is meaningless. Every individual has to act rationally and as per standards set by the capitalists.

The role of the culture industry in the contemporary society is asserted by its association with the commodity as for Marcuse, individuals are linked with the society according to their association with the commodity as he states, "people recognize themselves with their commodity...the very mechanism which ties the individual to the society has changed, the social change is anchored in the new need that it has produced" (9). The social changes are effectively brought through the creation of dimension thoughts within a society eventually converting the entire one-dimensional society dominated by a one-dimensional man having one-dimensional thought. The technological advancements adapt the societal interests as per individual interest; as a result, the element of strength is converted into the shared procedure. These technological powers and products are not plunged upon individuals

rather the individuals accept these powers by their own choice under the delusion of having a comfortable life. The changes are adopted through the process of mechanization and assimilation to deprive the individuals of the humanistic power converting them into professional slaves and then assimilating the individuals into a vicious cycle of an organic whole, the escape from which is nearly impossible.

The role of the culture industry in the present era of late capitalism is asserted by Slavoj Žižek (1997) a century after the culture theorists of the Frankfurt School of thought. Though he strongly negates the Marxian concept of ideology as false consciousness, he restates it as strong beliefs or strong actions but by conforming those actions to the traditional institutional beliefs regardless of the fact whether one accepts these beliefs or not. Žižek while emphasizing the role of the culture asserts that commodities of culture are a fetish in their nature, and though they are non-vital or false needs of the consumers they are assigned undue importance and the life is planned and structured accordingly. Our blind obsession with a favorite program, our strong association and even the worshipping of a celebrity, and the blind support to our favorite team all ensure the loving of the fetish commodity. It helps us to cope with the reality which he advocated through his popular slogan “where is your hamster—the fetish which enables you (pretend to) accept reality’ the way it is’?” (252). Fetish is to cope up with reality and it is with this notion that the fetishized commodities are being reproduced by the culture industry. The point of digression between Žižek and the theorists of the Frankfurt school is that formers believe that culture industry depicts only a single ideology whereas for Žižek the multiple ideologies are proposed by culture industry projecting the multiculturalist approach of late capitalism. The capitalists approve and appreciate the multiplicity of the culture but with a Eurocentric gaze to market it effectively. Postmodernism strives upon multiplicity in politics, social and economic fields. The culture too has to align with capitalism through multiculturalism because

multiculturalism is a disavowed, inverted, self-referential form of racism,’ racism with a distance’—it ‘respects’ the Other’s identity conceiving the Other as a self-enclosed ‘authentic’ community towards which the multiculturalists, maintains a distance rendered possible by his privileged universal position. (44).

Capital has become a culture itself and it can be termed as the cultural capital because of the product it sells, it is inclusive and holistic in its approach as it encompasses our behavior, our living, our education, and even our thoughts. The assertion of this notion is validated through the slogans of the famous brand as Nike's slogan **just do it** or L'oreal's **because you're worth it** all reflects an outlook, an approach, and a saleable cultural attitude. The capital does not sell products but the experiences through their products. Zizek concludes that the sustenance of multi-culturalism is the sustenance of capitalism and the culture acts as a symptom of capitalism which though a non- realization of the universal principle has to stay because it is this ground on which the ideological battle is played and won.

To conclude, the culture theorists are of the view that culture is the most efficient way to dissipate ideology which is possible only if culture is produced and distributed as a commodity on a massive scale with a repetitive formula by the culture industry. Having done so in culture, a non-vital false need becomes the ultimate need and replaces the true need. This false need has to be fulfilled immediately by any cultural product to build a symbiotic relationship between capital and culture. Once that status is achieved, culture effectively propagates not one but multiple ideologies.

1.4. Cultural Products and Literature

Raymond Williams (1976) while analyzing the shift in nature and the perspective of culture as a popular culture explained the term popular culture as

Being seen from the point of view of the people rather than from those seeking favor or power over them, the earlier sense had not died, popular culture was not identified by the people but by others. It carries two older senses: inferior kinds of work(cf. popular literature, popular press as distinguished from quality press); and work deliberately setting out win favor (popular journalism as distinguished from democratic journalism, or popular entertainment); as well as the more modern sense of well-liked by many people the recent sense of popular culture as the culture made by people for themselves is different from all

these; it is often displaced to the past as folk culture but it is also an important modern emphasis (237).

From the above-detailed quotation, it can be summed up that popular culture can be termed as the culture of the masses, it is fallaciously understood as the culture of people but in reality, it is under the influence of commercialism and industrialists converting it into a fetish commodity to instruct the masses to adhere to the ideology of the elite blindly and making the masses subservient to the power of the elite. This notion of Williams was effective earlier too but in 1920, the advent of technology and the massive reproduction and consumption of culture justified his notion emphatically. The cultural product as arts, crafts, or painting is not as effectively reproduced as any industrially produced automobiles, electronic goods, or any other products but the technology has invented the techniques by which their production and distribution has been increased. Historically, the popular press and the cinema were the first forms of mass culture and they were the official propagator of the formal ideology. In the 1930s the Nazi ideology was introduced in all arts and crafts through mass media abolishing other aesthetic ideologies.

Culture is portrayed through products, practices, and perspectives. The cultural practices are usually the pattern of social behavior guiding what, where, why, and how to behave in a certain cultural pattern. The products include both tangible (paintings, literature, cathedral, utensils,) intangible (dance, music, ritual, a spiritual or educational doctrine) products reflecting the philosophy and the beliefs of the culture. Whereas by perspective it is meant as the attitude, beliefs, and doctrines that form the bases of cultural products and perspectives. In short, it is through the perspective that culture is portrayed to the world. The three forms of culture are interlinked and have a synergetic association with each other. The assertion of the significance of culture is not novel, the commercialization of culture and leisure time dates back to the 1920s and 1930s when the issues and themes concerning popular culture were raised more emphatically. The most significant of the cultural products, literature due to its multiplicity is of greater importance as it constantly switches its place from products to practice and perspective. Kenneth Burke (1897-1993) is of the view that literature is the reflection of the society it reflects whatever happens in the society earlier it

was taken as a perspective and practice but in the present era, the conquest of globalized capitalism with the advent of the culture industry has transformed it into a cultural product due to its massive production and distribution.

Literature has always been considered as the most effective artifact of culture, as justly being elaborated by a social critic Leo Lowenthal (1961) that "Literature may justify or defy society, but it does not merely passively record it." (xv-xvi). It not only transforms, modifies, and alters as per changes in the society by adopting as a product; it also asserts its pivotal role in the transformation of the approaches and behavior of the society by switching its role as a practice or a prospect. The Traditional Marxists have strongly emphasized upon a cohesive bond found between literature and ideology and have asserted it as one of the superstructures of the state and for Pierre Macherey "literature 'produces' ideology by writing it out" (148). Althusser emphasized that text, ideology, social production, and productive forces do not move methodically from one level to another but through the harmony of all three at the same time. As an effective superstructure, literature either reflects the ideology of the dominant class by invoking the false consciousness and hiding the truth or it challenges the existing ideologies. The importance of fiction, novels, or books cannot be underrated in this regard. Literature as an effective distributor of the ideology has acquired the most fundamental product of culture to play a role in the process of globalization. It has emerged in various forms and it is the popular fiction that has made its contribution more in the era of globalization. Having evolved in many forms as children literature, teen literature chick lit and YA, its success has been tremendous and is the most preferred artistic product of globalization

Young-adult fiction or young adult literature, one of the subgenres of popular literature has steadily paved its way in the mainstream of cultural globalization. Often abbreviated as YA, it is a fiction written, published, or marketed to, and for the adolescent and young adults under the trademark of two societies The Young Adult Library Services Association YALSA or The American Library Association (ALA). These two societies have defined a young adult as someone between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Consequently, YA novels are often defined as a sub-genre of popular fiction traditionally written for ages

ranging from sixteen years to the age of twenty-five. It differs from Teen Fiction which is fiction meant for the ages of ten to fifteen. The exact definition and delineation of YA and its validity in mainstream fiction are still to be determined. Nonetheless, treading in the footsteps of conventional literature, young adult fiction, too deals with the universal issues and themes prevalent in society. Santoli and Wagner(2004) have opined that the basic question which every fiction tends to deal with are the identity issues which are very much there in the Y/A fiction and the universal themes as “alienation from one's society or group, survival or meeting a challenge; social and/or political concerns about racial or ethnic discrimination; social concerns about AIDS, teenage pregnancy, divorce, and substance abuse; problems resulting from family conflicts; fear of death; and the issue of political injustice” (Wagner 68). There can be no denial that Young Adult fiction equals all other serious genres in terms of its theme and content.

A fiction portrays life and writers of these young adult fictions do belong to the same world, exhibiting the same situations and have to cope- up with the same problems, thus they eventually portray the same life. Now and then, YA is termed as literature of unrealism simply because it usually deals with relatively new themes or with tabooed topics. Maia Pank Mertz (1978) has categorized YA on eight categories based on themes and topics which are The new themes they discuss include “changing family patterns, death, ethnic groups, male/female changing roles; the former taboo topics listed include "pregnancy, adolescent physical change, birth, and drugs” (101). These topics and issues have a true existence and reality and consequently, these novels must not be taken as unrealistic but ought to be termed as the representation of “New Realism” (101). These novels portray a universe where the shared values, beliefs, and codes of behavior of the young adults of the world are portrayed. As discussed earlier for Leo Lowenthal “Literature may justify or defy society, but it does not merely passively record it” (xv-xvi). If that be the case, then the young adult fictions like other popular fiction do represent conventionally. It is the need of the time that their importance must be felt and new themes issues must be embraced not merely as new but as the prevalent reality of the society.

Treading the path of other forms of literature, YA fictions have been excessively commoditized which is quite evident from the different awards as *The Michael L. Printz*

Award, The William C. Morris YA Debut Awards, The Margaret A. Edwards Award and The Alex Awards are the few among many. Besides honor and fame linked with the above-mentioned awards, the monetary benefits in the form of cash prizes (\$2,000- \$2500) are awarded to the nominees. The commoditized YA, fused with the ideology of the capitalist groups to whom they are indebted for their commodification supplement a lot to the aura of globalization.

Lately, the young adult fictions by South Asian writers have been critically acclaimed and appreciated and have made themselves heard within the mainstream literature in general and among South Asian adult fictions in particular. Writers of the South Asian diaspora, including Jhumpa Lahiri, Khaled Hosseini, Mohsin Hamid, Salman Rushdie, and many others have tenderly explored South Asian culture and consciousness in their works and have contributed terrifically in postcolonial cannon by providing the South Asian prospects, earning both fame, laurels and critical acclaim. The Anglophonic literature based on facts or fantasy has always grasped the market and has been commoditized extensively. Their massive productions and distributions have infiltrated them extensively in the era of globalization. The considerable number of western publishers opening their sub-branches or joint ventures in South Asia in general and in India, in particular, asserts the validation of South Asian literature. The chain of international publishers as *Addison Wesley, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin, Oxford Press, and Cambridge* are a few among many. It is not only the English books that have been published by these firms, *Penguin* in collaboration with *Yatra Book*, a local Indian publisher has started now publishing the Indian books in native or local languages, paving more ways for South Asian Anglophonic and non-Anglophonic literature. In that connection, the role of the fiction by the diaspora writers has been of major significance because it is the literature of the marginal taken as exotic as asserted by King Kok Cheung(1997) “marginal cultural productions are capitalized on today’s marketplace” (195). The market is in serious demand of multiculturalism or the world literature but that too according to its terms and conditions, and the marginal literature becomes readily subservient to the demand of the market. To be a part of globalization is taken as a part of the culture industry and culture industry strives upon sales and profit.

The diasporic writers have seemingly found a way to be a part of this globalization by subscribing to the ideology of capitalist entrepreneurs. The most successful ideology is the assertion of the notion of re-orientalism by the orientals themselves. Orientalism, a notion proposed by Said (1978) focused upon the process of the interconnection of power and dominance and formation of orientals. Said argued that Orientalism, in the sense of the Western scholarship about the Eastern World, is inextricably tied to the imperialist societies who produced it, which makes much Orientalist work inherently political and servile to power. The notion of orientalism has dominated the course of literature for more than a decade, predominantly in literature produced by colonized writers in the age of Expansion creating a bipolar notion of East vs West. The present-day globalized era has successively maintained the similar notion, Orientalism is still with us, a part of the West's political unconscious. It can be expressed in a variety of ways: sometimes as an explicit bias, sometimes as a subtle inflection, like the tone color in a piece of music; sometimes erupting in the heat of the argument, like the revenge of the repressed. Said's work details a variety of representational methods utilized to degrade, mystify or exoticize the Other; in an attempt to solidify the supremacy of the West. It is this recognition of a discursive, ideological dualism between the Occident and the Orient – or the Self and the Other – which proved so revolutionary for *Orientalism*.

The contemporary era has seen a curious shift in the paradigm, as the representation of orientals which was previously done by the occident has been now taken by the specific orientals known as diasporic writers, who have gained fame partly because they are based in the occident locale, and secondly, they overpower home writers. In the words of Lisa Lau (1985) “Re-Orientalism is perhaps, in part, an extension of the totalization that had always been present in the literature, imposing the culture, values, attitudes, etc., of a select minority as representative of the diverse majority” (573). To be a part of a consumerized global industry, they have adopted various techniques and most importantly, to fuse “generalize with the totalization” (580). The stereo-typicality is fore-grounded either as assimilation, hybridism, and contrast as per the demand of the publishing industry, the global audience, and the publishing industry. The culture industry has adopted the method of totalization in

which the culture, attitude, and values of the select minority, particularly the ruling one are selected and represented as a diverse majority. Based upon the notion of productions and profits, like the books by the diasporic writer are marketed well, distributed widely and their availability is ensured. Resultantly, the representation of South Asia is always thought to be presented by the diasporic writers more as compared to the resident or the local writers. The trajectories projected by these writers have been hegemonized exclusively in the mainstream of the publishing industry, projecting a different and exotic culture, notions, or beliefs but profusely aligning with the European mainstream ideology (Werbner). The literature produced by South Asian Writers has resulted in re-establishing and reasserting the binaries between East and West through a generalized representation of reality. Their adaptation and deployment of various techniques, both publishing and stylistics have resulted in tremendous commodification of their works.

1.5: Delimitation of the Study

The present study focuses upon the Young Adult (YA) fictions written by writers of South Asian origin residing in the West. It is delimited to the six novels, selecting three texts by the Pakistani origin writers and three by Indian origin writers. The selected novels are purely Young Adult Fiction, notable for their achievements and awards, making them a perfect globalized commodity. The novels, on one hand, portray the usual issues faced by the young adults as identity issues, love, betrayal, trust, etc. but have fused those issues with South Asian themes, cultures, and values. The selection contains *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chaddha, *The Skunk Girl* (2009) by Sheba Karim, and *Wanting Mor* (2009) by Rukhsana Khan. They are all Pakistani origin writers. *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chaddha is about the adventure of a young girl Bilquis Sangreal and her war against the unholy, unnatural, and evil deadly beings. The setting of the novel is London and the theme of supernaturalism has been dealt with while adding the Eastern touch. This Young Adult novel was nominated for SCWBI the undiscovered voices with its initial draft. Sheba Karim's *The Skunk Girl* (2009) is about Nina, a sixteen years old Pakistani girl, her Muslim and Pakistani parents, her perspectives of life, and her struggle in oscillating between two cultures. This novel was selected for the Silicon Valley Reads Program. Lastly *Wanting Mor*

(2009) is a novel by Rukhsana Khan featuring a young girl who migrated to Afghanistan during the era of the American regime and her apparent physical deformity, her cleft lips, and lack of education but with a very strong Faith. All the above-mentioned novels have Pakistani origin protagonists and the major focus has been upon the portrayal of South Asian culture in general and Pakistani culture in particular with the usual teenage themes and issues.

The list contains three novels written by Indian origin writers as *Born Confused* (2003) by Tanuja Desai Hidier, *Bamboo People* (2011) by Mitali Perkins, and *Blue Boy* (2009) by Rakesh Satyal. *Born Confused* (2003) enjoys a very important status as it is among the pioneers of South Asian YA novels focusing upon a south Asian protagonist and South Asian themes. Dimple, the protagonist of Tanuja Desai Hidier's novel, faces sheer difficulty in balancing the two cultures, adapting the values of Indian culture, she discovers the growing pains of adolescence and struggles to find a balance between her interest in photography and her culture. *Bamboo People* (2011) by Mitali Perkins is about a fifteen-year-old boy Chiko who is forced to join the Burmese government's military in a time of ethnic war. Perkins not only portrays the political situation of the war-driven country but at the same time, manages to depict a very strong bond of friendship between the two boys of rival ethnicity living on the opposite sides of the border. It is one of the most popular of all the novels as it was chosen for Junior Library Guild selection and Indie Bound's summer in 2010. *Blue Boy* (2010) by Rakesh Satyal and the winner of the Lambda Literary Award, and winner of best poetry/prose award by the Association of American-Asian studies (2009), is about an American Indian 12 years old gay boy. He is not only different in his action but in his appearance as well, Satyal portrays the myth of the tenth reincarnation of the Hindu god Krishnaji through his protagonist.

The theoretical framework has been designed by adapting and interweaving certain tenants from the theories of Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. For Theodor Adorno, the commodity has to streamline itself with the existing commodities by adopting the policy of standardization he expounded on the considerable similarities or the sameness between the products. and yet it must retain its peculiarity by having the element of pseudo-individualization. pseudo-individualization which he termed as the incidental differences between the products. If standardization filters out any kind of contradictions, ambiguity, or

the flaws of intellectualism or originality within the art, innovation or individuality is provided by pseudo-individualism. The pseudo-individualization of the commodity covers up the sameness and illusions of the masses of something innovative and exceptional. As masses may not live up to the standardization for a long time, thus pseudo-individualization maintains the sense of heterogeneity. If standardization filters out any kind of contradictions, ambiguity, or the flaws of intellectualism or originality within the art, innovation or individuality is provided by pseudo-individualism. The pseudo-individualization of the commodity covers up the sameness and illusions of the masses of something innovative and exceptional. As masses may not live up to the standardization for a long time, thus pseudo-individualization maintains the sense of heterogeneity. Marcuse, further extending the theory of Adorno stated that the cultural industry has to get the backing of the technology industry to align the commodity by flattening out the distinction between appearance and reality and consequently presenting reality whilst retaining the element of estrangement. Marcuse defined estrangement as “The things of everyday life which are lifted out of the realm of the self-evident...” (Brecht 76). By doing so any ordinary or natural cultural phenomenon is given the feature of extraordinary. For Marcuse, the estrangement is not superimposed upon literature or any other form of art but it is a conscious attempt on the part of art to rescue itself from the unification. The commodity thus produced will not be a real commodity but a freak of the original commodity. For Zizek (1949) typical and yet phantasm are the elements essential for a cultural commodity. The typical provides multiculturalism whereas phantasm in the form of ethnicization acts as a symptom that provides an ideological interchange for acknowledging a specific content behind some abstract universal notion. Thus the reason for adopting this framework is to trace the internal element to prove that these novels are thoroughly cultural products. To be a fetish commodity, the external factors as extensive marketing, distribution, being a part of brands or organizations of international fame do play a vital role, but the commodity itself has to alter or modify itself and standardized/assimilate liquidate as per global entrepreneurial demand and yet has to retain its individualism /estrangement or symptom. These internal factors do play a pivotal role to make a commodity a cultural commodity

The study has been delimited to these novels only as these are essentially the most important novels as they have not only been critically acclaimed but have been publically and officially accredited. They have either won international laurels or awards or have been nominated for certain awards contributing a positive role in the process of globalization. The rationale of this selection is to ensure the broader aspects and dimensions of the chosen topic. Unlike traditional South Asian novels, these novels have extensively portrayed the stereotypes and have focused much upon the impact of culture upon the character's development by focusing upon rare, unique, or sometimes ideas taken as taboos.

1.6: Statement of the Problem

The triumph of globalization thrives on tripods of military, economics, and culture whereupon culture is the most notable among the three. Culture has paved its way into the process of globalization through arts and crafts where arts in general and literature, in particular, are of utmost importance. The establishment and the empowerment of the publishing industry and the extensive framework of production and distribution have ensured widespread penetration of literature in the global arena. At the same time, it has transformed this aesthetic entity into a fetish product. The globalization of literature is analogous to the extensive distribution and marketing of literature. The young adult in general and young adult fiction by South Asian writers, in particular, in the aftermath of the publishing industry which has ensured the production, distribution of these texts on a wider scale transforming them into a fetish commodity. The young Adult fiction by South Asian writers has not extensively deployed the above-mentioned factors like branding, merchandising extensive distribution for its commodification by having flawlessly incorporated the internal elements to homogenized the external factors. By deploying the techniques of globalized culture, These writers have internalized the ideology of the capitalist group in their plots, characterization, setting, etc, and have visibly projected the ideology of the capitalist group, thus making their literature a complete fetish product. The external commodification of south Asian young adult fictions is invariably linked with the internalized ideology within the text. These texts are not merely the exotic commodities of globalization but are the trumpet of the ideology of the capitalist group. This study explores how internal elements along with associated ideology has

strengthened the capitalist dominated globalization which no doubt is a significant issue to be researched and disseminated

1.7: Research Objectives

- To examine the process of globalization as has been theorized and explained by different critics.
- To assert the notion that globalization is not a natural process by a dually controlled phenomenon.
- To establish the redefinition of the concept of globalization concerning the ideology of the market.
- To elaborate the role of culture in strengthening and providing a controlled dimension to the process of globalism.
- To examine the network through which culture has been transformed into a capitalist-controlled commodity.
- To signify the role of art in general and literature in particular in strengthening the globalized capitalist culture.
- To highlight the role of young adult fiction by South Asian Writers as a transmitter of the ideology of capitalists of globalization.

1.8: Research Questions

- How has the concept of globalization been altered and modified concerning the ideology of the market?
- What role does the culture industry play in reconditioning the notion of globalization?
- To what extent the Young adult fiction by South Asian writers has been commodified?
How has ideology been portrayed by South Asian Writers?

1.9: Significance of the Study

The study is significant in the way that it focuses upon the role of popular fiction in general and young adult fiction by South Asian writers in particular as an essential constituent of the culture and the pivotal role it has played in the process of globalization. The portrayal of culture has always been carried out through certain artistic means and literature being one of those is essentially an important form. The study emphasizes that to what extent do young adult fiction by South Asian writers, a subgenre of literature, subvert or subscribe to the process of globalization. The young adult fiction by South Asian writers has not been analyzed at a greater length, if these fictions are explored, the South Asian culture can be viewed and analyzed through a different lens. It can add multiplicity to South Asian culture which is always construed and inferred through adult fiction, travelogue, memoir, etc. Thirdly, across the globe in general and as evident from YALSA and ALA awards held regularly, the issues, themes, apprehensions, and concerns of young adults have been perceived and considered seriously. By focusing on these fictions, the specific issues and problems about South Asian youth and their feelings, emotions, traumas, joys, routines, habits can be studied. Through this study, a judgment can be drawn to see the similarity and the difference between the issues of the Youth of the world and the youth of South Asia. South Asian literature has contributed significantly to the globalization of literature and the contributions of both males and female writers have been tremendous. South Asian writing in English is a body of literature categorized into genres such as poetry, prose, novel, short story, travelogue, creative non-fiction, etc. South Asian writing, especially fiction in English has already reached a global audience and found its due place in world literature. Starting in the 1930s with the emergence of Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Ahmed Ali, and Raja Rao as novelists, the South Asian novel has flourished with the appearance of Bapsi Sidhwa, Salman Rushdie in the 1980s, and a group of post-Rushdie novelists on the literary scene from the 1990s onward. The literary revolution has never moved back, and rather, has produced a cluster of new generation novelists who deal with myriad themes and issues in their writing. The concept can be given a further dimension and aspect through the views of young adults by depicting the themes and issues pertaining specifically to the south Asian

youth. This research could lay the foundation of studying and analyzing young Adult fiction by South Asian writers which have not been analyzed in literary research.

1.10: The Structure of the Study

The study is divided into six chapters:

Chapter#1: This chapter provides the background of the concept by tracing the historical account of the term globalization linking it with economy and culture. The chapter establishes the link between culture and globalization and also asserts the role of literature in general and young adult fiction by the South Asian writers in particular in strengthening globalization. The delimitation of the study along with the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the research objectives, and the research questions have been discussed in this chapter.

Chapter#2: This chapter focuses in detail upon the theories of the cultural theorists as Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. The review of literature about the commodification of literature in general and young adult fiction, in particular, has been elaborated. The chapter has also traced the role of ideology in globalization and identified the gaps to be explored. The literature has been quite extensive which is impossible to explore so only selective literature has been reviewed.

Chapter#3: This chapter has discussed in detail the theoretical framework that has been applied in this research. The theoretical framework provides a lens to be used in the exploration of ideology in these fictions.

Chapter#4: Chapter four provides a detailed analysis of the selected text written by South Asian Pakistani origin writers. The chapter traces how far these fictions have been transformed into a fetish commodity to contribute to globalization. The chapter also traces the specific ideology that these fiction projects.

Chapter#5: In this chapter, the analysis of the selected texts by the South Asian Indian origin writers has been provided. The main emphasis has been to trace the internalized ideology within the texts that have played a pivotal role in the transformation of these texts as a globalized commodity.

Chapter #6: This chapter presents the conclusion of the research by giving the answers to all questions that have been raised in the first chapter. It also offers further recommendations and possibilities for future research.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses upon the review of literature about the commodification of literature in general and the transformation of literature into an entity of culture industry in particular. Moreover, the emphasis is also upon the theories presented by the eminent cultural theorists of the Frankfurt School of thought as Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). These theorists not only coined the term culture industry but also highlighted the essential tenants generally found in the products of the culture leading to their systematic transformation into fetish commodities. In addition to the above-mentioned theorists, the chapter also deals with some of the ideas of Slavoj Zizek (1949), a contemporary culture theorist, who, though after almost a century, has further extended the notions of the above-mentioned theorists. The review of literature provides an insight into the work already done within this area and also traces the gap that needs to be highlighted. Though literature, in general, has been taken into account the major focus has been on YA Fictions across the globe.

2.1. The Commodification of Culture

The notion of the commodification of culture has been contested for a long and its status as a commodity has been debated time and again. The contemporary trend of globalization has made culture to be dealt in certain paradigms and Pieterse (1996) has identified three paradigms, “Cultural differentiation or lasting difference, cultural convergence or growing sameness, cultural hybridization or ongoing mixing” (1389). Through these three paradigms,

the diverse national and global politics along with associated ideologies are propagated successfully. The cultural differentiation or relativism is strongly grounded in the philosophy of binarism between Europe and the Rest. It is based on the assumption that the collision of these cultures will result in intense destruction and chaos, due to which the imaginary fault-lines have been created which include "Islam's borders in Europe (as in former Yugoslavia), Africa (animist or Christian cultures to the South and West), Asia (India, China). The argument centers on Islam: the centuries-old military interaction between the West and Islam is unlikely to decline" (Huntington 31-32). The clash of culture is the continuation of the same cold war with the difference that the geographical boundaries have now been replaced by the cultural boundaries. This has been a successful strategy in making culture as an entity be effectively sold in the facade of globalization. In the contemporary era, cultural relativism is celebrated as a new form of conflict because culture is the most effective tool to project ideology to be utilized in the present capitalistic system. Moreover, the retention of the cultural differences provides cultural diversity and plurality to be able to sustain in the postmodern era and at the same time, it maintains the continuation of the same battle replacing the cold war with the war of dialogue as per the vested interest of the market. The example of souvenirs which the tourists or the travelers bring once they come after a visit or a tour is a concrete example to show the commodification of the difference of culture taking place in this globalized world.

The standardization of culture is the second paradigm of culture as per the interest of the multinational firms or corporations. The junction of the culture normally taken as Macdonaldisation is the contemporary way of looking at culture as "McDonald's formula is successful because it is efficient (rapid service), calculable (fast and inexpensive), predictable (no surprises), and controls labor and customers" (Pieterse 1391). The standardization of culture has not evolved naturally or merely due to the blurring of geographical boundaries but has been done rationally by laying out systematic frameworks based upon fixed agendas to create the evolution of the convergence of culture. This has been done by massive advertising to create a homogenized, uniform, and globally accepted culture. This homogenization of culture seems to be breaking down the barrier between the societies of the nations, but in

reality, supports one culture over the other and in most cases the West over the rest. The standardization of culture is in reality the globalization of the local, native and ethnic cultures, successfully carried out by the corporates under pseudo-notion of 'raising the local culture' but how, when, and where, this is only decided by the Western-oriented capitalists.

The third paradigm through which culture is portrayed has been termed as hybridization by Pieterse, which he argued as "Hybridization offers an antidote to the cultural differentials of racial and nationalist doctrines because it takes as its point of departure precisely those experiences that have been banished, marginalized, tabooed in cultural differentials" (1392). The mixing of cultures gives birth to this hybrid culture which is different from the original culture but has been remodeled and reshaped for this contemporary world. Hybridization subverts uniformity, authenticity, and individuality but proclaims and projects blurriness and vagueness, the essential tenets of postmodernism. The core of hybridization is based on globalization as elaborated by Roland Robertson (2011) "the interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas" (243). Though hybridization is at odds with the notion of globalization, as the former promotes the plurality of culture whereas globalization advocates the uniformity of culture, but at the same time hybridization promotes a local and indigenous culture which is what globalization aims at.

These three paradigms show three diverse and distinctive approaches of multiculturalists. These are not merely three different approaches but are three fundamental mindsets based on certain rigid philosophies with associated agendas. The first approach strongly proclaims the termination, asserting that the outside culture must be kept away, separated, secluded and isolated and the approval of collaboration and mingling can only take place in the market. The standardization, the second paradigm, though approves mixing, but that too, under a systematized framework laid out by the forces of the market, whereas the hybridization claims to be the intermingling and coalition but at the cost of one's identity or authenticity, as determined by the vested interest of the market.

The paradigmatic division of culture into its type advocates the transformation as well as the commodification of culture. As culture has now been transformed as a profitable

commodity yielding sufficient enough profit to globalized capitalist entrepreneurs. That is further evident from the vast numbers of workers engaged in the cultural activities as well as the growing numbers of art institutes as evident in Pakistan too (so far 54 institutes and colleges offer degree/ courses in arts) and even across the globe (more than 150,000 'artists' were registered in the New York metropolitan region in the early 1980s and that number may well have risen to more than 250,000 by now (Harvey 95). The evidence ascertains the evolution of generated mass culture leading to the establishment of the culture industry. The commodification of culture is indebted to the dominating powers of certain private owners who regulate, restructure or enrich the income by transfiguring those items or features of the culture marketable which are in some respect exceptional or irreplaceable. Even for Karl Marx's vineyard producing vine of amazing quality, a cultural product, can be sold at a substantial price making it a monopolized cultural product elaborating the idea that the uniqueness of the vine owes much to the price tag. The commodification of this idea about art can be further extended to the work of arts as Picasso or even Di Vinci, undoubtedly, the uniqueness or the peculiarity is the defining characteristics of these artists, but the commodification of their works have been done on the ground that no specialty or the distinctiveness extends beyond the trade or the monetary ground. In this new liberal capitalist world, monopoly is well-preserved through competition and rivalry, and the Darwinian concept of the survival of the fittest rules the market. Thus the success and the dominion of Microsoft, Gucci, and Nike, etc. clearly echoes the liberation of the market within the mask of centralization of the market, apart from the survival of the fittest. The entrepreneurism of culture is the commencement of globalization geographically pronounced through the monopolized global activities and their relations.

2.2. The Role of the Culture Industry in Commodification

The commodification of culture shows that culture that has been taken as an abstract entity is not merely a naturally occurring phenomenon, rather it has been transformed into an industry, a term coined by the theorists of the Frankfurt School of Thought. The most important among them were Adorno (1903–1969), Max Horkheimer (1895–1973), and Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979). Adorno's culture industry differs widely from the mass

culture as proclaimed by his ancestors. Mass culture is taken as the culture of masses which is spontaneous and extemporaneous and is commonly represented through low art, whereas culture industry focuses upon a uniform, homogeneous, and standardized culture. For Adorno, this devised culture is based on entertainment effectively projected by the advertising cultural elites to target the audience as the consumer at the cost of their critical thinking, analysis, and mediation. The widely popular culture owes much to commercialism; the more effective it is commercialized, the more it acquires the status of the culture. The product of the culture “sought after profit only indirectly, over and above their autonomous essence” (129), and the entire products of the culture industry “are no longer *also* commodities, they are commodities through and through” (129). The best example of that can be taken as music, the music before World War II was an entity, an abstract cultural entity restricted to the specific ethnicity or groups that were not widely distributed but now music has become an industry and is widely distributed and redistributed. Similarly, the film industry has become one of the foremost sources of the economy and is considered as the second in contributing to the economy after the sales of airplanes and air crafts in America. The music industry, fashion industry, and even film industry have subverted the traditional roles of the artists, musicians, writers and they are all engaged in the production of the commoditized culture at a massive scale. Art is researched, explored, and eventually deployed for the targeted audience for the sake of profit and money. This scientifically created art makes art vulnerable to be manipulated to such an extent that resistance is effectively marginalized or homogenized by the elitist of the culture industry making this counter-culture accessible to be appreciated by the masses again and again.

Adorno’s theory is deeply rooted in Marxist analysis and understanding, focusing upon the exploitative and the monopolist hold of capitalism and the urge to be overthrown. Having witnessed the failure of socialism and the strongest hold of fundamentalist capitalism, he strongly believed in the development of critical theory beyond the traditional Marxist mode of production. Technical domination of mankind has resulted in the entrapment of the same mankind into its own created technical tools. Critical thinking and rationality have been eradicated and the irrational targets and goals are now achieved through rational means, the

genocide of war can be taken into account for the compliance of this notion. Thus it was required to uncover the process which was leading to the creation of society completely under the control of the market. Such a social totality where culture, politics, and economics have not only been continuously merging but playing an effective role in the maintenance of the whole homogeneous and a strong totality. Thus culture must not be taken as a structure arising out of the base of the economy but as the structure playing its effective role in the base of the economy.

2.3. Adorno's Analysis of Art and Culture

The theorists of the Frankfurt School of Thought not only focused upon the dominant role of the culture industry as per se but also upon the alteration with which the cultural commodities have to undergo to be the product of cultural industry. Theodor Adorno's (1903-1969) theory also focused upon the cultivation of the specific mindset cultivated by the culturist entrepreneurs to transform the individual into a consumer to become a viable recipient to accept whatever is offered to them. The main framework around which the critics of the Frankfurt School of thought formulated their notion of the theory was the notion of the "anti-Enlightenment" for which "Enlightenment, progressive technical domination becomes mass deception and is turned into a means of fettering consciousness." (Adorno 92)

The historical account of Enlightenment has been much debated and contested historically and despite many differences yet there is a broad agreement of debate. Enlightenment as is universally agreed dates back to 1660–1800 –from the foundation of the Royal Society to Kant. Further, historical conceptions demonstrate a consistency about whom they consider representative; most, for example, would include Locke, Newton, the French Philosophes, and, in particular, Kant. Adorno's concept of enlightenment is "formulated more in philosophical rather than historical intent for they wish to analyze ideas rather than example, assess extent or duration" (524). Adorno and others reject the prospects of rational emancipation offered by enlightenment and involve a critique of Marxism.

Adorno and other theorists of the Frankfurt school of thought both refuted and endorsed Marxism. The orthodox Marxist emphasized the economy as the major factor in societal development but for the school, culture plays a pivotal role too. The previously autonomous sphere “itself came under the industrial principle. This meant that culture, once a space of freedom, came under the principle of instrumental rationality” (Lury 2). The culture industry highlighted the concept of commodity fetishism successfully linking culture and industry. For Adorno “the real secret of success...is the mere reflection of what one pays in the market for the product. The consumer is worshipping the money that he has paid for the ticket to the Toscanini concert” (38). The consumer worships the musical purchases mainly for their exchange values. Thus according to Kenneth Allen (2010) “in other words, it is not the art we are enjoying but its monetary value. Art becomes an object separated from its historical uniqueness, distinct from human relation that allowed it to produce it” (325) The complete selling of the tickets in the open market and then in the Black market establishes the success of culture even before it takes place. This is further evident from the evolution of one of the trajectory of economics, the cultural economics, and the associated theories.

Adorno further traced that every cultural product both performs and withstands this economic, political, or even global domination by establishing itself as a fetish commodity. This concept of Adorno endorses the Marxian concept that the exchange value dominates the use-value as production, consumption and the distribution of the product will always take over the actual need of the masses and the usefulness of the product. At the same time, it extends it to the sphere of the cultural forms and the commodities because “they are produced for the market and also aimed at the market” (38). However, there exists only one basic difference that in cultural products, “the exchange value deceptively takes over the functions of use-value” (39). This is because the cultural commodities particularly music, paintings, and films or other recreational cultural products bring the masses directly to their utility and the use-value transmutes itself into the exchange value which “disguises itself as the object of enjoyment” (39). Mike Fatherstones(1990) while further asserting the Adorno’s notion assert that everyday selling of the items from electronics as washing machines, tea, cosmetics cigarette and so on associated with “images of romance, exotica, desire, beauty, fulfillment,

communality and scientific and the good life” (007). These are carried out by the advertising industry. Thus washing machines or other electronic appliances are sold as the product of science and good life, cigarettes or cosmetics are associated with desire and beauty while selling of cars and luxuries are more with fulfillment or quality of life. That is why the cultural products are blindly consumed by the consumer and that too on a tremendous scale.

For Adorno, the culture industry is the point where the amalgamation of commodity fetishism, the supremacy of the exchange value, and the complete domination of capitalism takes place. Through culture industry not only the perceptions, the ideology, or the preferences of the masses is determined, but the consciousness of the masses is determined. By producing cultural products on a massive scale, the false need is triggered tremendously, which eliminates the true need of the masses. This is where Max Weber’s (1864-1920) influence on him becomes apparent especially through his instrumental reasoning theory (Scannell 37-44). For Weber, the creation and imprinting of false need upon the mind of people by the society was the “highest form of rational conduct” (Scott 570) which is quite logical as one can see the effect of Hollywood on people’s minds and culture as a whole; or “Hollywood at its most classical American mass culture at its most Fordist” (Hansen 47)

The term ‘culture industry’ by Adorno in 1975 entirely differs from its predecessor term the ‘mass culture’ very effectively used by the culture theorists. The mass culture theory reiterates that culture is determined by the selections, preferences, or the choices of the masses but for Adorno, culture is imposed upon the masses by the capitalists or the proprietors of the culture through a rationally planned plan as “all its branches, products which are tailored for consumption by masses, and which to a great extent determine the nature of that consumption, are manufactured more or less according to plan” (Ibid 98). The branding of the product, the legalization of the copyright by the specific brand or group is the systematized framework to bring the masses into a framework as per their hierarchy. For Kenneth Allen (2010) The best example of it can be the production of music on computers by the song makers who combine rhythm, beats, and melodies to create a song. It does not become an artistic creation but a product to be sold (326). Similarly, the tremendous sale or availability of the copied or second-hand version of a product, which though is

slightly different from the original yet sold on a massive scale all indicates the manufacturing of the product as per consumer. This is evident enough to show a systematized plan adopted by capitalist producers for the massive distribution of the fetish commodities. Adorno even goes further by asserting the role of advertising in establishing our bond with the object or the commodity. It catches us without our awareness but slowly and effectively convinces us to have it. So what is culture is determined through a well-managed system as it is effectively broadcasted in the media, portrayed in the regular cultural shows, and displayed in the museum or the galleries. The irony in these projections is that they are seemingly meant for the masses but “the masses are not primary but secondary, they are an object of calculation, an appendage of the machinery” (99). Even though masses embrace the given culture without considering it to be an imposition, the consumer goods produced by the culture industry are administered by the recognition of the market or the monetary value due to which their cultural hierarchy and value are determined.

While analyzing popular music Adorno highlights that popular song appears to be like each core structure, the rhythm and melody are replaceable. This special characteristic of the music is not only restricted to the music the same feature could be seen in popular films, fiction, and painting. Adorno’s analysis of popular music (1941) as a cultural commodity cannot be merely taken as a path or the framework adopted by the music to be transformed into a product of the cultural industry but generally indicates a system through which almost all cultural entities are modified into fetish consumer products. This means that these cultural entities are no longer means of art but are simply business but legitimized in such a way that masses blindly accept them as authentic art. For Adorno, the popular music is mechanized, technically through the process of standardization which he expounded as the considerable similarities or the sameness between the products. For Adorno “each branch of art is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together” (94). The standardization is effectively done through a rational, systematic procedure by using technological developments for the construction of a comprehensive system into which every microcosm and macrocosm form a compact whole, a unified self. The idea is self-evident from the fact that every entity of art such as painting, music, and poetry, performing or nonperforming art,

seems to follow a unified pattern. The content of popular culture is almost uniform. Whether it is about hit songs, stars, or soap operas; everything seems cyclic and repetitive. The technique has completely dominated content. Pure forms of music, art, and literature have been completely corrupted by the culture industry. The theorists state, “the whole world is made to pass through the filter of the culture industry”. Adorno positively asserts that the climax of the modern opera, the jam session of the jazz symphony of Beethoven, or the variations of the novel of Tolstoy have the technique of standardization. Moreover, the standardization is self-manifested not only within the national form of art but “peoples far removed from one another geographically and often belonging to different types of mankind there are found words, art products, industries, social structures and customs, folk-tales, beliefs and divinities, and even kinds of literature so much alike” (Mason 101). This is what has been termed as psychic unity by Hobbes, Locke, and many of the eighteenth-century philosophers who believed that the human mind is the same everywhere. The similarity or the standardization of culture might be a natural process as theorized by the anthropologists by documenting the fact that there exists no cultural difference between the agrarian beliefs, myths, and practice of the masses of South Asia and Native America as their dependence, survival, and sustenance is on the same mode that is agriculture. Even the romances like *Romeo Juliet* (1597), *Heer Ranjha* (1766) *Layla and Majnun* (5th century), and *Khosrow and Shireen* (1102) despite belonging to different geographical boundaries eventually appear to be the same. Nevertheless, it is also a fact that the “structural standardization aims at standardized reactions” (Strinati 60).

Adorno’s psychological insight of the theory can be readily applied in everyday life because for him the standardized reaction is easily apprehended, absorbed, and even directed. Standardization leads to repetition which serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it hammers the said ideas upon the masses and secondly it masks up the consciousness of the masses obstructing them to be critical and rational about any aspect whatever is presented. Thus any cultural entity as clothing, painting, or music is blindly accepted by all and becomes in vogue only to be followed by all. He goes on to the extent that:

Even if there were attempts to introduce anything different into light music, they would be doomed from the start by economic concentration... This standardization means the strengthening of the lasting domination of the listening public and their conditioned reflexes (124)

Entities not fulfilling the demand of standardization are termed as outdated or even backward.

Standardization is not the only means or the mode of transformation of the cultural entity into a fetish product, it is followed and assisted by pseudo- individualization which he termed as the incidental differences between the products. Thus a lipstick would be the lipstick if it is made by Maybelline or by Medora, but it is the smoothness that is associated with the former and the roughness that is linked with the latter ascertains the distinctness. Through difference which is essentially circulated through images not only makes the product individual but our choice of the product creates the notion of pseudo individuality among us. If standardization filters out any kind of contradictions, ambiguity, or the flaws of intellectualism or originality within the art, innovation or individuality is provided by pseudo-individualism. The pseudo-individualization of the commodity covers up the sameness and illusions of the masses of something innovative and exceptional. As masses may not live up to the standardization for a long time, thus pseudo-individualization maintains the sense of heterogeneity. Pseudo individualization may not necessarily be the drastic changes or any single variation as any variation of the hook of the song or anything to make the song catchy might serve the purpose. For Adorno Standardization and pseudo- individualization are correlated and thus cannot be ignored because “Standardization of song hits keeps the customers in line by doing their listening for them, as it were. Pseudo-individualization, for its part, keeps them in line by making them forget that what they listen to is already listened to for them or ‘pre-digested (445). The dual characteristics of the song make it commoditized enough to be marketed on a massive scale. Without pseudo individualization which is termed as market differentiation, the song cannot be “marketed well’ and without standardization, it could not be “sold automatically’ and marketed massively. According to Stuart Even (1945), mass society has two aspects; mass production and mass consumption. Standardization and

pseudo- individualization of the fetishized music is effectively applicable for the other form of arts and culture. Popular movies, paintings, songs, and even fiction have the characteristics of standardization and pseudo individualization to make them a marketable entity.

Huysen in his essay *An Introduction to Adorno (1975)* has defended Adorno on two vital grounds. For him Adorno's theory does not only highlight the manipulation, violation, and the administration of culture by the capitalist industrialists and its reverse implications on the individuals but rather as an "implicit attack on the impressionistic and mindless thesis of pluralism, current in American research on mass culture and popular taste, a thesis which predominates in the *Journal of Popular Culture(1967)*" (3). For him, for the major proprietors of these movements, the subjectivity, individuality as well as the multiplicity of the art would lead to the major revolution in art directly affecting the culture, a notion completely denied by Adorno. Andreas' point of view could be well justified from the fact that the contemporary movements of postmodernism, structuralism, etc., in art, culture or music become in vogue as per instructions of the culture industry. Arts and the tenants of arts are recognized by both masses and the culture industry if it is in alignment with the parameters set by the culture industry. Thus for Adorno, the canonized culture generated by western culture is the way of "latent totalitarianism" (4). The second major reason for the advocacy of Adorno's theory by Huysen is the recent tendencies of the contemporary era. It is the era of the promotion of political and social reforms movements, feminism, anti-war movements, anti eco movements, and various other movements proclaiming for social human welfare, but at the same time, it is also the era of globalization and internationalization where media in the form of printing and publishing, TV, radio and computers is playing a pivotal role. This makes him ponder if "it is legitimate to ask whether Adorno's theses about culture industry should not command more attention than all those theories that rely on culture, especially mass culture, as a vehicle for revolutionary change" (7).

The philosophies of the contemporary critics as Brecht and Benjamin are either too naïve or too sophisticated and thus can only be applied with improvisation or modifications. Both Brecht and Benjamin proclaimed that the improvised art through techniques and the intellectual spur would bring about evolutionary collective modes of production and

reception of art which Adorno considered as "anarchistic romanticism of blind confidence in the spontaneous power of the proletariat in the historical process." (66). For Adorno, the techniques implanted in art by the culture industry and the techniques naturally inherited in the art must be distinguished and the reason for the failure of the revolutionary change owes much to the former embedded techniques. In a technologically predominant capitalistic society that owns almost every empirically existing entity, the notions of Brecht and Benjamin would only be highly romanticized and idealized. Huyssen rightly supports Adorno and for him, the critique on Adorno's negative art owes much to the misapprehension of his concept. Culture has always been misunderstood as to be threatened by the masses as reified by eminent critics as T.S Eliot (1888-1965) or the philosopher as Ortega y Gasset (1883-1953). But Adorno's notion, on the contrary, asserts that the manipulation and exploitation of culture are due to the producers of culture and they are the major threat to culture, not the culture itself. Andreas Huyssen while affirming the ideas of Adorno has supported his theory of the culture industry as the most influential one though for him the "theoretical limitation and blindness have to be interpreted as simultaneously theoretical and historical ones." (12). He admits that "his theory may appear to us today as a ruin of history, mutilated and damaged by the very conditions of its articulation and genesis: the defeat of the German working class, triumph and subsequent exile of modernism from central Europe, fascism, Stalinism and the Cold War (12)".

These limitation hinted by Huyssen has been taken into the task by Gunster(2000) as for him "Rather, like the modernist art that Adorno admired so much, their work consciously employed exaggeration as a technique to bring into bold relief the hidden authoritarian tendencies of popular culture (41). Gustner particularly highlighted Adorno's concept of Sameness and standardization. For Adorno, almost all entities of the culture industry "are one in their enthusiastic obedience to the rhythm of the iron system" (120). As Adorno believed that due to the exerting and determining force of the culture industry every entity of the mass culture "follows the same formula" (122). By sameness, Adorno has focused on the representational techniques used by these cultural products. These techniques used in the cultural products create a kind of false impression on the consumers about the novelty of the

products. The culture industry ensures the availability of these products within the mask or the appearance of something new. For Gustner, Adorno's formula of 'sameness cannot be applied on "the surface content of popular culture which is constantly changing but to its form", (42).

Undoubtedly, the standardization or sameness may be applicable on the content and may not be on the surface, but as Adorno has highlighted that the sameness is blurred by adding the pseudo-individualism which provides both the estrangement as well as the novelty to content and thus slightly changing the outer form or the appearance of the popular form which act as the freak of the culture. Gunster has also criticized "the growing concordance" and the yields of the capital industry and the everyday life under the capitalism because for Adorno "The more intensely and flawlessly [the producer's] techniques duplicate empirical objects, the easier it is today for the illusion to prevail that the outside world is the straightforward continuation of that presented on the screen. Real-life is becoming indistinguishable from the movies" (126), Thus the modern products instead of providing an escape from reality re-assert the same truth because culture is no longer merely an ideological entity in a traditional sense as it no longer hides the truth, rather it erodes the thinking, imaginative and cognitive power of the individual effectively paving a way in building a symbiotic relationship between the individual and the reality. In such interdependencies, leisure or free time plays a very effective role. The individual lives under the illusion of free or leisure time without realizing that this free time is taking away all their sensibilities and cognitive powers. It is not merely the sale of the cultural product that is a problem for Adorno but the effect of the cultural products taking autonomy over everything at the cost of taking cognition or thinking abilities is his primary concern. For Adorno, the main quality that is fetishized in the exchange process is the exchange value itself but for Gustner "in the object of mass culture, commodification reaches its most extreme with use-value being entirely replaced by exchange-value." (50). Thus the transformation of leisure activities into pleasurable ones is regulated by inculcating in the mind of the consumer the process of exchange value which is declared to be natural and real. any rejection in this participation is termed as betrayal and that subsequently leads to isolation. The exchange value is

systematically legitimized and is the way by which the culture industry intends to enhance social cohesion strengthening the late capital world. While further discussing the limitations of culture industry by Adorno and particularly his idea of repetitive reification which he stated as human beings, as subjects, still constitute the limit of reification, mass culture has to renew its hold over them in an endless series of repetitions; the hopeless effort of repetition is the only ace of hope that the repetition may be futile, that human beings cannot be controlled” But for Andreas, while reading the classics in the light of the theory of may compel us to “revise the interpretation of these texts” (122). Both these two scholars with contrasting views agree that culture is not merely an abstract entity rather a controlled entity produced as per the vested interest of the capitalists; they only differ in the way culture is being used by the capitalist but assert that culture has exchange value.

Adorno’s concepts of standardization and pseudo-individualization can be applied to literature too as it is also an integral part of art and hence it plays an effective role in the *schema* of the culture industry. Thus from the Shakespearean drama till the present psychological novels; literature has followed the *schema* of standardization of the implementation of *bourgeois culture* and has become more and more powerful. They have followed an intricate formula due to which this continuation has become successful. They have only created pseudo-individualization by experimenting with the *liquidation of the conflict*. Whether it is the dramas of Shakespeare or the contemporary psychological novels, the standardized theme had been the propagation of the ideology of the dominant bourgeoisie with different techniques created under the mask of pseudo -individualization.

In conclusion for Adorno, every cultural entity must possess two essential tenants, the standardization and the pseudo-individualization to be a saleable commodity to be distributed to the masses by the cultural industry that is done by creating a false need within the mind of the consumers which eventually overshadows the actual need. His arguments have strongly been contested but it still holds importance in a contemporary era too where mass culture has been reshaped and has evolved more aggressively as popular culture.

Though Adorno based his assumptions on art in general and music in particular, his notion applies to all forms of art and culture. As mentioned above, mass culture has now evolved as popular culture and literature and particularly young adult fiction is an important sub-genre of popular culture. Adorno's concept can be effectively applied upon

2.4. One Dimensionality and Herbert Marcuse

Adorno's concept of standardization and pseudo-individualization has been further elaborated by Herbert Marcuse in his seminal work *One Dimensional Man* (1964) where he argued that the contemporary culture can only achieve these two tenants by 'Flattening out' of the distinction between culture and social reality which is only possible through the "obliteration of the oppositional, alien, and transcendent elements in the higher culture" (Marcuse 43). Marcuse endorses Adorno's concept by stating that the flattening out does not necessarily mean the denial of the cultural values but it is essentially their "wholesale incorporation into the established order" (43) due to which their every striking distinction are eliminated. This is how the assimilation of reality with the reification is successively carried out through a well-established framework that is very effectively formulated and laid out. Marcuse was of the view that "throughout the long history of art, and despite changes in taste, there is a standard which remains constant". (X). By constant standard, he meant the aesthetic standard. Marcuse has in reality Adorno's concept of Standardization which he had applied to music and has traced it upon different works of art. Marcuse further believed that the work of art becomes standardized not merely because of its form but "the content having become form" (8). Ironically, the analysis of art in general and literature in particular shows that "form becomes content and vice versa" (41). Further "a play, a novel becomes literary works by the form which 'incorporates' and sublimates 'the stuff' (41).

To sum up, he is of the view that if art has to transform, it has to be free from the clutches of the form. The high culture can be successively and effectively materialized because these cultural entities which include humanism, joys, and sorrows are essentially the same as the core concept and experiences borne by the masses all over the world are alike. These cultural materials cannot only be shared but can be effectively incorporated and so the

flattening out or the liquidation can easily take place. Once standardization is streamlined among the masses, then the process of pseudo-individualization is triggered to give heterogeneity to the art under the mask of the aesthetic form. The aesthetic form is incoherently built but in reality, all material, contents, and data of the art like sounds, lines, colors, thought and imagination are framed, lined, and ordered as per this form because for Marcuse “The laws or rules governing the organization of the elements in the *oeuvre* as a unified whole seem of infinite variety, but the classical aesthetic tradition has given them a common denominator: they are supposed to be guided by the idea of the *beautiful*.” (51-52). The reorganization of words under the label of ‘beautiful’ creates the pseudo-realm of the aesthetic dimensions of art through an extensive framework, because of which these ideas and emotions are systematically politicized, administered, materialized, and eventually sold in the market.

This assimilation of two entirely different dimensions of reality and aesthetic form into one results in the formation of ‘estrangement’ but this is the only way through which the truth is communicated. Marcuse defined estrangement as “The things of everyday life which are lifted out of the realm of the self-evident....” (Brecht 76). By doing so any ordinary or natural cultural phenomenon is given the feature of extraordinary. For Marcuse, the estrangement is not superimposed upon literature or any other form of art but it is a conscious attempt on the part of art to rescue itself from the unification. The estrangement gives the sense of sensationalism which adds the commodified aspect to that estranged culture entity. Marcuse's estrangement effect can be both politically and artistically maintained only if “to produce the shock which may bear the true relationship between the two worlds and languages: the one being the positive negation of the other ” (Zanetti 267). The estrangement has a dual-phase. It is destructive because it creates an emotional disturbance, turmoil, and chaos. It turns to counter prevailing thoughts and modes. but this estrangement has a positive aspect too as “It creates the conditions for seeing the world anew, in the form of the synthesis” (263). This notion of estrangement can be taken as another dimension of Adorno’s concept of pseudo- individualization. The more estranged an art is, the more it is accepted by the masses and the more it receives the token of newness by the masses. For Marcuse, the

poetic language is a model of the concept of estrangement as “poetic language speaks of that which is of this world, which is visible, tangible, and audible in man and nature – and of that which is not seen, not touched, not heard.” (50). The poetic language presents everything yet nothing, it is the estranged language at the same time it is the pseudo- individualized language of the poet that has been materialized.

Art in general claims to depict a reality that is a counter to the existing reality, an idealized reality. In short a ‘Great Refusal’ (23) of the existing reality, but the capitalist controlled art denies art from that liberation. The use of poetic language is one concrete example to show the denial of that refusal. Besides, this refusal also takes place through the reification of “the cherished transcendence images by incorporating them into its omnipresent daily reality” (70) which is testified by the society. The dreams, tragedies, sorrows, and joys are regularly, technically, and rationally administered. Rationality is determined both through behavior and language because the world that we reside in is a world of behavior and words. The abstract concepts are concretized through words and circulated as cliché which is hammered by constant repetition till it attains the status of the false familiarity once this general usage is ‘sanctioned’ by the intellectuals, it loses all cognitive value and serves merely for “recognition of an unquestionable fact” (66) and ultimately “the functionalized, an abridged and unified language is the language of one-dimensional thought” (67). The alienated art has the power of sublimation mediated between conscious and unconscious, reality and fact but sublimation though becomes the cognitive power “which defeat the suppression while bowing to it” (54), while the contemporary technological art is channeled systematically by institutionalized corporates endorsing the fact that whatever is real no matter if it is faulty it delivers the good for all.

To sum up, Marcuse's argument deals with the idea that art like any scientific entity is involved in the collective degradation of conventionalism and traditionalism by not abandoning the culture but by simply aligning it into the pre-existing order of the culture industry. According to Marcelo Vieto (2006)– for Marcuse, the difference between the pre-technological and post-technological project lies in “how subordination to the necessities of life—to ‘earning a living- is organized and in, the new form of freedom and un-freedom,

truth and falsehood which corresponds to this organization” (9) This eventually results in a kind of enslavement in this contemporary capitalist work. The technologically controlled art makes the technological mind susceptible to abstract generalization. For Reitz (2000) “the foundation of the Marcusean protest and the basis of his recommended political activity is not the concrete struggle of classes, nor the historical struggle of ideas. Instead, his program is grounded in the ‘activism’ of the aesthetic form seeking after the earthly actualization of pleasure, beauty, happiness, and satisfaction” (171). Like Adorno Marcuse also endorsed the political role of the art but their understanding regarding this point varied greatly. Adorno emphasized the negation of the art while for Marcuse it is the autonomy of the art in the form of aesthetic art that serves as emancipation but for Adorno, it serves as a criticism of life.

The extensive and massive commodification of art value functions the achievement of the ideological purpose and the ultimate end is the realization of the social interrelation and connectedness and the materialization of culture which results in the codification of culture ultimately serving as the denial of the artistic alienation. The artistic alienation had always preserved culture through the ideals, the values, and the ways of life, the standardization of art has denied this alienation and resulted in the ‘Great refusal’ it has thus taken away the sole characteristics of art, through which the refusal or the breaking of rules of the established order took place but it was the only way of paying “tribute to the antagonistic society in which they are linked” (47). But with the standardization of literature and the technological advancement, this refusal has been refuted and the other dimensions have been absorbed in the established order and are effectively sold and circulated. Moreover, artistic alienation is sublimation in its aspect resulting in the creation of such images which though negate and refute the established order yet turns out to be very useful and important. This imagery has now been refuted and reconciled and successfully incorporated as evident in the literature of the contemporary era.

Marcuse criticizes modern art because it neither follows the aesthetic form nor the reality, whereas Adorno fully appreciates the art due to its rejection of the technological world which does not represent the image or the facet of the other world rather portrays the “freaks” or the type of the same life achieving both the standardization with in the art as well

pronouncement of the established order. Besides this slight deviation in his views from Adorno, Marcuse agreed to the role played by culture industry in the massive production of culture along with internalized ideology.

Marcuse theorized his notion in 1937, and his notion still holds importance in the contemporary globalized era. Globalization has paved the way for the gigantic expansion of industries which have now evolved in the form of huge organizations. The commoditization of culture is now being done at an enormous rate and pace. The contemporary literature along with its sub-genre as popular literature or young adult literature which is an important cultural product is far more effectively utilized by the entrepreneurs of these globalized cultural organizations which not only ensures their massive production but also their massive distributions and promotions. This is the primary purpose due to which his notion has been utilized in this research.

2.5. Zizek and Culture Industry.

The culture theory of Adorno and Marcuse was taken up again in the twenty-first century by Slavoj Zizek(1949). Zizek while taking into account Adorno's concept of pseudo individualism and Marcuse's concept of estrangement not only endorse these concepts but adds another dimension to them. For him,if the element of estrangement or pseudo-individualism is supplemented with the element of specific myths or fantasies then a "specific twist, a particular content which is promulgated as 'typical' of the universal notion, is the element of fantasy, of the phantasmatic background/support of the universal ideological notion" (Zizek 29). while explaining the process of how culture aligns with the universal hegemonic content, Zizek believes that cultural content has to split into two constituents "authentic particular content as well as its distortion with relation to exploitation and domination" (29). The universal gets its concrete form and particular content act as the stand-in and as contingent, which is precisely resultant of the political tussle of the ideological hegemony. The distorted constituent is made as typical or the element of phantasm is added

to the distorted reality making it both the estranged as providing the concreteness to the universalism by acting as a 'stand-in' of the universe where the ideological battle could be won. What is interesting about Zizek's argument is that he gives equal importance to representation. For Zizek, ideology is a form of appearance which is the formal distortion/displacement of non-ideology". The particular identity is negated and eventually converted into the symbol of identity and fullness. The distorted reality is achieved by rearticulating this reality and making it compatible with the existing relation of domination. Although the distorted reality is secondary identification and is more outward it is of greater importance as it is more seizing and overwhelming because it reflects the basic and the primordial way of existence. The construction of nations has been altered too, the previous construction was based upon nationalization of ethnic but the contemporary mode is ethnicization of nationals which is more profusely consumed in the market.

Before going into the debate of Zizek's concept of multiculturalism, it is essential to provide the contemporary idea of the key terms, eurocentrism, and multiculturalism. Traditionally speaking, the term eurocentrism signifies the accepted view in which whether implicitly or explicitly, European history and values are posits as "normal" and superior to others. This is how the justification of domination of Europe over the rest is justified. while linking it with the epistemological dimension, the Latin American critics are of the view . that is Eurocentric knowledge, to economic aspects such as the organization of global capitalism and economic exploitation. the center of this debate revolves around the binary way of thinking whereupon a white, progressive, modern, and civilized European identity and juxtaposes to a black/indigenous, underdeveloped, traditional, and barbarian Other in the colonies. The continuous organization of power along these lines is what Aníbal Quijano has called the "coloniality of power" (Quijano 2002). Eurocentrism has been critiqued by, Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978) or Samir Amin's *Eurocentrism* (1988). They have debated that Eurocentric knowledge has been created by constructing orient as a distinct entity. Even the contemporary concept of modernity, progress, and universal history has been based on Eurocentric. The standard definition and interpretation, whether in encyclopedias or histories, defines modernity in terms of a self-contained European process of moral and

economic progress. Eurocentrism shapes the production of knowledge and its proliferation well beyond Europe and the western hemisphere. In sociology, multiculturalism is taken as how a given culture is dealt with in a society. the fundamentals of multiculturalism lie on the assumption that members of often very different cultures can coexist peacefully, The giants of multiculturalism are of the view that society flourishes by preserving, respecting, and even encouraging cultural diversity. . the political philosophy, multiculturalism is taken as how societies formulate, theorize and implement official policies based on equality while dealing with different cultures.

Multiculturalism can occur on a nationwide scale or within a nation's communities. It may be due to a natural phenomenon or through immigration. Those in the favour of multiculturalism are of the view that certain features of traditional cultures must be retained while the opponents are of the view multiculturalism threatens the social order by diminishing the identity and influence of the predominant culture. this argument has given birth to two theories commonly known with the metaphor, The melting pot Theory and the Salad Bowl Theory.

The regression and the acceptance of this ethnicization show that "the loss of the organic-substantial unity is fully consumed" (42). Post-modern politics' focusing upon the natural unity of social life has been replaced by a transitional stage between "a particular universal ethnic thing and the universal function of the market" (44). The market incorporates the ethnic and the local form of identification into a unified global form and at the same time, it imposes a kind of economic boundary. This regression from secondary to primordial way is thoroughly mediated yet its temporariness is maintained and effectively promoted whereby strictly following the politics of postmodernism, within which there is a rejection of this proper balance. A temporary balance is created in a particular thing as per the potentiality of the world market to blur the boundary of the market economy to ensure the sustenance of capitalism. No doubt in the beginning there was capitalism within the confined state of the nation with the accompanying international trade followed by the establishment of a relationship between the colonizing and the colonized state, it is still the same capitalist mode with a difference that the colony is not any country but a global country.

By endorsing Adorno's concept of standardization, Žižek stated that the ideology of contemporary global capitalism is in multiculturalism, where each native is closely studied and respected, indirectly maintaining and creating the same relationship which previously was created between the colonizer and the colonized. Multiculturalism is patronized by euro-centrism which is a self-referential, renounced form of racism, but racism with a distance. It respects and acknowledges other identities through the lens of the privileged position of universalism. That is why universalism or standardization is maintained in the culture. With this standardization, the element of typical acts as the *other* of the universal. This *other* is deprived of its reality but is added to the universality for the regulation of the pleasure to universalism. The typical thus act as a repressive to the standardization which is accepted and appreciated in its very basic and benign form. It is this 'typical' which enables us to see the universality from a slightly new angle. For Žižek despite this fact that this contemporary era proclaims to be a post-ideological era where the obsolete political passion and ideology of class struggle has assumingly incorporated into an ideology-free universe and where rational thought, technological domination, and pragmatic logic prevails. But it is also an undeniable fact that though contemporary aestheticism is bound with plurality and multiplicity, this era is also celebrating the comeback of the most ancient and the outmoded ideology of racism and that racism is the reward of postmodernism. Post-modernistic multiculturalism is celebrating the triumph of *Other* but with a slight twist, that is the profuse acceptance of the folklorist other only if it is deprived of its essentiality. Thus the estrangement serves the purpose of the *Otherness* to the standardization but it is the post-modernistic otherness that can be taken as the deprivation of this otherness of its true essence. Interestingly, universalism and multiplicity, two opposing terms that are completely terms, are negotiated within the terrain of globalization as global capital flow works profusely through this diversity. The sustenance of the non-standardized estrangement may induce the violence, fundamentalism, or even extremism whereas the standardized typicality inculcates the re-actualization of the repressive tolerance because "the tolerance of the other in its aseptic benign form which forecloses itself to the dimension of the Real of the other jouissance" (136). Jameson and Žižek both argue that multiculturalism is Eurocentric, but they differ on the ground that for Jameson, it is more Americanisation and a real one, but for Žižek, it is Eurocentrism and an

apparent one. This apparent Eurocentrism is not real but the level of representation is always real.

Today's postmodernism culture focuses upon the amalgamation of commerce along with the celebration of ethnicity in the mask of emancipation. Multiculturalism serves as an 'auto colonization' where each culture is treated the way the colonizer had treated the native that by merely respecting the natives. The estrangement or the pseudo-individualism element in the culture is the multiculturalist attitude of respecting the native but with a colonizer's gaze to ensure that a specific distance is maintained. In this way, global positioning is retained where there is "respect for local culture without roots in one's particular culture" (44). The post-modernistic multiculturalism is self-referential and an altered modified form of racism where on one hand there is a respect of the ethnicity of the other culture as an authentic but on the other hand this ethnicity is treated as an absolute alien and as *other* against which not only the multiculturalism can retain its privileged position but can streamline other culture in the mask of standardization and globalization. The heterogeneity or the amalgamated harmony of the multiple cultures openly pronounces the "presence of capitalism as a universal world system" (46). The celebration of ethnicity or cultural studies is invisibly strengthening the capitalism

The sustenance of multiculturalism along with its ethnicity/estrangement/pseudo-individualism is because the estrangement acts as a 'symptom' as a contingent of the main 'structure' which is the standardized culture. The symptom may be taken as an "element which although the non-realization of the universal principle in it appears to hinge on contingent circumstances----has to remain an exception that is the point of the suspension of the universal principle" (46). The role of estrangement acts as the poebel (mob) were to the main class, or as insanity is to sanity. For Zizek, multiculturalism is a systematic procedure of enchaining all the equivalence thereby bringing everything into the structure, yet leaving room for the symptom. It is the symptom that provides an ideological interchange of acknowledging a specific content behind some abstract universal notion. This is how the product whether artistic or cultural gains the status of commodification. A commodity is a form of *objet petit a* (95). When *objet petit a* which he defined as desire is fully established,

it attains the status of the mirage of the desire due to which reversal of Louis Althusser's formula of reification, which was relations between things are understood as relations between people (23-24)). Zizek's work can be juxtaposed with that of Fredric Jameson, though both unanimously endorse that globalization is the manifestation of late capitalism, for Zizek the only logic for globalization is culture, which is multiculturalism.

The reason for selecting Zizek's notion of multiculturalism in this research work is because, in this contemporary globalized era, almost all cultural entities have absorbed multiculturalism to proclaim multidimensionality, but particularly literature has engrossed multiculturalism the most. The present study focuses upon young adult fiction by South Asian American /European writers which are more prone to multiculturalism and have explicitly portrayed these fictions.

The three selected cultural theorists though belonged to different eras as the former two theorists were from The Frankfurt School of Thought whereas the latter belongs to the contemporary era yet they held similar approaches on the commodification of art. All three theorists unanimously agree that art has to transform itself into a fetish commodity to attain the status of a prominent culture as per the desire of the elitist of the cultural industry. They only differ in their dimensions, for Adorno, it is the element of standardization and pseudo-individualization that transmutes a culture into a fetish commodity, for Marcuse, it is the element of estrangement and the denial of the notion of great refusal that plays a vital role in making a commodity fetish, and finally, for Zizek, it is the element of multiculturalism with a tinge of symptom or typical that helps in the conversion of the commodity. However, they are undivided on the role of culture as an essential tenet of globalization.

2.6. The commodification of Culture.

Raymond Williams (1976), a very prominent culture theorist has defined the term culture as “an independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of

intellectual and especially artistic activity. It is now taken in the most widespread use as “culture is music, literature, painting and sculpture, theatre and film” (52). The contemporary capitalist industry has not only ensured the massive production of these artistic products but has streamlined their massive distribution too. An ordinary painting is being displayed in the galleries or auctioned only to be sold at considerable prices. Its massive commodification asserts its status as either an important or artistic piece. A drama, a form of art along with the source of entertainment is commoditized by the investors who play a key role in marketing it on a massive scale. Traditionally high culture as paintings was either considered for contemplating in solitude, for studying purpose or for gaining knowledge, for tracing the historical evolution, or for comparing and contrasting it with the other cultural aspects. Nevertheless, the artistic work was deliberated and argued, the meaning was supposed to be given by the creator, debated and ultimately the authenticity was confirmed by the professionals. Now with the commodification, the scenario has been changed altogether. Nigel Whitely (2005) has focused upon how due to art, design, commerce, and consumer have been fused on three levels. The first is the union of commerce and culture, where they are normally taken as having a symbiotic dependence, where commerce and culture are harder to separate. Secondly, the most creative and vital cultural fusion arises by creating a competition among the cultural products and thirdly it is done by the traditional role of culture that has been usurped by the manifesto of commerce. The idea is further strengthened by John A. Walker (1987), “as artworks produced by professional artists within the context of the Western economic system become commodities once they leave the artist's studio and are sold to collectors and museums via the dealer/private art gallery system of marketing and distribution” (26). It is very much evident from the difference between the shops and the museum as the seeming gap between them has disappeared. The shops have become more cultural whereas the museums have become more of the commerce, the concrete example of that could be D' Ralph Lauren Madison Avenue where the merchandised and cultural aesthetic exist side by side and similarly in the Metropolitan Museum, the first thing that is heard is the exchange of the cash.

Denis Broe in his article *Fox and Its Friends: Global Commodification and the New Cold War* (2004) has traced the way by which the cinema or theatre, a form of art has been commodified which is purely based upon the ownership by the big corporations. By providing the historical account of the Fox Channel, a corporation owned by Rupert Murdoch, he stated that the corporation of the nine major corporations (along with Viacom, Bertelsmann, Warner, Sony, Liberty Media, AT&T, GE, and Disney) serves three major purposes, primarily to extend the control of the market in collaboration with the other corporation and secondly to create “an almost frenzied fetishization of the value of "entertainment," extended both to news and fictional” (97). Denis Broe asserted that Fox Channel also serves another purpose which is to streamline the hegemony of the elite neoliberalism. By analyzing a drama serial *24*(2010), especially upon the ideological and paradigmatic shifts that have taken place particularly after 9/11, he concluded the global monopolistic approach of the corporation. Since the Fox network has broadcasted the American war against Iraq (2003-2011) and developed the reputation of the most viewed network, the proprietor of the Fox network Rupert Murdoch along with Fox Network and Twentieth Century Fox has not only taken the rights of the distribution of that particular drama series but also of its exhibition. The series that was ornamented with the global fetishism and whose agenda has been global terrorism, and global conspiracy, the Siberian war, etc. the post 9 /11 agenda and ideology shifted to al- Qaeda type, the exotified Arabs responsible for terrorism. Lastly, when the Bush administration came under the inquiry, the shift changed to the creation of fear and terror mainly by focusing upon deadly virus, chemical weapon, and nuclear war, clearly advocating the neo-liberal policy. Similarly, the element of sensationalism is further added to make it more marketable, the tickling of the clock and keeping the pace very fast are all sensational enough elements to keep it a marketable commodity. Broe concludes “if Murdoch's News Corporation is written into its media products even as those products act on the public consciousness to promote this new symbiosis between global markets and global warfare, or, more accurately, to promote the opening of once-resistant global markets through global warfare” (101).

The commodification of culture has been carried out successively throughout the ages through a systematic process. For David Harvey (2000) the commodification of culture takes place by building an important relation between “culture, capital, and socialist alternative” (94). Historically, the domination of the producers over the consumers has been carried out by adopting the policy which according to David Harvey is that of monopoly rent and competition. The policy of rent and competition had been carried out in two ways, firstly it was done indirectly by engaging the social actors into getting control of the commodity, resource, or the activity and practices by directly using rent. Secondly, it was done directly by trading the commodity. In both cases, the cultural products were not only considered as different or diverse from the rest of the commodities, nevertheless but their flexibility was also retained as they could easily be replaced by generic commodities. The monopoly rent is the way due to which the commodification of culture has taken place in the past and the best example is the development of the city of Barcelona during the Olympic Games in 1992 along with the promotion of tourism based on specific Celtic culture. The marketing of the Catalan history and culture along with the trading of the respective art, craft, and painting and the systematic publicity of the lifestyle through the establishment of museums and monuments showcasing the different aspects of life, clearly shows the monopoly of the capitalists. This was further strengthened by the building of the Olympic village which opened up a huge opportunity of the monopolistic rent, is one of the many examples to prove the role of monopoly and rent in the commodification of culture. In the neoliberal capitalist world, the traditional process of rent is successively tolerated to create competition, leading to the commodification as well as the sustenance of the product. Though the traditional notion of rent has focused entirely upon the high culture since the contemporary capitalists to gain their supremacy have now focused more towards urban culture as it has more of the cliché and more of the monetary and the profit value. At the sametime, it is ensured by them that urban entrepreneurialism “mixes state powers (local, metropolitan, regional, national or supranational) and a wide array of organizational forms in civil society (Chambers of commerce, unions, churches, educational and research institutions, community groups, NGOs, etc.) and private interests (corporate and individual) to form coalitions to promote or

manage urban/regional development of some sort or other.” (100). The competition has now been taken as the essence of capitalism.

To June Nash (2000) the commodification of culture has been done by promoting the tourist culture because “explorers in the late twentieth century are willing to buy not only the products but also the experience of life in all its exotic splendor”. (129). It is not that the producers of these cultural artifacts have lost touch with their heritage cultural bases, but have found a way by which the specific culture and their income production have been naturally synchronized. In that connection, the significant papers have been presented by three writers. Walter E. Little (2004) has focused upon how Kaqchikel women belonging to the Mayan Tribe of San Antonio Aguas CA lien have successfully adopted the ways of performing the traditional dances to the tourist. Similarly, W. Warner Wood (2008) has focused on the weaver of the Teotitlan Zapotec and their way of adopting a diversified living along with the production of the traditional rugs for the tourists. Matthew Krystal (2009) has focused upon the ritual performances of the native tribes to the tourists of the San Miguel Totonicap. These three diverse papers explore the role of commodification of the culture for tourism as per the demand of the globalized market. Nash asserts that besides building up the ties between the market and the indigenous tribe, it is but a way of retention of the lost heritage for these indigenous tribes. Apart from the commodification of ethnic culture, a new trend of self-commodification is also in vogue. Alexis Celeste Bunten (2008) has presented the latest trend of self-commodification of the native American culture which is “defined as a set of beliefs and practices in which an individual chooses to construct a marketable identity product while striving to avoid alienating him- or herself” (381). The self-commodification, more recently known as self-branding is multifaceted in its various aspects as it not only serves the economic response to the globalized market it also unconsciously portrays and reflects the lost indigenous identity which is sufficiently projected through tourism. The Native American tourists are combining the emotional aspect of their indigenesness along with the globalized skill of the market to meet the economic benefits, by simply commodifying their persona. The commodified persona is done by making the self, exotic to create the *otherness* and by simplifying culture as a trope and applying it in the field of

tourism through a well-structured economic and political framework. Because “The mandatory performance of the Other in the cultural-tourism setting is a critical activity, which reflects the double conciseness implicit in the representation of ethnic identity within the typically hegemonic encounter” (381). The Native American tour guides both endorse and negate the non-native demand to experience Native American life. They also appropriate themselves and their cultural values as per the assigned demand of the market. Thus the cultural commodification is a mutual production between the host and the guest which is facilitated by numerous culturally grounded beliefs as what it appears to be a member of Native American tribe.

The commodification is not demanded only it has its aura and significant reasons, commodification for Sara Fowler (2004) is actually “the romanticized golden past and the hope for a return to a simple life in future (Smith 33)”. The stereotyping of native life and culture is done by the commodification of their clothing and accessories by the leading stores as URBN, Nike, Cougar, and other sporting stores which promote Indian clothing, Indian jewelry, and even Indian moccasins. These branding companies owing to hard-hitting competition in the market have become so close to the originality that they have started producing the cardigan printed with a wolf howling at the moon, an Indian myth, the skin-tight leggings imprinted with native Indian symbols, and the local production of art and craft by the Indians. The globalized commonly taken as internationalized branding is the only way by which the Native American Culture becomes appropriated and institutionalized and can never be in competition with the main American culture. Thus when the Navajo tribe officially pursued a brand *The Outfitter* for the merchandising of their culture in 2012, it was emphatically defended by the spokesman of the company Mr. Ed. Looman proclaimed “Like many other fashion brands we interpret trends.....the Native American –Inspired trend and specifically the term “ Navajo” have been cycling thru the fashion, fine art and design for the last few years” (Navajo Nation Sue Urban Outfitters for Trademark Infringements). The commodification of the Native American culture has resulted in redefining the Indians as the “good homogenized identity which is consumable for the Modern American” (49).

The penetration of commodification in culture has been traced by Stewart Muir in his article *Goods in the New Age Good* (2007) where he has highlighted the systematic and the successful commodification of the Australian aboriginal culture particularly the artifacts of the spiritual values are being sold and marketed at the New Age. The existence of the special shops and mail orders ensure to “sell real and ersatz Aboriginal paintings, clapping sticks, healing stones, Tujung boards, Aboriginal herbal medicines, emu-oil salves, and didgeridoos. There are Aboriginal ‘Dreaming’ tours that visit Aboriginal places and Vision Quests that draw on Aboriginal imagery” (234). This commodity fetishism for Annette Hamilton (1993) is in fact “cultural appropriation” but not “not an appropriation of the ‘real’ but an appropriation of commodified images” (19). Nevertheless, through commodification, the utopian image of either tribalism or ancient romanticism has not only been invoked but the aboriginal culture has been marketed with a tremendous scale bringing huge profits to the producers. Muir validates his argument by giving a reference to one of the spiritual practices commonly known as *Oracle of Dreamtime* which consists of a set of forty-five cards along with the book and instructions as to how to arrange and interpret these cards. The cards originally associated with the spiritual oracle or as a means of prophesying the future are sold merely as a tool of entertainment and pleasure. Muir admits that the conversion of aboriginal culture into marketization creates alienation not only for the consumer from themselves but also to the aboriginals from their own cultures, but this fact cannot be ignored that commodification of culture asserts the duplication of culture. The manipulation of the market forces symbolizes culture to be a product and as an entity that can be brought, sold, owned, leased, and even rejected.

The above-mentioned discussion can be aptly concluded by the comments of Holt (2004) who concludes “Managers must get close to culture and that means looking far beyond consumers as they are known today” (43). Indicating that marketing practices are culturally embedded, plainly evident from the advertising that has become a very rich blend of the cultural references and economical insights as can be traced from the historical accounts where the clear reference indicates that artists have always thrived on the cultural infrastructure.

From the above discussion, it can be summed up that culture has been commodified as per the vested interest of the capitalists who have utilized all the external factors to make it a commodity. The earlier historical records affirm the commodification of high culture, but the contemporary globalized trend is upon the commodification of low, urban, and even popular culture. Nevertheless, the primary focus of the above-mentioned writers and their analysis has been upon the commodification of culture from the perspectives and interests of the capitalists or the industrialists. The commoditization of culture is a two-way process and culture has adapted, modified, and altered itself as per vested interests too. It is this aspect that the researcher has focused upon to have a vivid and clear understanding of the term commodification of culture.

2.7. Literature and Commodification

Culture, whether taken as “the way of life, especially the general customs and belief” is in reality “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Taylor 1) which emphasize upon the art which includes both performing and non-performing arts. Among the performing arts, literature has been the most significant form of portraying culture. Literature or fiction is the repository of a society’s ideological and psychological conflict; it also tends to reveal the collective cultural psyche of the society. Instead of being a product of an artisan, it has become a commodity having an exchange value in the market. The historical accounts indicate the exchange value of the literature. Homer (900 BC-701 BC) always chanted his verses to the congregation of nobles and warriors and was honored with an honorarium. The poetry of other Grecian poets like Pindar (517 BC-438 BC) and Simonides (556BC-468 BC) was meant to be recited for official recitals. Though there were some private poets as Sappho (630 BC -580 BC) and Anacreon (582 BC-485 BC) who since expressed private and personal emotions and feelings in their work, their audience too were general masses, although their audience were family or friends, an audience was a must. The ultimate publications of their poems on papyrus or parchment, further assert that their poetical works were meant for public concerns and not for personal catharsis and were more for commodification.

The onset of the printing press in the 15th century not only established the popularity of literature on a massive scale, but it set the foundation of the commodification of literature as the books were not only published but distributed on a larger scale, that is why in 1600 AD the booksellers eventually became the publishers. Among them, the prominent name was Jacob Tonson (1655-1783) who a bookseller who became a renowned publisher. George Woodcock in his article *Books as Letters vs Books as Commodity* (1982) has historically traced that almost all famous literary giants had successfully commoditized their works. The literary tycoon as Alexander Pope (1453-1503) arranged the subscription of some of the early editions of his books not only to gain monetary benefits but the publisher even had to demand a fair payment from the author as cost of the book before it was even sold. Even in nineteenth Century writers as Dickens (1812-1873) and Dostoevsky (1821-1881) experimented in publishing their works in serials or in parts to earn money thereby commodifying literature.

The modern concept of the *Bestseller* is the culmination of this commodification of literature as the bestsellers are extensively promoted through systematic publicity and marketing. These bestsellers, if met with success are declared best academically as well as artistically, but if it failed, are never heard again. According to Sutherland (1981), "Very largely speaking, the bestseller has two functions. The first is economic. It exists to sell the best and make money for its producers and merchandisers. The second, more flexible function is ideological" (22). The best-sellers are beneficial both economically and ideologically, as they not only provide solace or comfort to the audience but inculcate the doctrines desired very effusively.

Apart from the bestsellers whose worth is always questionable, the literary awards and laurels are yet another form of commodification of literature, even the most serious literary award as the *Pulitzer Award* is indirectly a literary way of the commodification of literature. W.J Stuckeys *The Pulitzer Prize Novels: a Critical Backward Look* (1980) contains the list of the award-winning novels from 1917 to 1970, and shockingly most of the important novelists have been ignored in that list including F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, John Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein, Henry Miller, and Nathaniel West. But those who were honored (primarily monetarily as the winner of the award gets a cash award of

\$10,000 besides a gold medal) for their lesser works as Hemingway for *The Old Man and the Sea*, Faulkner for *A Fable and The Rivers*, Sinclair for *Dragon's Teeth*. Besides, laurels have been awarded to those novels too that are no more heard off. No one now remembers Margaret Wilson's *The Able McLaughlins*, *Scarlet Sister, Mary* by Julia Peterkin, *Now in November* by Josephine Johnson, *Journey in the Dark* by Martin Flavin, and many more. Over the past many decades, the juror of the awards had been few literary and academic critics with a particular bent of mind, the editors of newspapers, and few emerging writers belonging to the commoditized publishing industry. Whatever the surface policy and practice of these awards may be, their primary objective is the "belief that virtue inheres in economic individualism constitutes the one principal theme of the Pulitzer novel prize tradition" (Stuckey 46). The scale and the marketing strategy of the best sellers and the Pulitzer might be different but they both serve the same purpose which is the commodification of literature.

To sum up the discussion, literature is no longer an artistic cultural product to project the aesthetic dimension of culture; it has become a fetish cultural product surpassing all other cultural products including art and craft. The onset of the printing press in the fourteenth century paved the way for the commodification of literature which has only been accelerated in the contemporary era of globalization. With the huge profit involved in their publication and distribution, the cultural elitists have modified them dramatically both outwardly in the form of their publication, merchandise, and distribution along with their inner modification by adhering to globalized themes and ideology. This altered globalized literature has eventually become a very important fetish cultural commodity for the cultural elitists.

2.8. Young Adult Fiction and Commodification

As Leo Lowenthal(1961) is of the view, "Literature may justify or defy society, but it does not merely passively record it" (xv-xvi). Young adult fiction, a sub-genre of literature is not merely a pacified recorder of activities of society rather it has effectively projected some of the other dimensions of society. It has primarily focused on the new, non-conventional form

of realism as pregnancy, delivery, emotional and physical change in the adolescent, drugs, etc, and has even portrayed some of the culturally tabooed conventions as sex and incest, etc. The controversial issues being portrayed in these novels have been streamlined by the publishers as a formulaic work to be accepted by the consumers. For Maia Pank Mertz (1978) the themes and issues within young adult fiction might seem to be shocking, “but their formulas follow a rigid and easily discernible moral code. Perhaps even more important is that the value orientations of any social change very slowly. Works that on the surface appear to deviate from traditional norms often, after closer analysis, are found to conform to existing values” (104).

Despite the apparent instability of its form and the depiction of non-conventional values in it, it is an undeniable fact that young adult fiction or any popular fiction reasserts the conventional attitudes and values. The culture, as has been discussed earlier can be taken as an umbrella term and young adult fiction, a sub-branch of fiction merely provides multiplicity to it. The credibility of young adult fiction has always been looked into, its validity has always been taken into the task, its comparison and contrast with the children literature or the grown-up literature have always been made, but its true status has never been asserted. A confusing cloud has always blurred the true essence of Young Adult fiction commonly denoted YA. Unfortunately, it is not the theme, the portrayal of the character or the mode of the action which is fast, or the mode of communication which is problematical, but the act of recognition and acknowledgment. This is ironically determined by the mature adult. Stanley Fish (1980) in his article has strongly contested this act of recognition and has asserted that:

the act of recognizing literature is not constrained by something in the text, nor does it issue from an independent and arbitrary will; rather, it proceeds from a collective decision as to what will count as literature, a decision that will be in force only so long as a community of readers or believers continues to abide by it (11).

Fish's argument asserts that the community of readers determines or shapes the meaning of literature, the mature readers are always taken as reliable and authentic reader communities.

Never has any recorded literature been the passive recorder of the social-political going on, it has always played a defining role in a socio-political condition of the society. Young adult literature like mature adult literature has provided social and political commentary about the existing issues and situations. The success of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter Series* demonstrates the denial of the above notion and the importance of YA as per the category of the canonical novels, as gone are the days of the didactic novel written precisely for the youth. As a genre, Young adult fiction has focused upon the same emotional and physical tension that follows no age limits. In her article *Young Adult Literature Evades the Theorist* (1996), Caroline Hunt traces the non-inclusive of young adult literature as a part of academia partly because young adult literature as a subject was inclined only in the majors of education or the library sciences focusing upon the interaction between the readers. Even in education and academia, young adult literature had always been used as an alleyway to understand the harder way of life. Literature has accordingly been published as the book entitled *From Hinton To Hamlet: Building Bridges Between Young Adult Fiction And The Classic* (2005) traces how even classics were only meant to cater to the above-mentioned requirements. Has this been the sole purpose of YA fiction? The answer is negative.

Roberta Seelinger Trites in her article *Disturbing The Universe Power And Repression In Adolescent Literature* (2007) has analyzed selected texts by applying Foucauldian approaches. She is of the view that young adult fictions are not merely coming-to-age novels and are not only a source of pleasure and entertainment, but they are proper texts that question the social structure of individuals. They are the ground where the battle for power is being fought to determine the ethics or the agency of the young adult to emerge as a self in this world. Similarly, Robyn Mccallum in his article *Ideology of Identity in Adolescent Fiction: Dialogic Construction of Subjectivity* (1999) while applying the Bakhtian approach has focused upon the creation of self, ideologically, politically, and socially as prevalent in the young adult. These comprehensive articles completely assert that there is much more in young adult literature than entertainment. Some of the earlier novels have featured the young and rich protagonist making the life of others miserable, at the same time there had been novels such as *The Sisterhood of Travelling Pants* (2001) and its sequel

focusing upon the theme of making the life of others as ideal and perfect. Fiction like *Does My Head Look Big in This* (2007) focuses on the social, political, and gendered ideal of young adults of the Asian immigrants of post 9/11. Most of the novels featuring the male protagonist have been about the identity construction rather than happy ending love stories, thus *Fighting Rubyne Wolfe* (2001) and *Getting Girl* (2003) by Marcuse Zusaks is about the struggle of the individual identity against the tribal identity and Sherman Alexie's *The Absolute Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007) is about the life in the Res and the being bullied by the white male on the account of his tribal identity. Similarly, there have been fictions that have proved to be stylistically innovative as *Keesha's House* (2003) by Helen Frost uses the poetic form to express the identity issue. All the above discussion asserts that there are more than youth issues in young adult literature.

Ironically, despite the above-mentioned details, the origin and the definition of the YA are dubious and yet to be answered. This confusion to the term YA owes to the fact that in most cases it is not the intention of the writer rather the reception from the readers or the publishers that determines the nature of the novel. The earlier novels of the nineteenth century charmed the youth though they were not precisely written for them. Many of the earlier novels as *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1812), Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1838), Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844), *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1860), *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), *The Lovely Bones* (2002) and *The Secret Life of Bees* (2002) were originally for the adults and became fundamentally for the teens. Though the scholars and the critics strongly deny the role of marketing in determining the nature and categorization of novels, it is essentially a fact that the publishing industry shapes the covers and the sizes of the novels as per the demand of the consumers it is catering to. The academia determines the status of literature, many important universities of the USA including Arizona State University, the University of Ohio, and many others are offering Young Adult literature as one of the modules of their curricula. Thus determining and shaping the directions and asserting the importance of Young Adult fiction.

Technically YA is like children's literature in a way as it is the audience that determines YA and they are like adult fiction as they function as both the presentation and the critique to the existing social and political norms. Besides, YA serve the third purpose too and that is to keep the readers abreast of the technological advancements as in *ttyl* (2004), *tfn* (2006), and (2007) where there is the sheer display of technology as the writer Lauren Myracle has displayed the use of the text messages to narrate her story. Freud in 1914 article *Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten* ('Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through) is of the view that the repetition of the trauma is a way to work out the trauma thus the sequels of the YA fictions from *Harry Potter series*, *Twilight* to *Hunger Games* and others with the same topic or the plot endorse the idea that the adults work out their trauma through repetition. Karen Coats in her article *Young Adult literature: Growing up in Theory* (2011) claims that "The young adult literature thus constructs as well as reflect the idea of the adolescence as the children literature does for the children" (326). Coats also admit that young adult literature is not cherished with the same pleasure the way the children's literature is read through adolescence is a reality and the threshold between childhood and adulthood and its issues cannot be ignored. Coats reiterates that "young adult literature responds to and helps contextualize cultural trends for its reader. In this way it is dialogic—that is it participates in the vibrant and constantly shifting dialogue" (320). They not only serve as a source of providing information but also of providing another alternative that how can our lives be lived in this era of technological globalization under the prescribed ideological norm. Generally speaking, serious and successful literature is taken as two separate entities as an ideology is the key factor involved in serious literature whereas emotions are the one involved in popular young adult fiction. Young adult literature seriously negates the established order similarly as the feminist have previously done with the established order of the feminist shifting. As there can be many shifts taking place in adult fiction, similarly young adult fiction does have many shifts and dimensions which need to be explored.

Whether YA fiction can be termed as a product of the culture industry or not, can be traced from the fact that when *Running Press Kid*, the publisher of Cathy's book *if found call 650-266-8233*(2006) entered with an agreement with Procter & Gamble, the manufacturer of

cosmetics, beauty care, health care, baby and feminine care, the reference to their product as lipsticks, lip-glosses, and other cosmetic products were profusely mentioned in the novel. Not only this, the company fully published the novel on its website paving the way for the commodification of the fiction. Similarly, the way Disney has been using the text, as well as the character for popular broadcasting, is the onset of commodification. The brands support the texts and the texts vividly display the commodity in their texts and thus a symbiotic relationship prevails which is fundamental for the sustenance of both.

The intermingling of pleasure with the commodification is the chief mechanism being deployed by the capitalist entertainment industry as elaborated by Jack Zipes (2002) who, while analyzing *Harry Potter Series* argues that the publishing industry is in fact “driven by the commodity consumption that at the same times sets the parameter for reading and aesthetic” (175). A systematized, well-planned framework for the recommendation and dictation is politically chalked out. As adult fiction is termed to be a more formulaic product, it has subscribed more to the norm of the culture industry. Amy Pattee (2006) asserted that adult fictions are commodities in their ways where a formal relationship and partnership exist between author, publisher, and the reader. Proctor and Gamble are blamed as it officially agreed with the *Cathy's Book Series*, but even those series that did enter into such a partnership have successfully introduced the commodities into their work thus obliging the capitalist-owned cultural industries. Diedre Baker (2004) while analyzing *The Princess Diaries* has found out the presence of numerous references to the popular products and brands of food (Rings Dings, Quarter Pounders, Coke, Pepsi), stores (Ikea, Bergdorf Goodman, Kmart), and designer and ‘name products’ (Donna Karan, Doc Martens, Birkenstocks) (Baker). The marketing strategy by the industry is to use the narrative strategies not only to persuade the reader as per ideology and policy of the capitalists’ world but also as a way of positioning the reader and identifying him with the ideology and the subjectivity of the characters. The more the reader is identified with the character, the more he accepts the ideology that is prescribed through the character, and the more readily he accepts the brands and the products offered through the narrative.

From the above discussion, it can be asserted that young adult fictions have firmly established their position in mainstream literature. Besides asserting their worth aesthetically, they have transformed themselves as a commodity. These fictions have become commodities either by highlighting the issues faced by young adults in general including the controversial or taboo themes or by artistically altering themselves by using the advanced technological modes or by effectively serving multinational organizations by regularly promoting their products in their works. They have become an important fetish cultural product and a major entity of the capitalists and a tool of advocating a specific culture but what are the precise measures that have been adopted by these adult fictions to be a part of the culture industry are yet to be analyzed.

2.9. The South Asian Novels and their Commodification

Tariq Ali in his seminal work *Literature and the Market Realism*(1993) As Internationalist culture is generally done in the name of preserving the world culture but ensuring that this exchange or the circulation of the culture takes place through an established order. the contemporary era is the ear of world literature under the domain of comparative literature and postcolonial studies. Comparative literature proclaims to be the literature establishing integrated globalization by advocating the notion of Europe-centered “difference obliterating standardization” (Morretti 148). (Postcolonial studies on the other hand though admit literary globalization as Eurocentric international literature, but mostly as a modest intellectual activity confined as in the words of Moretti, “mostly revolving around the river Rhine” (Morretti 148). For Tariq Ali, the non-European literature has paved its way into the European academia and market under the term of Market realism, which refers to the consumer and market-oriented circulation of literary works. the globalized circulation of the literature of literary culture has been completely altered and now to be accepted as world literature, the literary works are supposedly circulated as either in their original language or in the form of translation. the oriental literature is embraced by those Western publications whose sustainability thrives upon the phenomenon of the best sellers, trendy approaches, and

opinion-makers. As the result of this hegemony of the western publishing market, the writers are compelled to write in conformity with West-sponsored standards. eventually, "Writers themselves may find it hard to resist going with the global flow, producing work that fits foreign stereotypes of what an 'authentic' Indian or Czech novel should be"(Damrosch 107) . For Tariq Ali West- oriented literary globalization is simply a profit-able business flourishing reproducing Eurocentric ideals and beliefs. Agents of literary globalization preserve a circular culture by determining the best-sellers of the year. The leading posts as the "The New York Times" and "The Guardian" play a key role in promoting the culture of the bestseller, thereby maintain the circulation of consumerism because. "In the newly marketized countries of Eastern and Central Europe, a book can be consumed just like a McDonald's hamburger" (Ali 140). All the above-mentioned argument in the nexus of globalization made Tariq Ali declare :

From New York to Beijing, via Moscow and Vladivostok, you can eat the same junk food, watch the same junk on television, and, increasingly, read the same junk novels . . . instead of 'socialist realism' we have 'market realism.' (Ali 140-145).

Spivak in her seminal work *Death of a Discipline*(2003), is of the view that that globalization owes to the systematic framework assimilation of multinational finance, international media, and emerging information technology. Spivak does not euphemize Globalization but asserts that it is an epistemic break from the past, which she avows that "in the gridwork of electronic capital, we achieve that abstract ball [the globe] covered in latitudes and longitudes... now drawn by the requirements of Geographical Information Systems," (Spivak 72) . suggesting that how capitalist production is linked with the globe.

In contrast to the globe, Spivak provides the concept of Planetary which is the negation of the alienation of the global capital while explaining the key concept, she is of the view that the planet is from it is another system and species of alterity, yet we are the inhabitant, on loan.

It is not amenable to a neat contrast with the globe. I cannot say 'the planet, on the other hand.' When I invoke the planet, I think of the effort required to figure the (im)possibility

of this underived intuition.... Planet-thought opens up to embrace an inexhaustible taxonomy of such names, including but not identical with the whole range of human universals.... If we imagine ourselves as planetary creatures rather than global entities, alterity remains underived from us; it is not our dialectical negation, it contains us as much as it flings us away(Ibid 72-73)

She further argues that “the planetary of which I have been speaking... is perhaps best imagined from the pre-capitalist cultures of the planet.” (Ibid 101) where upon such planetary is rooted in the future but is “mysterious and discontinuous, an experience of the argues that impossible.” (Ibid 102) . Spivak thus is of the view that the only way of dealing with the is by moving away from the epistemologically labeling and patronizing under the umbrella of globalization, and by using the “planetary” as the sole model intreating the prolonged calamity in comparative literature, particularly the non-European literature and non-European cultural studies generally.

The English novels by South Asian diaspora writers have gained worldwide fame and recognition due to their literary merits and their cultural implications. Besides, these fictions have also marked their significance to counteract and resist the hegemony of dominant imperialists. The prominent cultural theorists such as Bhabha, Hall, and Ashcroft et. al. have emphasized the role of texts as one of the entities that have played a significant role in the creation of discourses for the empire to ensure the smooth conduction of the colonial administration in the former European colonies. At the same time, the textual language or literary fiction has played an assertive role to ensure the reconstruction of the discursive narratives or the identities among the colonized people. There is yet another role that South Asian fictions in general and fictions by the diasporic writers, in particular, have played and that is to establish themselves as a marketable commodity, yielding profit and revenue because according to King Kok Cheung (1997) “marginal cultural productions are capitalized on today’s marketplace” (195). The portrayal of multiculturalism or world literature is one of the demands of the market, but that demand is met as per criteria set by the publishing

industry itself. To be a part of globalization, it is mandatory to be a part of the culture industry and to be a major producer. The diasporic writers have successfully assimilated themselves as per the demand of globalization by highlighting the theme of othering thereby reasserting the notion of re-orientalism. The notion of orientalism was articulated by Edward Said who in his seminal work *Orientalism* (1978) theorized the interconnection of power and dominance and their result in the formation of orients. The notion of orientalism dominated the course of literature particularly the literature produced by the colonized writer forming the basis of postcolonial literature and even after the decades of colonialism, the notion of orientalism still prevails. The curious shift in the contemporary paradigm has not restricted this notion of orientalism to “the relationship of the dominance and the representation by the non Orient or the Occident” (348), rather this representation has now been taken up by the specific group of orients known as diasporic writers, who have developed partly because they are based in the occident and secondly, because they enjoy and exhibit more power than home writers.

To be a part of a consumer-oriented global industry, they have adopted various means and strategies as has been pointed out by Lisa Lau in her article *Re Orientalism: The Perpetration and Development of Orientalism by the Orients* (2007). As traced by her, among the popular strategies, the major being the technique of generalities in which the stereotypicality is foregrounded either in the way of assimilation, hybridism, or contrast as per the demand of the publishing industry, the global audience, and the marketing giants. The culture industry has utilized the notion of globalization or internationalization in which the culture, attitude, and values of a select minority; the most sought after one, are selected and represented as the diverse majority. The apparent reason being that the books by the diasporic writer are marketed well, distributed widely and their availability is ensured and granted. Resultantly, the representation of South Asia is presumed to be presented more realistically by the diasporic writers as compared to the resident or the local writers. The trails projected by these writers have completely been hegemonized in the mainstream of the publishing industry, projecting a different and exotic but of a more critical nature, subsiding in the European mainstream. (Werbner). The literature being produced by South Asian Writers has

not only reestablished and asserted the binaries between East and West but has also presented a generalized representation of reality. Undoubtedly, the tremendous success of Salman Rushdie *Midnight's Children* (1981) paved the way for a group of South Asian writers like Vikram Seth, Jhumpa Lahiri and Amritave Ghosh not only portrayed the post-colonial mode of culture but at the same time they were strong sales figures too. Numerous copies and editions of their works were sold yielding huge profit besides reaping strong seller reviews as well as prizes. It can be well observed that globalization of South Asian literature is either defined as circulation of the canon produced by the writers who no longer live in South Asia, or the work about South Asia written in English. Furthermore, the establishment of the branches of transnational firms in the South Asian countries including HarperCollins, Addison-Wesley, Macmillan, McGraw-Hill, Oxford University Press, and Cambridge University Press, Penguin and Prentice Hall, and many others cannot be ignored. Ironically, not only the product itself but the content of literature produced by these firms along with its language is taken as *Other* against the indigenous literature being produced in Hindi, Bengali, or Urdu languages creating an unbridgeable gap between the local legitimate culture and the global incorporated and compromised literature.

Even for Aijaz Ahmed (1992), the third world literature is governed by the “grids of accumulation, interpretation, and relocation which are governed from the metropolitan countries” (44). The critics of the globalized South Asian literary field tend to focus more upon the writers who have emerged from the prescribed cosmopolitan field and are more market-oriented. The English language writers though benefit financially more from the larger international potential audience but it is also a fact that in this attempt, their art is being compromised and constrained as per market standard of West which is both erotic as well as exotic. Thematically, the novel focusing on the village life of India, Bangladesh, or even Africa is considered to be a part of the world literature, whereas the literature focusing on English or American village comes under the category of American or English Literature, clearly indicating the demarcation set by globalized capitalist industry. The assertion of this ideology is done by euphemizing the readers than the writers and asserting that it is for the readers for whom the work is being produced. Thus for Kamila Shamsie (2009)

“‘international’ or ‘global’ writing remains another term for ‘minority’ writing, with a need to appeal to the majority audience to receive widespread attention or even to make its way into bookstores” (110). If it is the audience that determines the direction of publishing, it is reflected through the mushroom growth of publishing groups in India which have become the world’s third-largest producer of English books after the UK and USA.

The publishing and marketing infrastructure of Pakistan is quite fragile in comparison with India, resultantly, Pakistani writers have always looked towards India for publishing, distributing, and marketing their works, some of the important works by prominent writers as Uzma Aslam Khan’s *Trespassing*, Shandana Minnhass *Tunnel vision* (2007) and Mohsin Hamid *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* (2008) were published in India. Even the important fiction and non-fictions of Nepalese writer Manjushree Thappa have been published in India. Consequently, India, an emotionally volatile country, is always accused of writing for its audience, the Indian audience. The quality of literature might vary but it is a fact that the works produced by the South Asian writers have been transformed from postcolonial writing to international writing simply because it has followed a specific set and established paradigm laid out by the market forces. The British and American literature has a strong literary culture that does not necessarily depend upon the publishing entrepreneurs or the promoting strategies of groups or organizations but is firmly grounded in the institutionalization of culture which is effectively carried out in the form of an extensive network of bookstores and the established libraries, the literary prizes been awarded and the specific literary critics who regularly judge the merits of all works. In these circumstances and situations, the minority writers, or the writers of the world literature, including South Asian writers can attain the place only if they deal with the issues as migration, ethnicity, race, culture whereby creating and establishing the notion of Othering. The only matter is if there exists a strong infrastructure as publishing houses, literary awards, and merchandising networks, but they still require acknowledgment from Europe.

The intellectual irony is that; the representation of the orient is constantly being done by those who consider themselves to be the authentic representations. Resultantly, there occurs an unceasing reproduction of the repeated themes and the enforcement of the

stereotypes. Anis Shivani(2006) is justified in declaring emphatically that there is “a tedious elaboration of some of the cultural practices such as food as if Indians spent the greater part of their lives pondering the taste and timing of their food intake” (2). This notion of Shivani has further been endorsed by Graham Huggans(1994) who considers those writers as exotic who authenticate the difference of culture only for the market gain or for the benefits as it is the most sought after product of the market. For him “postcolonial critics may, unconsciously, contribute to a “global commodification of cultural difference”, and become part and parcel, unwittingly, of course, of a “booming alterity industry” (344). For him what can be a piece of better evidence than the Bookers Awards particularly the Booker of the Bookers awarded to Rushdie’s *The Midnight’s Children* “The novel reveals to its Western readers their hunger to consume: it feeds their desire for entertainment; satiates their keen exoticism appetites, but it never fails to mock them for their complicitous enjoyment (84). Amit Ray in his paper *Indianness’ and Contemporary Cosmopolitan Fictions: Of Bookers and ‘Spice’ and Everything Nice*,(2008) has particularly highlighted the depiction of exoticism in the novels by the South Indian writers as for him even the greatest writers like Rushdie and even the Arundhati Roy’s novel *The God of Small Things* is not even devoid of this postcolonial exoticism. Undoubtedly, *The Midnight’s children* were one of the most prominent novels of the decades, but Rushdie has cleverly crafted the novel with incidences as “proffering snake charmers and stammering siddhus, characters and descriptions of exoticism that offer sly gibes at those who might simply consume his fiction for its ‘otherness’” (132). Roy opines that the depiction of the western culture, music, or cuisine serves the purpose of a familiar setting but within the due course, this familiarity is converted into an exotic dis familiarity by persistently equating it with the eastern culture as per the interest of the western market and the writers deliberately oscillate between the two versions of the projection of their culture, either as an atrocious, wicked or a monstrous backward culture or the exaggerated glorified culture with the obvious objective of gaining access to the market. In this context, Vikram Chandra has been taken into charge by Meenakshi Mukherjee for the use of the native diction which he strongly defends by openly declaring it to be the trade of the time and by clearly advocating the young writers to do the same.

The Pakistani English fiction is not dissimilar to its forerunners, unfortunately, the well-acclaimed Anglophonic literature is by those writers who have openly adhered to the global ideology and have explicitly represented in their fictions what the Westerner wants. To begin with, Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lover* deals with honor killing and effectively represents the predictable stereotypes and concludes with the proclamation of America as the safest place for occupation and abode while Pakistan as the most dangerous place to live in. Similarly, Mohsin Hamid's *Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) can serve as the seminal text of "raft of Pakistani fiction that was tied into the US, Islam, Pakistan, and terrorism. Every subsequent novel seemed to have one or all of these signifiers in their title, and many of these were about the trauma of well-adjusted upper-class Pakistanis in the West facing the fallout of the attacks (Naqvi)". These novels are not only rich in the demonstration of the stereotypes but rather - endorse this stereo typicality emphatically, which is why these fictions have been readily marketed, accepted, and even published. Once these fictions represent what is expected and what the Western publishers aim at, they get recognition in the form of stamps of acknowledgment by the publishing industry or critics which further authenticates their value. For instance, Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is completely authenticated by declaring it as the best voice on the continent. Such a western inclined and patronized literature has been criticized by Aijaz Ahmed who has seen Rushdie work as "The blurbs on the Vintage paperback edition of *Shame*-based partly on a quotation from the New York Times-compare him with Swift, Voltaire, Stern, Kafka, Grass, Kundera and Marquez" (Ahmed). These remarks speak a volume about the trends of the market that if a writer is an Asian origin, having the ability to express in English and can convey or reinforce the otherness are declared as the authentic representative of that nation. Who can ignore the fame of *Satanic Verses* by Rushdie? Its prime interest for the west is its globalized handling of Islam in general and Prophet Mohammad in particular, making this and other such issues as ready-made items to be sold in the western market easily. Those writers who have been privileged in the form of laurels and acknowledgments from Europe rather than their achievements in the

home country are considered as real writers. The acknowledged South Asian writers both of India and Pakistan completely come up to that set merit.

From the above it is certified clearly that South Asian fictions are not merely aesthetic entities representing the artistic dimensions of South Asian ethnicities, these are the fetish cultural products that have asserted their worth merely by transforming themselves into a commodity as per the demand of cultural tycoons. Over the ages, these commoditized cultural products have stooped before these globalized giants and have thereby got recognition, fame, and acceptance in the culturally dominated globalization.

2.10. Young Adult Fiction by South Asian Diaspora Writers

Undoubtedly, the Anglophonic fiction by South Asian writers has made a strong impact both in academia as well as among the publishers. Over the past many years, many emerging genres by South Asian writers have paved their way in mainstream literature. Among them, the chick-lit by South Asian writers and young Adult fictions by South Asian writers are of quite significance. Interestingly, as compared to young adult fiction, the other emerging sub-genre of literature, chick lit by South Asian writers has gained more recognition in the mainstream. *Mistress* by Anita Nair, *Jungle Girl* by Ginu Kamani, *The Marriage Bureau by Rich People* by Farhad Zama, *Matrimonial Purposes* by Kavita Daswani, *One Hundred Shades of Whites* by Preeti Nair, *Salam Paris* by Kavita Deswani, by South Asian Indian writers have attained tremendous fame and recognition. Not only this, *Haveli (2013)* by Zeenat Mahal, *how it Happened (2012)* by Shazaf Fatima Haider *Karachi You're Killing Me (2014)* by Saba Imtiaz and *A Diary of a Social Butterfly (2008)* by Moni Mohsin are few by South Asian Pakistani writers. The popularity of South Asian Chick Lit owes more to the fact that it subscribes to the notion of main chick lit and the diaspora literature simultaneously. These fictions depict the same stereotype issues faced by the heroines of chick-lit as love, marriage, occupation, maturity, and beauty but South Asian chick-lit depicts these conflicts of its heroines fused with cultural, racial, and identity conflicts, making them

different from the main chick lit. Like popular chick-lit, the heroines of south Asian chick-lit too are obsessed with self- beautification, fashion, and cosmetics but their obsession with cosmetics is given a twist by focusing on ethnic cosmetics, clothes, and jewelry. These chick lits have quite a resemblance with diaspora literature, like the protagonists of diaspora literature, the protagonist of South Asian chick-lit faces the problem of othering, racism, and marginalization and either adopts hybridity or opt for assimilation. Their exotic portrayal of south Asian themes, culture, and practices had however given them dominance among chick lit in general as historically traced and certified by Abdullah and Awan (2017) as

Discourses on marriage, sex, feminism, and social life have evolved a great deal from *Pride and Prejudice* to *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Continuous enrichment is taking place in the portrayal of young women and how this genre is to be viewed and valued both locally and beyond. In this regard, Pakistani (South Asian) Chick lit presents an interesting site to observe the pattern of resistance, rebellion, self -determination and constructing new gender identities in its subtitles” (101)

Nevertheless, the popularity of chick lit in general and chick-lit by South Asian writers owes to its commoditized importance. In her seminal work *The Postcolonial Cultural Industry: Icons, Markets, Mythologies* (2014) Sandra Ponzanesi has traced the way through which postcolonial literature including South Asian fiction has paved its ways in globalization by successfully deploying culture industry. By historically tracing the laurels and awards bestowed upon them to the specific book cover designed for the Anglophonic South Asian, these attempts have undoubtedly improved the position and significance of the local or ethnic cultures but at the same time, they have strengthened the hold and impact of global institutions and marketplaces. By historically tracing the development of chick lit by South Asians, she stated that Chick lit by South Asian writers have not deviated from the mainstream literature as they depict the same theme and ideology of their white peer but have successfully added the touch of ethnicity in these themes through the incorporation of the art of cooking, the ethnic spices along with fragrances, the dresses along with the detailed description of texture and the cultural impact of ethnic jewelry, besides these thematic constituents, the specific cover prints along with their adaptation for films and dramas makes

them a readily accepted commodity. She concludes by declaring emphatically that chick-lit by south Asian writers adheres to the principle of “by highlighting patterns of consumerism, feminism and authorship branding” (226). Ponzanesi was not the only one to highlight the commodity value of Chick lit, the notion was already brought up by Pamela Butler and Jigna Desai (2008) who certified chick lit to be a projector of the ideology of neoliberalism. For them “South Asian American chick lit makes visible the presence and workings of neoliberalism as an ideology within the postcolonial nation-state. The elite transnational and cosmopolitan subjects who populate these novels are not abject, third-world subjects, but privileged middle-class consumers who locate themselves within the normative gender and sexual social economies of neoliberalism” (Desai). Owing to the pressure of globalization and to validate themselves as a useful entity, Gita Rajan and Shailja Sharma (2006) stated:

South Asian Americans mobilized by capital have produced a “new cosmopolitanism”—one based on South Asian access to transnational mobility and fluidity. However, unlike the transnationalism of white chick-lit characters, this new South Asian cosmopolitanism is connected to and engages longer histories and processes global migration, racialization, imperialism, and diasporas, rather than simply suggesting a transcendence of the nation-state” (125).

Nevertheless, chick-lit by South Asian writers has made a greater impact. Undoubtedly the heroines of South Asian chick-lit are updated and adheres to fashion and cosmetics, but this is what the larger part of traditional chick-lit revolves around. Juliette Well (2006) emphatically stated “[C]onsumer goods are essential to chick-lit heroines’ self-conception and self-presentation, and writers commonly give as much attention to the obtaining and assembling of outfits as to the maintenance of faces and bodies” (62). It is their obsession for self-beautification which makes their products the apt consumer of the beauty industry. Their obsession for shopping has been strongly contested by Ferriss and Youngs (2006) who asserted that their passion for shopping must not only be taken as merely an obsession but as a means of self-identity.

The other sub-genre, young adult fiction by South Asian writers to has drastically paved its way into the field of literature. These authors have crafted the novels not only focusing upon the issues, conflicts, ties, friendships but have richly linked their connections

and union with the sub-continent. This is not the sole reason for their fame or acclaim, their overall popularity in the world of literature is also hailed by the international prizes or the awards which these novels have won. The various award lists as published by the YALSA shows *Motherland* by Vineeta Vijayarahan, won Alex award (2002), *The Sea of Tranquility: a Novel* by Raja Millay, Alex award(2012), *All Involved* by Ryan Gattis, got Alex award(2016),*Salt to the Seaby*Ruta Sepetys, nominated forPhilomel Books(2016),*Scythe* by Neal Shusterman Simon & Schuster won Books for Young Readers, *Out of the Easy* by Tara Sullivangot Penguin/Philomel, (2013) All of which show the tremendous success of these novels. Besides these awards, a separate category of awards, the South Asia Book Award (SABA), clearly shows the overwhelming success of South Asian Young Adult Fictions. These South Asian novels capture the different aspects of South Asian culture and partly refute the traditional stereotype as has been set by their adult counterparts. For Rosagam and Pillai (2016) the major theme of the young adult fiction by the south Asian writer is the quest for identity but “not just as an individual who is at the cusp of adulthood but also as the "other" in a white society” (44). That is why the protagonist has to struggle because he is treated as a marginal or as an alien against the mainstream. The quest journey as set by the western mainstream is the one which is often defined as the journey where the conventional protagonist goes for a hazardous expedition in search of something valued in nature or encounters a monster. In such a journey, the role of myths is emphasized upon. In the case of South Asian young adult fiction, the cultural myths as used, serve the dual purpose, it not only reinforces the notion of the quest for identity but also provides cultural multiplicity and diversity. Rosatom and Pillai strongly advocate that mainstream young adult fiction strongly advocates the beliefs, values, or the culture of the mainstream. They are of the view or delusion to be precise that:

Reading texts written by writers from one's own culture and being exposed to the cultural aspects of one's ancestral home allows readers to become aware of the interpolation of language, dialect, landscape, and other aspects that reveal the intermingling and overlapping of the two cultures and the third space they inhabit” (42).

For them the South Asian young adult fiction contest in its way to disrupt the main discourse by presenting the other discourse.

However, this is the only dimension that has been explored so far in young adult fiction written by South Asian American/ European writers. With their vast publications, distributions, and marketing and having various dimensions as has been stated above, there are still more dimensions to be explored. The separate category of award (SABA), reserved for this genre as mentioned above clearly implies the commodity value of this genre. Undoubtedly, the fiction mentioned above have made a greater impact among literature in general and among young adult fiction in particular, but this is also a fact that like its parent genre i.e. South Asian fiction by the adult writers, it has negotiated itself tremendously and has compromised a lot. Since these fictions have been written in English and have been printed by publishers of international fame and recognition and established by capitalists' industrialists, and have got acclamation only when they have been approved by the capitalist sponsored literary critics, academician, and men of letters, yet many dimensions are still to be explored. These fictions have been analyzed focusing upon external factors only, yet there exist certain internal changes or modifications through which these fictions have gone to be a commodity or to be a part of the commodified culture. Though the young adult fiction by the South Asian writers has not been explored in depth so far despite its enormous fame and popularity.

The researcher has focused upon certain phenomenal Young Adult fictions by South Asian writers who have not only made their presence felt by gaining awards and laurels but have streamlined and altered their products to be a part of a commodified culture. The selected young adult fiction is purely young adult fiction by all means. Firstly, they have been declared as young adult fiction by YALSA and ALA. Secondly, in terms of themes, they do subscribe to the theme of new realism. Apart from the usual issues faced by the young adults as love affairs, communication gaps with the parents, peer pressure, and so on, this selection deals with the hushed topics too. *The Skunk Girl* deals with bodice hair which is usually a hushed topic particularly in Pakistani Culture, *The Devil's Kiss* is primarily about ghouls who are respected and feared simultaneously. They have to be dealt with cautious owing to their

religious connotation. *Wanting Mor* is primarily about the personal lifestyles of Afghani People is fused with the mask of Islamic religion and Asian culture, which can trigger anger and violence at the same time.

The selection by the Indian Origin writers is no more different than their Pakistani counterparts. *Born Confused* has dealt with homosexuality among females and the lives of eunuchs, *Bamboo People* is more about the impact of civil war upon the ethnic tribes of Burma, a notion, kept officially hidden from the rest of the world by the government of Burma. *The Blue Boy* is more about sexuality fused with Indian religious mythologies.

All the above-mentioned themes are generally considered as taboos particularly in South Asia connotation, but these issues have been blended well with the cultural practices and beliefs, giving them other dimensions and appropriate areas to be explored

Conclusion

The above literature review has systematically established how culture, at the beginning taken as an abstract entity has now become a commodified entity. The commodification of culture has been successively done by the capitalist industrialists by laying out a successive framework bringing everything in a confined order as has been established in the above review that only those forms of high art as painting, music, art, and craft are given a due status which is verified or legitimized by the specific galleries, museums, brands or organizations of international recognition. Cultural art and craft must be approved by these organizations, which are capitalist-oriented to be a part of the culture. The review also establishes how indigenous cultures in general and Native American cultures, in particular, have been given the status of culture only once they are branded. Similarly, literature, one of the entities of the culture has to be commodified to ensure its validity. The commodification of literature takes place through the effective distribution and publication of literature and is authenticated only when it is approved by a selected group of established critics or academicians in the form of laurels or awards. This rule is applicable not only for authentic literature but even the emerging genres that have systematically endorsed the above-mentioned criterion. Both children, as well as the young adult fiction, are relatively fresh and

naïve genres, generally considered as free from the ideology of the capitalists, but they have also commodified themselves as per the demand of capitalism as has been shown in the literature review. Similarly, South Asian fiction or literature has to align itself as per the above category to establish its authenticity. Having established so, the young adult fiction by the South Asian writers can also be considered as fetish commodities because, like its mature fiction, it only depends upon external factors as publishing, distribution laurels, and awards to authenticate itself as fiction.

The cultural theorists of the Frankfurt School of Thought including Theodor Adorno, (1906-1963) Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), and the contemporary theorist Slavoj Žižek have opined that the formation of fetish commodity does not necessarily depend upon the external influence of the capitalist industry but the commodity itself transforms. For Theodor Adorno, the commodities including cultural commodities have to streamline themselves as per pattern followed by other commodities by adopting the policy of *standardization*, and yet it must retain its peculiarity by having the element of *pseudo-individualization*. These two tenants of cultural entities create a kind of disintegration within the commodities and this fragmentation draws the attention of the individual to it paving the way for whatever ideology to be propagated. By adopting these two qualities, any entity can be transformed into a saleable commodity to be distributed among the masses. Marcuse, further extending the theory of Adorno is of the view that the technology industry can only attain totalization if the commodity aligns itself as per the demand of capitalist entrepreneurs which is done only by *flattening out* the distinction between appearance and reality but presenting reality whilst retaining the element of *estrangement*. These two fundamental aspects of the cultural entity including literature result in the negation of the great refusal which the art has always done. The commodity thus produced will not be a real commodity but a freak of the original commodity. Their notion was reinforced by Žižek (1949) who was of the view that the *typical* and yet *phantasm* are the elements essential for a cultural commodity. The typical provides multiculturalism whereas phantasm in the form of ethnicization acts as a symptom that provides an ideological interchange of acknowledging a specific content behind some abstract universal notion. In a nutshell, to be a fetish commodity a term coined by these

cultural theorists, no doubt the external factors as extensive marketing, distribution, being a part of brands or organizations of international fame do play a vital role. Nevertheless, the commodity itself has to alter or modify itself. Apart from many other factors, the commodity has to standardized/assimilate and liquidate itself as per vested interest and yet has to retain its individualism /estrangement or symptom. These internal factors do play a pivotal role to make a culture commodity a fetish cultural commodity.

This research focuses upon this aspect of the commodified culture to trace that how far has young adult fiction written by the South Asian writers has established itself as a commodity in general and how far has it streamlined or standardized or estranged itself and yet attained its peculiarity as per criterion laid out by the cultural theorists

Through this literature review, it is evident that thorough research upon the commodified aspect of literature in general and young adult fiction, in particular, has been dealt with and traced by various critics. But interestingly. Despite making a strong impact among young fiction, the young adult fiction by South Asian origin writers has not been analyzed and scrutinized. It is this aspect of the gap that the researcher has undertaken to unearth.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present chapter deals with the methodology and the procedure adopted for this research. The study has focused upon the Marxist cultural analysis of the selected texts. The major emphasis has been upon ideology and ideological notion and the role played by culture in general and literature in particular in the propagation of ideology of the dominant capitalist whereby playing a pivotal role in globalization

3.1. Research Design

The present study is qualitative, analytical, and evaluative. The qualitative analysis is holistic in its approach following certainly accepted paradigms as

- There is no complete truth or reality.
- The assumed reality is based upon perceptions which not only vary from individual to individual but are likely to change or alter
- The assumed meaning is only for a given situation or time.

My research has focused upon young adult fiction, a branch of literature and I have tried to establish its status as a fetish cultural product. I have tried to trace how far these fictions have modified and altered themselves as per the demand of globalization. The major focus is not on the external factor as merchandising, branding, or distributing but on the internal constituents of the novel as themes, characterizations, and settings of the selected texts based upon critical yet subjective analysis justifying it to be a qualitative analysis. Since the research is based upon the critical analysis of selected texts, for this purpose the content analysis of these texts has been done using the directed approach. The research is based upon the critical analysis of six texts by adapting the cultural theory of selected theorists of the Frankfurt School of Thought and one theorist from the contemporary era which again justifies my approach. The study is delimited to six novels of South Asian writers as follows: *Born Confused* (2003), *Bamboo People* (2011) , and *Blue Boy*(2012) by the Indian American/ European Anglophone writers and, *The Devil's Kiss*(2009). , *The Skunk Girl* (2009) and lastly *Wanting Mor*(2009) by Pakistani origin American/ European Anglophone writers to achieve the following objectives

- To examine the process of globalization as has been theorized and explained by different critics.
- To assert the notion that globalization is not a natural process by a dually controlled phenomenon.
- To establish the redefinition of the concept of globalization concerning the ideology of the market
- To elaborate the role of culture in strengthening and providing a controlled dimension to the process of globalism
- To examine the network through which culture has been transformed into a capitalist controlled commodity
- To signify the role of art in general and literature in particular in strengthening the globalized capitalist culture.
- To highlight the functioning of the young adult fictions of the South Asian Writers in the light of the culturally controlled globalization

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the following questions have been addressed.

- How has the concept of globalization been altered and modified concerning the ideology of the market?
- What role does the culture industry play in reconditioning the notion of globalization?
- To what extent has the Young adult fiction by the South Asian writers been commodified? How has ideology been portrayed in Young Adult Fiction by South Asian Writers?

The questions raised above have been addressed in the light of an adapted framework based upon the theories of Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Slavoj Zizek.

3.2. Theoretical Framework.

The analysis of the above mentioned six young adult fictions written by South Asian Origin American European Anglophone writers will be dealt within the parameters of the adapted framework of the theories of culture theorists, firstly to assert their status as a fetish commodity, secondly, to emphasize their status as a tool to project the ideology of the dominant groups whereby asserting their role in globalization. The current research will focus upon globalization of culture, in that connection, some theories of globalization have been taken into account to assert that globalization is not a naturally occurring phenomenon but a dually controlled process relying upon essential tripods as military, economy, and culture. To further assert the role of culture in the process of globalization, the notions of Sisklar(2002), Raymond William, and Nederveen Pieterse have also been taken into account because for them culture is one of the most essential participants of globalization as compared to economics and politics. Being the first to globalize, it has been globalized by presenting culture as different, homogeneous, or heterogeneous over time. After establishing the importance of culture in the process of globalization, I have dealt with Marxist critical theory and critical literary theory to assert the role of ideology. Marxian definition of ideology

cannot be completed without taking into account the important theorists who have contributed to strengthening the concept of Ideology, I have also taken into consideration the variants of theorists as Marx, Lukacs, Althusser, and Gramsci to highlight how ideology has been defined over the ages but my major theorists will be Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Slavoj Zizek. My study falls in the category of the analysis of the texts which are the artifacts of culture that is why culture social theory has been selected as a theoretical framework.

The analysis will be restricted to critical theory because by introducing the term culture industry, the above-mentioned theorists are of the view that masses are all under the domination of the capitalist-controlled culture industries which have converted cultural artifacts into fetish commodities. The most important artifact of culture, art has been taken by the proprietor of the culture industry in the mask of the need of the market whereby not only appropriating the art but creating the reliance of the consumer upon it. The commercialized art so produced is meant to be received uncritically and is essentially ideological as it interprets, motivates, strengthens, and reproduces the interpretation of reality as desired by the dominant groups. They asserted that the transformation of cultural products into a fetish commodity ensures its sustenance among economic, political, and most importantly ideological domination of capitalism. Adorno based his theory of commodity fetish upon Marx's notion of exchange value, which in a nutshell is the amount of money through which a commodity is brought or sold in the market. The Marxian notion of commodities, in general, can be applied to all cultural products which are "produced for the market and aimed at the market" (34). By possessing a fetish character, they are dominated by their exchange value "which deceptively takes over the use-value" (134). The culture industry ensures the commoditized nature of cultural products. Their notions also assert that the sustenance of cultural products is due to the creation of false needs which link the masses to capitalism.

The theoretical framework has been designed by adapting and interweaving certain tenants from the theories of Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. As it is not only the external element as branding, merchandising, or the network of the distributions that plays a pivotal role but it is the internal transformation of the cultural product which is done as per global

demand of the capitalist cultural group. For Theodor Adorno, the commodity has to streamline itself with the existing commodities by adopting the policy of standardization, and yet it must retain its peculiarity by having the element of pseudo-individualization. By adopting these two qualities the entity can be transformed into a saleable commodity to be distributed among the masses. Marcuse, further extending the theory of Adorno stated that the cultural industry has to get the backing of the technology industry to align the commodity by flattening out the distinction between appearance and reality and consequently presenting reality whilst retaining the element of estrangement. The commodity thus produced will not be a real commodity but a freak of the original commodity. For Žižek (1949) typical and yet phantasm are the elements essential for a cultural commodity. The typical provides multiculturalism whereas phantasm in the form of ethnicization acts as a symptom that provides an ideological interchange for acknowledging a specific content behind some abstract universal notion. Thus the reason for adopting this framework is to trace the internal element to prove that these novels are thoroughly cultural products. To be a fetish commodity, the external factors as extensive marketing, distribution, being a part of brands or organizations of international fame do play a vital role, but the commodity itself has to alter or modify itself and standardized/assimilate liquidate as per global entrepreneurial demand and yet has to retain its individualism /estrangement or symptom. These internal factors do play a pivotal role to make a commodity a cultural commodity. These internal elements have been traced by applying the theoretical framework stated above.

The two main reasons because of which I have taken cultural social theory for the analysis of young adult fiction are First, young adult fiction is a cultural product and more especially a part of popular culture, and culture and globalization go hand in hand. Since the selected fictions are from South Asia and they reflect South Asian culture and ethnic culture which has always been in vogue. Secondly, the capitalist-controlled culture has always been a tool for the propagation of the ideology of the dominant elitist group. According to Althusser, ideology has to be propagated through the *Ideological State Apparatus* and industry is one of the state apparatuses through which ideology is propagated. For culture theorists chosen above that is possible only if culture is distributed effectively on massive scales through

industrialization and technology. To identify the specific ideology and how that ideology is propagated, Lisa Lau's concept of stereotype and Graham Huggan's notion of exotic has also been somewhat incorporated in the above-mentioned theoretical framework.

My first theorist is Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) who in his self-explanatory article *The Culture Industry* has focused upon the essence of the commodity fetishism due to which any cultural product both performs and withstands in this economic, political, or even global domination, whereby implying indirectly that money or the price of any cultural product essentially determines, controls and even directs the social relation in this globalized capitalistic society. Synonymizing and endorsing the Marxian concept of the exchange value eventually dominates the use-value because the production, consumption, and the distribution of the product takes over the actual need of the masses. This notion is also extended to the sphere of cultural forms and commodities as "they are produced for the market and also aimed at the market" (38). The two major contributions of cultural industry are standardization, which he expounded as the considerable similarities or the sameness between the products because for him "each branch of art is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together" (94). The standardization is profusely carried out through coherent and methodical techniques by using technological advancements for the construction of a comprehensive system into which every microcosm and macrocosm form a compact whole, and a unified self. Secondly, standardization is endorsed by pseudo-individualization. Adorno's concept of standardization and pseudo individualization has been applied in the novel *Devil's Kiss* by Sarwat Chadda, and particularly in the depiction of characters to show how standardized, stereotyped characters have been portrayed and to enhance the stereotypicality the writer has given them a peculiarity to create the element of pseudo-individualization. Adorno's concept has been applied in *Born Confused* by Tanuja Desai Hidier, in the portrayal of characters, theme, point of view, and even in the setting. Finally, the same notion has been applied in the novel *Bamboo People* by Metali Perkinin the portrayal of characters, themes, and even setting. Through this lens of Adorno, it has been found out that these fictions are fetish commodities not because of the external factors but because they have flawlessly incorporated the ideology of othering in the theme, plot, characterization, etc. This is how the

internal elements have been balanced with the external factors to make these fictions a fetish commodity

My second theorist is Herbert Marcuse who believed that the concept of standardization and pseudo individualization is achieved by 'Flattening out' the distinction between culture and social reality which is only possible through the "obliteration of the oppositional, alien, and transcendent elements in the higher culture" (43). Marcuse endorsed Adorno's concept by stating that the flattening out does not necessarily mean the denial of cultural values but through their "wholesale incorporation into the established order" (43). This is how the assimilation of reality with the reification is successively carried out through a well-established framework that is very effectively laid out and formulated. Once standardization is successively carried out, the procedure of pseudo-individualization is triggered simply to give heterogeneity to art which is done under the mask of aesthetics. The aesthetic form though gives the delusion of incoherence but the deeper analysis reveals that all material content and data as sound, lines, colors, thoughts, and imaginations are all framed and lined as per prescribed form because "The laws or rules governing the organization of the elements in the *oeuvre* as a unified whole seem of infinite variety, but the classical aesthetic tradition has given them a common denominator: they are supposed to be guided by the idea of the *beautiful*." (51-52). It is this notion of beauty that creates the pseudo-notion of the aesthetic dimensions and scopes through a broad framework for systematic politicization, administration, and materialization. The assimilation of two dimensionalities that is standardization and pseudo individualization creates the 'estrangement' but this is the only way through which truth is communicated and that estrangement is not superimposed upon literature or any other art but it is a conscious attempt on the part of art to rescue itself from the unification. The estrangement makes the product sensational. The estrangement corresponds to the pseudo individualization concept of Adorno because the more estranged an art is, the more it is accepted by the masses and subsequently, it receives more tokens of newness by the masses. Marcuse's notion of estrangement has been applied in the theme of *Skunk Girl* by Sheba Karim. She has intentionally dealt with one of the estranged themes and exoticized it to the extent that it reinforces the ideology. Similarly, Rukhsana Khan has

created estrangement in the depiction of character, theme, language culture, and setting. The conscious attempt on the part of the writer to create estrangement is to assert the superiority of the West over the East. The vivid depiction of culture in *Born Confused* and *Blue Boy* has been scrutinized with the lens of estrangement. The culture has been intentionally created as estranged and the explicit details further strengthen the notion of exotic, yet backward East to satiate the expectations of the West.

The third theorist Zizek asserts that multiple ideologies proposed by the culture industry project the multiculturalist approach of the late capitalists. The capitalists approve and appreciate the multiplicity of the culture, but with a euro-centric gaze that synonymize Adorno's notion of standardization and Marcuse's notion of assimilation. The existence of multiculturalism is the existence of capitalism in which culture acts as a symptom of capitalism which even though is a non-realization of the universal principle it has to persist because it is this ground on which the ideological battle is fought. Zizek strongly advocates and endorses Adorno's concept of pseudo individualism or Marcuse's concept of estrangement by stating that the "specific twist, a particular content which is promulgated as the 'typical' of the universal notion, is the element of fantasy, of the phantasmatic background/support of the universal ideological notion" (29).

In a nutshell, this theoretical framework is thus made by adapting the theories of these theorists and by applying it to the six young adult fictions by South Asian writers and particularly by applying it upon the constituents of novels as plot, characterization, theme, and setting, etc. The novel *Devil's Kiss* by Sarwat Chadda contains the element of fantasy in the form of vampires, werewolves, and ghosts and Zizek believed that Fantasy act as a type through which the ideology of the dominant group is projected. Moreover, the novel deals with various ethnicities and for that matter, Zizek's notion of multiculturalism shall be applied. Consequently, the novel *SkunkGirl* by Sheba Karim is about a young South Asian girl who is torn between her Asian heritage, culture, and religion and European culture and religion. The novel will mainly be analyzed as per Adorno's concept of standardization. Adorno's standardization shall be applied in the portrayal of characters including the protagonist. The standardization is evident in the projection of theme, culture, and setting.

The novel will not only be analyzed concerning Adorno's notion of standardization but with his concept of pseudo-individualization and Marcuse's notion of estrangement will be applied to identify the hidden ideology within the text. Finally, the last novel by Pakistani origin writer *Wanting Mor* by Ruksana Khan shall be critically analyzed by applying Marcuse's notion of estrangement and Adorno's notion of standardization. Marcuse's notion of estrangement has been applied in the projection of culture through setting, the practices, and especially through the language, whereas the element of standardization is prevalent in the portrayal of characters and themes. The young Adult fiction by Pakistani origin writers has been analyzed under the adapted theoretical framework of three culture theorists where their theories have been applied either singularly or by combining them all. Through this framework, the internalized ideology of the dominant capitalist group as per the demand of globalization has been highlighted.

A similar theoretical framework shall be applied to young Adult fiction by Indian origin writers. *Born Confused*, a novel by Tanuja Desai Hidier has been analyzed by applying the theoretical framework of Adorno and particularly by applying Adorno's concept of standardization. The concept of standardization can be seen in the portrayal of character and particularly in the portrayal of protagonists, in the portrayal of culture which has been portrayed through beliefs and practices, through norms, and language. The novel shall not only be analyzed through Adorno's concept of standardization but his concept of pseudo-individualization and Marcuse's concept of estrangement. The concept of estrangement shall be applied in other artifacts whether religious as prayers and temples and cultural or social as food and particularly the taboos hinted at in detail in the novel. The second novel *Bamboo People* by Metali Perkin will be analyzed by applying the theoretical framework of Adorno especially by applying his notion of standardization. This notion is evident throughout the novel and through standardization, the hidden ideology of the capitalists has been highlighted. Finally, the last novel *Blue Boy* by Rakesh Satyal will be evaluated by applying Marcuse's notion of estrangement and Zizek's notion of multiculturalism. The estrangement is evident particularly through the depiction of religious cosmology, religious practices, teachings, and norms. The novel becomes estranged when the religious cosmology is linked with the action and behavior of a twelve years old young boy and especially when his queer

sexual behavior is directly linked with religious preaching. The novel shall be evaluated by applying Adorno's notion. The purpose of analyzing these novels as per theoretical frameworks of the cultural theorists is initially to assert these fictions as a fetish cultural product to be utilized effectively in globalization and secondly to trace the ideology hidden within these fetish cultural products.



CHAPTER 4

GLOBALIZED IDEOLOGY IN SOUTH ASIAN YOUNG ADULT FICTION BY PAKISTANI WRITERS

This chapter focuses on the analysis of selected South Asian Young Adult fictions by Pakistani origin writers the texts are *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chadda, *Skunk Girl*(2010) by Sheba Karim, and *Wanting Mor* (2009) by Ruksana Khan. By applying the theoretical frameworks of culture theorists Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek, the research intends to highlight the commodified aspect of these fictions as a prerequisite of globalization. The research emphasizes that the transformation of these novels into a fetish commodity owes not only to external factors such as pricing, publishing, and merchandising but the internalization of capitalist propagated ideology within the texts to align itself as per vested interests of the culture capitalist of globalization.

4.1: Globalized Ideology in *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chadda.

The novel *Devil's Kiss* (2009) is written by Sarwat Chadda, He is a British Pakistani origin writer who resides in London with his family. His works depict both the Eastern and Western world. He is a writer of both Middle grade (MG) and young adult (YA) besides writing for the Scholastic platform series (a selection of books for students, and parents for their children). Sarwat Chadda was brought up in an environment surrounded by the stories of

Saladin, Richard the Lion-Heart, and the Crusades, giving him a holistic view of cultures of both East and West. Despite being graduated as an engineer and working as a senior engineer, he started writing role-playing games and graphic novels. He is now a full-time story writer. His YA novels, *Devil's Kiss* (2009) and *Dark Goddess* (2010) were successfully published in various countries and received positive critical reviews. His popular MG novel includes a trilogy of *Ash Mistry Chronicles* (2012, 2012, 2013) and *the Savage Fortress* (2012- 2013) which were published in the UK and USA whereas his fantasy trilogy *Shadow Magic* (2016), *Dream Magic* (2017), and *Burning Magic* (2018) were published with Disney-Hyperion under the pseudonym of Joshua Khan. For Scholastic multi-platform series, he has contributed *The 39 Clues* and *The Spirit Animals*. He has also written numerous action-packed graphic novels in collaboration with Graphic India. He has recently written two action thrillers as *Mission Atomic* (2012) and *Dragon's Eye* (2018).

The novel *Devil's Kiss* (2009) is the first novel of Sarwat Chadda, it was the winner of the SCWBI new 'undiscovered voices' competition with its initial draft. The novel was auctioned in a hotly contested contest where Puffin got the Rights of publishing this novel in 2008. The novel has been selected for the adaptation in TV series by Gaumont International Television (GIT), the new Los Angeles-based scripted American TV of the French movie studio who has taken rights of *Devil's Kiss* by Chadda in Nov 2011. The novel has been published with three different paperbacks and has approximately 12 formats and editions. The above-mentioned details justify its status as a fetish commodity of cultural globalization.

The detailed analysis of the novel shows that the internal elements of the novel as setting, plot, and characterization have been aligned with the external factors to make it a complete fetish commodity. A comprehensive effort has been made by the writer to internalize the ideology of the dominant publishing group to assert the standardized notion of othering whereupon emphasizing the superiority of West over the Rest.

The novel revolves around a female Muslim protagonist Bilquis SanGreal, more commonly known by her Templars as Billi SanGreal. She is fifteen years old and she is the youngest and the only female of the Knights Templars (poor fellow-soldier of Christ or the

Temple of Solomon, some of the most skilled and trained fighters). Being a part of Templar, she has to live differently, instead of hanging out in malls with friends or going for dates, she has to spend her free time in an arduous and strenuous physical training for her Order who is in constant war against the unholy, werewolves, ghosts and even vampires. Though this is not a life of her choice and she hates that from the core of her heart but she has no choice for an alternate life. In her that struggle to cope up with that life and a strong temptation to lead a life of her own choice, she falls prey to an Archangel Michael/ Mikhail, who has been in the quest to release his brothers and sisters trapped in the ethereal of Solomon mirrors that had been guarded and protected by the Orders of the Templar for centuries. Her ignorance results in unleashing of one of the greatest curse and plague upon the humanity and that *is the death of all the firstborn*

In his extensively laid framework for the cultural product, Zizek asserted that for a fetish cultural product, the addition of ‘fantasy or the phantasmatic background’ (Zizek 29) is to support the universal ideology. As phantasm serves a dual purpose, firstly, to provide an element of estrangement that entraps the consumer to itself, and secondly, it paves the ground for the propagation of globally understood ideology. The fantasy acts as the stand-in of universal ideology. The deeper analysis of *The Devil’s Kiss* reveals the deep penetration of ideology within the chosen fantasy. The fantasy is woven into the plot by depicting the adventures of a female Muslim vampire slayer, whose mother was a Pakistani immigrant. This vampire fantasy provides an open ground for the ideological battle, clearly evident in the name Bilquis gave to the protagonist. Billi SanGreal’s full name is Bilquis which is an Arabic name of Queen of Sheba having a celebrated historical account. Throughout the novel, her Muslim Builquis name has never been used and no one in Templar Order calls her by this name. Instead, a contracted, marginalized, and pseudo-English name Billi is used throughout the novel. Chadda’s conscious attempt to use the Arabic name instead of the Christian name Sheba owes to the fact that the Arabic name provides an assumed ideology which the Christian version does not deliver. The historical details of literature show that Queen Sheba/ Bilquis has been frequently denoted in literature. Earlier Boccaccio *On Famous Women* (1374) mentioned Josephus in calling Queen Sheba *Nicaula* and this convention is carried on

by Christian De Pizan in *Book of the City of Ladies* (1405) where he praised her by calling her a wise and intelligent lady. Christopher Marlow in *Doctor Faustus* (1605) mentioned her as Saba but again as a very wise woman. The inclination changes when Sheba is switched to Bilquis in literature. In Neil Gaiman's *the American God* (2001) Bilquis has been portrayed as a prostitute whose youth depends upon the derivation of energy from the men with whom she sleeps. And similarly in Rudyard Kipling *The Complete Children's Short Stories* (2005), in one of the tales *The Butterfly that Stamped*, he did refer to Bilquis as "Balkis, almost as wise as the Wisest Suleiman-bin-Daoud" (372) but later on he explains that she was the one who influences her husband and through him to all jinns and even to all 999 wives of the king. The historical insights imply that the shift of name from Sheba to Bilquis results in the transformation of the character from a wise Sheba to a cunning, treacherous, and crafty Bilquis. For the West, Sheba is not a synonym of Bilquis and it is this concept that seems to have been appropriated by Chadda. Both the name and the adopted ideology have been used by him. The writer has intentionally chosen the name Bilquis, for the main character and has played with the fantasy associated with it. The choice of a specific name for the lead character is not unintentional but a conscious attempt on the part of the writer is because of the fantasy and an ideology associated with this name and that too a European ideology.

Despite being trained from childhood as a Templar, Billi is shown as vulnerable to all human weakness and brings destruction and wrath to Knights Templar. In her first ordeal, she gets carried away by the emotional words and gesture of a demon-possessed six years old boy and "dropped to her death and embraced Alex. She pulled the boy close to her heart" (Chadda 5) despite a regular warning from her father Arthur, putting her and his lives in extreme danger. Similarly, it is she who provokes another young Templar Kay to use telekinesis in unleashing the evil spirits being trapped in the Mirror of ethereal, making ArchAngel Michael trace their location. Her temptation to lead a normal life and her hatred to Templar's lifestyle made her befriend ArchAngel Michael resulting in brutal combat between him and his father where she angrily stabbed her father uttering "And you trusted Kay with your little scheme and not me? You wonder why I hate all this...." (130) leading to his death. Finally, she is responsible for unleashing one of the deadliest curses to mankind "the tenth plague. the death

of every firstborn child” (55). Billi is always realized of her mistakes by her dears and the culminating chapters of the novels echo with her repentance and guilt “That I would lead a Dark Angel to the Mirror? (136), Followed by a detailed description as “that’s what she had done wasn’t it? No matter how she tried to justify it to herself, she’d led him there. And kay had saved him” (136). Trained as a Templar, she got the physical training in a fighting combat style as per medieval fashion with the use of swords, rapiers, or any weapon with a blade giving her an apparent exterior of a lady Arthur with a sword. Even the cover page of the novel depicts a warrior female, a lady Arthur. By using a Muslim Female protagonist, Chadda has deployed the ideology of a weak orient female who is vulnerable to all weakness and a source of trouble by simply complimenting her name and the European notions and belief which that name bore. She is not the wise or the sensible Sheba, but a weak and a miserable Bilquis, who commits mistakes one after the other bringing troubles upon the entire Templars.

The notion of the portrayal of a female slayer is not a novice, the successful television series *Buffy the Slayer* (1992) has projected a female slayer and striking similarities are evident between the two protagonists of *Buffy the Slayer* and *The Devil’s Kiss*. Both of them are trained to be a slayer at a very young age, the parentage of both is not complete as Billi’s mother of Pakistani origin was murdered when Billi was quite young and Buffy belongs to a broken family. Both of them chafe off from their responsibilities and yearn for an ordinary life, both are tempted by everyday female weaknesses as they break the rules to go for dating, outings, etc. Yet they differ strongly, as Buffy Summers is an American Christian slayer who enjoys a prominent place in her group, her decisions are validated by all and it is she who takes all of the decisions leading her clan from the forefront. On the other hand, Billi is depicted as an imprudent, trouble inviter, bringing destruction not only to herself but to entire Christian Templars, Buffy is strong whereas Billi has been depicted as feeble despite her ordeal and hard work. Being ostracized, she is completely dependent upon others, as in the first ordeal of slaying a child ghul, she is saved due to the timely interference of her father, in school, she is relieved from the ragging of her classmates due to the intervention of Kay who knows exactly as what to say at the right moment. When she is ridiculed by her class fellow,

Kay remarks casually about the weight which Jane has gained by stating “Jane what a pleasant surprise!you put on weight..... A few pregnancy pounds on the hips” (30). But these words affect her so strongly that she is bound to leave Billi. She is rescued from three thugs late at night by The ArchAngel Mike who not only offered her help but helped her “led off onto the platform” (61). Finally, in the last ordeal, she is successful only due to the sacrifice of Kay described in steps by steps as to how he adjusts his position so that Billi could be settled in his laps. He held her that hand of sword and thrust it in her heart slowly and gradually not giving inkling to the angel of death of what he was doing. Billi is asserted again and again as an epitome of a weak Muslim woman. The Orient woman has either been presented as a prostitute as in Flaubert Kuchek Hanem or the one who “needs to be “freed” from the constraints of male domination, and none other than the liberated West can play this role of “knight in shining armor” (Rahman). And it is the second notion that has been utilized by Chadda both through the name that she bears and the actions she performs.

Similarly, the element of fantasy has been created by the depiction of *ghouls* or *ghuls* which Bilquis has to slay ruthlessly without showing any mercy as they are meant to be slain. Chadda has used the word *ghuls* from Islamic folklore and theology where *ghul* is the Arabic word for vampire. A ghoul is derived from the Arabic word *ghala* which means “to seize” (244). As per the Encyclopedia of vampire mythology, “ghuls are the female vampire demons that eat the flesh of dead.....if it cannot find an easy meal in the graveyard, its shapeshifts into a beautiful woman to trick the male travelers” (66). The ghuls hold a specific position in Islamic culture as they are the specific type of “jinn to whom Prophet Mohammed also preached as per Koran” (247). They are considered to be of religious importance too besides cultural importance. Edward Lukacs White is among the pioneer to use ghuls primarily for horror in 1897 with his poem entitled *The Ghoul*. The addition of ghuls serve the dual purpose they serve as a fantasy or provide a phantasmatic background and it is through this phantasmatic touch the ideology is circulated. Claire Chamber and Sue Chaplin (2005) identified the contemporary trend change in the treatment of vampires. According to them vampires are no longer being portrayed as a monstrous evil, a bloodsucker, malicious being rather in TV series as Angel in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997), William Compton in

True Blood (2008), Marshall in *Being Human* (2013) have been presented as a victimized being. Even in some of the vampire series as the vampire in *Brooklyn* (2018) or the *Blades* (1998) series, they have been portrayed “as ‘an unwilling victim of circumstances and a complex mix of rage, retaliation and redemption” (M. Williams 33). In recent decades and particularly in the vampire Romance by Stephenie Meyer *the Twilight Saga* (2008-2012), the vampires particularly Edward Cullen have been portrayed as an embodiment of the qualities of an ideal hero. Chadda on the other hand describes ghuls as :

you need to choose to surrender your soul to become a ghul....you must offer your soul willingly to someone capable of consuming it, an Ethereal’ usually a devil, it then passes some of its essences into the now a soulless body, it is not an easy transfer it takes a lot out of the ethereal. Even a single trade can weaken one for years. (85).

In the subsequent chapter Chadda further describes that such a trade takes place as per own choice of the soul for wealth, money, and immortality asserting the role of choice and willingness in this transformation which takes place mostly due to the worldly benefits and rewards serving as the complete opposite of contemporary vampires. Chadda cashes the ideology of the ghuls as the demonic vampire as the oriental vampire, the one denouncing Holy, the one choosing to be ghul out of choice not chance like the occident vampires. The fiction focuses more on the notion of a ghul slayer rather than the vampire slayer. Ghuls serve as other to vampires, werewolves and ghosts and the *other* is meant to be exterminated. Again for Chamber and Chaplin ghuls may be synonymized by the immigrants or the asylum seekers, the orients who completely devour the resources of the country, their extermination is evident and important. Ghuls on one hand synonymize phantasm, but the orient phantasm. The choice of orient phantasm by the writer has served what Zizek has elaborated, it creates the element of estrangement by drawing the attention of the reader to ghuls, their curiosity is cherished and entertained. Secondly, the ideology of othering is dispensed very effectively.

Chadda reinforces the western notions as almost all European literary figure who have mentioned Ghuls in their works as Lord Byron in his poem *The Giour*(1813), Edgar Allan Poe *The Bells* (1848),Neil Gaiman *The Graveyard Book* have mentioned them to be a

demonic ugly creature to be assassinated. Chadda's use of fantasy generates interest and makes the fiction interesting but according to Zizek, it is a platform through which the ideology of the dominant group is propagated. In this fiction, the fantasy is created by depicting a female Muslim slayer, and by focusing upon ghuls, which enhances the notion of othering.

Similarly, for Zizek, capitalist culturalism focuses on the 'ethnicization of nations' (Zizek 42) rather than "nationalization of ethnic" (Zizek 42). Implying that the incorporation of the ethnic and local into the global unification or globalization is a key trend. This global unification serves two major purposes, firstly, to provide Eurocentric universalism and secondly to sustain multiculturalism with a Eurocentric laid framework. This multiplicity provides aesthetic dimensions to the cultural product but in reality, it paves the way for racism and otherness. In multiculturalism, each native or culture is respected but it is ensured that binary is maintained. Chadda has employed this notion in *Devil's Kiss* by uniting different groups. The Templar Order consists of various orders belonging to several ethnicities and religions. Arthur SanGreal, the master of the Templar Order is a Christian and a British, followed by Gwaine "the Seneschal, the Templar second-in-command. He was a grizzled old warrior with cropped iron grey hair, sparse beard and eyes settled deep within wrinkles" (35) is British and second in command, an African Christian Ghanaian Percival, trained in all kinds of fighting including the medieval physical combat, a French cook Lance, a European priest Balin, Boris an African Fighter and Mordrid a European fighter. The second group comprises Elaine a Jewish woman and the keeper of the sacred Mirror of Solomon and Kay, a gifted oracle Jewish boy having the extraordinary ability of telekinesis, and finally Billi a Muslim biracial (as her mother was a Muslim Pakistani Immigrant) girl. Noticeably visible in the division of the groups, Templars are dominated by European Christian males who hold significant positions within the Templars. Among the first group, the duties assigned are based upon their ethnicity and not on their caliber or expertise. Gwain who opposes Arthur in almost all of his decision is assigned the responsibility of teaching "history and Arabic" (15) to Billi, a young Templar, father Balin is given the responsibility of teaching "Latin, ancient Greek and Occult Lore" (15) while Percival is detailed to train her in

medieval-style combat and special weapon training including “sword, dagger and quarterstaff” (15). While Arthur himself took the responsibility of training Billi for unarmed combat. All the important ordeals and teachings for the initial training of Billi or any Templar rests on the shoulder of all European, Christian males whose hierarchy is laid, despite all the atrocities provided by Gwain in dethroning Arthur from Templar Order, Arthur still gives him responsibility as he is only seneschal (pure Christian) Templar. The notion of othering is strongly maintained among the European Christian group too as in the final battle against the unholy when the Templars are joined by other Templars Modred and Bors, their detailed introduction enhances the notion of Othering

Mordred, an Ethiopian refugee the Order had picked up off the streets, was tall and elegant, with jet-black skin and deep, thoughtful eyes. Bors, bigger in girth if not height, was a cannonball of muscle. His neck was non-existent, his jaw comprised of a patch of ginger bristles and his eyes were piggy and close together. But he was a knight and Mordred was a squire. (130)

Thus, despite the nobility of Modred as he was far more elegant and graceful, it is Bors who is a Knight while Modred is a squire because of his Ethiopian origin asserting that Templars despite their openness to a different culture is dominated by British racism of the superiority of white over black or colored. Chadda has echoed what Rudyard Kipling has pointed out in his poem *The White Man's Burden* (1899). In that particular poem, though he has asserted white supremacy in politics, sociology, religion, culture ethics, and values. But his major argument is based on the supremacy of White theologically. The white man supremacy has its roots in the Biblical Story *The Curse of Ham* and some highly popular scientific theories on racism. Chadda's white males are invariably superior to their colored counterparts.

The Knights Templar comprises two females Billi and Elaine, the latter is a Jewish elderly woman “with grey hair tangled in a mess” (41). She is also trained in telekinesis and her expertise in theology is supplemented by multi-cultural and religious knowledge which she frequently shares with the other Templars particularly the young Templars, Billi and Kay. Despite her age and fragility, she is the custodian of the Mirror of Solomon, the supposedly

mythical mirror in which all ethereal and damned souls have been entrapped over the centuries. Elaine though faces marginalization especially, when Arthur, the master of Knights entrusted her with the custody of The Mirror of Solomon. Gwain, the second-in-command went mad at this decision, but Arthur stood firm and stated “the old religious war didn’t concern Templars anymore” (43). But it is quite evident that the responsibility has been given to her due to her Jew origin. Her old house near a pawn shop serves as a secret reliquary where all the magical secrets of Templars are kept. One is reminded of Jerusalem where the reliquaries sacred to all theologies have been kept. However, the honor has been given to her partly due to her European origin but mostly due to her Jewish religion. Arthur’s trust and dependence on her are depicted on every page, he confides her on the various situation as only she knew about the removal of the original mirror at the time of danger, Arthur stayed with her rather than other Templars, formulated a comprehensive strategy with her only against the ArchAngel Michael, excluding all other Templars. She is distinctly projected as *Other* to Billi, whose biracial and bi-ethnic origin makes her a complete *other* to the rest of the Templars. Billi’s admission to Templars is met with a strong protest as Gwain expresses his disgust as “A girl? In the Order? That’s not foolishness. That’s a heresy” (13). The later stances in the novel prove that this hatred is more due to her bi-racial and more precisely the Muslim origin because he believed “once a Muslim always a Muslim” (89). She is completely marginalized within the group as she is the one to whom the secrets of the Templars are not shared, the prophecy of Kay is not shared and even the cause of her mother’s death is also not shared. Though she had never offered Muslim prayers, she could never eat pork. Her Muslim identity is always highlighted by Elaine who while explaining would always ask her about Islamic mythology “as did your mum ever told you Islamic story about Satan? About Iblis” (54), stressing her biracial and bi-religious ethnicity. She is marginalized by her father too who when she gets emotionally attracted to ArchAngel Michael is not warned by him and is rather treated as a bait through which ArchAngel is lured to be killed, making her howl in shock and dejection as “and you trusted Kay with your scheme and not me” (130). Finally, her ostracism is revealed when her request to leave Templar is happily granted. The explicit comparison between Elaine and Billi asserts the superiority of the former over the latter.

The Knight Templars had two young Templars Kay and Billi. Kay was brought by father Balin and described as “that skinny boy with huge blue eyes and white hair” (13). Born with a gifted ability of Telekinesis, he is sent to Jerusalem to be trained among both Sufis and monks as to how to control the psychic ability, at home he gets the paramount training from the best fighters. His homecoming is celebrated with a huge party arranged by the Templars petrifying Billi a lot as her success in life-threatening ordeal is rewarded simply by a “box of Chocolate” (34). He is very close to Arthur who confides in him, his arrival and departure are kept secret from Billi, only he knew about Arthur’s plan of using Billi as bait to lure The Angel of Death to be killed by Templars. He was responsible for unleashing the ethereal from the Mirror of Solomon but it is he who sacrificed himself, using it as “the most powerful magic” (175) against the immortal Angel of Death. Though his presence in the Templar has not been accepted by Gwain who “thought Oracles were only one step away from witches” (35). Chadda’s portrayal of Kay as a paragon of nobility and chivalry sans weakness makes him a superior Other to Billi.

To sum up the discussion, Templars are a well-structured multicultural and a multi-ethnic group but that ethnicity is firmly grounded in Eurocentric framework, where the center is important and multiculturalism is tolerated only if it subscribes to the framework set by Europe. Different ethnic groups coexist in harmony but the closer analysis reveals that in this harmonious coexistence, the notion of binarism is ensured and consciously maintained. Billi has to be portrayed as inferior primarily because of her biracial and bi-ethnic background. The novel revolves around her yet she is deprived of all the status and position which the other Templars enjoy.

Zizek's concept of multiplicity is explicitly elaborated in the portrayal of various religions but within that cluster of religions, the notion of othering is ensured. Templars Knights were a group of people belonging to not only different cultures but they were from different religious backgrounds. Christianity and Judaism are well represented predominately through influential males who are either the master, the second in command, the priest, etc only Islam is portrayed through a weak, marginalized Billi. She too has been depicted as adhering to the hybridity rather than Islam. Despite Templar’s acceptance, obedience, and

tolerance to other religions, Christianity predominates and Billi has stooped before Christian values but without obliterating her Muslim Identity. Her hybridity is reflected in her name, her race, and her religion too. In this multi-religious cluster, Islam is portrayed as *other* to other religions, and as an inferior *other*. This juxtaposition of Islam with Christianity and Judaism is continued throughout the novel. The early life of Billi was under the guidance of her mother, who taught her to love Allah and to follow the Muslim doctrines but the later years of her life, which is the mature part of her life have been spent worshipping Christianity and Judaism. She is taught Arabic by Gwain, a devoted Seneschal, religious education by Father Balin, Right and the Reverend Master, the fragmented knowledge about her religion is provided by Elaine, a devoted Jew. Moreover, Gwain's distrust of Kay primarily owes to him being an Oracle but most importantly as him being trained with "Sufis, rabbis and priests" (230). Furthermore, the Islamic-Christian juxtaposition can be seen in their belief system too. Kay's reaction on seeing people rushing towards St. Paul Cathedral and Regent Park Mosque is because they are "the faithful", Billi believes that it is more because they are "the fearful". The self-explanatory statement asserts that Christianity is meant for the faithful while Islam bears the connotation of the fearful, a religion to be afraid of.

Both the scholarly and the academic discourse after 9/11 has focused on islamophobia because "Islam" often is used as a *dyadic other* that replaces "Communism" (Healey 15) projected by Christianity or Judaism. The history can be traced back to Salman Rushdie whose works "*Shame* (1983), *Midnight's Children* (1981), and *The Satanic Verses* (1988) remain "deeply Islamic, inform and reference, if not in content" (Sulehri 14). Islam in general and Quran, in particular, has been widely dealt with in literary text by the Anglophone writers as Salman Rushdie, Taslima Nasreen, and Hanif Qureshi who have either tried to test the authenticity of the Quran or to challenge the doctrine because "Fiction writers everywhere exhibit awareness of realities outside the text and their works have perpetually negotiated conditions of creativity against such pressures." (Mustafa 285). In most cases, the writers have strongly compromised creativity against the pressure. It is a fact that majority of the attack has been launched by the Muslim terrorists but every Muslim is not a terrorist, but this notion is constantly endorsed in the popular fictions. *Jihad: the Trail of political Islam* (2000)

by Giles Kepel, *The Fury of God; the Islamic Attack on America* (2002) by Malise Ruthven, *The Failure of Political Islam* (1992) by Olivier Roy, *Infidels: a history of Conflicts between Christendom and Islam* (2003) by Andrew Wheatcroft are some of the strongly acclaimed nonfiction works focusing upon the portrayal of Islam as a religion of terror. Besides these books, there are many fictions based upon the portrayal of Muslims as terrorists, particularly from the Muslims. *The Sirens of Baghdad* (2002) by Yasmin Khadra, *The Shalimar Clown* (2005) by Salman Rushdie *The Wasted Vigil* (2008) by Nadeem Aslam, *Confessions of a Mullah Warrior* (2009) by Masood Farivar. Though, these fictions have been based on false reports, propaganda, documentaries, and unauthentic versions of histories which results in the formation of a wrong opinion. These fictions by the Muslim writers claim to have diverted from the stereo typicality but end up asserting Islam as the religion of terror. Though Chadda has depicted Gnostics, Sufis, Hindu mystics, pseudoscience, and even Kabbalah in the novel to provide the alternative religious view Islam- Christian contrast remains the foremost topic and Islam is essentially depicted as the inferior *other* of the Christianity.

Zizek's notion of multiculturalism is not necessarily restricted to the depiction of religions only but can be further extended to faiths and belief systems of Templars. The religious doctrine of Templars is based upon knowledge drawn from different faiths and sources as Arabic, Greek, Latin, and Occults, but it is eventually Christianity they had to adhere to in their daily life. As stated earlier despite Father Balin being a priest, it is Elaine who not only is the guardian and custodian of the Templar reliquary but is the source of their occult knowledge, which she has derived from the practices and the doctrines of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, and Judaism. She, predominately a Jew, is Chadda's embodiment of religious hybridity, hybridity where religious specificity is retained and their common religious theological ground, cultural jargons, and expressions are highlighted. That common theological ground is streamlined with the Eurocentric notion of the superiority of Christianity over other religions. Elaine's room has a painting of "Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac" (53) is set alongside "Islamic calligraphy, the name of Allah entwined to form a circle" (53). These contrasting images and paintings are in Elaine's room and not in Billi's room. The fluidity of hybridity in the former and the agony of mixed heritage in the

latter partially because of more inclination towards Islam shows the triumph of hybridity and the failure of rigidity as depicted through Billi.

Multiculturalism, with a Eurocentric gaze, a notion by Zizek has not been portrayed through the depiction of various cultures, religions, beliefs but through minute things. Billi is trained with different swords as Scottish *claymore*, German *bastard* sword, French *rapiers*, Indian *patas*, and finally the *katanas*, the sword of Samurai. Billi's preference with *Wazakishi*, the Japanese Samurai asserts her association with Asian heritage. These all swords having their specificities fell flat upon the Angel of Death who has to be killed with the legendary Arthurian sword as elaborated in his death scenes as "Silver Sword touched his stomach, and she pushed, deeper and deeper" (268) resulting in his death with a scream and a yelp. This multiplicity in ethnicity, religion, culture, the use of crafts and tools have been explicitly depicted but the Eurocentric notion is ensured. Various ethnic groups are other to European, different religions bow before Christianity, different cultures and cultural crafts are inferior to European culture and even the weapons of warfare have been prioritized as per European ideology of othering.

For cultural theorist Adorno, a cultural product must have the element of standardization to make it a fetish commodity to be used in globalization. South Asian literature has always reproduced the element of standardization through the portrayal of stereotype characters and Chadda too has emphatically done so. From the analysis of the character of Billi, it is evident that she is a stereotypical portrayal of an Asian woman, who is weak, indecisive, and a trouble creator and who depends upon others, particularly males for her existence. Her biracial identity makes her a SanGreal too, but she is portrayed as antithetical to Arthur. Arthur has been described as apparently a weak person who is shabbily dressed, but with a strong determination as "no one argued with Arthur SanGreal" (5). His resoluteness in his decision makes him a strong man as he always ensures the implementation of his decision despite constant retaliation by his mates, the fellow Templars. His determination to make Billi a Templar asserts this notion. His excellent fighting skills enable him to be feared by all, a quality admitted by ArchAngel Michael himself who stated: "D'you know Billi, they say Satan himself fears two things in all of existence. The Judgment of God

and Arthur SanGreal” (129). Arthur is not an Angel as he does have his weakness making him prone to all physical and emotional brutalities. In the first ordeal of his daughter he suffers physically, he was nearly killed in ferocious combat with the Angel of Death, his weakness shifted the entire burden upon Billi to save humanity from the tenth plague. His foresightedness and prudence do not come in the way of his unconditional love for his deceased Muslim wife, his resentment towards his daughter, is only to make her a strong person to qualify the prophecy. The deliberate attempt on the part of Chadda to portray his character as resilient is partly due to the name that Arthur bears having the sacred and mythological connotation and secondly, to subscribe to the ideology of the west. Like Bilquis, the name Arthur is legendary, it has certain attributions and holiness and sacredness but the European sacredness, while Bilquis has a legendary connotation too but an orient one. Billi is thus inferior to Arthur not because of the physical or the emotional weakness but due to the ideological one, eventually making Bilquis as *other* to him. Both are the bearers of the name, having religious and sacred connotations in their respective history and culture, yet Arthur's superiority over Bilquis is laid. Chadda subscribes to Lisa Lau's notion of the assertion of re-orientalism by orients. As Adorno is of the view that standardization which he termed as sameness serves a dual purpose, Firstly, it hammers the same idea upon the masses, which is evident in the portrayal of the characters. The depiction of stereotype characters is the reinforcement of this standardization, and secondly standardization masks up the consciousness of the masses, obstructing them to see any critically and rationally.

To sum up the discussion, this novel is essentially a fetish commodity not only asserted by the external factor as laurels and honor bestowed upon it but the internal elements as themes and plots have aligned themselves as per criteria of a cultural product set by Slavoj Zizek. For him, multiculturalism is the essence of a cultural product through which the ideology of capitalist groups is perpetuated. Chadda through this novel has explicitly projected the ideology of othering, subscribing to Lisa Lau's notion that the ideology of othering by the orient as the most successful mode of marketing the fiction. The novel fused with the specific internalized ideology and the external laurels or awards makes it significant enough to be a part of globalization.

4.2: The *Skunk Girl* (2010) and Standardization

The *Skunk Girl* (2010) is a novel written by Sheba Karim, a Pakistani Origin American author. Sheba Karim is born and raised in a small town in Catskill, New York, and graduated from New York University School of Law. She also has a degree of M.F.A from the Iowa Writer's Workshop. Her debut Young Adult Fiction *The Skunk Girl* was the first novel dealing with Muslim, Pakistani and American identity. Her second novel *That Thing we call a Heart* (2017) was declared as the Best Contemporary Teen Read of 2017, the Kirkus Review has considered it as Best Teen Book of 2017 with a Touch of Humour, for American Library Association it was Amelia Boomer Best Feminist book for Young Adult. Her upcoming Book *Mariam Sharma Hits Road* (2018) published by Harper Collins is an innovative novel based on road trips/ adventures of a south Asian and has already received critical acclaim by reputed journals. Besides, she is also an editor of an anthology of *Alchemy: The Tranquebar Book of Erotic Short Stories 2*. (2012). Two of her short stories have been nominated for the Pushcart Award.

The Skunk Girl was among the selection of the 2012 Silicon Reads Valley Program and has positive reviews from the Kirkus Review. The novel was published in the United States, India, Italy, Denmark, and Sweden. With different paperbacks, the novel has been published in six different editions. In an interview given to Shehla Abdullah on April 1, 2016, she confessed that her interest in writing about Pakistan or Pakistanis is due to global interest in Pakistan particularly after 9/11. She further narrated that she joined the Iowa Writers workshop as “Literary agents often visit Iowa to meet with the students” (S. Karim, Author Interview: Sheba Karim). The nomination of the novel for awards, its publication in five different countries, and six different editions assert its status as a commodity.

The novel revolves around a 16 years old Pakistani Muslim girl Nina Khan living in a small town dominated by Whites in New York. Karim has focused upon four main aspects of her life, firstly, her relationship with her parents and her relatives who want her to achieve high grades, not to socialize, not to drink, and ultimately to marry a suitable Pakistani boy. Secondly, the freedom and liberty that her ‘white’ peers enjoy like dating, partying, and even

having a love affair which she is culturally not allowed. Thirdly her crush on an Italian boy Asher RiChilli whom despite her religious and social restrictions she cannot refrain. Her major problem is not being a Muslim or a Pakistani girl but a 'hairy girl'. These four issues are fused with Pakistani social and cultural values. The detailed analysis of the novel asserts that it is not a fetish commodity merely due to the above external factors, the internal elements of the novel also streamline with the external factors making it a perfect fetish commodity.

For Adorno, standardization, which he elaborated as sameness, is a central part of a cultural product because each product of "art is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together" (94). Standardization ultimately results in the creation of a standardized reaction that is effortlessly communicated by the cultural elitist and readily absorbed by the masses. Through standardization, the ideology of the dominant group is circulated. The objective of standardization is supplemented with pseudo individualization or peculiarity. The pseudo- individualization aims at making the individual "forget that what they listen to is already listened to for them or 'pre-digested' (445). These two notions of the cultural products are essential for keeping "them all firmly inline" (84). For Lisa Lau and Graham Huggan, the South Asian literature has perpetuated the ideology of othering and the detailed analysis of *Skunk Girl* asserts this notion. The novel focuses upon a stereotyped portrayal of Pakistani parents which is the standardized portrayal of South Asian parents in general and Pakistani parents in particular. The assertion of this notion of stereotype occurs in the very beginning of the novel when one of the class fellows of the protagonist speculates about the possible reaction of her father to her being kissed by her boyfriend in front of him, the spontaneous answer of her friend Bridget is; "Nina's Dad would kill her if you did that" (58) establishing the assumed belief of rigidity towards females as the stereotype attribute of Asian Fathers, though Nina immediately refutes by stating "he wouldn't kill me" (58). The immediate refusal through Nina by Karim is done to bridge up the traditional stereotypical image but is immediately reasserted in the subsequent lines as:

I must defend my father. He may be conservative, but he's no murderer like those nutty Islamic fanatics they show on TV movies who marry unsuspecting white

women, then kidnap their daughters and take them to some unnamed Middle Eastern country. He wouldn't kill me, just yell and maybe cry and only ever let me out of the house for school (58).

The stated lines futilely try to obliterate her father's portrayal as a stereotype but at the same time, the stated lines ironically assert other Muslims as stereotypes. Nina could not hold back the negation of her parents as a stereotype for long but in the subsequent pages her parents turn out to be as conservative and strict as are generally euphemized. When Nina eventually goes out for a movie with her friends and their boyfriends, she makes all the necessary arrangements so that her parents do not see them fearing that she might face restrictions from her parents resulting in the confiscation of little freedom that she enjoys. Neither Nina nor her super-nerd sister Sonia has ever been allowed to go for dance because of "lack of morality in the western culture" (138). Moreover, when they come to know about one of Nina's friends dating a boy they censor Nina's free time with that friend lest she is influenced by her. Interestingly, the more Nina tries to obliterate the notion of her parents as a stereotype, the more this notion is reasserted. The novel is supplemented with various instance to prove that, for instance, Nina's father, unlike the traditional Asian fathers, tries to create a cordial atmosphere in the house by telling jokes or singing aloud with the *qawwali* music and passionately discussing patriotism, religion, and culture, ironically, the very incidents end up by asserting his stereotype image. The stereo-typicality of her parents is time and again highlighted as when she candidly asks her mother about the shortcoming of American culture, she is strongly reprimanded by her mother who equates American culture to that of distracted youth, vagabonds, drug addict, and prostitutes. And for her "It is so preposterous that you can't even argue with it" (37). It is a fact that cultural and social circumstances determine parenting behavior and that is why it varies from culture to culture, nonetheless, it is also a fact that Asian parenting behaviors and practices are always labeled and characterized by the western media in general and particularly in fictions as outdated and odious. The western model of the upbringing of children focuses upon the "independence, individualism, social assertiveness, confidence, and competence" (Chung 224), whereas the traditional Asian parenting focuses more upon "culturally collectivistic, emphasizing

interdependence, conformity, emotional self-control, and humility” (50). This portrayal is in sheer contrast with the essential standards of the Western but ironically it produces far more desirable results than the Western practice. Subsequently, in the western theories and discourses, Asian parenting modes and practices are often analyzed as per western theories despite the extensive cultural contrast resultantly like all Asian traits, in the novel too the Asian parenting style serves as *other* to the Western modes and practices.

The deliberate attempt on the part of Karim to portray the stereotype image is to commemorate what Said (1993) has identified of Eurocentric authors who are bent upon presenting the distorted image of the natives. For Said, they depict the standardized portrayal of the character in a way that they are “given a certain persona, with mostly negative connotations, that they have to lug around to either explain or defend” (26). Karim has not confined herself to the depiction of stereotypical Pakistani parents only but has treated almost all relatives of Nina with the same lens of stereo-typicality, having similar traits. For Mukherji since the South Asian writers fail to come up to the standards set by Salman Rushdie and Rao, they found their ease and comfort by portraying “exaggeration, typecasting, stereotyping, exoticizing, pandering to western tastes, demands, and expectations, selling out, having mercenary motives, playing to the gallery, to more sophisticated misrepresentations of totalizing, essentializing, subalterns, marginalizing, and most recently of all, re-Orientalizing.” (30). This is what Karim has done particularly through the portrayal of Nina's parents who reflect all the stereotype traits essentially found in orient parents. The depiction of these essentialist stereotypes is an intentional effort on the part of the writer to hammer the sameness blocking the critical and rational thinking of the masses. The idea of backward, irrational, and typical Asians is echoed through this standardized depiction.

The standardized stereotype portrayal is balanced by a pseudo-individualized characteristic of a cheerful and light mood predominant in this text. The congenial and high-spirited atmosphere widely contrasts the dilemma that she is facing (being a hairy girl). The religious or the cultural obligations do not shake her disposition or temperament, occasionally, she does feel miserable and depressed, but that gloom is outshined by her

cheery or witty comments. In her school when the entire class is invited by Serine, her class fellow at her farm party, and Nina is deprived because Serine thinks that Nina's stereotypical parents will not allow their daughter. Her disappointment and misery are counteracted by her cheerful statements as "Maybe there are only two types of people who spend their Friday nights in high school and at home—Pakistani Muslim girls and future serial killers" (28). Making her oblivious of everything and helping her come back to reality.

The postcolonial fictions have not only embarked upon the notion of othering but according to Lisa Lau, another recurring standardized notion prevalent in South Asian fiction has been that of "a reductionist representation at the expense of holistic ones, and a deliberate process of self- othering" (13). Karim has utilized this notion through her protagonist Nina, who despite having a very close friendship bond with Helena and Bridget and enjoying an equal status from them is obsessed with self-othering. Right from her childhood her prime wish had been to have a fair complexion, she even expressed this desire to her sister Sonia as "When you take over the world, can you make me white?" (7). Her mother, taken aback by this desire, inquires the account of that desire to which she can only contemplate that it "sucks being one of the only brown kids in the school" (18). It is neither community nor the locality that treats her as *other* but this self othering is created by Nina herself. The tiniest detail provided by Nina is to highlight this self othering. The sitting place at Deer Hook during lunchtime is segregated into divisions but based upon the preference of the students themselves. The choice of black and Latino students to have their lunch on the left side of the lawn and that of Nina with another Asian minority to the right side of the lawn along with the white is purely a student's choice. Though Nina sits in the company of her white peers, she is the one who is never comfortable and feels different. Her only desire is to be white and that is why she finds an affinity and kinship with Anthony, a black boyfriend of Bridget from the Island of Grenada, and tries to inculcate the feeling of self othering in him by asking this question "Do you ever wish you were white?" (118). The strong desire within her makes her probe this question time and again from different people and is not shun and hushed by the response from others as that desire might cost her the family, the friends, and even the culture. So the notion of self othering is highlighted by Nina herself. The Asian community

in general and Nina's parents in particular regularly assert self-othering to create distance from the other ethnicities. Despite being brown themselves, they insist their daughters choose "a doctor as well, so you too will be on equal footing professionally ----- and he shouldn't be too dark" (122). Their insistence on not choosing a black partner is simply to assert the notion of self-other. Furthermore, the idea of difference is palpable in Nina's parents' shock on finding out about Bridget dating a black boy making them utter "But with a black boy?" (138). Finding the notion of a white dating a black is too detestable; they made their daughter distance from her friends. As Adorno asserted, standardization acts as repetition which serves the dual purpose, first, it does hammer and re-hammer the same idea again and again and secondly it makes the masses oblivion of the critical dimensions, and thus the masses are unconsciously tuned to accept what is delivered to them. Karim has resonated with this ideology and asserted the notion of self othering by projecting the standardized stereotypes.

The standardized depiction of stereotypes is supplemented by the addition of element of exoticism which is an essential constituent of the South Asian texts. South Asian literature has to be exotic to attract the masses to its hidden ideology. The element of exotic makes each text strange yet adds the touch of individuality and charm making a literary product a fettered commodity. The ultimate purpose of exoticism is to reassert the notion of Othering thereby satisfying the complex of the superiority of the West over the East. Graham Huggan (1992) defined the term exotic as:

It is not, as is often supposed, an inherent *quality* to be found 'in' certain people, distinctive objects, or specific places; exoticism describes, rather, a particular mode of aesthetic *perception* – one which renders people, objects, and places strange even as it domesticates them . . . Exoticism, in this context, might be described as a kind of semiotic circuit that oscillates between the opposite poles of strangeness and familiarity. (13).

The post-colonial exotic is usually created through the portrayal of the difference in cultural products or cultural practices. *Skunk Girl*, deviates from this established norm as

Karim has created a pseudo- individualized exoticism through the depiction of not a teenage Pakistani Muslim girl, with usual teenage issues as dates, parties, etc but a rather “a hairy Muslim girl”. It is one of the most shameful secrets of Nina, which she states as “I fell asleep as a human, and woke up a gorilla” (21). Her hairy body singles her out from the rest of her friends making her *other*. The scorching heat of summer compels everybody to wear sweatshirts and shorts or miniskirts but she has to wear jeans regardless of “legs are sweaty and my jeans feel like they’re papier-ma’ch’ed on” (15). Making her different and other to the rest of the ethnic groups, she further compares herself with the Arabian women of the Middle East wearing a burka and visualizes the agony which they face I wearing so particularly during the summer season. This association with Arabian women endorses the notion of not only of othering but of *Orient Other*. The indication of a hairy body is not particular to Nina only; Karim treats it as a generalized issue of Pakistani women. Nina’s agitation and discomfort are overlooked by her mother who answers her casually as “a lot of Pakistani women are hairy Nina, It’s not a big deal” (20). This generalization asserts the notion of orient women as exotic other as none of her white friends are hairy.

One of the many realities that are not frequently discussed very publically among Asian girls in general and Pakistani girls, in particular, is related to body and physique such as hair and waxing or threading, etc. Karim has added a peculiarity to that notion of hair when not only Nina has hair but “a wide line of soft dark hair running from the nape of my neck down to the base of my spine-----right down the center of my back like a skunk” (104). She feels that would not only make her very mysterious but a laughing stock and indirectly as an inferior soul among the rest of her peers. She would be an “outcast. Ostracized” (105). When asked from Sheba Karim in a blog related to the issue of hair she replied:

Sheba: Body hair was something that my South Asian friends and I had to deal with growing up, and it was so embarrassing we were only comfortable talking about it with each other. If you’re going to write a realistic and honest book about how difficult it is to grow up South Asian in the US, then body hair has to be part of it. (Sayantani)

The exoticized portrayal of cultural practices and norms has always been an essential component of postcolonial literature and has been modified in the works of South Asian literature to “complicate, problematize, and extend traditional interpretations of the phenomenon of South Asia in a global context (Phukan 3)”. It is the strategic methodology by them to market their work. The success of the distinguished writers as Jhumpa Lahiri’s owes mainly to the exotic nature of her work *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), and further the problematizing of that work in the category of ‘ethnic minority made that work as exotic *other* to the American literature to be awarded *the* Pulitzer Prize. Moreover, the exotic representations of South Asian women by the south Asian women writers cater “to Western fantasies of the exotic Third World woman” (Phukan 4). Through this strategy, the fetish commodity is readily available to be sold at the market. Karim is not the first one who has exoticized the self, before her the south Asian writers as Jhumpa Lahiri and Samina Ali have projected the striking images on the cover pages of their work which eventually made their work exotic enough to be accepted easily by readers. But Karim has added the element of pseudo- individualization in a way that the cover does not depict any stereotype image of exotic orient woman yet it centers on a very exotic theme of a “Pakistani Muslim hairy girl” and further extending it by considering her as a skunk girl. Undoubtedly, South Asian women are obsessed with body hair. It is a colonial hangover and the hairless idea is promoted by the media which advocates lighter skin and hairless body as a perfect emblem of beauty. In South Asia, waxing is a sacred ritual that starts as young as 12. Karim has endorsed this Western notion through her protagonist Nina, who is bent upon getting rid of her hairy body. As Adorno has theorized that the technique of pseudo individuality is used by the producers to cover up the sameness and illusions of the masses of innovation and particularly the striking innovation. This is what is evident in the portrayal of a hairy Muslim Pakistani girl. The choice to this notion to an orient woman is a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to build a pseudo individualized effect to an exoticized woman. In this way the writer has tried to give heterogeneity and multiplicity because it is through pseudo-individualization an idea can be marketed well. The intense marketing of the novel owes to its pseudo-individualized title depicting a hairy girl.

Lastly, the recurring standardized theme evident in South Asian literature has been a validation of the notion of hybridity. The portrayal of the notion of hybridity according to Young “implies a disruption and forcing together of unlike things” (111) but for Bhaba it is “interdependence of colonizer/colonized relation” (108). The illustration of hybridity in the colonial era was through the renewal of the folk tales, traditional culture, and heritage, and the purpose was the retrieval of that era which was free from colonial interposition. The contemporary period has successively represented hybridity by adapting the contemporary artistic, cultural, and religious practices in a unified multicultural and globalized form but to assert what Macaulay (1935) stated “Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and intellect” (430). The projection of the notion of hybridity has been an essential element of diaspora writings and writers like Buchi Emecheta, Bharati Mukherjee and even Hanif Kureishi have projected the hybridity as a mode of existence among the migrant communities in their fictions.

The *Skunk Girl* explicitly highlights the cultural practices and the religious practices represented through the main characters. The contemporary fictions have primarily focused on the stereotype portrayal of religion as a major obstruction against the success of immigrants or diasporas residing in an occident territory. Nevertheless, Karim’s projection of Islam is rather diverse, a moderate religion having the tendency of all-inclusiveness devoid of extremism conventionally associated with it. Through various practices carried out by the characters, assert religion as an aspect of their life but not the essential aspect of their life. Nina’s entire family is not very religious as only Nina’s mother offers prayer regularly but the family ensures the regularity of prayers only when Nasreen Khala, their religious aunt visits them to keep up their family appearance. The childhood incident narrated by Nina is when one of her religious tutor brother Hassan observed a painting depicting two Mexican women holding flowers, he told Nina that “It is haram to depict human figures,” (82). The family's decision in his removal from the assigned post and not the removal of the said picture despite his true depiction of Islamic view assert the acceptance of hybridity by this Muslim family. Moreover, Nina’s continuation of reading the Holy Quran “under the watchful eyes of the Mexican women” (Ibid 83), asserts the above-discussed notion.

Karim seemed to have advocated the notion that the cultural and religious practices observed by someone do not assert his status as a staunch follower of that ethnicity. The projected family is a Muslim and a Pakistani, but it is only the mother who observes the religious and cultural practices, the rest of the members including Nina does not necessarily do so, she does not offer prayers regularly, has a crush on Asher Richelle, an Italian origin, has gone to a party, has danced, tasted beer and even got drunk and yet proclaims herself to be a Muslim. Sonia, the super nerd of the family to whom Nina occasionally goes to seek sisterly advice states very emphatically

Whose definition are you applying to that? In every religion, people pick and choose what they want to follow. Look at Ma and Dad's friends—a few of the aunties cover their hair, and a few of the aunties drink, some fast during Ramadan, some don't. You can't spend your life worrying about what other people will think. If you live decently and help others, is Allah going to condemn you simply because you had a beer? I don't think so, but others might. In the end, you have to do what *you* believe is right (208-209)

Through the above-detailed quotation, Karim's idea of hybridity has encompassed both religion and culture, religion is not to follow certain norms and practices of religion it is what one considers as right or wrong and the same notion is applicable for culture too, it is not the one who follows the teachings of Islam but the one who follows what he considers as right or wrong. Karim's robust proclamation of affirmation of hybridity is clear from one of the culminating comments of Sonia as "When it comes to religion and orthodoxy and culture and self-actualization, there is no magic box [with] easy answers" (209). Hybridity is the offspring of globalization, nonetheless; it is a demand of globalization too. The contemporary projection of hybridity is not taken as a negation of identity but as a way of safe living, a way of getting accepted in a capitalist-dominated world, and finding it as a successful tool to be assimilated in this corporate contemporary world. Sonia's advice imprints positively in the mind of Nina, who does what pleases her as she goes to the party, has a drink, experiences the first kiss but at the same time goes to Pakistan and meets her parents and relatives not with guilt and remorse but with confidence and contentment. Her hybridity enables her simply to be accepted by her western peers not as an outsider but as

their comrade and by her Asian parents and relatives too. South Asians, Pakistanis in Britain are increasingly part of a creative effort to produce a culturally hybrid high and popular culture that is critical, satirical, and self-reflexive. The enormously positive response by an English, and increasingly global, the mainstream audience has made this diasporic public sphere extremely lucrative as well as being enjoyable, integrating South Asians into British society without the demand that they abandon their consumption-based transnational connections and orientations

To sum up the discussion, it can be seen very clearly that Karim's *Skunk Girl* is a complete fetish commodity. It is not only through the external factors as laurels, awards, and publications with various editions and publishers that assert its status, the internal elements as plot, setting, and characterization have been effectively aligned to commemorate the external elements. For cultural theorist Adorno, a cultural fetish product has to have the element of standardization to hammer sameness with an element of pseudo-individualization to add peculiarity to a given notion, sensationalizing it enough to be sold as a marketable commodity. Karim's fiction has not deviated from this framework, as a work written for the consumers having a monetary interest in the background, the novel completely expedites the ideology of the publishers. The West in general and Western consumers in particular despite their declaration of internationalization or globalization have faith in the notion of East as disorderly in practices, culture, and norms with stereotype clichés serving as *other* to the west. This fiction following the practices of other south Asian fictions completely satiates this Western desire. Karim completely expedites Lisa Lau's notion of prizing others or the reassertion of orients not by the occidentals but by the orients themselves to get global recognition and fame.

4.3. *Wanting Mor* (2009) and the Element of Estrangement.

Wanting Mor (2009) is a novel written by Rukhsana Khan who is a Pakistani origin Anglophone writer residing in Ontario Canada. She started her career as a story writer by writing songs like *Adam's world Children Video* and continued with writing picture books, short stories, and novels. Her picture book *Big Red Lollipop* won the Golden Kite Award in

2011 and Charlotte Zolotow Award in 2011. She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, The Writer's Union of Canada, CANSCAIP, and Storytelling Toronto. The list of her creative writings includes *Big Red Lollipop* (2010) *Silly Chicken* (2005) *Ruler of the Courtyard* (2003) *King of the Skies* (2001) *The Roses in My Carpets* (1998) *Bedtime Ba-a-a-lk* (1998). She has written two novels, *Wanting Mor* (2009) *Dahling, If You Luv Me Would You Please, Please Smile* (1999). Her short stories collections include *A New Life* (2009) *Many Windows* co-authored with Elisa Carbone and Uma Krishswani (2008) *Muslim Child* (1999). The diversity in her publications makes her a member of the International Storytelling Network.

Wanting Mor(2009) is the winner of the *Middle East Book Award* (2009) and has been nominated for many awards as *Capitol Choices Noteworthy Titles for Children and Teens* 2010, *CYBIL Awards* 2009, *IRA Notable Books for a Global Society* 2010, *Muslim Writers Awards Children's Books* 2011, *SSLI Honour Book* 2009 *USBBY Outstanding International* 2010. The novel has 13 editions and is available in different paperbacks and subtitles which establishes its status as a fetish commodity. In her blog, Rukhsana Khan has clearly stated that she writes stories on all those issues which are in vogue or what are the demands of the time asserting the commodified and monetary interest involved behind the selection of themes and plot of her works. Moreover, the plot of her novel *Wanting Mor* deals with the struggle of an 'orphan Muslim girl' and the setting is Afghanistan, which is sufficient enough to assert its status as a fetish commodity.

The story is set in the background of war-torn Afghanistan and is about the struggle of a young girl Jameela, apparently with a physical deformity, i.e. a cleft lip. The plot deals with the sudden death of her mother, the remarriage of her drunkard and alcoholic father, the brutalities of her stepmother, her desertion in a busy market by her father, her final settlement in an orphanage, her journey of peace and restoration, and most importantly her strong faith in Allah.

For the cultural theorist Marcuse, one of the essential traits of a fetish cultural product is the element of estrangement. It is only through the estrangement that "art fulfills a

cognitive function; it communicates truth not communicate- able in any other language it *contradicts*' ' (10). The estrangement according to him does not necessarily create a new reality; it recreates and reproduces the existing reality. The estrangement is not deliberately and consciously superimposed upon the literature but it does provide an element of sensationalism which is important for the fetish aspect of the culture. The estrangement draws the attention of masses towards itself and having it done, it successfully propagates and circulates the ideology of the dominant group which is unconsciously accepted by the masses. The more estranged an artistic work is, the more it is consumed by the market. The South Asian work, in general, has to be estranged, which it does so by adding the element exoticism to be a readily consumed commodity. For Huggan, the popularity of South Asian fiction owes more to its exotic notion and less to its artistic form. The novel by Rukhsana Khan endorses what he has elaborated. The title of the novel *Wanting Mor* onsets the concept of estrangement as one is completely baffled because the title excites many queries in one's mind, whether Is it wanting more? If so-- what? Is it spelled incorrectly, what does the word *mor* implies? The answers to these queries lead to construing the novel with a vivid and stereotypical portrayal of an orient culture. The novel depicts a cultural journey of Afghanistan under the US invasion, the most discussed country of the world after the fiasco of 9/11, politically a country of Taliban, economically, a country with the lowest per capita income, san technological developments, poverty-stricken masses, pollution, dirt corruption, and unemployment.

The novel revolves around a cleft-lipped Muslim Afghan girl Jameela who is ostracized by her father in a busy market of Afghanistan and is left at the mercy of fate which fortunately takes her intact to an orphanage. Jameela has been portrayed as a typical marginalized woman whose demeanor is more of a slave having no personality and choice of her own. She assumes this role even during her mother's life and after her death, she takes up the role of a silent caretaker of her father and cooks, cleans, and washes for him. The portrayal of her father as idle, lustful, and addicted qualifies him to be a stereotypical Asian man. His detest and hatred by the community in general and by women, in particular, lead them to stay away from Jameela's house. They consoled and helped Jameela after the death

of her motherly when “he’s gone” (19). Jamila does not act as a slave to her father only, she takes up that role wherever she goes, as she cooks, cleans, and washes without uttering a single word; she cannot express her desires and wishes for important things such as reading and writing. She completely exemplifies a stereotype orient woman serving as *other* as to satiate the western demand, an idea summed up by Rahman (2010) “The portrayal of women as marginalized figures denied any voice or independent life is a reaffirmation of western beliefs. They have a pretty fixed image of third world female living an extremely miserable life.” (60). She is a contemporary portrayal of an orient girl, reminiscent of Kuchek Hanem of Flaubert (1821). Her inability to express her emotions and feelings especially when her *mor* dies and her father wants her to vacate the house for good is incredible. She, like a puppet, does not even enquire about anything but quietly un-reluctantly follows the instructions of packing and what her father tells her to do. Her blind submission to the orders of anybody is thoroughly emphasized throughout the novel. The entire novel is supplemented with lots of examples of her blind obedience to anyone and for readers, it becomes a routine affair when on arriving Kabul, after covering a long distance at the back of a van, tired, exhausted and hungry yet when asked by the lady of the house to help in the household chores she “hate(s) to leave those corbacha.(but) I get to my feet and follow her into another room” (30). For her, doing all house chores, from cleaning to cooking and washing and being required to sleep in the hallway, is normalcy which she adheres to without expressing any reaction. Her indifference at her father’s second marriage immediately after the death of her mother and her servitude to her stepmother and his son is strong enough to baffle the readers. Her complete submission and enslavement to her surrounding make her sanity dubious and fallacious to the reader especially when she is abandoned by her father in a busy market of Kabul followed by her savior by a kind butcher sheltering her for a couple of days. She lives up to what Said (1978) has established about the oriental woman as she “is no more than a machine -----she never spoke of herself, never represented her emotions, presence or history” (178). Through this estranged title, the standardized oriental woman has been represented by Khan validating what the publishing industry demands from South Asian writers.

The standardized portrayal of Jameela as a stereotypical marginalized woman is enhanced throughout the novel, and as stated by Rahman, for the West the marginalized orient woman can be freed and liberated from the constraints of male domination by the effective interference of West playing the role of “knight in shining armor” (Rahman). This is what Khan has undertaken in the novel. The apparent physical deformity of Jameela, her cleft lips, was a source of botheration and shame for her, though often consoled by her mother as “Jameela if you cannot be beautiful, you should at least be good” (12) and her strong belief in God, it was a butt of satire and fun. Her name Jameela which is meant as ‘beautiful’ in Arabic strongly contrasted with her appearance. The orphanage burst into laughter as soon as she mentioned her name and the girls jested as “does not it mean pretty --- must have been joking” (96). The relief from this agony and misery is done once her cleft lips are operated on and fixed by the US Army Surgeons and that too without any cost. Jameela truly is salvaged from her agony by the western surgeons who act as Knights in shining armor for her. Jameela exhibits the strong traits of internalized patriarchy, a notion which asserts the natural conditioning of males and females to observe patriarchy and exhibiting its trait through their practices. Jameela’s enslavement to patriarchy is because of the societal norms and practices which have been indoctrinated to her by her mother, towards the end of the novel Jameela shows the denial of patriarchy when she refuses to go back with her father from the orphanage.

Jameela is not the only one who subscribes to the standardized depiction of a stereotype, the whole men folks are the stereotype orient. Jameela’s father has neither been given any name nor any exposé, he is merely the bearer of certain attributes as being hated by all, a drunkard, an opium addict, and a sexual pervert who tried to molest the wife of an Agha with whom he stayed as a guest, an opportunist, who marries widow for monetary purpose. He is a standardized male chauvinist having no sympathy for women and even abandons his daughter in a busy marketplace. Jameela’s father is a concrete example of internalized patriarchy, being a male he cannot weep over the death of his wife and adopts other far more destructive ways such as getting drunk or having a dose of *charas*, a local drug, to cope with pains. As the sole decision-maker of the family, he takes hasty decisions without consulting

any women let alone his daughter. His other hasty decisions as getting out of Kabul, later on marrying a rich widow, are partial because he is oppressed by the patriarchal notion of being the male economic provider of the family. His decision proves to be useful to him but not for his daughter. He eventually turns out to be a living example of an internalized patriarchy through his aggressive and violent temperament. The other males are also types of internalized patriarchy. Jameela 's stepbrother Masood, shows the traits of negating this internalized patriarchy as he believed in not only keeping a distance with his sister, believes in sharing everything including food with her, and eagerly likes to teach her. His negation of internalized patriarchy makes him a sorry figure among the males. His apparent physical weakness as having lost one leg in a mine blast equates to his moral weakness as he does not dare to stand against the atrocities of his mother to Jameela. After his marriage, his house becomes a mundane ground of fight between his wife and mother and he does not dare to stop them. Khan's representation of all males as typical orient stereotypes re-assert what has been stated by Said (1978) that the orient males have been portrayed as backward, illiterate, erotic and licentious and immodest stereotypes explicitly adhering to the internalized patriarchy

For Marcuse, the estrangement within the product serves the purpose of drawing the attention of the consumer to it, and once the consumers' attention is engrossed the ideology of the dominant group is naturally proliferated. What can be better than presenting culture in an estranged manner? The novel is supplemented with a detailed description of the daily practices, routines, and culture of Afghanistan. The detailed account highlights the exotic, uncultured, and underdeveloped orient. While preparing tea for her father the next day Jameela makes the fire and "strikes the flint with steel" (20) immediately in the very next line further detail is provided in the form of instructions as "blowing on the tinder to get the fire to catch makes me feel dizzy. It's a mercy when the flame starts licking the dry grass. Feed it small sticks then bigger" (20). Many such details effectively excite the curiosity of readers, on one hand indulging them to find more about the daily life of Afghan, on the other hand highlighting the technological and economical backwardness of this country. It though enhances the estrangement or exoticism as most Westerners may not have the slightest idea

of the relation between the flint, the grass, or the connection between small wood or the larger wood. Jameela's practice of using ashes as a detergent for washing utensils and crockery again gratifies Westerner readers, the notion of the orient as backward yet exotic. This small detail leads to a graphic detail of different rituals beginning with the detailed burial ritual in the first chapter.

First, we take a sheet and cover it. Then working under the sheet, we remove my mother's clothes-----muttering prayers, we gently clean her, make wudu for her, then wash her hair, the right side of her body, then left-----when her body is clean we are ready to wrap her-----some of the women are wailing (12-13).

The graphic description of the burial ritual is the onset of many other details as to how a bath with a bar of soap has to take place methodically by following the religious and cultural doctrines, the prayers to be read while taking a bath is interesting as well as exotic. The graphic portrayal of the norms and practices of culture serves the major ideological purpose. Firstly, to cater to the taste of estrangement and exoticism which is expected from the orient fiction and secondly, it serves the major ideological purpose which according to Linda Nochlin(1989) "of the picturesque – Orientalizing in this case – is to certify that the people encapsulated by it, defined by its presence, are irredeemably different from, more backward than, and culturally inferior to those who construct" (51). The estrangement gives the sense of sensationalism which adds newness and novelty to any ordinary cultural product.

The representation of culture is done primarily, through the practices but importantly through the language. According to Ashcroft & Griffiths (2002), the aboriginal writers specifically use two forms of English, the abrogation or the appropriation to mold the language to serve their purpose. The language of *Wanting Mor* possesses both these qualities, the language is supplemented with the native lexicon as *Agha*, *purani*, *chadri*, *charpae dusterkhaan*, *corbacha*, *ghusl* and the list goes on. These words assert the authenticity of culture also serve the purpose of estrangement, though the glossary of this lexicon along with the English equivalent is provided at the end of the novel for the international readers but only after the element of estrangement is done. To Ashcroft & Griffiths, the use of the

abrogated language and vocabulary inevitably asserts the supremacy of English besides serving as the authentic projection of the East. This estranged culture through the authentic portrayal of norms and language makes it exotic enough to internalize the ideology of capitalism to be consumed in the global market. Through the estranged culture, the widespread ideology of the West is accomplished entirely and that is to represent the orient culture as essentially dissimilar and inferior to *others*, to accidents by the orients themselves. According to Lisa Lau:

re-Oriental writers set themselves up as ‘translators’, translating one culture to/for the other, have the dual role of opening the channels of communication, but also of holding the two sides separate because it is this very separation that lends heightened significance to their role. (585).

Khan has trodden the footsteps of Asian writers similarly. She has successfully drawn the attention of the readers towards the main plot by creating the element of estrangement by portraying an estranged culture or through estranged language. Once the estranged culture and language capture the interest of the readers, the ideology is successfully incorporated.

For the West, the East is devoid of order, it is chaotic and lacks organization, a legacy created by the colonial writers and particularly by E.M Foster in *A Passage to India (1924)*. This lack of refinement and sophistication serve as contrast, as *other* to the refined, mannered, and sophisticated way of life and taste of the West. The misuse of power, poverty, corruption, and slum might not be outlandish and unfamiliar to the West but this is the precise image of the East which they have and which they want to see in the orient fiction. As stated by Linda Nochlin (1989):

another important function, then, of the picturesque – Orientalizing in this case – is to certify that the people encapsulated by it, defined by its presence, are irredeemably different from, more backward than, and culturally inferior to those who construct and consume the picturesque product. They are irrevocably other. (51).

While describing Kabul a very vivid description is provided by Khan;

As we get nearer to Kabul, the houses get closer and closer together, leaning up against each other like they're tired. The air is yellow and it tastes thick. How can they breathe? The exhaust of hundreds of cars clogging the road makes me cough. And everywhere there are people! I never dreamed there were so many! They don't look friendly. They walk with their heads bent down, a scowl on their faces. And many of the women are bare-headed. There are ragged children everywhere (29).

This elaborated scene on the surface portrays the intense description but in reality, affirms what Nochlin stated, it depicts the chaotic geographical location of Kabul, with pollution and poverty predominating, the stereotype masses comprising of hostile, vehement, and aggressive males, the dominated females and the poverty-stricken children. The detailed description is to be found all over the novel, the market where Jameela has been abandoned by her father is another example of such a sketch:

We get into the intersection. Shops line the street. Little darkened huts all crammed together selling oranges and grapes and fabric and naan. There are cars, trucks, oxen, horses, and people all jamming the road carrying things, going places, raising dust to choke my throat, and land on the fruit and fabric and naan (73).

The graphic detail asserts the validation as anticipated by the Western audience. Erni Suprati (2015) in her paper has drawn an interesting comparison between Afghani marketplaces and orphanages. For her, Afghani markets are not just the sight of cultural depiction but also the places to assert gendered roles. The markets are strictly for men where the economic issues are dealt with and the presence of women without men is strongly detested. Whereas the orphanage and the refugee's camp are places to recover the women from the trauma and atrocities of war and male-driven violence. Khan has substantiated this notion in her novel as Jameela has been abandoned in the busy market of Kabul, but she emerges as a strong woman in the orphanage who readily refuses to go back with her father.

In a nutshell, Khan's *Wanting Mor* is a fetish cultural product not only on account of all external factors such as publishing, paperbacks, various editions, and publishing

techniques but Khan has consciously streamlined the internal elements of the novel too. The novel has the standardized portrayal of the stereotype characters, setting, and themes, as according to Adorno, standardization serves the purpose of repetition and reinforcement through these stereotypes the notion of othering is enforced. Similarly, the evident use of the technique of estrangement particularly in the depiction of culture is to lift it out of the realm of self-evident. The estranged yet exotic projection of the culture through norms, practices, and language as substandard, uncultured, chaotic further gives it a sense of sensationalism. Through this estrangement, the penetration of the ideology of othering is to assert the East as inferior to the West.

Conclusion

From the detailed analysis of these young adult fictions by Pakistani writers, it can be noticeably concluded that young adult fictions' contribution to capitalist globalization owes due to adherence to the internalized ideology making them a fetish commodity. The South Asian Young Adult fictions treading the path of adult fiction reinforce the ideology of othering, the effective assertion of *othering* and re-orientalism by the orient eventually transforms their product as a fetish commodity that is readily consumed in the arena of globalization. These novels have been successful because they have successfully aligned themselves as per the demand of the cultural industry by adding all those elements which make them a fetish cultural product. The element of standardization, the element of estrangement, the element of multiculturalism are all internal elements that make any product a fetish cultural product. These writers have skillfully deployed the technique of standardization, estrangement, and multiculturalism to transform their artistic products into fetish products. It is not the external factors as typical exotic covers, numerous editions, laurels, and awards that have made these products globalized products. Their popularity owes more to their adherence to the internalized ideology of the dominant group which has contributed more to their success. These writers have deployed all of the above-mentioned cultural techniques simultaneously or have used any one of the stated techniques. But their deliberate purpose has been one and that is to satiate the need of the western audience. In *The Devil's Kiss*, the writer has utilized multi-ethnicity or multiculturalism to make herself heard

whereas, in *The Skunk Girl* and *Wanting Mor*, the writers' major focus has been the standardized and the estranged depiction of culture, the ultimate motive has been similar that is to sell them as a commodity and gain the monetary benefits in the form of laurels, awards, and acknowledgment in the Western market possible only by projecting the prescribed ideology of the publishing industry. The novels have established and strengthened the culture which is not only different but backward and recessive and in short of no match to the Western culture.

The novels have portrayed the culture either through the language or through the practices, but a conscious effort has been made on the part of the writers, through the addition of the minutest details either as a standardized or in the estranged form to make that culture a fetish culture to be readily marketed and to ensure the fixation of theme which explicitly states the difference between the West and the Rest. The cultural depiction deliberately avoids the holistic or the positive aspect while the trivial or the unfamiliar has been maximized to gain the access to the western laurels and market endorsing Graham Huggan's opinion that "postcolonial world, has capitalized on its perceived marginality while helping turn marginality itself into a valuable intellectual commodity" (viii). Moreover, as mentioned earlier the acknowledgment of these novels in the form of laurels and awards assert the fetish aspect of these novels and the way they have been distributed worldwide in different paperbacks accommodating different types of consumers and slightly varying titles assert the commoditized aspect of these fictions.

CHAPTER# 5

GLOBALIZED POETICS AND POLITICS IN THE YOUNG ADULT FICTION BY INDIAN WRITERS

This chapter focuses upon the young adult fiction written by Indian Diaspora writers. The study focuses upon three novels which include *Born Confused* (2001) by Tanuja Desai Hidier, *Bamboo People* (2010) by Metali Perkin, *Born* and *Blue Boy* (2009) by Rakesh Satyal. The study establishes these fictions as fetish products as per theories presented by cultural theorists Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Slavoj Zizek. It further highlights the internalized ideology which they exhibit to be readily consumed in Western-oriented globalization. This chapter presents a critique on the selected young adult fictions written by Indian writers and highlights the internalized ideology in these texts and asserts that internal elements as plots, themes, or characterization of these fictions have successfully aligned with the outer factors like branding, numerous editions for distribution achievement of laurels and awards to make them fetish commodity.

5.1. *Born Confused* (2001) and the Reassertion of Standardization

Born confused (2001) is formally the first novel written about South Asian young adults in general which focuses upon the female teens in particular. The novel is written by Tanuja Desai Hidier who is an Indian American writer. Hidier won the James Jones Literary Prize for *A Tale of Two- Hearted Tiger* in 1995, the South Asia Book Award in 2015, and the London Writer/ Water stone Award. The APALA Children and the YA honor Award too. Besides being a writer, she is a singer and a songwriter as well who has composed *when we were Twins* based on the novel *Born Confused* that has been declared as the first ‘book track’. Her second novel *Bombay Blues* was launched at the National Book Festival in Washington DC and a Literary Festival in Jaipur India. Her Music video *heptanes* from *Bombay Spleen* remained a favorite pick on MTV Indies for quite a long time, whereas her video “Seek me in Strange” is a track of a feature film *Other People’s Children*. Recently she has produced a video entitled ‘Deep Blue She’ where she has involved more than 100 artists or activists focusing on human rights, which has been declared as the desi version of the notion ‘We are the world’. She now lives in London.

The novel, *Born Confused* has the clear support of the publishing industry which is well evident from the review of some of the popular publishers such as *USA Today*, the *Kirkus Review*, *Barnes and Noble Teens*, *the Atlantics*, *NBC* to name a few. Similarly, *RollingStone Magazine* has declared it among the list of top literary works as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, the *Harry Potter* series. It is the recipient of the ALA award, the YA honors awards and the APLA awards and the list goes on. The novel has been translated into various languages like Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Italian, and German subscribing to what the cultural theorists believe that tailor-made products are made by the culture industry to cater to different consumers at different levels. The book has not only been exhibited in Queen’s museum of art exhibition under the title *Her Stories: Fifteen Years of the South Asian Women’s Creative Collective*. It is also taught as a part of curriculum worldwide affirming its reputation not only as a cannon but as a fetish cannon. It is available in the form of an Audiobook that too by Blackstone Audio, one of the reputed ones, and finally, it has been adapted by the writer

herself into a screenplay asserting it to be a tailored commodity for the market and the consumers. All the above-mentioned factors assert the commoditized nature of this fictional work. Furthermore, in her interview, she postulated;

I hadn't read any books I could recall with a South Asian American teen protagonist [before I wrote mine] ... To the best of my knowledge *Born Confused* was the first book with a US female teen desi heroine; that was one of the reasons my publisher wanted it, and it is certainly one of the reasons I wrote it (Hidier, On Born Confused).

This asserts the status of this text as a fetish commodity since the novel was written for marketing purposes and the publishers were interested in this novel only because there had not been a novel written about Indian female teens. However, the deeper analysis of the novel shows that the internal elements of the novel have been adapted as per the interests of the capitalists of globalization. The novel revolves around Dimple Rohitbhai Lala, a Marathi-origin teen girl living in New Jersey in America, and her conflict between two cultures, the South Asian particularly the Indian culture and the American culture. The novel explores the teenage issues faced by brown kids, stages of adulthood, family and peer pressures, and the first love experience, but deep down it focuses on the harmonious blending of two cultures. She has to adhere to the Indian culture at her home where her parents have kept up the Indian culture through the physical setting of the house, the rituals that are being practiced in the house, and on the other hand in school and other public places, she experiences the American culture and has to negotiate between these two spaces and her journey of self –actualization.

The assertion of the novel as a fetish commodity is evident from the paperback and cover of the novel which depicts an Indian girl wearing a *bindi*, a typical Indian identification symbol. The South Asian fiction in general and Indian fictions, in particular, have been identified for the portrayal of the exotic book covers, as the covers usually portray Indian women with the traditional dress like saree, wearing traditional jewelry or the traditional cosmetics as *henna, kajols, sandoor* or any other ethnic cultural symbols. Usually, the book covers reflect the content of the book but the South Asian fictions, in particular, have never complied with this practice. G Tekgul (2017) whose entire thesis is on the marketing

strategies of South Asian fiction, has highlighted that Asian fictions have exotic book covers reflecting one or many of the above-mentioned tropes which give them a legitimized license to be accepted in the market. These standardized estranged covers serve the purpose of exoticism and *other* to the mainstream fiction. Nevertheless, the cover book of the *Born Confused* portrays a half Indian face, with *kajoled* eyes only and the question mark in the middle serves the double purpose, either to be taken as a *bindi*, a traditional cosmetic worn by Indian females, or as the connotation of confusion or question mark (?). Apart from the book cover, the title further adds to the estrange aspect of the novel, the title *Born Confused* has been taken from ABCD “American born confused desi” (79) which is generally accepted as referring to “South Asian American born or raised in the United States in contrast to those who were born overseas and later settled in the USA” (120.). The standardized, estranged book cover and the title assert what Marcuse has pointed out that the estrangement does not necessarily create a new reality; it recreates and reproduces the existing reality. It is a fact that estrangement is not deliberately and consciously superimposed upon literature but it cannot be denied that estrangement does provide the element of sensationalism which is important for the fetishized aspect of the culture, whereupon it draws the attention of masses towards itself. Once it is done it successfully propagates and circulates the ideology of the dominant group of East as the exotic *other* of the West, which is unconsciously accepted by the masses.

As Adorno has pointed out that one of the essential techniques used by the South Asian writers, in general, is the element of *standardization* which acts as a repetition through which an ideology of the dominant group is not only circulated but accepted by the readers. The standardized theme that is prevalent in most South Asian fictions is the endorsement of *othering* and most importantly *self-Othering* which can be traced in Hidier’s *Born Confused*. The notion is depicted immediately at the beginning of the novel when the protagonist realizes in school with approaching summer break that she along with another Indian boy Jimmy aka Trilok Singh is very different from the rest of their peers as they strike out as the exotic others to their white peers. She strongly feels:

I didn't have to struggle for spy status. Fortunately, I have this gift for invisibility, which comes in handy when you're trying to take sneaky peeks at other people's lives, considering I'm one of only two Indians in the whole school. The other being Jimmy (Trilok Singh) who wore his ethnicity so brazenly, in the form of that pupil-shrinking turban and the silver *Kada* bangle on his wrist, we got the feeling many people had stopped noticing that I hailed originally from the same general hood. But I did my best to play it down. After all, the day I wore my hair in braids everyone yelled Hey, Pocahontas and did that ah-haah-baah-baah lip-slap at recess (4).

This detail reveals the notion of difference and isolation which she feels among her white peers and white community. Her association with the other Indian boy who had retained his ethnic identity through *Kada* and *turban* is because he too is *other* like her to the rest of the mainstream peers. Eventually, when she once wore the braids and everyone called her Pocahontas, all she wished for was either to be invisible or to be assimilated in the mainstream because she felt that she was different and an inferior different. Hidier is not the only writer who has dealt with the perception of identity, this has been the standardized issue in almost all South Asian origin novels as Umma Narayan (1998) has stated that "South Asian writers also portray protagonists being concerned over the issue of self-identity, but this struggle is not with the maintaining of a South Asian identity in a Western world, but finding individuality in a community which is highly prescriptive" (250).

The issue of othering is further highlighted by the protagonist when she compares her house with that of her best White friend Gwyn. Dimple's house is the place where the family has kept up the Indian culture and traditions, highlighted by the commentary of Kavita, the cousin of the protagonist studying at NYU as

As we walked through the house, Kavita exclaimed delightedly at all sorts of things I'd long stopped noticing: a thigh-high vase blinking with peacock feathers in the foyer, the sandalwood chariot with the miniature Krishna and Arjuna...She stopped at the edge of a handwoven rug....-Bapray! I remember when you bought this

(addressing Dimple's mother)-you signed it here, the Kashmiri storekeeper's way of assuring you the rug later shipped was indeed the chosen one (89).

Out of all the objects in the house, Kavita comments on all those objects which reflect Indian culture. She has not only picked up and pointed out the Indian artifacts but has also provided a short historical account of the objects exotifying it to a larger extent. The concept of self-othering is further enhanced by Dimple herself when she compares her house to that of Gwyn. She begins with providing detail of her living room in which all of their "Indian possessions have taken up residence" (89) and she elaborates:

these lived together not in so perfect harmony with a few American Items, such as the faux leather couches creating a corner at the rosewood statue of an Indian classical dancer in ajigkike pose, part of her shoulder chipped from shipping, breast honey dewed over the protruding belly. A pastel painting of boats in Cape Cod harbor—which my father bought because it was so "pleasant" ---starred a hand-sewn Rajasthani mirrored wall hanging in the face with a quiet menace, the kind implemented in TV commercials for female douching products. On the elaborately carved writing desk serving and lobbying tennis player figurines proclaimed world's #1 Dad and world's Greatest player-----And dizzyingly the partially glass cased sandal wood chariot with Krishna explaining the Gita to Arjuna perfumed the air beside the wildly untuned piano" (89)

The entire description provides an unbalanced and unmannerly blend of American and Indian artifacts where the chaotic aspect of Indian paraphernalia strikes out and the setting loudly declares the ambiguous blending of the two. Whereas Gwyn's house has been described as simple yet elegant, it is symmetrical with a proper color scheme. The rooms are comparatively spacious but not overcrowded with messed-up furniture. In her house, Dimple and other children could find ample space to hide while playing and rooms can be transformed and decorated on various occasions. The perfect symmetry in the rooms is provided by the details of Gwyn's mother's room which goes on as:

It was white. All white ---from blizzardy carpeting stretching from one white wall to another to the king-sized bed draped with snowy linens, the tassel throw pillows, and lampshades. A faux-fur-trimmed dressing gown hung silkily off the bed spot in the same camouflage. Porcelain figurines of swans and sprites floated on the mirror surfaces of glossy white vanity tables and night tables and dresses. And atop the entertainment cabinet; an all-white turntable, one speaker (the other was propped upon a wicker basket in the corner), and a cassette deck, like a sound system for Barbie's wedding (178).

The detailed description serves as a sheer contrast to the previous description, where the perfect evenness and proportions of all items coexist in a perfect harmony which compelled Dimple to remove her shoes out of awe and respect. It counterbalances the unsymmetrical and exotic arrangement in Dimple's house. Through this minute description, the writer has made a conscious attempt to portray the ideology of the inferiority of the East over the West. She has successfully deployed Adorno's notion of standardization by portraying the typical stereotype cultural cliché's.

It is not only the retention of the exotic within the house, but the Hindu community tries to preserve and highlights the peculiarities of their culture on a broader scale and feel proud of their standardized exoticism as Kavita invites Dimple to attend a conference on South Asian culture to introduce her to South Asian culture. The standardized portrayal of the exotic culture serves the purpose of highlighting the notion of *othering* where the Asian culture turns out to be inferior to the western culture and serves as a contrast to them. This *standardized* notion is the demand of the culture industry.

As Marcuse is of the view that one of the essential traits of a fetish cultural product is that it contains the element of estrangement which draws the attention of the consumer towards itself and once the attention of the reader is drawn it becomes easier to circulate the ideology of the prominent group. The element of estrangement is created by Hidiier in the novel through the portrayal of exotic authentic details of India as;

India. I had few memories of the place, but the ones I held were dreamed clear: Bathing in a bucket like a little girl. The unnerving richness of buffalo milk drunk from a pewter cup. My Dadaji pouring tea into a saucer so it would cool faster, sipping from the edge of the thin dish, never spilling a drop. A whole host of kitchen gods (looking so at home in the undishwasherred unmicrowaved room). Meera Maasi crouching on the floor to sift the stones from rice. Cows huddled in the middle of the vegetable market, sparrows nesting on their backs. Hibiscus so brilliant they looked like they'd caught fire (15).

The graphic details provided by Dimple, the protagonist of the novel focuses upon both the cultural practices as well as the paraphernalia of India. She remembers and recalls her Dadaji sipping tea out of the saucers without spilling a drop and her Meera Maasi crouching on the floor sifting the stones, a kitchen containing the whole Avatar of different gods, the overcrowded marketplace, and so forth. The exotic description serves the dual purpose, it creates the element of estrangement and draws the attention of the reader towards it, and secondly, it creates the element of *othering*, a backward and uncultured India is explicitly portrayed where people casually sit on the floor and continue their chores, where people drink tea from the saucers creating uneasiness to the refined morale of West. A technologically backward kitchen where there is no electricity but the whole avatar of gods to overlook the matter, a dusty busy market where people and animals equally wander, creating a chaotic atmosphere, and finally the presence of hibiscus instead of adding serenity adds further mess as if caught fire. These minute details apart from creating the authenticity assert the notion of East the backward. The notion of estrangement and exoticism is an essential aspect of South Asian Fictions as Anis Shivani succinctly remarks, "You can safely dip your toes into the exotic mystical waters of the East and not have to worry about being drowned" (5). The postcolonial writers generally yearn to portray the authentic detail and in doing so, they end up exotifying their culture which creates the element of estrangement, having the assumed ideology of creating binaries, eventually making their product a readily consumed product for the first world readers.

Tanuja Desai Hidier has tried all possible means to make the text a fetish commodity. The exoticized notion is not merely restricted to the depiction of exotic details of the Indian culture and its practices, besides, she has appropriated the English language effectively to create the desired effect. *BornConfused* is fused with the use of the oriental native words because culture has always been introduced either through or cultural practices. Dimple's parents are quite fond of using Hindi words in their everyday communication and particularly when they express their joys or sorrows. Thus when Dimple's parents caught her in an awkward position after she comes home drunkard the detailed description is provided by her

My father and mother formed a united front in showing me their backs. I wished they would at least look at me...Thank Ram Kavita is coming, the back of my mother's head commented-enough of these hanky-panky friendships of yours (76).

The use of *Ram* for god and the extensive detail as the *hanky panky* is the *desi* words of which the writer does not provide any detail. It is not only in extreme emotional stances or situations where the native words are being used in the text, but Hidier has also used the native names for the titles of her chapters as well thus she has chapters entitled as *Om on the Range*, *Durga Rising*, *Surya Namaskar*, *Gur Nalon ishq Mitha* , *Jugal Bandi* , *Durga slays the demon*, *Thus Dished Zara Thrustra*, are few examples. By adding so Hidier has tried to add nativity to the English language. The addition of these serve multipurpose, firstly, they recapture the emotions and feelings of the character more profusely, secondly, they create the element of authenticity within the text, and finally, they serve the element of estrangement and through this estrangement, exoticism has been created to introduce to the foreign readers the backward and exotic culture of India As Anis Shivani notes, “a notion of exotic culture is sometimes evoked not only by providing the descriptions of cultural practices but sometimes foreign-sounding expressions are used to create a sense of a different culture” (2).

One of the standardized themes prevalent in the works of South Asian writers is related to “mangoes, coconuts and grandmothers” (Srivastava 28). This notion has also been explicated by Graham Huggan who is of the view “India . . . is more available than ever for

consumption, and more prevalent than ever are the gastronomic images through which the nation is to be consumed.” (82). The post- colonial novels in general and South Asian fictions, in particular, have invested a lot in food, and the food serves as the exotic other to the West. Food in South Asian fiction does not merely serve as nutrition, a source of nourishment, or the source of cultural portrayal but it supplements various other themes like family, gender role, socioeconomic factors, and many others. Over the past few decades’ foods as Rüdiger Kunow (2003) has noted, have become a major means of affirming one’s identity as a South Asian diasporic subject. (163). It is not only Hidier who has asserted the inclusion of South Asian food both within the title and in the text, it is one of the strategies used by the writers to link it with the marketing world. According to Mannur (2009), some South Asian American writers engage in “a form of cultural self-commodification through which . . . [they] earn a living by capitalizing on the so-called exoticism embedded in . . . [their] food ways”. (59). Desai has also highlighted food in quite a detail. In the opening chapter the protagonist after feeling isolated and different in her school gets the feeling of home, the moment she enters her house and particularly at her kitchen where she immediately gets the feeling of homeliness and identity. The kitchen and the culinary of the kitchen gives her the feeling of identity, the Indian identity to be precise as she reiterates:

My mother was standing before the stove, stirring a huge pot. From the milky-sweet newborn scent, I knew it was kheer-my favorite Indian dessert, rice pudding, basically, with saffron and cardamom, a pistachio crown (72).

The entire novel is loaded with the minute details of the food items as there is hardly a page or a chapter where the traditional Indian cuisine or food items have not been discussed. When the protagonist’s cousin arrives to stay with them, the detail of cuisine is laid down as follows:

brown sugar roti and cloud-puff puris just itching to be popped. Coconut rice fluffed up over the silver pot like a sweet-smelling pillow. Samosa transparent, pea’s pudding just below the surface with nymph –finger clove of garlic that sank like butter on the tongue. A vacate of cucumber raita. The two percent yogurt thickened with sour

cream----- and a centerpiece: a deep serving dish of lamb curry, the pieces melting tenderly off the bone oh and of course, small but deep bowl of kheer, coroneted with crushed pistachio and strands of saffron, vermillion like tiny cuts in the foamy surface” (69).

These minute details of the food create the *standardized* exoticism associated with food. It is not only the mere mention of the food but the exotic layout of the cuisine further adds charms to it. It is the sheer display of an exquisite cuisine where everything has been displayed together, the salty and the sweet dish, a peculiar trait of typical Indian layout creating a way of self-commodification and thus marketing the exoticism. The cuisine is very much popular as the protagonist herself mentions the mixed reaction of her class fellows as of desire and disgust whenever she used to have her lunch in the class. Food is not only a means of nutrition or health in South Asia, it is a way of expressing emotions, the bond of family ties, and the formation of new relationships as well as the strengthening of the old and it is this that has been depicted in the novel. This cultural association with the food is completely contrary to what the West associates with the food. For them, food is merely a sort of nutrition and nourishment having no cultural or ethnic association. This contrast has been depicted by Hidier in this novel proving that East is different. It is this difference that she has deliberately projected and highlighted.

As discussed earlier, it is not merely the food that has been portrayed by the novel but the novel has focused upon the standardized theme of linking food with the gender role, as South Asian women are expected to do the cooking. In Lala’s house, the kitchen is always controlled by her mother. She cooks the meal not only for her family and “cook(ed) with her body” (254). With her emotions and feelings and even gets carried away by the exaggerated flattery of her cooking skills by anyone. She also cooks on every special occasion and almost spends the entire day cooking. Thus she cooks splendid dinner when the possible suitor of Dimple, Karsh Kapoor visits them, and even when he pays visits to their house off and on, it is she who offers him *chai* or *frozen samosa*. Food and her mother are so interlinked that even when they go for outings or dinner it is her mother who decides the menu for the entire family. Dimple’s English friend Gwyn is interested in learning Indian cuisine not from the

food channels or the cooking books but Lala's mother. Similarly, her mother's reluctance to share the traditional recipes is because recipes are synonymous with the traditional Indian culture which she does not want to share. When the protagonist goes to NYU to attend the conference about South Asian culture, the bar, and the food court is under the domain of two Indian girls Kavita and Sabina even though the entire conference has been organized by both male and female students. All this shows that the strong connection of food with gender roles establishing the notion of Asian gendered women as opposed to the Western androgynous independent women. As Lau in her famous article has pointed out that these sweeping statements aid to emphasize parables and stereotypes of Indian women as the ones perpetually bound and doomed to servitude, and Indians as a race being hysterical and histrionic people. In making such statements, some diasporic South Asian women writers seem to be propagating certain cultural images, implying them quite explicitly. Although these images may apply to only a certain section of society, it is taken as a fact and as a norm in the wider South Asian community (584). Hidier is not the only one who has reasserted this gendered link of food with women, this notion has been depicted by various South Asian writers in the works as Rohan Candappa's *Picklehead: From Ceylon to Suburbia – A Memoir of Food, Family and Finding Yourself* (2006), Sarfraz Masoor's *Greetings from Bury Park: Race. Religion. Rock 'n' Roll* (2007), Sathnam Sanghera's *The Boy with the Topknot: A Memoir of Love, Secrets, and Lies in Wolverhampton* (2008), and Hardeep Singh Kohli's *Indian Takeaway: A Very British Story* (2008). The protagonist's expected suitor too is entertained with a lavish cuisine and throughout the first meeting of the family, it is the food that the family was most concerned about. Even in the subsequent chapters whenever the protagonist has ever mentioned the possibility of bringing her suitor home her mother's major concern has always been the *chai* or *the frozen samosa* or the *pakoras*. The most cherished incident that Radha, the best friend of Dimple's parents can recall and narrate is related to the love affair of her parents, who were most famous in the medical college as love birds feeding each other the homemade ladoos. Food is not merely a source of nutrition; besides asserting the gendered role it is a source of building and strengthening a new relationship. There is hardly a chapter without the description of food and even some of the titles of the chapters are based explicitly or implicitly about the food thus the title of some of the chapter is

Chicken Chat, Gur Nalon Ishq Mitha, The sub-continental Breakfast, a Brief History of Love and Ladoos, Hot like Spicy. This standardized depiction of food within the chapters or in the title is not something new. The food in the title has been depicted in many of the South Asian diaspora novels as Mira Nair's *Mississippi Masala* (1991), Gurinder Chadha's *Bhaji on the Beach* (1993) Carmit Delman's *Burnt Bread and Chutney* (2002), Nisha Minhas's *Chapatti or Chips?* (1997) to name a few. These novels are not precisely about the food but food has been explicitly displayed within these novels as Arjun Appadurai (1981) states that "South Asian civilization has invested perhaps more than any other in imbuing food with moral and cosmological meanings" (496). Huggan is of the view that the food titles act as a cliché and it is the most successful formula of South Asian diaspora writers to make their work a successful admission into the marketing and selling process. Mannur proclaims that through the depiction of the food in the title the writers engage in "a form of cultural self-commodification through which . . . [they] earn a living by capitalizing on the so-called exoticism embedded in . . . [their] food ways" (126). It is through exotic food titles the South Asian writers assert the *othering* of their cultures. The commodification of the exotic food of India can be well evident from the fact that when Dimple goes to Jackson Height Queen with Gwyn she is surprised to see

As in India, there were people, people everywhere: women in brilliant saris and yellow gold with thin knit cardigans and sometimes socks stuffed into toe-looped chappals, plucking up half-price jars of ghee and even frozen food (I was amazed at all of the idlee and dosa TV dinners you could find here)...alleys hectic with Hindi movie posters, the long-haired elaborately dressed actresses half-heartedly running from men at their sari tails, a paan maker with black teeth rolling the icy thandak in betel nut leaves that my mother said my father used to hoard in his mouth like a hamster in India (156)

The protagonist can see food like *ghee, dosa, idlee, paan*, and many other eatable items openly available in the market and the street is the busiest of all the other streets. Rüdiger Kunow has further asserted that overtime, food has become a major means of sustaining and asserting one's identity as a South Asian diasporic subject and the novels are rarely seen devoid of this gastro-economic trope'. Moreover, both the media and the

publishing Industry is obsessed with the preservation and the projection of Indian Cuisine, a notion well asserted by Scottish Pakistani novelist Suhayl Saadi,(2004) who stated:

How many more novels about . . . exotic Indian spice-sellers can we stomach? Like vindaloos, they pour endlessly into our system and out the other end, changing nothing in the process . . . We have become bulimic with TV comedy-dramas about Asian restaurants . . . and everywhere . . . the odor of curry . . . writers pander to all this because they know . . . that if they don't, the likelihood of publication or production is commensurately less. So let's all jump onto the korma train and dance exotic for the English über-classes! (128).

As Adorno has pointed out that to be a fetish commodity, it must have the element of *pseudo* individualization besides standardization because it is this pseudo individualism that creates the element of estrangement which draws the attention of the consumer to itself and eventually makes it a saleable commodity. Hider has very tactfully highlighted the issue of sexuality and particularly the tabooed sexuality. The Hindu society is predominantly heterosexual, the cultural and religious doctrines prevent talking about sexuality, and highlighting sexuality is considered as taboo, but India is one of those nations which is considered to be the home of *Hijras*. The *hijras* as commonly defined as "eunuch" or "hermaphrodite" although modern LGBT considers them as transgender or transvestite, a term given to a specific community in South Asia. The recorded history of the existence of hijras in India can be traced back to the Kamasutra period partly because literature and religious doctrine of this period focused upon two important gods *Bahuchara Mata* and *Lord Shiva* who were considered to be the patrons of the hijra community. Besides in *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, the holy texts of Hindus do give the occasional reference to *hijras*. The depiction of hijras by the westerner has been done by the British traveler in the colonial era who referred to them in 1650 as "Men and boys who dress like women" (Rach) . During British Raj, attempts were being made to eradicate them from society considering them as "a breach of public decency" (Preston). Despite these historical traces, hijra have been exotified as an eastern *other*. There has been a general interest in depicting and portraying their lifestyle. It is not the notion of "neither male nor female nor both " that has

been exotic for the colonial British but the notion of clothes, dances, acts and attires of females that interested them then and is of interest to the Westerners now. This is what Hidier has done explicitly in her fiction and has very beautifully created self-exoticism through the portrayal of detailed description and lifestyle of a hijra Zara Thusara. Hidier has specifically focused upon the feminine portrayal of Zara. Dimple's first encounter with Zara, a hijra took place in NYU in the South Asian conference where on the dance floor she is mesmerized by her/his appearance as she was

the most striking woman I'd ever seen didn't even look human. This creature was an Indian goddess; like something I had seen only in museums or movies or the illustration in the gorgeously spined books on Dadaji's shelves. Except even more fictitious and more viral, as if she'd come unclipped from the Hindi film images, now brick playing, wandering multi-dimensionally out. She was decked out in a Space-Bollywood style in an Argentine sari, and silver glitter-dusted the apple of her cheek. Her locks ran long, flawless as a mannequin hair; her skin was like a sunrise on a dune. She had all the right moves and they seemed subaqueous, s flowing were they. Her faced too danced to the beat, neck switching from side to side, seashell lid low, eyes skirting the faces below her from beneath them, like slow darting fish" (144)

This exotic description which is supplemented with strong words as striking women, not human, Indian goddesses already create the exotic image. Besides her attire, the make-up details add to the exoticism and the charm and the last detail about the exuberant dance movements further add to the exoticism. Hidier has provided an elaborated detail of the typical Indian *hijras*. Not only has she relished this detail but has devoted a complete chapter *thus dished Zara Thusara*. The exotic grace and beauty of Zara even surpassed that of Gwyn who before the arrival Zara shone like a queen. Zara was not only exotic but had an Indian exoticism in her/his personality which strikes her out when Dimple happens to go to a pub *24-hour café* bar run by this transgender. Zara was different because of her walking style and posture which was a typical Indian and *other* to the rest of transgender as "the way he walked, gracefully navigated the sated space, a dance's walk" (316). His tragic narration of being "persecuted throughout the history" (318) and his taking of asylum in America only to

be loved not to be mistreated has been ignored and overlooked by her. Dimple has only focused upon her and about her transformation as a drag queen which inspired her to take her photo. She took shots of the moment-by-moment graceful transformation of Zara, the way she transformed himself/herself into a female cladding herself/himself into a sari, wearing the necessary jewelry, and even applying all the necessary make-up and thus being converted into a graceful woman. Out of all pictures of the transgenders of the world, Zara's pictures are selected by the *flash* magazine and got reviewed by the editor on the front page suggesting the value of exoticism of the *other*. Hidier has successfully done the self-exoticism and this creates pseudo individualization on the part of the novel too. This pseudo-individualization of the theme makes the western reader look for something *other* in the novel to satiate their notion of superiority and eventually convert this novel into a fetish commodity.

Hidier's fiction has not only focused upon hijras but also has brought to light Indian society's tolerance to lesbian relationships. As discussed above that Indian society is purely a heterosexual society and even today, like all Asian countries, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) laws have not yet been implemented in India. Moreover, talking about sex is still considered taboo in this conservative society. Besides, this novel was written in 2002 when LGBT laws were not even passed in the European nation as well. Hidier still has hinted about the existence of lesbo relationship in society. The notion of same-sex relationships had never been non-existent as there exists the notion of *sakhi* or *saheli* to express the female relationship. The same-sex relationship between the females can be dated back to the middle ages where for the first time the concept of worshipping of *devi* among Vishua and Shiva arose. The mythical tale related to the sex change of male into the female through birth became one of the most important themes to be dealt with. Similarly, the abrogation of masculine traits of *Shiva* to please his spouse *Parviti* further strengthened this notion which was eventually eroticized by the myths of birth resulting from this relationship. In Indian society, the same-sex relationship is not taken as such a taboo as the illegal heterosexual relationship is taken. But despite all these religious references, this relationship is still taken with a hush. India despite being a very conservative society has always

proclaimed heterogeneity even though the myths and the folk tales have always shown the other way round. This further adds to the exotic notion of India and it is this theme that Hidier has dealt with. Dimple's cousin a student of New York University (NYU) shares a room with Sabrina another Indian girl. Dimple comes across this lesbian fact about her cousin when pointed out by her friend Gwyn "where does Kavita sleep?" (218). As only one bed of the apartment seemed to have been used by them and later on the gestures shared by them made Dimple think "the way Kavita was looking at Sabina, up from under her lazy lids, it was a sort of like the way Gwyn looked at Karsh" (221). and it was not only confirmed by Kavita but Dimple finds out about them by herself. It is not merely that this relationship has been exoticized by Hidier, the way the relationship is taken as a norm and as a practice in India is the major fragment of the novel. Thus when Dimple in amazement inquiries from her mother about the true nature of the relationship between Kavita and Sabrina after their break up, her mother replies casually, "the story of love between the women is not new in India --- it is an old age saga" (268). She further adds candidly after this breakup that Kavita only needs a *Saras Chokri* to console her and to get her out of misery. This clearly shows the normality of such a relationship but only if it is maintained among the Indian girls.

The depiction of an exoticized South Asian taboo community as hijra or the portrayal of a tabooed relationship by Hidier is her pseudo- individualized addition to an already standardized depiction of South Asia. These various pseudo individualized additions by her create the element of estrangement grasping the attention of the consumer or the reader to itself and thereby introducing the element of *other*. Through this tabooed sex community or the sexual relationship, the notion of mysterious India is highlighted which makes it a saleable commodity. As Said himself has described Orient as a "living tableau of queerness" (103) which further reduces and constructs orient as *other* of the West. Moreover, it further strengthens the superiority of West and the Western individual over the Asians

Hidier has not only created pseudo- individualization through the depiction of certain taboo communities or the relationship but also the depiction of a *Marathi* language, one of the regional languages of India. As discussed earlier the postcolonial writers intend to use the native language to retain the *oriental myth* of authenticity. Hidier has not only used the Hindi

words, lexicon phrases, and sentences as postcolonial writers had already done so. But has especially utilized the Marathi language as a part of her pseudo-individualized schema which serves multiple purposes, initially, it creates the pseudo individualization as per the requirement of the culture industry. Secondly, through this, the element of authenticity is created which is the requirement of the postcolonial text, and finally, it creates the element of estrangement or the exotification through which the ideology of the superiority of western language over the eastern language is established. Thus words like *bachoodi*, *dikree*, *ketli sunder chhokrichhe*, *kaka*, *gujju*, *saras chokri*, *Jeevan saathi*, *bapuji* are few that echo regularly in the novel and cater to the need of the Western audience again adding to the commoditized aspect of the novel.

The West has always been enchanted by the mystery and the exotic beauty of India, commonly depicted as the land of Sadhoos, magicians, spices, and snake charmers. The standardized western longings and yearnings have been vastly marketed in the form of book covers, billboard signs, media both print or electronic media. The depiction has always ensured one thing that is of exoticism and oriental beauty. Besides these external marketing strategies by the western industry, the Asians have themselves created “fetishized signifiers often based upon anthropological tropes of clothes, food, kinship and ritual” (J.Hutynek). Through these representations, the Asian culture is now merely reduced to repeated images of saris, exotic cuisines, the Hindus sages, and even the Indian dances and the elaborate wedding details. The primary cause of these representations and commercialization undoubtedly owes to the globalized multiculturalism but it is also a fact that most of the commodification of culture and stereotype cultural tropes are portrayed by the very producer of these cultures, the South Asian themselves who have successfully gained access to the market through these strategies which is very much evident in most of the covers of the novel written by the South Asian writers. In an article written by Dania Zafar (2016), she indicates that most of the covers of the South Asian fiction written in English and published in the West clearly show the exoticized notion of the Indian culture bearing a little or no likeness with the content of the novels. The cover page of the novel clearly shows the *sari*, the *henna*, the *bindi*, and the other such cultural artifacts as these are simply consumed in the western

market. This standardized constituent is prevalent in the novel of Hidier as she has excessively deployed all possible cultural relics and objects in the novel besides food. The writer has focused upon the clothes, the jewelry, the religious and cultural practices in detail, and each detail further adds the element of estrangement in the novel. The novel begins with a detailed description of all the pieces of jewelry and accessories that Lala has which she has never appreciated, but ironically, those have always been a major source of attraction for her English friend Gwyn. Gwyn wore certain pieces of Lala's jewelry on her first date. Hidier has devoted a complete chapter on Lala's jewelry is comprising bangles of all colors and textures, different anklets as *jingle bell anklet*, *the noisyanklet* the *silent anklet*, the rings particularly the thumb rings and armlets, the varieties of bindis the *rakhis* of all kinds and finally different varieties of saris, from handwoven to the finely delicate ones. Hidier has not only described merely the accessories but the rituals associated with these accessories and that too in detail e.g. when talking about *rakhis* Dimple remembers that her mother used to go to a temple on a *Raksha Bandhan* and would perform all the rituals except the tying of *rakhi* before going as her brother had passed away explicitly indicating that *rakhis* have certain connections with a tradition associated with siblings as brothers. Similarly, *shalwar* suit or Saree is not merely a dress but the dress to be worn on all important occasions escorted with all kinds of accessories, her parents not only made her wear the *shalwar* suit but applied a *bindi* on her forehead when she was supposed to meet her expected suitor. It is not only in Dimple's house where the traditional culture is being displayed but in Jackson Heights, there is a complete lane called The Indian Neighborhood that displays the Indian Culture. Thus Dimple asserts:

gold with thin knit cardigans and sometimes socks stuffed into toe-looped chappals plucking up half-price jars of ghee and even frozen food (I was amazed at all of the idlee and dosa TV dinners you could find here)...alleys hectic with Hindi movie posters, the long-haired elaborately dressed actresses half-heartedly running from men at their sari tails, a paan maker with black teeth rolling the icy thandak in betel nut leaves that my mother said my father used to hoard in his mouth like a hamster in India (112).

Almost every chapter of the novel has either focused upon the cultural products or the cultural practice and it is not only the cursory hint that has been provided but explicit details have been provided by the writer and the major focus is on the ethnic and cultural details. Dimple is mesmerized to see the ritual of *Surya Namaskar* performed by her mother and her cousins which is again provided in detail as:

mother was in the countermen in the lotus position-----we watch in amazement as mother commanded them through a full circuit that involved jumping their feet to their hands, doing some kind of bird swoop up with their arms then going through another squat and jump back that landed Kavita flat and histrionically on her belly and her black satin partner shakily holding in an impressively low push up posit (126).

Even in the South Asian conference at NYU, Gwyn looked exquisite and radiant as she not only wore the traditional Indian outfit but applied the traditional makeup too. Zara Thusara, the very famous Indian Hijra dominance on the dance floor owes much to his/ her traditional and Indian outlook distinguishing him from the rest. The primary reason he was able to receive critical acclaim from the editor of the *flash* magazine was not because of him as a transgender but the way he transforms himself into an Indian hijra with all the attire and outfit. The novel is loaded with numerous examples like these but the final detailed cultural detail focusing upon outfit is provided when Dimple's mother finally dances after imposing a self-censure for a lapse of twenty-five years and she wears a dress which she wore twenty-five years ago:

The choli stretching at the hooks but still flaming on, deep purple sari stitched gold as summer waves cresting, creased fabric fanning between her knees, and the final piece of cloth knotted around her waist, hanging over her backsliding. Upon her clavicle, the jutting necklace lay, the chunky pendant not quite flat, and the chain hanging still around it. Earing swung to nearly her shoulders (302).

This complete detail starts from the minutest detail of every piece of cloth to the drapery and even the description of the jewelry of ears, arms, nose, neck, feet, and almost

everybody part is sufficient enough for the cultural interest. Finally, her mother's performance of dancing entitled *Durga slaying the Dragon* is the best example of the standardized portrayal of the cultural rituals of India. The portrayal of culture by Hidier echoes what Lisa Lau has explained in her article *Re-Orientalism* that the diaspora writers in general and women writers, in particular, are obsessed with the depiction of the authenticity and particularly with the authenticity of the culture as

if something is the norm, it is hardly necessary to highlight it any further. This explicit and deliberate explanation of cultural norms is one of the defining characteristics of diasporic writing, and one of its most distinctive features the constant rehashing of a handful of stereotypes that supposedly accord with the expected representation of Indians is part of the damaging workings of Re-Orientalism as practiced by a fair number of diasporic South Asian women writers (583).

The portrayal of these cultural artifacts and practices are specifically as per western demand who want this distinctiveness and individualities of the Orient to be portrayed grotesquely to affirm their cultural absurdity. The South Asian writers themselves exotify and use their ethnicity and cultural practices as a reward to be earned. These writers have consciously or unconsciously assumed the role of representatives of their ethnicity or culture and are thus ready to exploit both at whatever level. For Lisa Lau:

as emissaries, third-world individuals are often expected to be virtual encyclopedias of information on sorts of different aspects of their complex "cultural" heritage. Their encyclopedic expertise is often expected to range from the esoteric to the mundane, from popular to High Culture, from matters of history to contemporary issues (583)

It is not the cultural practices, artifacts, or tropes that have been portrayed by Hidier, she has also focused upon the religious doctrines or the practices. The South Asian Diaspora writers have regularly portrayed religious preaching and practices in their works. The depiction of these standardized religious rituals primarily serves to portray the authenticity of a particular culture but importantly it reasserts the queerness and the backwardness of these religions

thereby asserting the superiority of western religion. Hidier has focused upon the religious deities and the rituals associated with Hinduism and that too very explicitly. As Dimple gives a detailed description of her kitchen and focuses upon deities:

in the kitchen alone the ivory Krishna in the temple ----- a bright orange trunk smiling Titwala Ganesa sweetly removing the obstacle from the stovetop and the jamming sandalwood cereal shelf Sarasvati, the goddess of knowledge and music (54).

Thus kitchen is a place that is crowded with different gods and goddesses and ample detail has been provided about each deity. Besides, she has also provided details about the religious norm and practices followed by her parents as to how her father used to offer prayers to these deities, every morning after the shower and would bow before every deity and that too in a specific order according to their hierarchical status and not even once has this order been violated while her mother would enter the room “slipped silently of her house *chappals* and sat softly with her beads” (54). Besides, the protagonist of the novel Dimple Lala despite being a non-religious person finds solace and peace in her worries only when she visits the temple of *Shree Ganesh*. Hidier has even provided at length the description of the worshipping place including temples. Not only the exterior of the temple has been provided but the minute interior of the temple is the painting depicting Krishna and Hanuman and images from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The minute details about the practices within the Temples further enhances the impact as Hidiers begins with entering the temple which includes the removal of the shoes, followed by the playing of harmonium, the chants in *Sanskrit*, the girls wearing *shalvar* or saree with all traditional jewelry are the rituals of the temples. Hidier has not only provided details once, rather they occur as a recurring theme all along with the novel. Each chapter explicates the religious doctrine besides the religious practices.

The standardized projection of culture is strengthened by the stereotype depiction of myths and folklore deeply rooted either in religious or cultural beliefs. The revival of myths or folklore is an attempt by postcolonial writers to preserve their culture for the second

generation. Dimple's father narration of the famous folklore from *Ramayana* is a perfect example of that, thus he narrates to his daughter:

When Ram, heir to the kingdom of Dasaratha, was unjustly banished to the forest by his stepmother-in order to clear the title for her son, Bharata-this son kept Ram's padukas, his wooden clogs, on the throne as a sign of his love and respect and devotion for his elder brother. Who himself felt was the rightful heir. Bharata sat beside the throne, besides these shoes, looking after the kingdom and guarding Ram's place until his return fourteen years later (334).

Through the narration of this folklore, the initial aim of the writer is to inculcate the cultural value and the authenticity of the Indian religious doctrine. Besides, it affirms the significance of a strong family value of filial relationship and union but the description also provides and creates an estranged effect within the text. This estranged, exotic depiction reflects a conscious attempt on the part of the Hider to represent to the western reader a world of exotic and charm depicting them a fetish product. The commodified aspect of the Hindu religion can be verified from the fact that the vast majority of puja items and rituals are readily marketed and sold in the international markets. The appearance of religion into the market gives it a status of art and not merely a ritual, an art inferior to western art but to be sold in the market. The exotification of Hindu religion has resulted in the massive commodification of Hindu artifacts in European markets the presence of shopping enclosures as Little India in important cities as Los Angeles and New-York substantiate this standpoint. The shops openly entertain the clients with items such as statues, lamps, amulets, and similarly the Hindu temples are located in most of the cities and they cater to large audiences including both Hindus and non-Hindus. This idea has been affirmed by Vaneeta Sinha in her seminal work *Religion and Commodification: Merchandising Diaspora Hinduism* (2011). According to her "Hinduism as an embodied religion grounded in materiality" (1).Based on the ethnographic details gathered from the diasporic community, Sinha has affirmed it to be important for its sustenance in this capitalistic globalized context. The material objects used in Hinduism enable the wholesale flow of the exceptionally unique procedures and practices accompanied by the subsequent apparatuses in the global market. A systematic wholesale

flow of these goods through a standardized mechanism occurs both at the grand entrepreneur level involving the industries and market to the individual level involving ordinary vendors selling goods on the street. By tracing the historical account Sinha is of the view that initially the materials required for the performance of daily rituals was provided by the *jaitis*, the religious groups of the temples comprising of the artisan or the garland makers who impregnated with the religious solemnity and doctrine never considered it to be a materialistic task but a religious obligation. In the contemporary globalized arena, the rituals have been taken by the corporate groups having no religious, ethnic, or spiritual background, owing more to the diasporic depiction of Hinduism in the media. It has resulted in the merchandising of Hinduism on a grander scale with a marked demand for numerous materials and a need for the commodification of these materials. Hinduism, as projected by the South Asian writers, has laid its foundation on a very strong devotional ground fused with energy and enthusiasm in the name of devotion both public and private domain. Desai's depiction of the religious detail supplanted with the devotion and fervor is the standardized depiction of Sinha's assertion

In a nutshell, it can be concluded that Hidier's novel *Born Confused* certainly is a complete fetish commodity, a notion certified not only through the external factors, the way it has been branded, produced, and merchandised, and the way it has been winning the support and recommendation of the important booksellers and publishers. It has repetitively been nominated and awarded with laurels and awards and finally, it has been transformed into a movie and other multimodal genres. The internal elements of the novel have also transformed and subscribed to what the culture industry demands from it. It has both the element of standardization and the estrangement which helps it to dissipate the ideology of the dominant cultural group. It has effectively internalized the ideology of the culturist gurus. It presents what the western audience expects from it and reiterates and reasserts the standardization and estrangement, the two fundamental constituents of the fetish cultural products. Through standardization, the hammering of the same idea has been done and the ideology of othering has been instilled, and through the estrangement, the newness or peculiarity has been added to the notion of othering. It can be safely concluded that this fiction is a thorough fetish

commodity not instead of its external elements but the internal elements also validate this assertion.

5.2. *Bamboo People* (2010) and Reassertion of Standardization

The most popular and the winner of YALSA (2011), *Bamboo People* is written by an Indian origin writer Metali Perkins. Metali Perkins was born in Kolkata and has moved to many countries including India, Cameron, Ghana, UK, the USA, and Mexico before settling permanently in San Francisco. She studied political science and public policy but got fame as a story writer. She now resides in Orinda, California.

Perkins has written ten novels and almost all of them have been nominated for various awards. She has written *You Bring the Distant Near* which was selected for the National Book Award, Walter Award honor book, *Rickshaw Girl* was selected by the New York Public Library as one of the top 100 books for children in the past 100 years, *Bamboo People* was nominated by American Library Association's Top Ten Novels for Young Adults, and *Tiger Boy* which won the Charlotte Huck Honour Award and the South Asia Book Award. Her books have been published by renowned publishers including Penguin Random House, Charles bridge, Candlewick, and Macmillan. The independent booksellers have declared her to be the 'the most engaging author' and the Boston Library has honored her with the title of 'Literary Light of Children'.

Her novel *Bamboo People* has been nominated for at least 12 awards including 2010 Indies Choice Book Awards, Recipient 2010 Indies Choice Awards, CCBC Choices, A Junior Library Guild Selection, Booklist Best Fiction for Young Adults 2011, YALSA Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adult, Notable Books for a Global Society, Young Adult Honour Book and IRA Teacher's Choices among many. With 18 editions so far, this novel by Perkin is another example of the fetish commodification of culture reproduced by the capitalist culture industry.

The novel is about two teenagers who are on the opposite sides within the chaotic and war-torn Burmese government and the ethnic tribe Karenni. Chiko, a fifteen years old

home tutored boy who could read both Burmese and English, lives with his mother as his father has been imprisoned by the government on the charge of treason. With a very meager amount left in the house to support both him and his mother, he is bound to apply for the post of the teacher as advertised in the newspaper which proves to be a trap to captivate the youth to be recruited in the army forcefully. A change in his fate took place when he is sent to his first mission against the Karenni tribe and is wounded in a blast in a mine and rescued by a Karenni boy and is taken to the Karenni refugee camp. This narration is supplemented by the other tale which is about a sixteen-year-old Karenni boy who is also on his first mission to supply the people of his tribe, who have been declared as rebels hiding in the forest. The mine explosion led him to encounter Burmese soldiers including the wounded Chiko. Tuh Reh. Despite having seen the brutalities of Burmese soldiers, rescues Chiko and this twist in the lives of these two protagonists bring them close together despite belonging to different ethnicities which are arch enemies of each other.

Burma has never been unfamiliar to the world as the world has known Burma either through Rudyard Kipling's Poem *Mandalay* (1890) or through George Orwell's novel *The Burmese Days* (1934). Apart from these classical works, Myanmar has been brought into focus through children's tales, travelogues, plays, and memoirs e.t.c. Almost all of these have focused on "Myanmar's steaming jungles, *dacoits* (or bandits) lurked among a menagerie of exotic wildlife, all waiting to attack anyone who crossed their paths." (Selth). Interestingly, most of the books about Burma have been written by non-Burmese, as out of 15 best-known books about Burma or Burmese culture either in the form of fictions, travelogues or memoirs as, *The Glass Palace* (2002), *Burmese Days* (1975), *Finding George Orwell in Burma* (2003), *The Piano Tuner* (2003), *Under the Dragon, a Journey through Burma* (2008), *Saving Fish from Drowning* (2006), *Golden Earth; Travel in Burma* (2003), *Burma Chronicles* (2010), *The Lizard Cage* (2008) have been written by the non-Burmese Western or Western origin writers who have represented Burma as *other* to the West. Undoubtedly the authentic minutest details provided by these writers cannot be challenged as most of these writers have either lived in Burma for a considerable period or have at least traveled justly far and wide but the representations have essentially been non-Burmese, stereotypical and

unfamiliar. These writers have primarily highlighted the theme of a non- Burmese protagonist's survival in Burma and his positive contributions within the surroundings of Burma. Even if native Burmese have been presented as protagonists, their stereotypical projection had been evident in such works.

Metali Perkin has followed the same track as her counterparts by acting not only as a representer of the Burmese culture but has ensured a repetitive, standardized stereotypical representation. She is an outsider, a non -Burmese writer who is not a native as in one of her interviews she clearly utters:

For three years my husband, children, and I lived in Chiang Mai, Thailand. While we were there we visited the Karenni refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. I was astounded at how the Karenni kept their hopes up despite incredible loss, still dreaming and talking of the day when they would once again become a free people (Perkin).

Thus she is neither a resident of Burma nor has ever visited Burma and she has merely got the inspiration of this story from a refugee camp at the Thai-Burma border relying upon all the readymade stereotype information gathered from various sources.

The Burmese fiction by the Western or the Western-oriented writers has always focused upon a stereotype standardized protagonist "Usually, he is a member of the elite; he has had a Western education, speaks English fluently, and may have lived part of his life in Europe." (Silverstein 130). Chiko the protagonist of the novel though is a Burmese boy brought up in Myanmar but he is brought by his father who graduated from England in medicine and who taught him both Burmese and English. Their house contains a secret shelf where there is a collection of "dozen medical and college textbooks but (we) also own the complete work of Shakespeare ----- and novels by Indian and Russian writers like Rabindranath Tagore and Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Arabian Nights*, and a set of books by Charles Dickens" (Perkins 5). His only ambition is to be a teacher just because he could speak English and Burmese well. Even when he is captured by the army to be recruited as a soldier, he is the only one who can read and write and thus appointed by U Tha Din, the

officer in charge of the recruitment camp as the official moderator between the recruit camps and the Burmese government and the correspondences had to be in English Language. He is officially known as a 'teacher' in the camp and is treated with respect and dignity within the camp, indirectly *other* than the rest of the Burmese boys simply because of his command of the English language and his refined English manners. As has been discussed earlier, usually the protagonists in fiction are non-Burmese elitists who not only defend themselves but also rescue others and make their life better. Chiko not only makes his life comfortable but makes the life of Tai, another recruit, free of toil by teaching him English thereby making him civilized as per European influenced criteria. Due to Chiko's effort, Tai is released and liberated from the toil, he is eventually appointed as an "office clerk" for "writing letters" (116). Besides, he provides monetary relief to Captain U Tha Din whose salary is raised due to the effective communication of Chiko. Finally, when Chiko is injured in the mines and is rescued by Tuh Reh a Karenni boy, and is taken to Karenni refugee camp he demands the English books and is given the books like the *Lord of the Ring* to read which comforts him in this time of turmoil. Though Chiko is a Burmese boy, he is *other* to the rest of the Burmese boys on the account of not only his knowledge of the English language but his refined English manners. Perkin has tried to assert that Chiko's English knowledge gives him the power of the gift of gab and refined manners, due to which he can convince the president of the camp of his innocence and makes the President of Karreni tribe declare emphatically "The soldier is quite young. I questioned him myself, and I personally don't believe he's a spy. Others might still have doubts, but I'm fairly sure this particular soldier doesn't know much" (239). Perkin has reiterated this notion through one of his characters Tu Reh who thought the credit of Chiko's innocence goes to the big words and gigantic vocabulary that Chiko is habitual of using. The standardized ideology of the superiority of refined English culture over crude and unsophisticated Burmese culture is asserted by the writer in a very subtle manner.

Chiko is not only *other* because of his language but in his appearance and outlook too, as he is a bespectacled boy who prefers wearing trousers to the *longyi*, the traditional dress worn by the Burmese boys. He does not wear the traditional *Tanaka*, a traditional light paste

worn by the boys, and considers it to be unpleasant and even derogatory. His eating manners are also quite different and descent and he follows the proper food manners and can gain the respect of his fellow recruits because of his different manners. The above-mentioned detail is sufficient enough to prove that though Perkin has provided a pseudo-individuality by focusing upon the Burmese protagonist, despite the fact she is neither a Burmese nor has she any personal experience of Burma, but her protagonist is an English elite through and through. By projecting a Burmese native, she has re-asserted the standardized stereotypical of the western elite who “can fit easily into a European environment and be absorbed by it rather than move the story into a Burmese arena” (130). It seems that Perkins has tried to portray the protagonist to bridge the gap between East and the West but it turns out to be the other way round and Chiko appears as *Other* to the rest of his Burmese contemporaries in the novel due to his different knowledge and most precisely his proficiency in English language and manners. The rest of the Burmese boys appear to be physically strong yet intellectually primitive to him. He not only completely fits into the western standard of superiority and refinement which is based upon Western manners. This standardized stereotypical cliché has been successfully highlighted by her.

Perkins has not only shown standardization in terms of projection of the character but a stereotypical setting of Burma as well. Most of the Burmese or non- Burmese writers tend to keep their stories in the rural setting and this gives them a license to use the detailed description of both the people, the land, and the culture and they try to authenticate their literary piece by providing a vivid description of Burma. The novel brings a comprehensive account of the setting beginning as “On the road behind our house, horns toot, sirens blare, and bicycle rickshaws crowd the streets. A high cement wall and a barrier of bamboo muffle the noise, making our garden seem as private as a monastery” (4). Like Orwell, Perkins has focused entirely upon the fauna and flora of Burma making it interesting and enchanting at the same time fulfilling the Western expectation of exotic yet primitive Burma. The above setting resonates dirty and polluted Burma having primitive locomotives as rickshaw and bicycle, a primitive and an overcrowded place, having cemented wall and bamboo fence, the overall description is a typical Asian description catering to the imaginations of the western

readers. Similar detail is presented when Chiko along with other boys is taken to the recruit camp:

outskirts of the city and heading north, where rice paddies and coconut trees line the narrow, flat highway. Women are harvesting rice, their bodies bent, and their bamboo hats shaped like upside-down bowls. Thin, straight streams sparkle like wires, dividing the wet fields into squares. The last rays of the sun redden spilling into the water like blood (32-33).

This detail presents both the exotic and primitive Burma. On one side there are romantic rice paddies and coconut trees but on the other hand, the romantic description ends with the notion of blood which symbolizes the atrocities in Burma. Unlike George Orwell who in *Burmese day* (1934) had focused upon the detailed description of flora in a simple language with the constant use of similes and comparing the native plant, animals, and even the landscape with the English foil as Flory, the protagonist of his novel spots “some ragged brown creatures like disreputable thrushes,” and some white flowers with a “sharp scent like bergamot” (56). The strong longing of English season and English landscape is seen in Orwell whereas Perkins has strongly relied upon the general description portrayal and explanation, a description which has been gathered from either electronic or the print media and not experienced. Orwell has portrayed Burma not only with an idealistic romanticized description but has also focused upon the unappealing, hostile and horrific portrayal as well. The main protagonist of the novel Flory and Flo “came to an impasse where the path was blocked by large ugly plants like magnified aspidistras, whose leaves terminated in long lashes armed with thorns” (58). This description contrasts dramatically with the earlier romantic description of Burma. The land appears to be both hypnotizing and aggressive. In *Bamboo People* when Chiko is taken to the recruit camp to him the location of the valley is:

like a flat-bottomed bowl, with dense, green slopes curving up on every side. Roosters crow in the distance. The river where we filled our cups the night before cuts the valley in half. Beyond it are paddies and a farmhouse nestled at the foot of high hills.

Jungle covers the hills behind us, swallowing the dirt road that leads back up the mountain (45).

This valley viewed from Chiko's perspective is very romantic, unrealistic, and idealized presenting a fairy tale description, even the ugliness of the puddles or the dirty roads vanishes in this enchanting description but within this romanticized description, the backwardness or the under the civilization of Burma strikes out. The Orwellian Burma presents both the serene heaven as well as the horrifying hell and is overloaded with the ironic imperialistic notion as for Elizabeth the beauty of Burma lies in the act of destroying it as it appears both unfamiliar and hostile to her. The only time she enjoys the Burmese landscape is when she goes on hunting with Flory to kill the pigeon. Nevertheless, it is also a fact that one of the best descriptions has been provided by Orwell as when Elizabeth

looked up into the branches of the frangipani tree, which the moon seemed to have changed into rods of silver. The light lay thick, as though palpable, on everything, crusting the earth and the rough bark of trees like some dazzling salt, and every leaf seemed to bear a freight of solid light, like snow (177).

Orwell's description is labeled with the minutest details from the leaves to the flowers with explicit description but as compared to this description, the description of Perkins falls flat. Thus when she elaborates:

The sun is low in the western sky. Mosquitoes swarm around us, lured by the taste of blood and the scent of sweat. With a grunt, I heave the boy onto my back and trudge forward, step by tired step. It's twilight when I finally reach the broken tree. Beyond it to the west is a mound of green vines and leaves. A gust of wind shifts the vines, and I catch sight of a small bamboo hut camouflaged under the greenery (156).

The above description echoes what the Westerners expect of the East, as chaotic, disordered, and even if picturesque, is supplemented with backwardness and poverty. The charming greenery of the vines and bamboo are oddly camouflaged with the smell of sweat and blood. Nature is exotic and beautiful but worn-out poverty-stricken muddled forest. For West,

Burma has been the land of pagodas, traditional bamboo huts, the mine-affected land, and people but none of these have been portrayed by Perkins. The novel is set in the background of an ethnic civil war but the destruction, chaos, and displacements associated with the ethnic civil war are nowhere to be seen. In *Burmese Days* the vivid portraits of fauna and flora, though with the imperialistic gaze does create a colorful portrait, focusing upon both the ugliness as well as the beauty of Burma where as in the case of *Bamboo People* the description does exist but it appears to be very flat and bookish and seems as if the writer has relied upon the ready-made information of Burma gathered from various sources. One thing that stands out in this standardized description is the primitiveness and the backwardness of Burma. It appears to be a country not dominated by natural beauty but by uninhabited, uncivilized, and horrific jungle or forest, a place where ferocious beasts as elephants and Burmese soldiers are alike, a place where one can encounter both the mosquitoes as well as the bullets. This standardized flat and primitive description highlights the ideology of othering and satiates the western expectation. Besides, the close reading points out an interesting fact which is common in almost all Burmese fiction “Burma, in the main, is the background and many of the plots and characters could just as easily fit into the Indian or Malay scene (Silverstein 130). In a nutshell, these descriptions not only serve as particular or typical but a general description of the East where any Eastern country can easily be substituted with the other with no particular difference.

Within this standardized description, Perkins only adds her slight individuality that is where she describes in detail the way bamboo can be utilized. The country where bamboo can be found in abundance and the economy of Burma depends upon it, Perkins’ novel dominates with the reference of bamboo occasionally and it is only in the middle of the novel that we come across the importance and the utility of bamboos in the life of the Burmese people when Peh, the father of the protagonist inquiries from Tuh Reh about the uses of Bamboo, he remembers

“I fought off a wild pig once.

“What else can you do with it, Tu Reh? Do you remember

harvesting it?”

“Mua cooks it,” I manage at last.

“She uses it for fuel, too, remember?” “And we make medicine out of it. Baskets. Houses. Rafts. So many, many things.” (146)

Apart from the above utility of bamboo, the writer does add that bamboo also serves as a natural geographical boundary at the refugee camp. So it serves as a natural boundary or the natural beauty of the land and it is a symbol of their culture, their lifestyle, and their existence. It even is the reason for their mission, and struggle, the only reason for Tuh Reh’s hatred towards the Burmese forces is not the displacement or the dislocation which his tribe had to face but the memory of his burning grooves fills his heart with fury and eternal rage. The importance of bamboo is symbolically portrayed through the title where the protagonists like bamboo for multiple purposes; they serve as the beauty of Burma, the sustainer of its culture and tradition, and the symbol of its individualism and identity. The importance of bamboo is echoed not through the characters but also within the descriptions, Perkins herself expounds:

I was impressed, too, by how creatively Karenni used bamboo. Homes, bridges, transportation, weapons, food, storage, irrigation—all these and more depended on the resilient and ecologically efficient bamboo plant. I began to think about that plant as an excellent symbol for the people of that region. (296)

But is also a fact that through the description of fauna and flora, especially by focusing upon Bamboo, the writer has tried to create the element of estrangement, indulging the Western to explore it. Nevertheless, Perkins has internalized the standardized notion of *othering* as the setting too is as per Western agenda and Eastern expectation which is to portray the East as backward, dirty, polluted, chaotic, and yet exotic that serve as an inferior *other* to the west.

One of the standardized themes prevalent in the works of South Asian novels, in general, is “mangoes and coconuts and grandmothers” (Srivastava 28). This notion has also been explicated by Graham Huggan who is of the view “India . . . is more available than ever for consumption, and more prevalent than ever are the gastronomic images through which the nation is to be consumed.” (82). The postcolonial novel in general and the South Asian fictions, in particular, have invested a lot in the food and it serves as the exotic *other* to the West. Food in South Asian fiction does not merely serve as nutrition, a source of nourishment, or the source of cultural portrayal but it supplements various other themes like family, gender role, socioeconomic factors, and others. Perkin’s novel is no more exceptional than its predecessors. Burmese cuisine is explicitly elaborated now and then, as before he departed from the house for the post of a teacher Chiko is well satiated with a sumptuous lunch which “*ngapi*, the dried and fermented shrimp paste we eat with every meal; rice; and a few chunks of chicken floating in a pale, weak curry” (8). This lunch apart from being a reflection of traditional culture also reflects the economic status of the family. In the recruit camp, they are provided with “cups of weak tea and bowls of steaming rice” (45). This brunch is first served to the senior recruits and finally to the newly appointed recruits. The East is poverty-stricken and hunger prevails in this region and hunger can make the individuals do anything. The recruits are made to work extra hours simply for the rewards of eggs and milk. Perkins has highlighted the idea that hunger can make East do any task no matter how mammoth it appears to be. Tuh Reh is offered food comprising of “rice and curry made of bamboo shoots on a tin plate” (161). Chiko can gain the sympathies of a Karreni mother simply by praising her food and comparing her food to that of her mother’s cooking style. Perkins has asserted the establishment of the stereotype connection of food with females and domesticity and women are always shown of being proud of their culinary expertise. The South Asian writers have not only tried to represent authenticity through the depiction of food but it is the food through which they had tried to create the exotic *otherness*. Over the past few decades as Rüdiger Kunow (2003) has noted, food becomes a major means of affirming one’s identity as a South Asian diasporic subject. (163). Huggan(1994) asserted with reinforcement that the reference to South Asian food both in the title or in the text is one of the strategies by the writers to be a part of the marketing world. According to Mannur

(2009), some South Asian American writers engage in “a form of cultural self-commodification through which . . . [they] earn a living by capitalizing on the so-called exoticism embedded in . . . [their] food ways”. (59). Metali Perkins has re-asserted the standardized stereotypical representation by referring to the traditional food of Burma time and again in her seminal work.

One of the most important and standardized themes prevalent in *Bamboo People* is the representation of women as equal to men. Apparently, the novel revolves around two teenage boys and their coming to age experiences but it is also a fact that the novel predominates with many female characters that played a vital role in the life of these young protagonists and the equality which they enjoy with their male partners. The notion of the high status of women in Burma has regularly been enforced by the historical and contemporary British administrators, scholars, and even contemporary fiction writers. Gwendolen Gascoigne (1896) in one of the travel accounts has mentioned clearly that “Utterly unlike their miserable Mohammedan and Hindu sisters, [Burmese women] enjoy absolute liberty—a liberty of which, if the rumor proves true, they make ample use.” (43). Perkins is not the only one to create Burmese women as *Other* to their contemporary South Asian particularly Indian and Pakistani women and has asserted the westernized desirous othering, Sir Harcourt Butler who had served in Burma from 1923 -1927 emphatically declares Burma as the best among the rest of the British colonies. He owes it because their women do observe purdah yet they are equal to their male partner. This Western colonial mindset is though strongly negated by the Burmese feminists as the Burmese feminist scholar Mi Mi Khaing(1984) has openly declared in “There is no doubt in our minds. Spiritually, a man is higher than a woman. This is just not an abstract idea belonging to religious philosophy. Conviction of it enter[s] our very bones.” (Khaing). It is the Western idea that predominates and the universal belief about the Burmese women is that they are independent, liberated, and most importantly enjoy equality in this region. They do not depend upon their male partners for their decisions and can alone take a stand and stick to it. This notion has been effectively taken up by Metali Perkins, the two protagonists of the novel Chiko and Tuh Reh’s lives have been shaped by women. Chiko’s life has been greatly influenced by his

Mua, the mother, the Dow Widow, an elderly lady from the neighborhood, and Lei, his sweet heart. Chiko's *Mua* is initially portrayed as a typical mother whose chief interest seems to be tending the household chores like cooking, cleaning, and stitching, she reflects the general traits of a devoted and typical Asian mother whose major concern is to provide healthy food and nourishment to her only son and she does that by giving him the major serving while herself cherishing with the left over and resultantly getting thinner and thinner day by day. Apart from these domestic chores that she attends she is a strong woman whose main concern is not only "how skinny" Chiko is getting but she is responsible for the economic condition of her family. It is she who decides what to sell among the household items as jewelry, pots, pans, toaster, fans, and radio and does not allow her son to sell the precious books of her husband. On Chiko's insistence, she reprimands him strongly by saying "No! Your father brought those back from England before we were married. Selling them is like . . ." (10). Chiko has to take her permission first before applying for the post of a teacher even though he is the only male member of the house, even when Chiko leaves for the job she hands over him "a few kyat notes." (24). In his absence, she not only manages herself but even accommodates Tai, the street boy, and his sister in the house. She is the standardized representer of a "Chancellor of her husband's exchequer" and keeper of the "Family Purse." (Khin Myint) a notion which is time and again reinforced by the British colonial administrators. It is not only Chiko's *Mua* who has been portrayed as strong will powered woman, Tuh Reh 's *Mua* is another strong character. She is certain of the bravery of her son and despite the danger involved in his first mission, she readily sends her only son for the rescue mission. She readily accepts the decision of her son of bringing a Burmese soldier to the refugee camp, and readily accommodates the two girls, and looks after her family after the departure of her husband and son. Outwardly they are typical mothers when it comes to the expression of their emotions and feelings and even the way they manage the common chores and are no more different than the rest of the South Asian mothers but they turn out to be very different, authoritative, and irrepressible unlike them. Besides, the other two elderly women are Daw Widow, the neighbor of Chiko, and the doctor aunty in the refugee camp. Daw Widow, the neighbor of Chiko is another tough and strong-minded woman. She is the one who gathers every information and rumor of the Burmese government and prepares or

warns the family of possible consequences. She not only looks after this family but also guides them in every possible way whether it is related to healthy cooking in a constrained economic condition or finding a job in Burma. Despite having certain other male neighbors in her closer vicinity, Chiko's mother seeks help and counseling from Daw Widow showing a strong bond between the two women. Her strong personality and argumentative skill are even appreciated by Chiko who believes:

I wish for the hundredth time that Daw Widow had been with us when the soldiers came for Father. Even armed officers would have a hard time standing up to her. I've seen a burly chicken seller back away from her door when she accused him of overcharging her (20).

She is not only the strongest among the women and but a far-sighted and wise lady too as she is the one who can judge Chiko's potential and ability to teach and argues and convinces his mother to let him go. Similarly, doctor aunty, the only lady doctor in a refugee camp is another tough lady, she is not only the doctor of one particular refugee camp but travels from camp to camp to treat the patients, wounded and injured. The equality of women is stressed from the fact that in the counseling meeting of the refugee camp, women are given the second row and the opinion of both men and women is granted equality. In the council's meeting where the fate of Chiko is to be decided and the recommendations and proposals are sought out by the president, the lady doctor proposes that "I'll leave in the morning. The boy can come with me. He'll be fitted with a replacement leg at the clinic in the next camp and walk across the border himself" (243) is accepted by all with a slight alteration. Even when Tuh Reh decides to lend his mule to Chiko, the president asks him to consult his *Mua* first before making this decision and her mother strongly favors her son in the council she openly states "We trust our son's decisions" (244). All these elderly women, despite their age and the trauma which they have gone through, are strong and well-determined women who know what to do and what to say, and their verdicts are respected and honored by all. This notion of equality of women and the superiority which they enjoy was effectively projected after 1930 and is still accepted in the western media despite strong denial from the local Burmese female writers.

It is not only the elderly ladies who have been portrayed as strong and determined but the young girls are also equally robust. Swati, the sister of Tai, a street boy is a strong girl too. She strongly resisted the soldiers when they tried to take her brother by abusing and kicking them and Chiko considers her to be a strong girl on which Tai comments “She’s always been smarter than me” (41) wholly acknowledging the smartness of his sister and not getting any complexes commonly associated in South Asian males. Similarly, the two other girls Ree Meh and Nya Meh the two sisters who live all alone in the forest with their grandfather are equally strong-willed ladies. About Ree Meh it is said that “The younger girl used to come into camp for supplies---- “She’s a tough one—makes her way there alone, loads her bag, and heads back again the same day” (138). This is not simply a hearsay Tu Reh finds her to be dominant and bossy. When they take Chiko back to the refugee camp she helps Tu Reh in carrying the stretcher and not even once makes Tuh Reh feel the other side is weak or unstable, she marches and matches her steps with him asserting her equality with him. She is not only physically strong but emotionally balanced too. Tu Reh is always bitter while narrating and recalling the account of Burmese soldiers burning his village and house, whereas she is always calm and composed while narrating her account which is no different than his. Despite being a girl she forcefully argues with Tu Reh and forces him to take Chiko to the refugee camp and Tu Reh is compelled to call her an “I don’t know. You’re . . . stronger, Ree Meh. More . . . more like a boy. Yes, that’s it. You’re more like a boy” (179). This is how he equates her to him in almost all aspects. On her way, she is even hit by the bullet but she completely ignores that and manages to seek support from the refugee camp, she supports Tu Reh and even had a heated argument with Buh Reh, one of the toughest men in the camp. Though she shows her reluctance to go to school nevertheless she is a resilient and tough girl, a typical Burmese girl as portrayed by British colonialists. Her sister Nya Meh is no different than her sister despite being captured and tortured by the Burmese soldier she is still a strong girl who believed that “That God can bring beauty and goodness from anything” (129). She not only bore the torture as she was abducted and raped by the soldiers but turned up to be a healer rather than an avenger. She heals and provided first aid to Chiko even though her life has been ruined by Burmese soldiers. She is soft-spoken and still a firm girl who strongly advocates saving this Burmese soldier and even calls him her Ko, her

brother. After covering a very tough journey from her house in the forest to the refugee camp, she immediately helps doctor aunty in healing the patients on the same day without taking any rest and spends the rest of the days non- stop nursing the patients and learning from the doctor.

Though the novel focuses upon two teenage boys, women play a pivotal role in the life of these boys, Chiko's life is shaped by two women his *Mua* and Daw widow who encouraged him to seek what he wants and throughout his journey, it is the picture of Lei which has given him enough courage, support and hope to live. Tu Reh's life is fashioned by Ree Meh, Nya Meh, and even his *Mua*. Both of these sisters forced him to follow their instructions and were not even once taken in by his commands and back in the refugee camp his mother and his sister constantly encouraged him. It is the girls' pleading look that forces him to lend mule to doctor aunty to carry Chiko to the nearby clinic. Perkin has reasserted the notion of independent and liberated Burmese women which was dually portrayed by the British colonial rulers particularly through their travelogues, the press, and the media. Among the South Asian women, these Burmese women serve as western *others* to Asian women particularly the South Asian women and Perkin has created this *othering* successfully. Chie Ikeya (2011) in his seminal work has traced the entire procedure adopted in western epistemology to make Burmese women superior or of high status. They have shown to be physically and emotionally strong, enjoying equal education facilities along with their men, whether it is due to displacement which they had to face because of constant ethnic civil war within the country or some other reasons, but they are different from the rest of the Asian women. Ikeya rightly concludes "It was from within thriving discourses about modern Burmese women in the popular press that the most persistent and firmly established Burmese "tradition" of egalitarian and progressive gender relations developed." (72). Perkin does create pseudo-individuality within her novel as she is perhaps the only non- Burmese writer who has created multiplicity in the portrayal of the female characters. Almost all female characters are diverse in their way and have reversed the traditional patriarchal order. They are the ones who support the male characters and provide them with support and courage. *Mua*, Daw Widow, Lei, Sawati, Ree Mah, Nya Mah, and the lady doctor are not the

stereotypical women rather they are all individuals having special characteristics of their own, they are like different pieces of one major mosaic ‘The Burmese women’ and each piece represent a different aspect of an independent woman. Both of the Muas are emotionally strong, Daw Widow is strong-headed, Ree Mah is both physically and emotionally strong as she bears the bullet, the torture of displacement very strongly, Nya Meh despite being abducted and tortured by the Burmese soldiers is a soft-spoken determined and resilient girl. All these females show strong determination when it comes to practical life, but besides this pseudo- individuality, Metali Perkins has reproduced the same standardized theme which both the Western publisher and the Western audience want and she has successfully cashed that theme.

The standardized feature of the text which acts as a background of the novel is the depiction of the political unrest or chaotic political situation of Myanmar or Burma. The novel echoes the description of political or ethnic insurgencies within the country. All the major, as well as the minor characters, are directly or indirectly influenced by these riots, the protagonist of the novel Chiko’s father has been arrested by the Burmese government on the charge of treason, just because he treated a Karenni patient and the entire family did not know whether he is still alive or dead. As Burma is on the verge of an ethnic war with different ethnic tribes, the government’s tactic to handle these tribes and to create disillusion among the masses are explicated in the novel. As Perkins, herself has elaborated the historical account of the Burmese political situation since “

Burma has the largest number of child soldiers in the world, and that number is growing. These young soldiers are taught that the Karenni and other ethnic groups are the cause of problems in their country, and they are rewarded with money and food if they burn, destroy, torture, and kill ethnic minorities” (269).

This doctrine of hatred is effectually elaborated in the novel when in the recruit camp the captain delivers a long sermon to the newly appointed recruit and triggers the notion of patriotism by channelizing their anger and hatred by saying:

Were it not for the tribal people. They want to break our country apart and divide it among themselves. Their whole mission is to destroy our peace. If we succeed in defeating these insurgents, we can return home to care for our mothers and sisters. --- You may have heard that the rebels who call themselves the Kayah are among the evillest of our enemies-----“Many have turned away from the teachings of the Buddha to embrace Western religions, in the hope that they can gain weapons from America to attack us. They are ruthless killers, men and women alike, and they despise our Burmese language and our Buddhist religion (48).

The explicit detail clearly shows that besides invoking the notion of patriotism, filial, religious, and moral emotions, the notion of hatred is instigated in the minds of young fifteen-year-old boys who grow up with all this hatred and animosity and end up participating in the warfare. Besides, the Burmese tactics, Tu Reh hatred is also based upon the politics of ethnic tribes in their youth as well who encourage their youth to participate in the war only to avenge the Burmese soldiers on ambushing their entire village and setting the bamboo groves on fire and for the sake of their mothers and sisters and other girls captivated and tortured by these forces. Almost all characters are directly affected by the war and the standardized detail provided in the fiction is merely for the sake of authenticity. The South Asian novels in reality tend to portray a little bit of everything in their novels from marginalized women, political unrest, looting, unequal distribution of power and wealth, and everything that the West wants and relishes. The individuals are portrayed as fighting against the endless problems and lost in the whirlwind of these problems. But then again, the South Asian writer deliberately does so to captivate the market as Anis Shivani reiterates “reviewers repeatedly mislabel the desultory, superficial cataloging of alien cultural facts as finely detailed writing. Imagine an entire novel of this sort of trivial exchange, which, when written by Indian writers, somehow assumes the status of dignified cultural information” (25).

The above discussion proves the point that Metali Perkins has in most of the places consciously and deliberately utilized the notion of re-orientalism or Othering and she has

done so by effectively deploying the technique of standardization by portraying the stereotype tropes to associated with Burma, its vicinity, characters, social, political and cultural situation. She has created the element of estrangement by focusing on an exotic country as Burma, the two teenage boys, and especially the contributions of women in the lives of these boys. But she has ensured to internalize the ideology of capitalism, which is to transform it as a fetish commodity as per the demand of the consumers. To authenticate the reader with the truth, she turns up in portraying what the Western market in general and Western consumer in particular demand and eventually has done what Lisa Lau has asserted:

re-oriental writers set themselves up as ‘translators’, translating one culture to/for the other, have the dual role of opening the channels of communication, but also of holding the two sides separate because it is this very separation which lends heightened significance to their role. (585).

Through the analysis of the novel, it can be safely said that the novel is a commodity. The fetish aspect of this novel has been established by applying the theoretical framework based upon the tenants of standardization and pseudo-individualization. Through standardization, the idea of sameness is echoed and thus the ideology of othering is resonated. The concept of Pseudo-individualization gives uniqueness and newness to an ordinary idea. The success, fame, and laurels bestowed upon the novel are partly due to its aesthetic value but mostly due to adherence to the ideology of the capitalist group which she has perfectly woven within the text.

5.3. *Blue Boy* (2009) and the Element of Estrangement

The novel *Blue Boy* is written by Rakesh Satyal, an Indian-origin novelist. He is a senior editor at Atria book which is a division of Simon & Schuster a leading publishing company in America. Previously he has worked with Harper Collins and Doubleday and held an important position there. He was a member of PEN world Voices festival and has also taught the publishing program at New York University. He won the Lambda Literary award with his

debut novel *Blue Boy* and the fellowship fiction award in 2010. His second novel *No One Can Pronounce My Name* was published in 2017 and has been critically well acclaimed. He is perhaps the only South Asian novelist who has taken the subject of South Asian gay/queer in his novel.

The novel *Blue Boy* by Rakesh Satyal is an important young adult fictional text with a focus on a South Asian and particularly, an Indian protagonist. The novel is about a young twelve-year-old boy Kiran Sharma and his journey of exotic identity. This is yet another important novel as it is the winner of various prestigious awards such as *Lambda Literary Award*, best award for Prose/ Poetry from the Association of Asian American studies. Besides, it also has the credit of being the finalist of *Triangle's Edmund White Debut Fiction Award* conforming it to be an important fetish commodity. This novel is critically acclaimed in the form of comments, reviews and views from various popular publishing groups as *Barnes & Nobles*, *Kirkus review*, *Goodreads*, *The New York Times*, *Lambda literary* and many others asserting its position as a globalized fetish commodity having a close and strong liaison with the publishing industry. Unlike the other novels discussed in this research, and particularly the young adult Indian protagonist fictions, this novel has been published in at least three paperbacks catering to customers across the globe. *Kensington Books* has published it in two paperbacks while the third version has been published by *Indian link* with an entirely different paperback. The attempts of Satyal have not gone unrecognized, as he has not only received fame and repute, he is the winner of the *Fellowship Award* in 2010 by the New York Foundation for the fine arts. The subsequent details assert the status of the novel as a fetish commodity as it has laurels and awards at its back, it has the support of the publishing industry, and finally, it has been made available in different forms and ranges to cater to the needs of consumers of different class and taste. It is not only the external factors that determine its status as a fetish commodity, but the detailed scrutiny of the novel also reveals it to be containing various internal details too that have played a very pivotal role in the transformation of this simple novel into a fetish commodity.

This coming-to-age novel revolves around a twelve years old Indian boy of an immigrant family living in Cincinnati and studying in Martin Van Buren Elementary school.

Besides facing the usual problems as faced by young adults in general and immigrant second-generation children in particular such as racial otherness, facing bullying by his white peers at school and surrounding. The writer has taken an entirely new aspect, as his quest for self-identity and his peculiar and queer behavior of playing with dolls, obsession with colors, make-up and dances, and gender nonconformity. Kiran neither feels fit among his community nor his American peers and his quest for identity is gratified when he realizes that he is the third incarnation of Lord Krishna, a blue Hindu deity. The novel primarily focuses not only upon the racial *otherness* but also on culture and sexual *otherness* by applying Adorno's concept of Standardization, Marcuse's concept of estrangement, and Zizek concept of addition of the element of fantasy to act as stand-in, where the internalization of the ideology of global capitalist group has been successfully incorporated to make this novel not an aesthetic product but a saleable commodity to be marketed effectively.

As Marcuse is of the view that one of the essential features of a fetish commodity is the presence of the element of estrangement, it is through this element that the ideology of the dominant group is executed and circulated within the masses. The estrangement draws the attention of the readers towards itself and once it is drawn, then it is easy to communicate the ideology of the elites of the capital group. The novel *Blue Boy* is a perfect example where the element of estrangement is portrayed vividly. The title of the novel is very catchy and it attracts the attention of the readers. The term 'blue boy' is usually defined and elaborated refers to either a very popular painting by Thomas Gainsborough in 1775 which portrays a boy in a blue outfit or refers to the cops wearing blue caps. The term *blues* refers to gloom, melancholy or sadness, etc, and from here the term blue jazz or blues has originated. On the other hand, the famous idiom *blue eye* refers to preference and favoritism. But Satyal has subverted all the above notions, his protagonist neither wears blue outfit as he loves wearing colorful dresses and his preference has been bright colors like orange, pink, and magenta, nor is he a sad boy though he makes the lives of other miserable and sad, and finally he is not loved by others not due to his Asian heritage but because of his queer behavior. The new meaning given to the term *Blue Boy* has the element of exoticism and not a general Asian exoticism but a religious cosmological exoticism that enhances the element of

estrangement. In Indian religious mythology, among all deities, Lord Krishna holds a special position as he is among the eighth avatar of God Vishnu. He is the most Supreme Being and he is generally considered as the God of love, sympathy, and kindness and importantly he is often depicted both in idols and in scripture as a god with blue color. This is because the name Krishna has originated from the Sanskrit word *Kṛṣṇa* which means “black, dark, or dark blue” (M. M. Williams). A very comprehensive detail about Krishna has been provided by a notable scholar David R. Kinsley (1975) as:

One of Hinduism's favorite gods, a god worshiped virtually throughout the entire subcontinent, is described as a youthful cowherd who lives in an idyllic forest setting. He is a surpassingly beautiful god who intoxicates and delights all those who see him or hear his flute. In the autumn, on full-moon nights, he beckons with his flute to his beloved cowgirl companions to join him in the forest, where they dance, sing, frolic, and make love with him. He wears a crown of peacock feathers, has a lovely blue complexion, and is an incorrigible prankster. He is the darling of Hindu devotionalism (9).

In *Blue Boy*, the protagonist synonymises his queerness and strangeness to Lord Krishna not only exotifying himself but also doubly exotifying Lord Krishna, which creates the element of estrangement within the novel indulging the readers to learn more about this deity. Thus when he is caught red-handed in his mother's bathroom applying makeup and particularly applying the blue shades he immediately exclaims “Surprise! Surprise Mom, I'm Krishna. I'm Krishnaji (7). His invocation to Lord Krishna, not only saves him from an awkward situation but also onsets the notion of estranged as well as the exotified Hindu cosmology. By referring to one particular god he generalizes and reasserts the myth of re-orientalism which asserts the binaries and *othering* between East and the West. In that standardized projection, Satyal has added his pseudo-individualization by primarily focusing upon one sensitive aspect of the Asian ethnicity which is religion. He has ensured that this pseudo-individualization is done by over-glorifying it to the extent of estrangement. The protagonist of the novel invokes Lord Krishna only because of the exotic beauty he (Krishna) exhibits enabling him to relate himself to Him. It is not through invocation only that Kiran

associates himself to the lord but is later on manifested through his passionate inclination towards, beauty, art, color, and dance. The numerous ordeals and trouble faced by him further strengthens this notion and boasts his self-confidence after re-studying the attributes of his favorite Lord which makes him utter passionately:

The only thing that keeps me going as the class ends my oddity, either is the realization that I am even more like Krishna than I thought. He was blue and different but had no explanation of why. I'm so different from everyone, and yet there doesn't seem to be an explanation of Krishna was different but had the fortune of being a god (32).

As Marcuse is of the view that once the commodity is estranged and the attention of the reader is drawn towards it, it becomes easier to inculcate the ideology of the prominent group; the novel speaks highly of that. Krishna has been exoticized to a greater extent through everything from physical details to the attributes associated with him and the way he is perceived by his followers. The readers come to know about the physical description of Krishna through Kiran who while providing the cursory details of other deities present in his house in the form of statues or pictures provides comprehensive detail of Krishna. He begins as “And then there's Krishna, blue-skinned and smiling secretly into His silver flute, His peacock feather headdress more crown-like than Lakshmi's shining helmet” (7). This minute detail is thoroughly exotic especially for the Western audience beginning from his blue skin color, his silver flute, his shining headdress. Krishna's love for music besides color is further glorified by referring to his attributes about him as a lover of music which is evident through his silver flute and his flamboyant nature depicted through the peacock headdress that he wears. Almost all attributes are arranged by Kiran in numeral order as “1. Blue skin. 2. Show off. 3. Flutist. 4. Butter Eater. 5. Girlfriend” (44). For the Westerner reader, this detail about a particular religious' deity and his attributes are quite exotic and acts as a sheer contrast to their religious divine being (Jesus Christ) who is generally depicted as an ordinary, though a mystic human being in white attire with none or minimal embellishments. This estranged depiction reasserts the notion of the pure West and the exotic East.

Kiran does not only restrict himself to this description only but goes into the biography of Lord Krishna. He chiefly mentions the childhood description of Krishna as he has heard from his parents or he has read from various sources. He begins reading the narrative of Krishna as he “looks like a little girl, his hair festooned with gold ribbons” (44). Though Satyal immediately provides another detail focusing upon the masculinity of Krishna to assert his heterogeneity as if the previous description was a mere slip of the tongue as “Although Krishna wears flashy clothing and has pierced ears and has red lips, there is also something masculine about Him, a tautness in the bulge of His blue biceps and blue chest, a sense of dominance about His posture” (44). But what is done cannot be undone now as these dual characteristics like Lord Krishna are imprinted in the imagination of readers and the later detail further exoticizes Him asserting what has been discussed earlier that is to assert the notion of othering. The minutest detail provided through facts or myths is exotic. The mystical details are not the traditional mystical details associated generally with the religious deities but it is precisely the Indian mystical details, the estranged and exotic details as expected from the orient. Religion has now grown more than a ‘system of symbols’ (Geertz 90). It has become a commodity and is “packaged and sold in the same way as other marketed goods and services” (Einstein 78). India has a comprehensive history of visual culture, which is evident in the chromolithographic prints of images of deities, saints, and sacred sites that became popular in the late nineteenth century. They are widely referred to as ‘god posters’ or ‘calendar art’ which are commonly found in religious and secular locations throughout India, such as shops, cinemas, factories, public transport, and temples. Variants of these stock images have appeared on merchandise primarily intended for a Western audience in the form of everyday apparel on the high street and also on the catwalks of fashion collections by esteemed designers such as Roberto Cavalli. Undoubtedly, their popularity owes much to the exotic attributes which these holy deities bear.

As Zizek, the contemporary cultural critic is of the view that multiculturalism is the essence of the cultural industry and the best way of multiculturalism is the incorporation of ethnicity within the domain of multiculturalism and making it acceptable because capitalist culturalism focuses upon the “ethnicization of a nation rather than nationalization of ethnic”

which implies that the incorporation of the ethnic and local into the global unification. This global unification has two major purposes, firstly, to provide Eurocentric universalism and secondly, the sustenance of multiculturalism, but that multiculturalism with a Euro-centric laid out framework. This multiplicity does provide aestheticism to the cultural product, but in reality, this multiplicity paves the way for racism or otherness. In multiculturalism, each native or culture is respected but binarism is maintained. Zizek's this notion is self-evident in the novel where Satyal brings forth the Hindu religious ethnicity and compares and contrasts it to that of Christian religious ethnicity. He has gone to such an extent that a complete chapter *My Band of one* provides this complete detail. The details come in the form of language, clothing, behavior, infrastructures, and practices and all of these have been compared. Kiran feels very uncomfortable with everything when he goes to visit the Sunday temple. The place is not very comfortable, as one has to sit on the floor unlike the serene and peaceful place with comfortable pews arranged for the families "like Easter islands monolith on them" (18). Similarly, the deities too have been contrasted sharply, the Christian icons as "stately, polite and gilding" with minimal embellishments and the places where they are kept are lulled by either the sweet perfumes or "the soft woodiness of the bible pages" (18). It is not only the infrastructure but even the Biblical religious language is quite soothing and powerful. The impressions and the influence of Christian sermons are long-lasting as they are properly synchronized despite being in Latin. Kiran creates the notion of Othering when he compares artifacts, practices, and details of Hinduism to that of Christianity. The Hindu worshipping places (temples) are very uncomfortable where people have to sit and crouch on the floor; the interior is though colorful and cheerful with the vibrant colors displayed all around but is supplemented with the odor of smoke, flames, and spices creating suffocation. Moreover, the Sanskrit, the religious language is too difficult to understand despite Cody's uttering "stop complainin' ya sissy. Our priest says a lot of words and prayers in Latin and you don't see me complainin' Just take a nap" (18). But for Kiran Sanskrit, the sacred and ancient language further becomes de-familiar when the pundit with in a loose white kurta pyjama with "obsidian comb-over" and the "soles of his feet as cracked as the as dry earth" (19) utters these in an imbalance synchronization, as in transient from loud fierce voice to low gentle voice, with harshness as well as smoothness even not restricting to one language but

constantly shifting from Sanskrit to Hindi to English making the language as “Hinglishkskirt”. He does not only stop at criticizing the temples but to the icons too, as the icons are not in coordinated pattern but vary incredibly in form and texture with maximum embellishments set with garland and smoke. The minute comparison between the two ethnic-religious realities asserts what Zizek has pointed out that multiculturalism has now become an essence and beauty of a cultural product. This multiculturalism is ensured with the Eurocentric gaze with the notion of binarism and othering and re-establishing the exotic, and this is what is expected from south Asian fiction in general and is evident in *BlueBoy*.

Zizek has further asserted that in fetishized cultural products, the addition of the ‘fantasy or the phantasmatic background’ (29) is to support the universal ideology. As the phantasm serves the dual purpose, firstly to provide the element of the estrangement which entraps the consumer to itself, and secondly it paves the ground for the propagation of the universal capital control ideology. Because fantasy acts as the universal ideology. In *Blue, Boy* Satyal has created the religious fantasy through the detailed narration of the life history of Krishna. This narration serves the dual purpose; on the surface, it appears as interpolating the Indian culture through Hindu cosmology but deep down it reasserts the estrangement. The life of Krishna is time and again narrated by Kiran who associates his queerness and obsessions to that deity. Kiran not only reads or gathers religious fantasies from the texts or his parents but also openly shares that information with his European peers. The very first narration by him is:

Continuing the ages-long battle between good and evil, the demons of the world chose to infiltrate the ancient kingdom of India by disguising themselves as rulers of the land. The evillest of these rulers Kamsa heard tell of a young woman Devaki who, as sages foretold would give birth to eight sons, the eighth, the sage said, would rise against Kamsa and kill him. Ruthlessly the king had Devaki imprisoned and killed her first six children. Her last two children were switched with children of another town. One of the children who was switched to safety was Krishna, who was Vishnu descended to Earth as a human child. Eventually, Krishna was taken to Gokula where he was able to grow up without being hunted. All the same, he encountered trouble

around every corner---often because he went looking for it. He seemed to invite it wherever he went, fighting with the serpent and angry animals and killing demons along the way (85).

The above-mentioned narration is highly supplanted with all the fictional and the imaginary details well suited for a perfectly created fantasy. This ethnical fantasy has a seamless Eurocentric gaze which made Cody react the way a European consumer would have reacted, and that is by considering the Indian mythical detail to be a biblical narration, a version of the story of Moses despite Kiran's insistence of it being from *Upanishads*. Eurocentric Cody is ready to accept this narration only after declaring *Upanishads* to be an Indian Bible and not only relying upon it but considering the entire Indian Cosmology to be mere cartoonish. Kiran does not simply stop at only the historical accounts of Krishna, the other physical detail which he keeps on elaborating throughout the novel as a lotus- eye-blue-skinned, the one wearing a garland around his neck, having a peacock headdress, the one having a yellow cloth wrapped around his body. For the European consumers, this description serves as a contrast to their deities who are usually glorified with simplicity and sobriety. Kiran while narrating the strength and power of Krishna narrates "Krishna beats Rama because of all his talents—his flute playing, his ability to charm cow-headdresses, and of course his skin (102). Whereupon this detail serves to exotify him rather than to glorify him. Krishna attained his strength not through combat or on a battlefield by exhibiting his flawless power but by merely playing his flute. Kiran does not culminate upon this; he further depicts the youthful life of Krishna especially the way he won the love of his lady which is narrated as:

Radha was Krishna's great love-----she was daughter of a yogi in Krishna's town. She was very beautiful-----she loved Kajol and every day Krishna would try to woo her by playing the silver flute. Every day he would play and try to make her come near him and then one day she started to get tame and fell under the spell of his playing (54).

This all asserts that even his youth is also quite exotic and he manages to win the love of his lady love not through combat or on a battlefield as had been the tradition in the middle

ages but managed to get her by merely playing the silver flute, in other words by casting a spell upon her through this flute. This might not appear to be a European chivalric way of attaining love, it is rather a non-heroic way of attaining love quite contrary to the Western norms thus strengthening the notion of othering.

Satyaj has not only created the element of estrangement by adding exotic myths and narration but has highlighted the androgynous element of the Holy deity particularly Lord Krishna. His god is androgynous in physique and attributes. Kiran begins as “Although Krishna wears flashy clothing and pierced ears and has red lips, there is also something masculine about Him, a tautness in the bulge of His blue biceps and blue chest, a sense of dominance about His posture” (44). This estranged physical description of Krishna serves as a sheer contrast when Kiran brings into mind the description of Jesus Christ after arguing with his best friend Cody as a “(He is) cool---. He is a loving figure, a man of billowing white robes and white skin” (87). Thus if Jesus is cool, Krishna appears to be a trouble inviter, Jesus is fair-skinned, and is generally portrayed to be wearing white robes as in ‘bumper sticker of the town’ and as white is the color of purity and loyalty asserted by Kiran himself, whereas Krishna is generally portrayed with blue skin, wearing extremely colorful garments undeniably serving as other to Lord Jesus.

Satyaj has very successfully incorporated the religious fantasies within the novel, the South Asian novels especially from the Indian sub-continent normally depicts the religious doctrines, rituals, practices, and artifacts but this is one of the novels where religion has been taken into another dimension, it (un)shapes the personality of the protagonist that can be identified within the novel through the elusive details provided. The novel also focuses upon the element of fantasy in detail which further adds to the exotic part of the novel. Through the details provided in the form of religious allegory, myths, or fantasy, whether by comparison with the Christian mythology or by providing both the facts and fantasies, it might appear as if the writer is trying to interpolate the ethnic religion into a globalized mainstream or it might appear as if he is trying to bring the native culture known to the general masses but in reality, it turns out to be what Zizek has pointed that is the interpolation of culture but with a Eurocentric gaze to highlight it as *other* to the West. Satyaj

has generated this otherness by creating the element of estrangement which is possible only if the culture is exoticized. This is what the writer has successfully done through his protagonist.

As the course of the discussion reveals that one of the standardized themes prevalent in South Asian novels, in general, is the element of *self othering*. For Adorno, standardization which he elaborated as sameness is an essential constituent of a cultural product because each product of “art is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together” (94). Standardization ultimately results in the creation of a standardized reaction that is easily dictated, created by the cultural elitists, and is readily absorbed by the masses. Through standardization, the ideology of the dominant group is effectively circulated. The aim of standardization is supplemented by pseudo individualization or peculiarity. The pseudo-individualization aims at making the individual “forget that what they listen to is already listened to for them or ‘pre-digested (Adorno 445). These two notions of the cultural products are essential for keeping “them all firmly inline” (84). The same notion can be seen in this novel. Satyal has portrayed a standardized theme of quest of self -identity but by adding the element of estranged pseudo- individualization. His theme of the quest for self-identity has been subverted into self othering. Lisa Lau has emphasized that of the themes prevalent in South Asian fiction is “a reductionist representation at the expense of holistic ones, and a deliberate process of self- othering” (13). Satyal has also trodden their path because this is what the Western audience expects in South Asian Anglophonic Fiction.

The novel revolves around a twelve years old South Asian boy living in Cincinnati and is completely marginalized by his friends in school and out of school by his elders. He struggles not only to ascertain his identity but to assert his unusual identity. Unlike the traditional South Asian novels where the protagonists are always portrayed as submissive, naïve, and not very vocal and who are torn between two identities which they bear. Almost all of the South Asian coming to age texts have usually focused upon the notion of self-identity while resisting both the European mainstream assumptions and practices and their ethnic values and notions. The major focus of these novels has always been the quest for identity where the protagonists are usually successful in relocating a hybrid identity which is usually a blend of two, East and West. Like all other notions which Satyal has subverted

earlier, his protagonist is different and untraditional. The novel begins with the mysterious way of Kiran's sneakily entering into his mother's bathroom simply to apply her makeup and the prologue reveals that it is not for the first time "I have succeeded at it time and again so that the only impossible mission seems to be not wanting to put on makeup" (2). The flamboyant nature of this twelve-year-old boy living in Cincinnati is depicted in the prologue of the novel where his obsession with dance, color, or the popular pop is hinted although not in an unusual manner, his ultimate interest is depicted when he "creates a girl in the mirror" (5). This onset the revelation of his queer nature. In school, he befriends only two girls Sarah Turner and Melissa Jenkins and enjoys the swing and rides, and can give a very confident view about Barbie's dress and dance moves. He probably is the only boy who has opted for the ballet dance. His later interest in strawberry shortcakes (a kind of doll) and the way he has kept one under his bed and has always found solace in her presence further adds to his queer nature.

The Asian protagonists have always acted as a model minority and have desperately struggled to get their identity, by doing so, they love to act as *others* to their white peers, but this othering is always internal and is created and felt by the protagonists themselves. In the case of Kiran, this *othering* is very vivid and loud and is felt by the protagonist but more by the others. The other protagonists have always kept their newly created identity hidden but Kiran loudly proclaims his queer identity. By focusing upon the gender confusion, Satyal on one hand given the pseudo-individualized touch to his protagonist and on the other hand has subscribed to the universal globalized aspect of the exotic Asians. As a subversion to a model minority pattern, Kiran is also depicted as mean-spirited, cruel, malicious yet vocal both in his manner, thoughts, and actions. All the mistreatment in the form of ridicule, mock and sarcasm received once from his only white friends like Sarah, Melissa, Cody, and Donny are avenged ruthlessly by him as he set the art room on fire, deceitfully creating all the clues against them resulting in their detention not only from the school but a serious warning from the local police and administration. Even though they are his only friends, he is left with no one to confide or to play with, nevertheless, he is the content of his action as reflected clearly in his thoughts:

It's too perfect. It's just too perfect. Sarah and Mellissa wanted to be friends with Cody and Donny? Cody and Donny wanted to be friends with Sarah and Melissa? Well, they got what they wanted, and now the police are grilling them. Maybe they will be executed ---burned at the stake! No, no that won't happen but it's just too perfect (175).

What can be better than this evil intention coming from the mouth of a minority, a brown, exotic, queer Asian? Satyal asserts that no matter what the circumstances are, the diaspora generations are meant to be other and different. It is not only at the end that the true nature of Kiran is revealed but he was mean all through. Only he could dare to counteract Cody, his white peer who passed an indecent comment about some of the tales of Hindu mythology as cartoonish, Kiran answers bluntly by mocking Christian mythology as, "Oh but the man who walks on water----- before turning into wine----and heals the blind and dies only to come back to life is believable. It sounds more like an episode of captain planet" (86) Whereupon putting Cody in a state of misery and forcing him to leave the table. The more estranged the boy becomes, the more complex and exotic his personality appears and the more the notion of othering is intensified. Satyal's protagonist Kiran is a very complex character as he does not only consider himself to be a different and an outsider among his American peers but he also considers himself as an alien among his Indian friends. Even though his family regularly visits the temples on religious occasion and mixes with other Punjabi families but every visit make Kiran more uncomfortable and it strengthens this notion "When you are used to expending most of your energy living with the difference of your skin, it is hard to think of people whose skin is the same as yours as 'regular'" (125). This standardized notion of self othering is one of the major features of South Asian fiction in general. He, on one hand, is mesmerized and overwhelmed by the whiteness and feels different and inferior because of his skin which is evident when he is surrounded by the whiteness of his bathroom which eventually enhances the color of his skin. But that feeling is temporary and he gets rid of this feeling and focuses upon his skin which strikes out in this contrast. But unlike his Asian contemporaries, he feels much solace and comfort in his othering. He admires the fire engine lipstick simply because it has the semblance with Cindy Crawford but his major obsession is

his mother's magenta-colored lipstick which is quite exotic and has Asian origin showing his struggle to be out of the white American surrounding in which he lives. He does not lament his otherness but celebrates that otherness and does everything to stand out as different even though his otherness is mocked by all. Though he has always kept the Strawberry shortcakes with him showing his attraction towards the whites American surrounding he finds his associations more with Whitney Houston the Afro- American singer who excelled in singing gospels over Mariah Carey primarily because of darker skin of the former over the later. Similarly, he likes Lisa of the *Save by the Bell* again because of her being African. This standardized oscillation of Kiran between two worlds and feeling satiated with both makes him estranged and different from the rest. Though Krishna and Whitney Houston are different as one is a religious deity and the other is a singer but Kiran's obsession with both of them owes to one point, the different color of their skin. The Anglophonic South Asian novels have always projected the South Asian protagonists' conformity with their ethnicity but in the case of this novel, the mystical connection with the religious ethnicity has been taken to the other level. This is what Kiran exhibits in his performance in the Annual performance show which makes him other and different and creates the notion of self-othering, not an ordinary self-othering but an exoticized self-othering.

To bring more complexity in the personae of his character and to strengthen the notion of self-othering, Satyal has not only highlighted the dilemma of racial self-otherness and gender nonconformity, a theme which has always been very effectively projected. The queer sexuality has been very aptly portrayed by other South Asian writers as Tanuja Desai Hidier in *Born Confused* (2001) Hanif Kureshi in *Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) and finally in Shyam Sulvadurai *FunnyBoy* (1994) to name a few. According to Gopinath (2005) "discourses of sexuality are inextricable from prior and continuing histories of colonialism, nationalism, racism, and migration" (9). What makes Kiran's sexuality queer is not due to the American gay movement rights gaining its influence around the globe in 2009 but his practice of associating his queerness with the god Krishna makes him equally exotic. Indeed, the blue color of Krishna was one of the reasons for his attraction and inspiration but it is the "the flashy clothing, pierced ears and colorful lips' ' which attracted Kiran, the more attribute

of his lord he adopts the more he becomes a laughing stock. Krishna as a deity is worshipped despite his blue color and his exotic historical accounts, but the boy who blindly adopts his attributes is not even welcome both in his ethnicity and in the western ethnicity. Kiran does not turn out to be an extraordinary being but he creates a myth, a story for his exotic identity making him and the heavenly deity both exotic. The western audience assumes the Asians to be queer whom they openly project in the electronic and print media and Satyal in his novel has triumphantly satiated this assumption. By subverting the stereotypical queer sexuality, he has linked it with Holy deities. Kiran's persistence on sexuality and particularly his queer sexuality is asserted through the fact that he does not mind embracing both hetero- sexuality and homosexuality at the same time. For a twelve-year-old boy brought up in a conservative Asian family, who are followers of a medieval religion but the boy's inclination towards homo-sexuality by concentrating on this notion "it means you are wired for a different life entirely. It means that your bodies, your feelings, your responses towards other people are different" (203-204). It asserts the Gopinath's notion of the continuation of the legacy of sexuality but with de- familiarization by bringing the testimony of the holy deity as proof which makes Kiran ultimately utter as "Perhaps I am being smitten with a celestial wind of lust. Buffeted by bhagwan" (205) a very rare case of exotic self-identity by maligning the Hindu cosmology.

Besides, the element of estrangement is very well depicted in the title to the minutest detail acting as a façade through which the globalized ideology of the West has been propagated, this South Asian novel has utilized Adorno's concept of standardization quite effectively. As Adorno is of the view that one of the tenants to be found in a fetish cultural product is the element of standardization or the sameness since the cultural product has to be first in alignment with the standardized globalized cultural conformity before being converted into a saleable cultural product. It is only through standardization that the ideology of the dominant group is circulated. Almost all South Asian novels in general and most of the Young adult fiction, in particular, have very successfully interpolated culture, the novel *Blue Boy* is no exception. But this standardized interpolation has an element of pseudo-individualization, uniqueness, and a difference. The entire novel shows the standardized

projection of the culture of India but rather than focusing on one specific area or locality and projecting the practices and beliefs of that one area, he has brought about the Indian cosmology thereupon focusing on holistic Indian cosmology. Moreover, the interpolation is not primarily at the vicinity of home or in a specific ethnic community but on a wider level and in almost every place. Though the major focus of the writer as well as the protagonist is to merge and mix the western and the Indian culture, in-depth it is not the conversion but the diversion of two cultures. The religious interference is immediately brought when in the prologue of the chapter, Kiran while applying his mother's makeup and transformation is caught red-handed by his mother and covers that by saying "Surprise! ----Mom, I'm Krishna. I'm Krishnaji" (7). It is very rare that any cultural hint or reference is brought into focus so promptly and instantly and from there onward there seems to be no end to these cultural and historical references and portrayal. The texts and the doctrines of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* the two sacred books of Hindu mythology are extensively illustrated either from the books that Kiran reads in the library as:

I discover that Vishnu has ten incarnations—from a bull to a tortoise, to a lion to even a powerful midget. But it is Krishna who is the most memorable of these figures, even more, memorable than Rama, the hero of Ramayana. Krishna beats Rama because of all his talents—his flute playing, his ability to charm cow-herdesses, and of course his skin" (102).

The description reveals the historical and biographical details of Krishna. He simply does not only rely upon the books but also gets first-hand information from the Sunday temple school where he constantly inquiries from Pundit's wife about god Krishna, about his color, and many other details. Moreover, some of the details particularly the graphic detail is provided by Kiran himself especially when he provides the visual details of all Hindu deities which goes on as a "bright portrait of Vishnu, a golden circling the tip of his many fingers like rings around the planets, an icon of Lakshmi, red and magenta on Her lush lotus flower; Shiva's eyelids drooping, cobra beaming from His shoulder like blackbird's parrot" (8). The exotic details further contribute to the fallacies of the globalized cultural ideologies triggered by the publishers bracketed in re orientalist approach not by the accident but by the orients

themselves with the kaleidoscopic scope. Satyal's primary focus has been god Krishna and it is He whom Kiran finds a special affinity and associations and keeps on gathering all the information about him. Nevertheless, behind the depiction of this information, the major focus has been to exoticify India through these divinities. The text has not targeted mysticism or divinity but the projection of religious ethnic details to the Westerners has been the primary agenda which has been exhibited through the protagonist Kiran. Cody's admonition and rebuke of Kiran's religious doctrines do not prevent him from projecting his ethnicity in front of all his White and European community. He eventually shows his obsessions in the form of drawing Krishna and reasserting him as the blue-skinned god. The god of love" to Mrs. Goldberg, his English teacher, clearly bracketed him as the god of blue color along with his exotic attributes. With all this standardized portrayal of religion but along with the pseudo individualized way of treating lord Krishna in particular and by using the allegory of Hindu cosmology. Satyal has re-assured the notion of othering with new dimensions. The commodification of Hinduism to merchandise has been narrowed down by Vaneeta Sinha in her seminal work *Religion and Commodification; Merchandizing Diasporic Hinduism (2011)* who avowed "Hinduism as an embodied religion grounded in materiality" (Sinha 1). Moreover, while extending this notion further and providing the justifications she is of the view that the essentialist merchandising of commodified Hinduism in the capitalistic, globalist and diasporic context has resulted in the wholesale flow of religious commodities among the entrepreneurs at a large scale level is highly important for the universal sustenance of the Hinduism in this late-capitalist era.

The voluminous description of Hindu holy ethnicity leads to the depiction of Indian culture by and large, particularly through the attire, music, dance, and much more, a globally tailored standardized projection of the *other* culture by bringing it close to authenticity. For the annual talent show, Kiran makes an elaborate costume based upon "a conglomerate of all the garments that I've seen the gods and goddesses wear in those paintings, there is something of Lakshmi and Sarasvati's saris in the way that the shirt falls..." (242). The way he painstakingly makes the costume was primarily due to his passion but it reflects a rich and colorful Indian heritage that strikes out from the rest and is exceptionally colorful

accessorized with all the complimentary jewelry and makeup. The magenta lipsticks, the thick layer of *kajal*, the bangles, and the anklets are all artifacts of pure Indian cultural heritage complementing the tradition of the interpolation of culture which is evident in almost all South Asian Novels. Satyal has described in detail the cultural portrayal and heritage when the family visits the Sunday temple or when they gather on potluck gatherings usually arranged in different Punjabi houses. The Sunday temple, located in Cincinnati is completely Indian in its decorum. The setting of the temple, the sitting posture of worshippers, their dresses, the colorful deities, and the pundits, the sermons in Sanskrit, the bhajjan played with harmonium, and finally, the ringing of the bell is all Indian heritage. The standardized depiction of the Indian culture satiates the need of the Western consumer who assumes the Indian culture to be exotic, disorderly, and estranged. A notion affirmed in the same chapter where Kiran compares almost everything of his culture to that of western culture. An Indian temple is a place difficult to sit whereas the churches have comfortable seats, the focus of the sermon is *hinglishkirst* a self-coined term, non-harmonic and has irregular rise and flow whereupon the Christian sermons though in Latin are properly synchronized and blended well. The pundit appears to be a clumsy man with heels as cracked like dry earth contrasting strongly with the serene and elegant priests of churches, the temples are all bright and colorful, with pungent spicy smell everywhere surrounded by smoke and fire. While the churches have soft and subtle fragrances a serene and peaceful perfume dominates and finally the Hindu deities are in the form of exotic statues or images with exotic or strange shapes or colors. The Christian cosmologies are all unified and purity and spirituality predominate, perfectly synchronizing with the whiteness, the complexion of these deities.

Satyal has not only portrayed culture vividly through the portrayal of the practices and activities of the Sunday temple but also through the depiction of two Punjabi families where the Indian culture is thoroughly displayed. A complete chapter is A well-intonated chapter *Singh Singh* demonstrates an explicit detail of an Indian family from the clothing to the cultural practices. *Sharmas*, the protagonist's family is greeted by Neha Singh, a businesswoman in Indian attire "wearing a stunning orange-yellow sari and a group of gold bangles encircling each of her forearm" (104) and despite being a part of European

entrepreneur, greets the guest in a traditional style by positioning her palms, prostrating and saying *Namsateee*. Their luxurious house follows the custom of taking off shoes before entering the house, maintaining the tradition of a potluck with Indian cuisine of steaming rice dyed in turmeric curried peas, potatoes, okra, and cauliflowers, all served in a silver container of stainless steel. Satyal through Kiran also identifies the colorful shalvar kameez which all women wear and the white dress of males and the Hindi language used both in greeting and in practice. This standardized cultural portrayal again exhibits what is generally assumed, the chaotic East. The otherness of India is affirmed in the very prologue by Kiran endorsing his parents to have hailed from “the most exotic and dangerous of lands” (4).

The depiction of colors has been deliberately done by Satyal, as it is a part of a standardized culture projection and India proudly boasts its bright colors. Kiran’s obsession with Krishna is more due to his bright blue color rather than his attributes and it is this focus that makes him unconsciously utter “There is something to be said for creating a natural-looking face, but there is also something to be said for standing out, entrancing, glowing” (6) immediately after the application of blue color all over him. Moreover, his interest in the magenta lipstick unlike the fiery red of Cindy Crawford, his fascination with the peacock hair dress of Krishna, and finally his wearing of a specific colorful costume at his annual function reflects. not only his obsession with colors but the reflection of the bright colors of India. The delineation of harmonium and flute and the dancing moves as *khattak* are not merely accidental but a conscious attempt on the part of Satyal to interpolate globally certified standardized culture completely assorted with *otherness*.

The authenticity of the globally accepted standardized culture is replicated through the depiction of its language and by blending the two forms of English, the abrogation and appropriation show both the acceptance and the rejection of the standardized language in the novel. The appropriation shows the surrender to a standardized form whereas the abrogation is the pseudo-individualized aspect added by the writer to reassert the authenticity on one hand and to create the exoticism on the other hand. The text contains numerous Hindi expressions as *mar kai ga*, *Arre Kiran betakia haal hai* , *tum kharab larka ho* , *sashi kya ho gaya hai?* are a few among many abrogated expressions. This pseudo-individualized,

exotified, estranged words assert the authenticity besides satiating the need of the Western consumer of the native language. Apart from these ethnic orient expressions, the English language has been well appropriated but with a conscious effort to show the deficiency and lacking on the part of orientals. Throughout the fiction, Kiran has mimicked all the Indians of their inability to utter *w* and replacing it with *v* and their incorrect structures. Kiran's Indian tutor of dancing speaks English but with unstructured and mispronounced expressions, for instance, while telling him the importance of Indian dancing she says "vhat is important is how Kiran vill larn , ha?kiran beta evry child should larn haw to dence khatak. Beta I show you" (76). Even the pundit's wife who is supposed to teach anglicized Indian children the religious doctrines have pronunciation issues and while replying to their queries regarding the colour of Krishna she says: "it means he vas born blue. He vas born god. He vas different" (132). This standardized appropriation and abrogation serve the dual purpose, initially to bring the authenticity of the culture but eventually to show the surrender of all to the western mode of dialect.

The above discussion can be summed up in a way that this young adult fiction is not a fetish commodity on account of its external factors only but the internal element of the novel has been aligned as per the vested interest of the cultural capitalists. The detailed analysis reveals the Satyal has effectively deployed the techniques of standardization, estrangement, and multiculturalism as theorized by Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek to establish his novel as a fetish commodity and has effectively projected the ideology of othering which according to Lisa Lau and Huggan is the most demanded ideology of the market. A conscious effort has been made on the part of the writer to reassert the notion of othering, to assert the superiority of the West over the East either by highlighting the standardized cliché's or by adding the element of estrangement.

Conclusion

From the above discussion and analysis, it is evident that the young adult fiction by the Indian Anglophonic writers is no more exempt than adult fiction in the depiction of the globalized theme of the portrayal of re-orientalism based on othering and exoticism. They

have completely catered to and satiated the needs of Westerner consumers. Undoubtedly, the success of these novels owes much to the laurels, awards, and honors bestowed upon them and their tremendous success and their enormous availability asserting the role of the culture industry in their projection. Undoubtedly the artistic creativity is pretty much evident in these texts which distinguishes them from the rest of the creation, but one of the major features which projects out blatantly is that these novels have completely aligned themselves as per the demand of the culture industry. By deeply fusing all those elements demanded by the corporates of the culture industry and by internalizing the ideology they have been transformed into fetish cultural products. The techniques include both the external elements as well as the internal elements. The external factors which include merchandising, branding as well as massive distribution as per different consumers have played a pivotal role in their tremendous success, but the significance of the internal factors cannot be overlooked. The writers of these novels have though deployed various techniques as multi-ethnicity or multiculturalism as can be seen in the case of *The Blue Boy* or subscribing the standardization with the fusion of pseudo- individualization as in *The Bamboo People* and *Born Confused* or eventually by depicting the element of estrangement as can be seen in case of *Blue Boy*. The writers of these novels have ensured the utility of one or many of the techniques of the culture industry which have been identified by cultural theorists as Adorno, Marcuse, or Zizek. The ultimate aims and objectives had been the same, that is to convert them into a fetish commodity to be merchandised to gain monetary benefits in the form of laurels and awards and even acknowledgment in the Western market which is possible only if their prescribed demands and theoretical framework are adopted. These technical adaptations chiefly serve as mere modern or contemporary artistic décor, but the implicit purpose of all these fictions has been the same, that is the reinstallation of re-orientalism. The texts have established and strengthened the Indian culture and its exotic ethnicity which is not only different but a backward and a recessive culture and in short of no match to the Western culture and ethnicity.

The main aim of the novels has been the projection of culture either through the languages or through the practices, but a culture consciously grounded in the depiction of the

minutest details imbued with the element of standardization or estrangement marking a difference or creating an exotification and ensuring the fixation of theme explicitly stating and creating the binarism of the West and the Rest. The cultural depiction deliberately avoids the holistic or the positive aspect while the trivial or the unfamiliar has been maximized to gain the access to the western laurels and market endorsing Graham Huggan opinion that the “postcolonial world, has capitalized on its perceived marginality while helping turn marginality itself into a valuable intellectual commodity” (viii). Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the acknowledgments of these novels in the form of laurels and awards assert the fetish aspect of these novels and the way they have been distributed worldwide in different paperbacks accommodating different types of consumers and slightly varying titles assert the commoditized aspect of these fictions.



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter sums up the entire discussion along with laying out the importance of the present study. Besides, the chapter also provides answers based on the research findings to questions posited at the beginning of the research. The chapter concludes the research on concrete findings and suggests certain postulates and recommendations for further research, exploration, and inquiry.

The first question that was raised in the beginning was how has the concept of globalization been altered and modified concerning the ideology of the market? The answer to that question was traced in the first chapter by providing critical insight into the conversion of globalization from a naturally occurring phenomenon to a capitalist-controlled process. It has been established from the inference and analysis of the first chapter that globalization was first considered as a natural process of incorporation of people, groups, and societies as one by the exchange of view, economics, beliefs, and cultures. The advent of technological revolution has blurred the geographical boundaries responsible for the division of people around the globe in various ethnicities, groups, and countries and now there occurs free movement of goods, services, and capital. Globalization is now synonymous with

internationalization where there exists a complex interaction between influential capitalist institutions such as the United Nations (UN), WTO, IMF, and World Bank, and the nation-states. Under the mask of monoculture, mono-economics, and mono-society, it creates an illusion of freedom of capital, economics, and culture but ensures the preservation of class difference, unemployment, and poverty. This has resulted in redefining this notion as a process that depends upon international organizations and groups. Owing to its multiplicity as a source of both exploitation and emancipation, it is taken as a condition imposed by the capitalists through an extensive framework maintaining a powerful center and a weaker periphery to ensure the flow of capital from center to the periphery. This capitalist-controlled globalization has attained a gigantic stature by embracing three important Transnational Practices (TPs) the economics, politics, and the cultures with capitalism acting as a strong foundation. The TPs accentuate the role of globalization through a globally monitored framework having the consent of the states which deploy their ISAs to carry out this process. The contemporary process of globalization differs widely from the controlled process that occurred in the Era of European Imperialism where coercive centers played a significant role. The existing globalization emphasizes more upon a decentred economy, a non-existent geographical and political boundary but a more penetrating notion within the being of every individual to be accepted hegemonically. The global entrepreneurs advocate harmony, balance, and standardization making globalization an ideologically developed and politically driven notion to exert firm control over every individual of the globe.

The rationale of tracing the answer to this question was to achieve the two objectives which stated that globalization has been redefined by new capitalists as a dually controlled process having a material existence.

The second question under consideration was what role has been played by the culture industry in reconditioning the notion of globalization? The answer to that question has been elaborated on both in the first as well as in the second chapter. Elaborate discussion in the first chapter reveals that culture has always played a pivotal role in the process of globalization since culture encompasses both perception and the actions of the individuals and for that reason, it is not acquired unconsciously but is learned consciously at almost all

levels by an effective role played by various institutes or organizations transforming this generic culture to a regime culture having a base in materialism. Historically, Culture has always been a part of the process of globalization either in the form of, heterogeneity, homogeneity, and hybridity. The era of colonial expansion was based upon the difference or heterogeneity in every field including culture. The dependence of globalization on culture owes to the reason that unlike the other two of its tripods, i.e military and economics, culture assumingly appears to be more naïve and less coercive and is consequently accepted hegemonically. This gives an edge to it to disseminate the ideology of the dominant capitalist groups more profusely as it can adapt itself as per the need of globalization. From the findings of the discussion in previous chapters, it has been proved that globalization is not a naturally occurring phenomenon rather it is a process carried out by the corporate groups through extensively laid frameworks. The most successful present-day framework is to transform a culture from an abstract entity to an industrially manufactured product, a fetish commodity to be produced and distributed massively. The culture then attains the status of an ISA to be under the control of a nation. The systematic procedure followed by the culture industry is initially the creation of false needs of emancipation and liberation and then catering and satiating these false needs by relying on goods by capitalist controlled industry resulting in the formation of a uniform pattern and behavior. In the subsequent chapter, the focus has also been that how culture attains a fetish nature, a notion theorized by culture theorists as Theodor Adorno (1991), Herbert Marcuse(1978), and Slavoj Zizek(1991). In the findings of Chapter Two, these theorists have extensively elaborated the role of the culture industry in the propagation of the ideology of dominant capitalist groups. Theodor Adorno postulated that since a cultural product is aimed at the market, it must have an element of standardization and pseudo-individualization to align it with the demand of globalization. Herbert Marcuse re asserted Adorno's notion of standardization by linking it with technological advancements and developments, for him, Adorno's s idea of pseudo-individualization is well complemented by the addition of the element of estrangement to add the element of sensationalism to the product. Slavoj Zizek further added that the element of multiplicity and multiculturalism with an aspect of *typical* ensuring a Eurocentric gaze is another essential feature of a fetish cultural product. In a nutshell, the late capitalist arena

hails culture only if it is transformed into a fetish commodity to be produced by the culture industry on a massive scale into a profitable commodity. The immense circulation of products streamlines the perspectives and practices of culture whereby strengthening the process of globalization hegemonically. The globalized culture having a symbiotic relationship with the economy profusely injects the ideology of the capitalist group resulting in the creation of a uniformed behavior more tremendously than the other two of the tripods. As postulated by them, culture exists in the form of products, practices, and perspective, it is the product that dominates out of three forms as the other two forms of culture is variably or invariably linked with the products. The discussion has been further continued in the second chapter where the historical traces of the commodification of the culture have been traced to show that earlier it has followed the most successful procedure of rent and competition. The stooping of high culture for commoditization has been beneficial monetarily for the investors resulting in the shifting of the interest to urban culture. The advent of tourism and the culture associated with it as the sale of urban art, crafts, and paintings and the reestablishment of museums and galleries, has given a boost to the commodification of culture. The wholesale incorporation of experience along with the products allows the neoliberal capitalist to commoditize culture on well-constructed politically and economically laid structures. The emergence of various brands, well-assorted by multinational stores and chains asserts the commodification of cultures. The literature review has asserted that commodification of cultures has been identified and acknowledged logically by these eminent scholars as well who have substantiated that the popularity of aboriginal cultures in the contemporary era has turned out to be a profitable business. The preservation and publicizing of urban and ethnic culture universally exemplify the above notion.

The findings of the second question were to validate the other two objectives which stated that culture plays a very important role in globalization as it is through culture the ideology of the dominant group is more successively broadcasted and is readily accepted by the masses. Being noncoercive, it is infiltrated easily within the globe and crosses geographical boundaries with much ease and comfort.

The last question that was taken into consideration was to what extent young adult fiction by South Asian writers has been commodified and what ideology do they portray. The answer to this question is addressed in core chapters four and five. These chapters elaborate that literature holds a special position among the cultural products as it is the repository of psychological and ideological conflict. Capitalist-controlled globalization has yielded its intense effort in its transformation from an art form to a fetish commodity having an important exchange value. The chapters trace the historical accounts where all eminent scholars and poets subscribed their artistic work as per the demand of the consumers or the public as per notions of Marx and Engel who proclaimed that literature does have an exchange value. The establishment and popularity of the printing press catering both the demand and supply, laying the foundation of royalty and copyright was, in reality, a process of commodification of literature. The trend of publishing the works in serials or parts, the idea of best seller further exemplifies the link of the economy with ideology. In these chapters, it is further traced that the recognition of literary merits through awards and laurels is yet another way of assimilating literature into globalization. The more profitable a piece of literature is, the more it is likely to be a globalized commodity. The transformation of all genres of literature has been elaborated and discussed in those chapters. Accordingly, young adult literature has trodden the same path of commoditization, paving its way as an important ground for the ideological battle of capitalism to be fought. As the importance of young adult fiction is determined strongly by publishers or by consumers, they are regularly merchandised, publicized, and filmed because the consumerization of young adult fiction has far more monetary benefits and significance. The branding of young adult fiction takes place only when the surety of the publicizing of products of popular brands is granted by these writers. While keeping this notion in their mind, that youth is more prone to the consumption of these products, the products are readily consumed.

Reviewing literature traces the importance of English fiction by South Asian writers and the discussion has revealed their significance owing more to their commodification. The Anglophonic South Asian literature has undoubtedly contributed to the mainstream literature by depicting the postcolonial themes providing the Asian dimensions. However, it is an

unchallenged fact that those South Asian diaspora writers have contributed more to globalization as compared to home writers. Their experience of discrimination, alienation, and isolation and facing the pressure from the host nations to be assimilated has been far greater than their predecessor immigrants. The past two decades have seen the portrayal of resistance of these atrocities and hybridity and the assertion of their ethnicities and polygonal identities. The widespread acceptance and popularity of South Asian writers such as Agha Shahid, Ali, Amitav Ghosh, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Romesh Gunasekera, Mohsin Hamid, Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, and Jhumpa Lahiri are few among many to name whose works have acclaimed a prominent status both in literary academia and in the publishing industry. Nevertheless, it is also a fact that these South Asian writers have deployed the commodification of their ethnicity to gain access to the mainstream literary fields. Based on the notion of Lisa Lau and Graham Huggan, the study highlights how prizing or awards have contributed successfully to the popularity of this fiction. By taking the Pulitzer award as a reference, these scholars have asserted the role of aggressive techniques deployed by these writers in collaboration with publishing industries as merchandising, publications with different paperbacks as per different consumers belonging to different ethnicity and strata of society. Treading in the footsteps of their predecessors, the writers of young adult fiction have deployed the same marketing techniques. They have been awarded laurels and awards, their distributions have been made effective by publishing them with different titles, paperbacks, and even prices to cater to the needs of different consumers of the globe. To provide a new dimension to the aspect of commoditization, a detailed analysis of the selected texts by South Asian origin writers has been done using the theoretical framework of culture theorists Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. For these theorists, any cultural product must align itself as per the demand of the culture industry. As discussed earlier, for Adorno it must have standardization/sameness with the rest of the products with a touch of pseudo-individualization, for Marcuse the impact of pseudo-individualization is enhanced if the element of estrangement is added and for Zizek, the element of multiplicity along with the element of typical is effective for the transformation of any cultural product into a fetish commodity to propagate the ideology of the dominant group. According to Lisa Lau and Huggan, the ideology of the capitalist group for the South Asian fiction has been the re

assertion of the notion of Othering and to exotify their culture, practices, and beliefs to comply with the supposed expectations of the Western consumers. There exists an embedded understanding between the publishing giants and the South Asian writers where the latter assumes the role of representer of culture. With a complete understanding of this notion, the Young Adult fiction by the south Asian writers has been analyzed.

Chapter four has focused upon the Young Adult fiction by Pakistani Origin writers and the selected texts are *The Devil's Kiss* (2009) by Sarwat Chadda, *Skunk Girl* (2010) by Sheba Karim, and *Wanting mor* (2009) by Rukhsana Khan. These young adult fictions have contributed successfully to the process of globalization by altering themselves into a profitable commodity. Their extensive publication and distribution, selections for the laurels and awards, and their recommendation by various critics belonging to well-reputed publishing groups assert their status as a fetish commodity. The discussion is not restricted to the above-mentioned external factors but has focused on the internal elements as plot, characterization, and themes, etc to assert the internalizing of the ideology of othering and exoticism. These elements have been crafted unconsciously with external factors. The analysis of *The Devil's Kiss*, reveals that the writer has very profusely applied the techniques as depicted by the culture theorists. The plot has multiplicity in terms of culture, ethnicity, religion, characters, and groups subscribing to Zizek's concept of multiculturalism but with a Eurocentric gaze to ensure the superiority of the West over the Rest. The element of multiplicity is supplemented with a tinge of typical, with a deliberate attempt to assert the inferiority of the East. Similarly, in the portrayal of characters the writer has used Adorno's notion of standardization, but focusing more on stereotype portrayal of characters especially the Eastern characters. Marcuse's notion of estrangement has been used, but it is the eastern values, themes, and characters that have been treated as estranged to exotify them. It has been traced that since this novel has internalized the ideology of othering and exoticism of publishing groups, resultantly it has turned out to be a suitable commodity for globalization. *The Skunk Girl* by Sheba Karim is yet another novel where the adaptation of ideology in its constituent elements can be seen. From the studies, it has been seen that the writer has used Adorno's notion of standardization more liberally especially in the plot, characters, themes, culture, etc. The objective of standardization is to portray the stereotype

image, particularly of East as inferior to west. Marcuse's notion of estrangement used by the writer in the depiction of culture, food, language, and ritual reinforces Huggan's concept of exoticism and thereby enhances the notion of Othering. The outcomes assert this notion that commodification of this novel undoubtedly owes to the external factors but the internal factor of asserting the ideology of the dominant group too has played a pivotal role. Finally *Wanting Mor* by Ruksana Khan is not behind others in this league. She has very successfully deployed the notion of estrangement in the title, themes, language, and culture to exotify them, as per the demand of globalized capitalists. To enhance the notion of othering, she has deployed Adorno's notion of standardization in the depiction of stereotype characters, themes, language, and finally culture. All writers have disseminated the ideology of re-orientalism, othering, stereotype, hybridity, or exoticism within their texts by adhering to the framework of culture theorists Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. This internalized ideology has enabled them to be accepted by the proprietors of the publishing industry to be a prominent part of globalization.

Similarly, the young adult fiction by Indian origin writers is not much different than their predecessor adult writers. The Anglophonic Indian writers have always dominated both Academia and the globe. They have successfully trodden the path of their predecessors as they have been nominated for prestigious awards and have been publicized and commercialized tremendously contributing to the world of cultural globalization. Being a part of the culture industry, their works are not devoid of the ideology of capitalism. The findings of chapter five are based upon the analysis of three texts such as *Born Confused* by Tanuja Desai Hidier, *Bamboo people* by Metali Perkins and *Blue Boy* by Rakesh Satyal depict the fused ideology of the dominant capital groups by aligning themselves according to the norm of cultural globalization. In the outcome of the first novel, *Born Confused* it has been proved that the writer has aligned to Adorno's notion of standardization by portraying a stereotype character, plot and theme but with a Eurocentric gaze. The standardized depiction on the surface portrays an elaborate detail but in-depth, it ensures the establishment of the ideology of othering. The stereotype characters re assert self-othering, the culture in the form of rituals and practices are exotified to an extent that it appears as uncivilized, uncultured, and *other* to

the Western culture. The writer has dealt with the theme of sexuality aiming at how it is taken in Indian culture and religion and has mainly conversed on Indian taboos and forbidden aspects to satiate the desires of the Western consumers. Similarly, *Bamboo People*, another award-winning novel, subscribes successfully to cultural globalization by depicting the Burmese culture, it is not devoid of the ideology of the dominant group. The projection of the setting, theme, and character of Burma by a non- Burmese writer cannot be devoid of the ideology of othering. Unlike other fictions where the binarism of East and West is indirectly created, in this novel the binary is created very vividly within the same culture by portraying different versions of the same culture, one Europe orientated and the other native oriented. There exist two settings, one controlled by Western laws and regulations and the other by the local Burmese laws, similarly, among the two main characters, one has been brought up with western education and values and beliefs while the other with the Burmese laws, likewise two different cultures and faith systems exist within the same country. The elaborate and detailed depiction of settings, characters, culture through preaching and practice only creates an estranged impact which is exotified to a maximum extent only to strengthen the ideology of othering. The internal depiction of ideology strongly complements the external form of commodification as annotations and compliments by various critics belonging to various giants of publishing groups make it a venerable product for globalization. Finally, the last novel in the selection, *Blue Boy* by Rakesh Satyal has also followed the paths of the other two novels in aligning the internal ideology with the external commodification. The novel has focused more on the projection of estranged elements and to exotify them to an extreme magnitude. The stereotype culture is exotified, the taboos and forbidden aspect of culture too is exotified and lastly, a very daring step of exotifying Hindu religion, along with gods, religious myths, rituals, and beliefs have been done, the more exotified they appear the more is the assertion of the notion of un-civilization, un-culture, and othering. The internal ideology commends the external commoditized factors as the book cover, title, and strong annotations by the publishing groups.

Based on the discussions and the detailed analysis of young Adult Fiction by South Asian writers, it can be very clearly concluded that this fiction subscribes to the norm of

globalization by aligning the internal elements of their fiction with the external factors. These texts are not the globalized commodity due to their external factors as branding, publishing, and merchandising along with the acknowledgments in the form of laurels and awards, they are commodities. They have very successfully internalized the ideology of the *othering* by focusing upon the themes as hybridity, binaries, othering, and self-identity. They owe to globalization not because of the aesthetic factors but more due to their ideological factors. The purpose of tracing this question is partly to seek the answer to the questions that have been posited but more to validate the final objective which states that young adult fiction in general and by South Asian writers in the particular project the ideology of the capitalist profiting on the notion of reasserting binary by either the West the best or West and the Rest.

6.1: Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Readings

As the critical analysis of the texts has been by applying the theoretical framework of Adorno, Marcuse, and Zizek. The framework has been adapted by focusing on these key terms from their theory as standardization, pseudo-individualization, estrangement, flattening out of the difference, and finally multiculturalism with a typical. This adapted framework has been applied to the essential elements of fiction like plot, characterization, setting, theme, and point of view as they are the core where the ideological battle is fought. By applying the framework as a whole, in various combinations as standardization/ estrangement or pseudo-individualization/ multiculturalism, the hidden ideology is revealed. The same theoretical framework can be applied to young adult fiction by other South Asian writers belonging to Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan to reveal the hidden ideology. The present study focuses on the writers of two countries only, their scope could be increased to other South Asian countries such as Srilanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, etc. The reading of these texts would further endorse the above-discussed notion giving a more holistic picture. The chosen framework can be applied to the other emerging genre by south Asian writers as chick-lit, teenage literature, and even to children literature. The framework can also be applied to all other young adult fiction by Asian, Arabian, or African origin writers to reveal their commoditized nature.

From the review of the literature, the following recommendation can be suggested that Young Adult fiction by South Asian writers must be given due importance as they do not necessarily deal with the issues of the young adults as relationships, identity, troubles, joys, and happiness, they also project the contemporary issues, phenomenon, and process with a young adult gaze. The acceptance of South Asian young adult fiction as an important genre can add multiplicity to the South Asian aspect of post colonialism, feminism, Marxism, etc. South Asian literature has yielded postcolonial theory in many ways. Texts like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*, Mohammad Hanif's *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*, and many other texts, memoirs, travelogues have exemplified post-colonialism. The addition of South Asian Young Adult fiction would contribute further, and perhaps more dimension to this notion and would provide a more holistic view to it.

Though the literary history of South Asian women is difficult to trace because the writing emerges from different socio-political backgrounds. However, particularly after the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, poetry, songs, short stories, and novels, as well as autobiographical and critical texts by South Asian women writers, have offered new formulations for the traditional definitions of gender, work, and family that have been a cultural feature of pre-colonial and colonial South Asia, Indian Independence, and the partition of India and Pakistan. More recently, women writers from South Asia have also contributed to transformations that have been introduced by an increasingly South feminist approach, which essentially critiques Western feminism for having put forward stereotypical images of apparently homogenous 'third-world women'. However, the aforesaid notion has been debated and contested in novels, poetry, memoir, and other works written by South Asian Writers. Young adult fiction is missing in this debate, with the addition of Young Adult Fiction, further dimensions and aspects of feminism could be explored.

With their vast publications, distributions, and circulations, there are still more dimensions to be explored. Their acceptance authenticates that they have negotiated themselves as a mode of commodification by getting published by renowned publishers. Their acclamation has been granted only if approved by the specific giants of the genre. They

need to be dealt with in-depth to find out how far they have stooped or resisted the dominant ideologies.



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