

Exploring the Theory of Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*

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Abstract: An individual's identity has been shaped and reshaped throughout the history of the world. There have been several phenomena and lenses attached to the growth and development of human beings. *Bildungsroman* is the genre, which emphasizes an individual's development from being to becoming. The journey of the *Bildungsheld* takes place within the societal norms that force him/her to decide whether he/she wants to live in the society or leave it. In this regard, postcolonial writers have chosen this genre to explore the development of humans in the colonial and postcolonial periods. The phenomenon of postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is a new domain untouched by both creative writers and critical thinkers. The paper in the present context explores the theory of postcolonial *Bildungsroman*.

Keywords: Identity, *Bildungsroman*, *Bildungsheld*, Colonial, Postcolonial Period.

1. INTRODUCTION:

"The young man has become so homeless and doubts all concepts and all customs... a lord in the universal empire of history. If already as a boy he was "ripe", now he is over-ripe."

(Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*)

The notion of self focuses on the unusual and complex processes of the formation of the subject instead of the subject itself. It makes one's way across the complicated texture of social, political, cultural, economic, and linguistic realities that may allow an individual's self to acknowledge its role in the subjectivization of self and how the self acquires the existential and phenomenological realities of subjectivity. Self, its emergence, growth, and development, is also seen and examined through the complicated process of the construction of the entire epistemic order. Each form of epistemological reality structure analyses what human is and how they exist in this world. ¹Veerendra Kumar Mishra, in his *Modern Novels and Poetics of Self: Reading Modernist Bildungsromane* (2014), asserted that the documented historical realities of the world have affected the inevitable textures of the socio-political and economic turmoil that have changed and developed human history in many ways. In the beginning, they have propelled a few important changes which have determined the nature of "Reality" and the way truth is considered, recognized, and elucidated that can be entrenched by digging into the entire approach of the literary study from Structuralism to Postmodernism, Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction, and Postcolonialism. Further, they have put human beings under some introspection. The ideology of Postcolonialism and Cultural Studies has also examined the system of subjectivization and objectification because they locate the ontological, epistemological, and metaphysical realities about the construction of self, subject, and identity. Being, self, and subject have been reviewed and analyzed from the complex series of intellectual, philosophical, and literary lenses; however, every lens interprets and disperses them distinctively and uniquely.

Mishra (2014) stated that apocalyptic wars have imposed and constructed an exceptional view of hopelessness, chaos, and turmoil that has caused endless chances of death, dejection, grief, and distress upon an individual's subconscious mind. The idea of numerous fragmentations and fracturedness has disturbed the complete structure of "truth, being, self, and subject" (22). In addition, the textures of self, subject, and the phenomena of identity construction have been considered by many theorists, thinkers, philosophers, and metaphysicians, even from the "pre-Socratic era", accompanied by many contemporary philosophers. The discourse of the contemporary literary, creative, theoretical, and

critical world is broadly examined through different lenses of discourse. However, particularly, the realist discourse deals with the notion of self, which is one of the fundamental concepts of the construction of an individual's identity, which has ruled and enriched the world of knowledge. Self and identity are examined and explained through three major philosophical schools: 'Empiricism', 'Cognitivism', and 'Pragmatism'. The philosophy of Empiricism explains that the growth and development of the self are deeply embedded into the empirical realities of the world. The philosophy claims that the structure of epistemic formation is the result of the continuous repercussions of various components of the social, political, economic, and cultural realities, where one examines "the journey of one's living or existing with a *tabula rasa* mind" (26). The formation of epistemological realities is the repercussion of mimesis. However, Cognitivism has expounded the fact that the self and identity are the consequence of psychological activities. ²David Hume, in his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), depicted the fact that the self is nothing but a stream of mental processes. The Utilitarian, Cultural Materialists, Marxist theorists, and philosophers artistically depicted the effective part of extraneous factors in the formation of internal realities. In addition, the school of Pragmatism has delineated the fact that both Empirical and Cognitive realities constitute the realm of self and identity. ³Carol Lazzaro-Weis, in her *From Margins to Mainstream: Feminism and Fictional Modes in Italian Women's Writings 1968-1990* (1993), states that "the subject is indeed divided and a product of social, psychological, or political constraints" (9).

There have been two models of the construction of one's Self and Identity. The First model demonstrates that an individual negotiates with family relationships, and those relationships are based on gender and sexuality. Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, and some non-psychoanalysts belong to this model. ⁴George Herbert Mead, in his *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934), delineates that the self emerges through the procedure of interaction with the people of the society. The Second model emphasizes the idea of Identity as a product of economy, power, and culture. Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Hegel, and some more Marxists come under this model. They have focused upon the possible role of external factors in the creation of the internal realities of an individual. They discovered the reality of human existence in social, economic, political, and cultural realities. ⁵Michel Foucault, in his *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the College de France 1981-1982* (2001), states that it is power that causes the character to transform into a subject. Theorists have believed that the self and identity are constructs because nobody takes birth with a constitutive idea of self and Identity. According to them, Subjectivity has come from within the society, which includes certain interactions of the self through economic realities, hegemony (dominance by one state or social group over others), power, and truth, etc. All these constructs, ideology, consciousness, and identity, further mould the subjectivity of an individual.

To understand the Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, these phenomena of self and identity provide the theoretical framework. Postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is an amalgamation of Postcolonialism and *Bildungsroman*, which is a new domain untouched by both creative writers and critical thinkers, respectively. Therefore, it becomes crucial to comprehend the theory of postcolonialism and *Bildungsroman*. 'Postcolonialism' is a conceptual, intellectual, political, and philosophical platitude that examines the ways of reading, exploration of politics, cultural refusal, and interference with the history of colonialism. The history of colonialism brings out notions like civil rights, liberation, and sovereignty to challenge the tyrannical system of enslavement, victimization, oppression, and bias based on color and sex. Postcolonialism not only explores the resistance of people to colonialism but also the process of colonization as well. Further, it explains that the postcolonial proposition differs from the colonial approach as it focuses on the dissimilarity between the native people and the colonizers. Conceptually, it opposes any kind of accustomization or homogenization of people and cultures. It acknowledges how enslavement, exploitation, acculturation, hegemonization, and assimilation happened during the colonial regime. ⁶Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) has explained that the colonizers have been able to colonize the natives and aboriginals by creating the binary category of the Orient and the Occident. Further, he postulates that the colonizer enslaved the history, race, culture, intellectual tradition, consciousness, and language of the native, and hence the colonizer has created the phenomenon of epistemic violence. It is through this process and reality that the colonizers have colonized the natives. ⁷Said reasserts a similar argument in his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). Orientalism is Said's creation of thoughts, ideas, points of view, and knowledge about the Orient, and he thus defines Orientalism:

a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western Experience . . . the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience . . . Orientalism is a style of thought based on ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" . . . the phenomenon of

Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient . . . despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a “real” Orient (1-3, 5).

⁸Leela Gandhi, in her *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1998), explicates that postcolonialism “can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering, and, crucially, interrogating the colonial past” (4). In the 1970s and 1980s, colonial discourse analysis controlled the structure of postcolonial criticism. Colonial discourse analysis tries to reveal the colonial dogma in the cultural and literary works created by European countries. It was interested in the linguistic illustration of colonial exercises and power relations, in the place of realistic historical and institutional situations of capitalism and geographical possession. Therefore, it turned out to be a colonial *text* instead of a colonial context. Postcolonial criticism proclaimed European aesthetic models to be rejected because these perspectives cannot do justice to African and Asian writings, which are extracted from and affected by their own culture. From 1980 to 1990, questions on nationality, migration, gender, and sexuality were included in the exploration. Postcolonial studies are still in the process of reclaiming the history of ‘Subalterns’ that have been erased and unheard by both nationalist powers and colonists. Postcolonial analysts of this period tend to choose dissimilarity between the writers, who belong to different localities such as Wilson Harris (Caribbean) and Raja Rao (India). The critics should identify and propose the similarities that both writers talk about the universal human condition. ⁹Deepika Bahri, in her *Native Intelligence: Aesthetic, Politics, and Postcolonial Literature* (2003), asserts the centrality of postcolonial writing is “the intermeshing of socio-politics with artistic and intellectual expression” (11). Throughout the 1990s, the paradigm shift has seen certain issues associated with “Third World” within “First World” countries: exile, migrants, and racial minorities. The Inclusion of minorities under postcolonial symbolizes a bridge between colonized and hegemonized people. The Migrated mob, who were under the control of racism and structured marginalization, identified them as colonized within the ‘First World’ nations.

In addition, postcolonial realities are always seen in interdependence with the theory of colonization and decolonization. The colonizers have imposed strongly upon the body and cognitive ability of the colonized. Colonizers imposed powerfully upon the colonized their own culture, language, and cultural realities which as a result have evolved the dialectical difference and division between the self and others. Franz Fanon’s twentieth-century works can be seen as the emergence of postcolonial theory. The studies of imperialism have already been taken into consideration, but because of Fanon, the lessons of psychological and ethical repercussions evolved. He also claimed that colonialism dehumanized the native people. ¹⁰Pramod K. Nayar, in his *Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction* (2008), affirms that this exercise occurred extensively, that “the black man can see himself only as the black (mirror) image of the white man. The white man is the master, and represents an object that is to be feared and desired”. (23) Therefore, the black man struggles a lot to look like a white man and is set on “white masks” (23). ¹¹Ania Loomba’s *Post/Colonialism* (2005) recounted the fact that, in addition to language, politics, culture, and language, race has also been represented as one of the prominent categories of exercising colonialism. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha have also made immense contributions to the field of Postcolonialism. Bhabha treats the postcolonial experience differently; he holds a poststructuralist place and trusts in the chances of a “Hybrid Identity” in which an individual negotiates and joins new social, cultural, linguistic, and historical realities and tries to maintain his new hybrid identity. Homi Bhabha, a prominent figure in postcolonial criticism, gave the definition of postcolonial criticism in his “Postcolonial Criticism” (1992), which is as follows: “Postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority in the modern world order” (437). Likewise, ¹²Spivak in her critical essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988) unveils the difficulty of subaltern subjectivity that has been purposely silenced by the unchallengeable and tyrannical ideology of the domineering system of the Enlightenment.

The second critical idiom is *Bildungsroman*. To understand this term clearly, it becomes important to know the formation of the word. *Bildungsroman* is a kind of literary genre. The form of *Bildungsroman* originated or was introduced in Germany by Karl Morgenstern (1819), which is directly related to the realities of self and identity. It has been constituted by *Bild*, which has been derived from the German word *Bilade*, which is the representation of *Picture*, *Image*, and *Figure*. *Roman* is derived from *Romance*, which weaves the story of *Bildungsheld’s* (protagonist) adventure or his journey in the world. *Roman* also represents ‘Novel’. It focuses upon the formation of identity and the process of becoming *Bildungsheld* from its being. It also constructs the epistemological realities of the protagonist. In another word, it explores the growth and development of the self and how one acquires one’s selfhood, identity, and

consciousness. ¹³Gregory Castle, in his *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman* (2006), demonstrated: “The *Bildungsheld* emerged in late-eighteenth-century Germany in a climate of intense aesthetic and philosophical exploration and creative production; it emerged not only as the signature narrative expression of the concept of *Bildung* but also the genre of aesthetics”. (18) *Bildungsroman* can be characterized through some features; it must be an autobiographical novel in nature. It includes biographical details, facts, and also fictionalization in it. Most of the time, it even gets difficult for the critics to locate where the facts begin and the fictions end. For example, ¹⁴Sylvia Plath’s *The Bell Jar* (1963) and ¹⁵George Eliot’s *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). *Bildungsheld* must encounter some conflict as far as socio-pragmatic realities are concerned. Socio-pragmatic realities are those realities where *Bildung* takes birth and finds an end number of problems and starts negotiating and leads his life as per the social norms. In the Aesthetico-Spiritual realities, he started urging for the meaning of his existence, and in the search for his own identity, he got into the world of art or aesthetics. Further, *Bildungsheld* must have experienced two relationships or sexual encounters in his life. The first experience must be physical, which will be degrading, and the second must be spiritual, which will be liberating. For example, ¹⁶James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and ¹⁷D.H. Lawrence’s *Sons and Lovers* (1913). *Bildungsheld* remains happy either with his life in society or may move into the world of aesthetics. For example, at the end of D.H. Lawrence’s novel *Sons and Lovers*, *Bildung* leaves that place and goes into the world of infinity. The last feature of *Bildungsroman* is that it cannot violate more than two features. *Bildungsroman* can be seen through three categories: *Entwicklungsroman*: ¹⁸Jerome Hamilton Buckley, in his *Seasons of Youth* (1974), explicates that “It is chronic of a young man’s general growth rather than his specific quest for self-culture” (13). The *Bildungsheld* must be involved in the process of socialization, so that he can attain a mature individual self. *Erziehungsroman*: Buckley illustrates that “It emphasizes on youth’s training and formal education” (13). Through formal education, *Bildungsheld* gets informed about society, power structure, his role as an individual, epistemic structure, etc. *Kunstlerroman*: According to Buckley, it’s “a tale of the orientation of an artist” (13). The central idea talks about the character’s process of becoming from its being. The process of becoming involves socio-economic, cultural, language, and political intervention.

The Colonial aftermath impels postcolonial writers to write on the conditions of the people, while *Bildungsroman* writers have talked about the development of an individual in society. The main concerns of both are Self and Identity; thus, it becomes the central theme of postcolonial *Bildungsroman*. ¹⁹Jose Santiago Fernandez Vazquez, in his “Recharting the Geography of Genre: Ben Okri’s *The Famished Road* as a Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*” (2002), proclaims that “one of the reasons why post-colonial writers turn to the *Bildungsroman* is the desire to incorporate the master codes of imperialism into the text, in order to sabotage them more effectively”. Allowing the genre’s “problematic relationship with a colonialist ethos makes the *Bildungsroman* a rather odd choice for postcolonial writers” (86). According to Maria ²⁰Helena Lima in her “Decolonizing Genre: Jamaica Kincaid and the *Bildungsroman*” (1993), the postcolonial writers decided to apply *Bildungsroman* in their writings, which illustrates a contradiction and then she asserts that *Bildungsroman* “helps to reproduce the cultural imperialism that inevitably separates the Third World intellectual from the community and culture of his or her birth” (434). Through Lima’s and Vazquez’s declarations, the genre of postcolonial *Bildungsroman* can be categorized by the “cultural imperialism” and “colonialist ethos”, which has apparently taken from the classical *Bildungsroman*. Many writers like Maria and others have asked the question “Why the *Bildungsroman*?” ²¹Pheng Cheah has provided a suitable answer to this question in his *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (2003), *Bildungsroman* “is the most appropriate symbolic expression of the search to alleviate the sense of homelessness experienced by those without a sense of community or nation as a consequence of the onslaught of colonialism” (242). Cheah also bothered, “the predicament of decolonization is that there is [often] no pre-existing community for the individual to be reconciled to” (243). Although this fact constructs the retrieval of native culture and proclamation of national identity, on the other side, it also underlines the uncertain self of *Bildung* who has no alternative but to do his or her best into the dominant order. The changing realities of history have left human beings into a dilemma and shaped and reshaped their realities. ²²Michel Foucault, while explaining the technologies of the self in his *Knowledge/ Power* (1977), affirms that:

[T]he goal of my work during the last twenty years has not been to analyze the phenomenon of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subject. (07)

The historical realities of the world put human beings at the center so that they can be observed through self, subjectivity, consciousness, ideology, and identity. Postcolonial studies have questioned the process of subjectivization and objectification. ²³Danaher et al. in *Understanding Foucault* (2000) unfold the fact that:

[s]ubject is produced by discourses, institutions and relations of power. This makes clear that people are not free agents who make their own meanings and control their lives; rather, they have their lives, thoughts and activities 'scripted' for them by social forces and institutions (such as school, the media and advertising). (116-117)

²⁴Mikhail Bakhtin while talking about *Bildungsroman* in his essay "The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism: Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel" (1986) focuses on "man's essential becoming" along with that put the interpretation of the "novel of human emergence" to writings in which the "changes in the hero himself acquire plot significance" (20-21). He claims that;

Along with this predominant, mass type [the novel with the "ready-made" hero], there is another incomparably rarer type of novel that provides an image of man in the process of becoming. . . . The hero himself, his character, becomes a variable in the formula of this type of novel. Changes in the hero himself acquire plot significance. . . . Time is introduced into man, enters into his very image, changing in a fundamental way the significance of all aspects of his destiny and life. This type of novel can be designated in the most general sense as the novel of human emergence. . . . Everything depends upon the degree of assimilation of real historical time. (21)

Bakhtin has divided the development of novels into certain types, and all of them are determined by the "types' relationship to time". Within the first and second types, time is periodic in nature, and it represents human development as "repeating itself in each life". (22) Another type is *Erziehungsroman*, which emphasizes an individual's knowledge formation and epistemic development through which he "becomes more sober, experiencing some degree of resignation" at the end of the novel. (22) The next type sticks to "biological time" and "emergence here is the result of the entire totality of changing life circumstances and events, activity and work". (22) The succeeding category is "didactic-pedagogical", which proceeds with regard to actual "historical time". It also characterizes the final type, in which human's emergence is no longer independent or private: he "emerges along with the world". (22-23) Bakhtin's use of actual historical time in the protagonist's life and the final type, both ideas are specifically connected to the postcolonial *Bildungsroman*. Explicitly in favor of postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, the reciprocity among the human's emergence and actual historical time, the urge for putting postcolonial subjects within the center of history rather than at the periphery of it, because of the history of colonialism, the emergence of the postcolonial subject has become way more possible. All these aspects have become a task for many postcolonial *Bildungsromans*.

²⁵Jed Esty, in his article "The Colonial *Bildungsroman*: The Story of an African Farm and the Ghost of Goethe" (2007), states that at the end of the nineteenth century, the question of identity for *Bildungsroman* came into being. Colonialism constructively "disrupt[ed] the *Bildungsroman* and its humanist ideals, producing jagged effects on both the politics and poetics of subject formation" (411). According to ²⁶Ericka A. Hoagland in "The Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*" (2019), the African postcolonial *Bildungsroman* needs to be acknowledged like an important element of postcolonial literature. Fundamentally, Africa is one country that has experienced both colonial *Bildungsroman* and postcolonial *Bildungsroman* culture, which depicts the procedure of becoming a colonized being in the colonial time frame. It can be seen that these two genres are distinctive in nature and share a dialogical relationship. An autobiography, *L'Enfant Noir* (1953) / *The African Child* (1954) by ²⁷Camara Laye used the *Bildungsroman* philosophy. While unfolding his childhood experiences in the colonial period, he also portrays the consequences of his colonial education. But at the end of the novel, Lay left his village and headed towards France. The novel talks about the growth and development of *Bildungsheld*, but the focal point is within colonial and postcolonial circumstances. The drift from colonial to postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is more than a chronological movement. Hybridity, trauma, and ambivalence are the central themes in the postcolonial *Bildungsroman*. But the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* has established an inherent problem by itself. ²⁸Simon Hays, in her "Nervous Conditions, Lukacs, and the Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*" (2013), declares that the "inherently contradictory" feature plays a vital role in the "postcolonial *Bildungsroman*" (318). Simon proposes placing "postcolonial" like an identifier of the genre of *Bildungsroman* "in the sense that the narrative conventions of the form are reproduced not to be either rejected or embraced but because in the suspension between rejection and embrace lies the possibility for ongoing struggle" (341). As a result, postcolonial *Bildungsroman* has appeared like a move towards revolution, an anti-thesis and a governmental process of opposing victimization, a re-envision and rejuvenation, a development of an individual with the help of removing its predecessor and unveiling the *Bildungsroman*'s philosophical limitations.

²⁹Franco Moretti, in his *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (2000), affirms that the inherent struggle in postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is into the “ideal of self-determination and the equally imperious demands of socialization” (15). The postcolonial *Bildungsroman* emphasizes the struggle, which is usually extended by the cruelty and ruthlessness of civil war, the shadow of colonialism, extensive subjugation, oppression, and fragmented politics of families. Postcolonial *Bildungsromane* have formed the written history of the *Bildungsroman*, and Esty believes this is a “process of . . . unmaking” (18). ³⁰Jed Esty in his *Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development* (2011) elucidate the unmaking procedure, “which is always coeval with [the *Bildungsroman*’s] making” (18), supports ³¹Marc Redfield’s *Phantom Formations: Aesthetic Ideology and the Bildungsroman* (1996) idea that several times the *Bildungsroman* “is cast into question, the more its flourishes” (40). These prominent observations by Esty and Redfield have played a vital role in raising and answering the questions by postcolonial writers about the selection of *Bildungsroman* and how the genre has changed over time. The *Bildungsroman*’s symbolic space thus becomes a place where postcolonial writers attempt symbolic resolutions of political and social problems that occur in postcolonial societies. Vazquez (2000) writes;

Bildungsroman has grabbed the imagination of a great number of postcolonial writers, in spite of the genre’s Western roots and its problematic association with a colonialist mentality. The concept of a progression from childhood to adulthood – that is, from a primitive to a fully developed state of being – constitutes one of the images that has made the colonial enterprise possible (86).

³²Feroza Jussawalla in her “Kim, Huck and Naipaul: Using the Postcolonial *Bildungsroman* to (Re)define Postcoloniality” (1997) pronounces that “when the postcolonial novelists needed a genre to define the birth of their new nations and to define their experiences in relation to colonialism they chose the genre of the *Bildungsroman* or the novel of ‘growing up’ to signify their national birth – their nationhood” (30-31). In the postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, the protagonist moves away from colonial interpretations of indigenous culture while also coming to terms with the formation of a feeling of belongingness and national identity. It is not only a story about a protagonist coming of age; rather, it is a narrative about the protagonist’s development and realization of their personal, racial, national, and socioeconomic identities. Nonetheless, nobody has made an effort to characterize the distinctive qualities of postcolonial novels or literature beyond the assertion that they represent any struggle against a dominant “colonizing” force or the anti-colonial struggle. ³³Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin, and Gareth Griffiths in their *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) say that “we use the term ‘postcolonial’ . . . to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (2).

³⁴Martin Swales, in his *The German Bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse* (1978), observes that the German novels that focus on a young man’s development and transformation through adolescence and that consider this time as precisely the one in which significant philosophical and intellectual issues are embedded in the psychological process of human self-discovery are typically classified as a *Bildungsroman*. In addition, he describes the “*Bildungsroman* as a highly self reflective novel, one in which the problem of the *Bildung*, of personal growth, is enacted in the narrator’s discursive self-understanding rather than in the events which the hero experiences” (4). Essentially, postcolonial theory emphasizes the colonial events that the hero goes through rather than his comprehension and assimilation of the events of colonization and cross-cultural interaction. However, according to Swales, the *Bildungsroman*’s thematic opportunities were mostly centered on the flux and change of adolescence. Consequently, the *Bildungsroman* genre “was never quite dislodged from its prestigious position” although ³⁵Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister* (1773), a historical and social text, continued to make use of it for “nationalistic” and class analysis objectives (7). Swales further observes that the main goal of “the English novel of adolescence – [Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and Joyce] – is essentially concerned to find a certain practical accommodation between the hero and the social world around him” (34). Therefore, it should come as no surprise that postcolonial novelists chose the *Bildungsroman*, or novel of “growing up”, as a genre to represent the birth of their new nations and their experiences concerning colonialism. This helps to symbolize the author’s sense of national birth and nationhood. Many writers of postcolonial fiction have chosen it as their genre, including ³⁶Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses* (1988), ³⁷The Moor’s *Last Sigh* (1995), ³⁸Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958), and ³⁹R.K. Narayan’s *Swami and Friends* (1935). Writers of contemporary minority fiction, including the Hispanic-American authors ⁴⁰Rudolfo Anaya’s *Bless Me Ultima* (1972) and ⁴¹Tomas Rivera’s *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (1971), as well as female authors Kamala Markandaya, Bapsi Sidhwas, Jamaica Kincaid, Paule Marshall, and Sandra Cisneros, have used this genre to depict adolescent’s development as a shift towards ethnicity and nationalism.

Maria Helena Lima in her analysis of Caribbean postcolonial *Bildungsroman*; provides the idea of “generic transculturation” to explain the translation of a genre “to serve [the] particular needs” of the realm and cultural transformation, such as the Caribbean, they have lived and experienced in English colonization (433). Lima asserts that “the *Bildungsroman* gives mankind [the] illusion of a distinct, self-present subjectivity” and this affirmation of her fabricates the recognition of the *Bildungsroman* between postcolonial writers still confusing for analyst (437). In addition, the self-realization of the Occidental middle-class issue has been associated with the suppression of race and culture through colonialism; the *Bildungsroman* occurs as an inadequate tool for exploring the development of postcolonial subjects. Therefore, it has become more important for colonial and postcolonial *Bildungsromane* to take part in “generic transculturation” but only then, as long as the particular genre takes the place of any traditional, political, and societal utilization. Maria Helena Lima declared that numerous postcolonial *Bildungsromane* “begin with a death rather than with the more conventional birth of the *Bildungsroman* protagonist” (441). But Lima’s declaration is not usually appropriate to all postcolonial *Bildungsromane*. Lima further notes that the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* consistently emphasizes the short period in the *Bildungsheld*’s character and life. This kind of narrative choice by the writers presents the restricted, interrupted, uncertain, and fragmented growth and development of the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* protagonist. Writers do not allow the protagonist to access himself in steady development; instead, they show flashes and fragments before the readers. A moderate development is significantly refused by the reader as well as *Bildungsheld* and emphasizes the “displacement and alienation [chronicled] in post-colonial texts” along with the importance of the developmental procedure for the *Bildungsheld* (442).

The feature of the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is the ongoing decontamination process of colonialism’s terrifying provision, along with the growth and development process and the formation of identity.⁴² Alioune Sow, in his essay, “Political Intuition and African Autobiographies of Childhood” (2010), asserts that the “tragic representation of colonized childhood” should not assume as a failure mechanism for critics and readers of this kind of text, despite the existing surroundings of how effective this method is in expressing the social and political behaviour of *Bildungsroman* (502). In the Postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, the notion of anti-*Bildungsroman* culture, such as the representation of a ruptured, or even unattainable, growth and development process, and a good analysis of the society into which the *Bildung* strives for access, can also be identified in it. Ericka A. Hoagland in her essay (2019) states that the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is “dismantling of the ideological suppositions of the *Bildungsroman*”, she manifests a fact of the genre in general: “It does not exist in vacuum, cut off from socio-historical forces and changes, and its definition, always subject to the desires of its interlocutors, is not immune to challenge or change” (220).

In⁴³ Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps* (1986), Askar, the protagonist of the novel, tries to map his identity.⁴⁴ Derek Wright, in his “Mapping Farah’s Fiction: The Postmodern Landscapes” (2002), calls it a result of “colonial whimsy”, in that “ethnic and geographical spaces [have been] subordinated to the free play of colonial signifiers” (96). In her novels, “sexual, national, and ontological boundaries are straddled” and the *Bildungsheld* manifests the harmonizing deed among identities in eternal stress (100). The postcolonial *Bildungsroman* protagonists are always in search of their existence and identity in the social and political domain. Particularly, they want to locate their belongingness, who they are, and where they belong. Similarly, the question of identity can be seen in Farah’s *Maps*. Askar’s *Bildung* or identity formation has occurred in the surroundings of postcolonial nation-building and within gender politics. Thus, the postcolonial writers found the *Bildungsroman* applicable and adapted it for examining the social and political structure of the colonial legacy and the after-effects of postcolonialism.

2.CONCLUSION:

The postcolonial *Bildungsroman* reinterprets *Bildung* itself. It highlights the fragmented, dialogic, and historically driven aspect of identity while rejecting the idea of a unified, self-present individual. The genre questions Eurocentric conceptions of growth and affirms the importance of other theories of knowledge and cultural narratives by putting the postcolonial protagonist within the historical timestream rather than at its margins. As a result, the process of being is a complicated negotiation with history, power, and memory rather than a personal quest for social harmony. To sum up, the postcolonial *Bildungsroman* is a dynamic and changing genre that both builds upon and deconstructs its European roots. It turns the story of personal development into a critical investigation of the politics of identity, national formation, and the legacy of colonialism. This metamorphosis not only challenges the classic *Bildungsroman*’s ideological underpinnings but also creates new avenues for comprehending how the self emerges in a world reshaped by postcolonial reconfiguration and colonial disruption.

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