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## Mimicry and Multiculturalism from Colonial and Postcolonial Perspective in Rudyard Kipling's "Kim" and Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Thing"

Assist Lect. Rakan Assi Khalaf

Alnoor University / College of Education – Department of English, Mosul, Iraq

Email: [Rakan.assi@alnoor.edu.iq](mailto:Rakan.assi@alnoor.edu.iq)

### ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the mimicry, multiculturalism, the role of race, and the impacts of cultural colonialism on the inhabitants of India in Rudyard Kipling's "Kim" and Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things", highlighting colonial and postcolonial perspectives. Colonialism had diverse effects on the lives of the colonized people. The researcher utilizes a qualitative analysis method to conduct this study and achieve its objectives. At the beginning, introductory notes about novels and novelists are given. Further, colonial and postcolonial concepts of multiculturalism and mimicry are elaborated. The findings of the study conclude that multiculturalism and mimicry hints are in abundance in both novels, which give rise to the issue of race and identity in the lives of the Indians. The effects of colonialism arouse the division between the white and the black, class and race between Indians and British on the one hand, and within classes in India on the other hand i.e. amidst touchable and untouchable within the same context and culture among Indians.

**Keywords:** Colonialism; Postcolonialism; Mimicry; Multiculturalism.

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## التقليد والتعددية الثقافية من منظور الاستعمار وما بعد الاستعمار في كيم روديارد كيلينج وأرونداتي روي إله الأشياء الصغيرة

م.م. رakan عاصي خلف

جامعة النور / كلية التربية – قسم اللغة الانكليزية ، موصل- العراق

[Rakan.assi@alnoor.edu.iq](mailto:Rakan.assi@alnoor.edu.iq)

### المستخلص

تناول هذا البحث تحليلاً للتقليد والتعددية الثقافية، ودور العرق، وتأثيرات الاستعمار الثقافي على سكان الهند في رواية (كيم) لروديارد كيلينج و (إله الأشياء الصغيرة) لأرونداتي روي، مع تسليط الضوء على وجهات النظر الاستعمارية وما بعد الفترة الاستعمارية. وكما هو معروف كان للاستعمار تأثيرات متنوعة على حياة الشعوب المستعمرة، يستخدم الباحث منهج التحليل النوعي لإجراء هذه الدراسة وتحقيق أهدافها. ففي مستهل البحث ، تم تقديم ملاحظات تمهيدية عن الروايتين ومؤلفيهما . فضلا عن تفصيل المفاهيم الاستعمارية وما بعد الاستعمارية للتعددية الثقافية والتقليد. وخلصت نتائج الدراسة إلى تقديم تلميحات حول التعددية الثقافية والتقليد الموجودة بكثرة في نصّي الروايتين، وهو ما يثير مسألة العرق والهوية في حياة الهنود. وفي الحقيقة تثير الآثار التي خلفها الاستعمار الانقسام بين الأبيض والأسود، والطبقة والعرق بين الهنود والبريطانيين من جهة، وداخل الطبقات في الهند من جهة أخرى؛ أي وسط المنبوذين وغير المنبوذين ضمن السياق نفسه، والثقافة بين الهنود.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعمار؛ ما بعد الاستعمار. التقليد ؛ التعددية الثقافية

## INTRODUCTION

Both novels, Kipling's *Kim* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*, are replete with ideas through their characters and themes, which were highlighted and scrutinized in this study. Kipling and Roy have shown their artistic skills to project the impact of colonialism through the lens of a Postcolonial perspective. Mimicry and multiculturalism play a significant role in both novels to project the concept of hybrid identity as the characters in both novels adopt the identity and cultural norms of the culture and identity which belong to the colonizer. They are heavily

under the influence of their cultural and colonial effects. Both novelists used autobiographical references to give the stories a more realistic and authentic portrayal of Indian people, culture, identity, and race. Both novels also highlight the effects and impacts of colonialism and post-colonialism on the lives of Indian people.

Mimicry, multiculturalism, and the effects of colonialism on the lives of the Indians are portrayed in both Kipling's *Kim* and Roy's *The God of Small Things*. The novelists of both novels project themselves and the concepts of identity as both directly or indirectly linked with the countries under the impacts of colonialism. Roy is an Indian; hence, she is directly affected by colonialism, like millions of other Indians. Kipling was not an Indian, yet he was brought up in a colonized culture, and his dual identity highlighted the issue of identity crises or the issue of identity in *Kim*.

Rudyard Kipling was an influential British poet, reporter, children's author, and novelist. He was born and raised in India in 1865 in Bombay, where British colonists-controlled India. When he was a six-year-old, he was taken to England by his parents. He had a horrible time and even had a nervous breakdown at the age of 11. His mother came from India, took him on holiday, and transferred him to another school. As soon as he regained his mental stability, he discovered his writing abilities. In 1882, he returned to India as a young writer. Though he had forgotten about the birthplace's sights, sounds, and language, everything immediately returned to him as soon as he returned.

After returning to India, he knew his dual identity and culture. He grew up in India and hence had India as his origin, but he was English and had an education by blood. So, he had the privilege of attaining favor on both sides. The Indian treated him

as Indian, and the British deemed him a fellow. Nevertheless, he had another health issue soon in India, insomnia, that he started to roam the street and took to opium, which was not English men's trade. However, these experiences led him to write serious stories, later compiled into 40 short stories entitled “*Plain Tales from the Hills*”. His rise to stardom began with these events in England as a writer. In 1889, he returned to England and met Balestier, a publisher, who later became his intimate friend.

On the other hand, Arundhati Roy is a writer and political activist from India who was born and raised there. In 1961 a Hindu father and a Christian mother raised her. She grew up in India. These settings and places appeared in *The God of Small Things*, her first novel, a book that is highly occupied with her childhood memories and has an autobiographical touch. Her novel *The God of Small Things* is her most famous work. That was released in 1997 and became an immediate success, and she was awarded the Booker Prize for writing to become one of the young and inspiring writers in England.

Apart from literary writing, Roy has a politically motivated mind and aptitude for politics. She has written columns and essays on political issues, including nuclear weapons and American interest in the Indian. In addition, she deemed an influential neo-imperialist critique and associated within-universal motion. Furthermore, Roy wrote about screens and movies. She wrote the two most renowned movies “In Which Annie Gives It Those One” and “Electric Moon”. Pradip Krishen, her husband, produced both films). As far as screenplay writing and criticism are concerned, she gained much prominence in 1994. She criticized “Shekhar Kapoor’s film *Bandit Queen*” at that time. She even dubbed it “The Great Indian Rape Trick.” (Roy,1994:855)

Roy is so particular about her writing that she is least concerned about her career; instead, she embedded herself with society and its issues. This is what she articulated at an International Book Fair held in Sharjah “I have never been particularly ambitious. I am not a careerist; I am not trying to get anywhere in a career. It is more important to engage with society, live it, and have different experiences” (Famousauthors, 2018:123). Roy even took on sensitive issues like the nuclear testing of India, where she severely condemned the Indian act of nuclear testing, which was too shocking for the world because she was an Indian. The elites and nationalists did not like her critique of such issues. She was fully aware of the response, and she, in her interview, articulated the criticism and hurdles she faced after that in these words, “Each time I step out, I hear the snicker-snack of knives being sharpened, but that is good. It keeps me sharp.” (Roy,1997: 25).

**Kipling's *Kim*** is a renowned novel about Kim, whose mother died when he was born, and his father left him an orphan to a half-caste woman in India. So, Kim spent his childhood in the streets of Lahore. By birth, he belonged to an Irish family. His father was an Irish soldier who lived in India when he was born, and when he became an orphan, he turned into a beggar in the street of Lahore. Later, he becomes a spy for the British in India. As he had to live in utter poverty, he did other odd jobs to support himself financially. Kim was brought up and born in India; thus, he belonged to the Indian community though he was English by origin (Kipling,1901:159).

The novel is highly impactful, due to its portrayal of Indian people, culture, and identity issues faced by the Indians during British colonialism in the region. The impact of colonialism is very vivid as far as *Kim* is concerned. Kipling successfully

handled all these aspects in the novel. He was fully aware of the people and culture of India. His experiences and identity issues embedded in his life are the backbone behind Kim's depiction. Due to *Kim's* theme and artistic greatness, the BBC deemed it the UK's best-loved novel in 2003. It was even adapted into a film, inspiring other writers to unearth the impacts and effects of colonialism in India and everywhere around the globe.

*The God of Small Things*, on the other hand, is a story about a well-off family of Ayemenem in Kerala, India, and the name of the family is Ipe. The story centers around two twins named Rahel and Estha. The story takes place in 1969 and 1993. The story jumps back and forwards ahead between the past and the present. After her divorce, the story opens with Rahel returning to Ayemenem, her native town from Boston. She comes back as she comes to know about the arrival of her brother Estha whom she got separated 23 years ago. Both the twins had strong affiliations when they were seven years old, but they separated from each other due to a family tragedy. Estha lived with his father in another town, and Rahel lived in her native town, away from her mother, Ammu.

## 1. Colonialism

When the 19<sup>th</sup> century was concluded, the British Empire was the most powerful in the world, the prime and the wealthiest Empire in the entire universe. It was due to the assistance of industrial enhancement and utilization and innovation it brought. As the British were prosperous and well off, they became arrogant towards others, especially those under their subjugation. They deemed themselves as an upper-class race and considered others as lower class. They thought that they were selected to renovate the world with the benefits enjoyed by the Western

world, and based on this objective, they started making other countries of the world their colony, and that is the advancement of colonialism in the world. It is suitable to define the concept of colonialism and post-colonialism.

Horvath (1972:50) elaborated on the concept in these words “Colonialism is that form of intergroup domination in which settlers in significant number migrate permanently to the colony from the colonizing power”. There is no denying that colonialism emerged on the one hand to assert the dominance of the West over other countries that they believed to be lower class and thought they were from the upper class. On the other hand, it was meant to accumulate economic benefits by making others subjugated and submissive. As has been the law since time immemorial, those who conquered others utilized their resources for their objectives, and the same was the prime objective of colonialism.

Hence, the definition of colonialism is not as simple as it seems like a theory; instead, it is a complex term while deeming it in a historical context. The concept of colonialism is stretched over many nations and countries involving so many forms and orientations and it is not merely limited to economic gain on the part of colonial forces; rather, injustice, inequality and inhuman treatment can be seen in these terms behind colonial, colonialism, and imperialism. According to Robert Young (2001:17), colonialism “involved an extraordinary range of different forms and practices carried out with respect to radically different cultures, over many centuries”. Few deem colonialism as a modal to accumulate political, territorial, cultural, lingual, ideological, and economic motives and disperse poverty, inhumanity, injustice and extraction of everything of the natives and consume it for colonialists.

## 1.2 Post Colonialism

The term post Colonialism and its origin can be traced back to the 1950s, but it came to the limelight as a literary theory and critical approach in the 1970s. Few critics consider Edward Said *Orientalism* as a foundering study of post-colonialism, published in 1978. In the mid-1980s, the term makes its way into literary journals and critical debates, and in the mid-1990s, it establishes itself as an academic study, literary theory, and critical approach. By default, it was the term coined for pieces of writing and literature written in those countries that were or were once under colonial effects. From either perspective, it is a theory about people and whatever experiences they have in their personal, social, and economic life.

In the view of Bertens (2007:74), “Post-colonial studies critically analyze the relationship between colonizer and colonized, from the earliest days of exploration and colonization”. It is asserted how post-colonialism evaluates two cultures that come into contact at the beginning, and one of them tries to dominate the other and vice versa based on its superiority, and as a result, a new culture emerges. Post Colonialism is a literary approach to evaluate and analyze the literature written by literary figures belonging to those countries which had been colonized once, especially with respect to the sense of national and belonging among colonized people. Young (2001:69) projected the same concept “Post-colonial theory is always concerned with the positive and the negative effects of the mixing of peoples and cultures”.

## 1.3 Mimicry

In colonial and Postcolonial studies, it is an act in which colonized people initiate or copy the colonizers’ language,



behavior, dress, and political and cultural patterns; it is termed an 'act of mimicry'. The individual holds it as societal behavior that if they follow the patterns and behaviors of the upper class or the masters, they will be able to achieve the same height and glory attained by their masters. It refers to the mimicry of upper culture and people in power, which usually results in a cultural clash between emigrants and subjugated colonials. Keeping these aspects in view, mimicry is a postcolonial term meant to evaluate the relationship between colonizers and the colonized (Khana, 2018).

Huddart (2005:39) highlights the economic aspect of mimicry as "The comic quality of mimicry is important because colonial discourse is serious and solemn, with pretensions to educate and improve. Perhaps, the 'export' of democracy advocated by some Western politicians reminds us of these pretensions." Bhabha (1994:125) highlighted the concept of 'mimic man' that emerged in postcolonial literature as a flawed colonial mimesis in which to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English". To Setyowati (2014:6), "Mimicry is an exaggeration of copying of ideas, language, manners, and culture of the dominant culture that differentiates it from mere imitation".

#### **1.4 Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is a phenomenon related to how a specific society deals with cultural diversity within its societal horizons. The basic concept behind this is living peacefully and harmoniously with people from diverse cultures and social backgrounds. They must respect and honor each other to live in conformity with other members of the same society though belonging to different social and cultural backgrounds. In political terms, it is associated with how policies are being formed to

interact and have friendly and working relations with other world communities for a peaceful and prosperous harmony. Hence, it is not merely limited to the regional or national level; instead, it has its borders outside the national horizons into the international and global arena (Gerteis, 2005: 218).

People from diverse cultures and social backgrounds deal in cultural and societal diversity to form a harmonized society and a unified world at an international level. Multiculturalism can occur either within one nation or the same community, either because of immigration or the intervention of other cultural people in that community. This process can occur in two ways: natural, which can be in the form of immigration or interaction, and the second can be artificial, when culture is mingled and interacted through the legislative arrangement (Bhabha, 1994: 121). It is supposed by the critics that while interacting and negotiating with other cultures, one needs to maintain the components of one own culture and local traditions. It has the adversity that it affects the norms of other cultures and can disturb the entire social fabric, as can be seen in the case of colonial countries which are, in some way or another, remained under the direct impact of colonized culture in terms of language and other social norms.

## **Analysis**

### **2. The Concept of Mimicry in Rudyard's Kipling *Kim***

In Kipling's *Kim*, a reverse form of mimicry is found. Instead of coping and imitating the norms and manners of the upper class or the people who are in power, the main character or the protagonist, Kim, adopted the norms and cultural traits of Indian people as he was born and brought up in the Indian context as well as he was an English by origin. Though he belonged to the

class that was the master of Indian communities, he unconsciously adopted the environment where he was grown up. He was unconcerned about his identity, self, and origin for a long time. It is a reverse form of mimicry as Indians imitated and adopted the British's cultural traits, lingual norms and socio-economic attributes to gain prominence in society, move ahead in life, and win the favor of the English. Kim adopted and perfected the traits of local inhabitants.

Kim was an Irish soldier's son who was brought up among the Indians on the streets of Lahore and spent his entire childhood among the Indians. Initially, His mother worked as a nursemaid in the family of a Colonel; thus, he belonged to a well-off family, while his father was an Irish soldier in a regiment posted at Delhi Railway. However, after the Irish regiment's defeat in South Asia, they fell prey to poverty. He and his family had to live in utter poverty. His father continued to live in India, and his family suffered both at the hands of time and due to the fatal mercilessness of his fate as:

The wife died of cholera in Ferozepur, and after that, O'Hara fell to drink and loafing up and down the line with the keen-eyed three-year-old baby. Societies and chaplains, anxious for the child, tried to catch him, but O'Hara drifted away till he came across the woman who took opium, learned the taste from her, and died as poor whites die in India. (Kipling,1901:4)

Reverse fate resulted in reverse mimicry as Kim grew up in the streets of Lahore like a beggar and unconsciously adopted the ways and means of the people of Eastern culture and civilization. It took him away from his self, identity, and culture. With the passage of Irish glory, he completely forgot about his own country and identity. He began to perceive himself as an Eastern

rather than of Western. It also resulted in hatred against the British colonial force, as depicted in the novel by Kipling (1901:311) “He has lost his own country and has not acquired any other. But he has a complete hatred of his conquerors”. The same idea is quoted by Wagner (1993:148) as in his view, “Kim delights in changing his appearance and identity in becoming Other, and he loves to live in a world of pure becoming. His is a world of infinitive concrete potentiality Endowed by the narrator with special talents, and he can do anything and become anybody” .

There is yet another reverse mimicry that is in the above-stated idea as the ideology and mental image of Kim was quite in contrast to the pro-colonial or pro-imperial motive of Kipling as he had started, “a man should, whatever happens, keep to his caste, race, and breed. Let the white go to the white and the black to the black” (Kipling, 1901: 147). It also indicates that Kipling is supposed to be the strongest among those who supported and favored colonialism and imperialism, especially that of the British in India. An anti-imperialist viewpoint is not only in his mind, but it is projected through his character, most dominantly through the depiction and projection of anti-imperialism through his mental image of Kim.

Another reverse mimicry is religion. Christian missionaries were in pursuit of extending their religious dominance in India and Indians, while on the other hand, Kim, who was a baptized Christian, disguised himself as a Muslim as he became a follower of Lama in his pursuit of the enlightenment River. Besides that, he had a strong like for Sacrosanct Haj dinner. In addition, as is depicted by Kipling (1901:221), “Kim [learns] whole chapters of the Koran by heart, till he [can] deliver them with the very roll and cadence of a mullah”. Wegner (1993:148) stated that for the

Indians, religion was a life-or-death issue. Kim had never given any prominence to religion:

In the land of many religions, he changes from a Hindu to a Muslim, from a Muslim to a Buddhist, from a Buddhist to a Christian, and then begins the cycle (of disguise) all over again. Along the way he adopts innumerable minor identities and disguises, further proliferating the play of subjectivities.

Nevertheless, another reverse mimicry is noticed after learning that Kim acted as a spy and horse trader for an Indian named Mahbub Ali. Most Indians acted as spy and agents of the English to facilitate their pursuit of India, but the Irish and the English acted otherwise. He had the faith and trust of the master as he was fully equipped with the ability to keep secrets during the executions of his tasks as Kim is depicted by Kipling (1901:31), "... the one soul in the world who [has] never told him a lie"

During Kim's service as a messenger, he had to deliver a message from his master without disclosing his identity as he threw a coin into the feet of an Englishman rather than paying into his hands. Hence he was paid back for this act, it showed a reverse imitation compared to the general trend in India as Indians were respectful towards English, but Kim showed disrespect towards them. It also indicates that although he had the blood of the West, he loved to be a man of the East, which is reversed as far as the context and situation were concerned.

Lingual mimicry is also there in Kipling's *Kim*. It is also evident from the Indian or Eastern people as they imitate and copy English as a language of an upper class, culture, and identity. It is natural and found anywhere globally, particularly in colonial areas, but in *Kim* being Irish, it is a reverse mimicry.

Kim was Irish and had English blood, but he was acquainted with Indian languages, especially Urdu. He had comprehensible know-how of both Urdu and Hindi though his knowledge was clumsy enough. Words with which he was familiar, as depicted in *Kim*, are “Maharaj” (emperor), “Pahari” (Hillman), “shabash” (bravo!), and “Pardesi” (a foreigner). Once, a drummer boy made fun of him for speaking the Indian language, and he talked about the superiority of the English language. Nevertheless, neither of the two attitudes on the part of the drummer bothered Kim even a least.

Kim was so engrossed in his native culture and people that he did not show any linking or fancy towards his own culture, identity, and people, as is depicted in *Kim* by Kipling “his [lost] country—his race—his village” (Kipling,1901:27). Kim was so well versed and familiar with Eastern culture and norms; though he was native English, he fluently spoke Urdu and other Indian languages, which indicated that instead of glorifying the English language and culture, he had shown his detachment from these entities. It also indicates that Kipling was considered as “Poet of the Empire” by Besant in 1900 and “the prophet of British imperialism” by Orwell in 1942, anti-colonial and anti-imperialism in his narration, especially in his narration of the case of *Kim*. In addition, it can also be taken as an attempt on the part of Kipling to fill the bridge between ruler and ruled.

Mimicry in terms of dressing and attire is also there in *Kim*. His caring guardian, an opium-addicted woman who claimed to be the sister of *Kim*’s mother, took care of him. She always insisted he wears a Western dress like pants, a shirt, and a battered hat, but *Kim* was least concerned about the Western dress. He contended that with the native or Desi dress, “it easier to slip into Hindu or Muhammadan garb” (Kipling, 1901:4). It is

further elaborated through the image of a Hindu kit that was given to Kim by a fashionable man, and he accepted it with an open heart, as narrated by the author:

The costume of a low-caste street boy, and Kim [stores] it in a secret place under some bunks in Nil Ram's timber yard, beyond the Punjab High Court, where the fragrant deodar logs lie seasoning after they have driven down the Ravi.... Sometimes there [is] food in the house, more often there [is] not, and then Kim [goes] out again to eat with his native friend .

Mimicry of Kim was not limited merely to the culture, lingual, religious, and dress codes; somewhat, it was extended to the aspects of norms and traditions of Indians. He loved to be among Indians. He loved their language, culture, norms, and attitudes. Kim liked to eat their foods, seasonings, and atmosphere. Ash-smearing fakirs, which were supposed to be holy men, were also a matter of fascination for him “with whom he [is] quite familiar—getting them as they [return] from begging tours, and, when non-one [is] by, eating from the same dish” (Kipling,1901:6). Kim's admiration of Indians and their culture indicates that Kipling wants to illustrate the so-called upper-class complex between East and West. It is also meant to deconstruct the racial dichotomy between white and Eastern people.

Notwithstanding, Kim had a delightful way of living with the people of the East right from the beginning. He had a very balanced approach towards the people of India, as is depicted at the beginning of the novel “on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazaar; Kim [is] white— a poor white of the very poorest” (Kipling,1901:3). He had equally adopted relations with people like Hindus, Jat, farmer, Sikh craftsman, Dogra more

solid and Hindu banker as he was not reluctant to “side by side with all castes and peoples” (Kipling, 1901: 32). Kipling (1901:74) indicated:

All castes and kinds of men move here. Look!  
Brahmins and chamars, bankers and tinkers, barbers  
and banyas, pilgrims and potters—all the world going  
and coming. It is to me as a river from which I am  
withdrawn like a log after a flood.

## **2.1 The Concept of Mimicry in Arundhati's Roy, the *God of small things***

Like the novel, the characters and themes of *The God of Small Things* are set in two diverse cultures; therefore, there is an ample chance of interaction, and imitation or mimicry cannot be avoided. It is seen at different levels in the novel. First, it prevails at the societal level as society is divided into the touchable and untouchable classes, similar to the division between East and West and between colonizers and colonized. West considers itself from the upper class and the East from the lower class, especially during colonial and imperial periods. Ipe is a landlord family, and it is maintaining its social status. Velutha is from an untouchable class, and how he is beaten to death is a considerable example of cultural and class mimicry derived from the West or the white people who were the upper class to Eastern people.

*The God of Small Things'* main character is Baby Kochamma, who imitates the norms and traits of Western culture to project her social status. She is seen displaying her English while quoting “Tempest” during her airport scene. It indicates that she is imitating English as a medium to impress others to project her social and class status. Baby even goes to Western culture to study gardening, which is yet another imitation, and she has a



fascination for Western culture and way of thinking after she falls in a love affair with a monk. Her persona, language, thinking, and even hobbies of gardening in nature are an imitation. It is further supplemented by how she and other family members arrive at the airport to meet Sophie and her mother, Margaret, who was once married to Chacko.

The family welcomes Sophie Mol and Margaret, as Margaret is English and her daughter has an Indian father, Chacko, but she appears to be English by the way she carries an English dress and her physical features. Chacko is also impressed and fascinated by the English culture and people, so he studied at Oxford. Furthermore, during his stay there, he meets Margaret, a hotel maid, and marries her. In India, they have social class and status, but under the West's dominance, they have the slightest concern for such matters. He deems himself an Oxfordian and a Scholar in India, but his wife leaves him because he is good for nothing. So, it is a typical mimicry of culture, language, and way of living on the part of Eastern people, frequently appearing in *The God of Small Things*. Indian or Eastern people are always impressed and try to imitate Western culture's social, cultural, and lingual norms and people as they are considered from the upper class.

Then there is a fascination and liking for Western or English dress on the part of the family. When Sophia Mol comes to live in Ayemenem, her dress is given much importance. According to Roy (1997:143), "She walked down the runway, the smell of London in her hair. Yellow bottoms of bells flapped backward around her ankles. Long hair floated out from under her straw hat". It becomes more evident as all the family members take her with a warm hand. It also becomes more evident when her dress, which is symbolic of white and western culture, is

compared with the dress of her cousin Rahel, who represents Eastern dress and culture. The novel is narrated as “In her stiff lace dress and her fountain in a Love-in-Tokyo, Rahel looked like an Airport Fairy with appalling taste” (Roy,1997:142).

It does not end here, as the following-up comments indicate that family members are fascinated by English dress, culture, and even skin color. It is further widened with Rahel's twin brother Estha’s comment, “Estha – with some basis, and it must be admitted – said that Rahel looked stupid in her Airport Frock. Rahel slapped him, and he slapped her back”.(Roy,1997:140). These aspects are more profound regarding cultural norms and societal trends concerning culture and backgrounds. So, there is a fascination with Western dress as a part of imitation concerning dress. In addition, everybody likes Sophia Mol and considers her “better” because of her glamorous attire and white skin as well. In addition, her mother was English; this is another reason for the family's attraction toward her. Roy (1997:146) stated:

She was taller than Estha. And bigger. Her eyes were bluegray-blue. Her pale skin was the color of beach sand. But her hatted hair was a beautiful, deep red-brown. And yes (oh yes!) she had Pappachi's nose waiting inside hers.

Characters in the novel are also engaged in activities that are norms and trends of Western culture rather than Indian culture. This novel shows that the feminist voice is more liberal and independent than the masculine one. Women, like Baby, Kochamma, Ammu, Margaret, and Rahel are projected as dominant and forceful. They are as independent in their matter as the women of the West. They, like Western women, make their personal decisions. *The God of Small Things* has all the main

female protagonists who make their marriage decisions. In addition, like Western women, when they feel no longer interested in living with them, they get a divorce. Ammu and Rahel marry the persons of their liking, but they leave their husbands when they feel uncomfortable. So, the Western concept of women's power is very much imitated by the women in *The God of Small Things*.

Margaret also married the person of her choice, but when she fell in love with another man Joe, she abandoned her husband, Chacko, for him. So, there is no difference between the Western and Eastern women in *The God of Small Things*. A significant feature of a Western societal tendency is selfishness and living for oneself. The members of the Ipe family adequately imitate it in the novel. Characters show concern for themselves. They are least bothered about their family and kids. They care for what they like to have in their lives. Ammu marries a person of choice without consultation with the family; she leaves him and, to the family's embarrassment, comes to live at her native house and village. For all that, she does not care for the family or even about her kids.

Baby Kochamma also imitates the Western tone and trends in her life. She loves a monk though she knows it can never be materialized into practical shape. She is not caring about societal and social norms; she only cares for herself. In the later part of the novel, the way she plans to get rid of Ammu, Velutha, and the kids by saving her family name and status is a prominent example of selfishness. When Rahel and Estha return to Ayemenem, she does not care or pay any heed to them, resulting in incest later. She only spends the whole day watching TV with her maid. So, like Western people, characters are living for themselves. Even after separation from her ex-wife, even Chacko is ready to ask her to live with him in the same house after the death of her second

husband. This is a typical mimicry of Western society and cultural tone.

Illicit relations are common in Western culture. Western people only need consent from their partners for that. In this regard, no other social, cultural, or moral code is kept in mind. It is the typical attitude of the West to have sexual relations outside marriage and even with family members. This trend is also copied and imitated by Ammu and her kids. Ammu has a sexual relationship of marriage with Velutha for two weeks. She even does not care about the social and class status of Velutha, which is also a Western tone. He was from an untouchable class, but when she is sure that her relationship can only be materialized in this form, she does not hesitate to do it. Incest, a common practice in Western society, is also adopted in the novel's final section; Rahel and Estha have sexual links just like their mother.

More than the cultural, lingual, societal, and dress code mimicry, *The God of Small Things* clearly shows the influence of Western culture. Its characters are highly affected by Western culture's eating and drinking habits. Ammu, husband and father of Rahel and Estha, is an alcoholic person. This is the reason that Ammu leaves him. Drinking is a common practice in the West, which is what is seen in the case of Baba. Broken family tradition is also gaining prominence in Western culture, which is equally imitated by the characters of the family. Divorce is yet another common feature in Western culture. These two aspects are interlinked in the novel *The God of Small Things*. Ammu, Rahel, and Chacko's divorces result in both the family's suffering and the kids' disturbance. Rahel and Estha's sufferings are mainly due to the doing and actions that their mother commits.

Due to the analysis of the two aforementioned novels in the light of mimicry's concept, a frequent idea in colonial and

postcolonial studies, it is concluded that there are diverse layers of imitation or copying of culture, social norms, religious conduct, and societal codes in the novels. Characters in both novels adopt the culture's norms other than their own or native norms. It is seen on cultural, societal, religious, and lingual layers and as far as dress codes are concerned. The representation of mimicry in *The God of Small Things* is quite common in colonial studies. The people under the dominance of colonialism naturally copy and imitate their masters, but in the case of *Kim*, there is a reverse form of mimicry. Being a master of English, instead of following the trends and tone of his class and status, Kim is following the cultural, societal, religious, and lingual codes of the Eastern setup.

## **2.2 The representation of Multiculturalism in Rudyard's**

### **Kipling *Kim***

In *Kim*'s novel, Kim's central character or protagonist is the most multicultural person. He is of British origin; His race is white, and he is an Englishman. He is from upper-class Western culture. Though his family is impoverished, he is considered a very influential and well-to-do person. He has been in this culture since his birth as a race, culture, and background. However, his mother dies in India due to Cholera, and his father also dies; as is seen in the story, he is taken up in the Indian context. After their death, he is taken care of by an Indian half-caste woman. This is the second version of culture in his life. By origin and by blood, he is English. He is born to English parents. His race and skin are of upper-class culture, but he was born and raised in Eastern culture and background, regarded as lower class in his native culture.

By living and being brought up in a wild culture according to the West in a wild manner, his living is so chaotic and wild that he forgets that he is white and that it is abided by the people of color to respect and honor white. He has imitated the new or adopted Indian culture and made many friends from different races, colors, and cultural backgrounds. He is very compromising and can accept and adopt the traits of his friends' cultures and norms, putting him at the apex of multiculturalism. He is a man who is fully aware of how to live and behave in a multicultural setup. He believes everyone has a secondary culture that becomes a part of the larger culture through time. He is fully aware that in a multicultural setup, each race has its own culture, and to avoid misunderstanding and misconception, we have to look at and observe the world from the perspective of others, not always our perspective. This is key to adjusting and being a part of a multicultural society like India during the colonial period.

Here Kim is the prime example of multiculturalism in the novel, it has another dynamic. Even though Indians think of the English and British as an outside colonial force that has manipulated their resources and land, some believe it fit to adopt British culture's norms and cultural practices. The reason behind this adaptation may be debatable, yet there is no denying the fact that it is yet another instance of multiculturalism in *Kim*, as quoted by Kipling (2019:63):

Kim loafed over to the nearest tobacco seller, a rather lively young Muhammadan woman, and begged a rank cigar of the brand that they sell to the students of the Punjab University who can copy English Customs.

Punjab University was among the very few universities in India meant for Indians, especially for people of Higher rank within India. Though it was meant for Indians, and the subjects taught there were local and native, the culture and norms were English.

It is a fact that after colonialism in India, many reforms and development have taken place there. Cities are reformed, and steps are taken to reform the people and society. Indian people have adopted the norms and cultural traits of English people. Stores opened in India that sold tobacco and English food, roads were being made, English schools were set up, and the Railway system was introduced. Kipling said:

The crowd thickness was the nearest to the resting place, which marked the end of their day's journey. A line of stalls selling very simple food and tobacco, a stack of firewood, a police station, a well, a horse trough, a few trees, and under them some trampled ground dotted with the black ashes of the old fire, and all that mark on *para no* on the Grand Trunk; if you expect the beggars and the crows both hungry (Kim, 1901:83).

Kipling indicates the environment of multiculturalism in *Kim* as he depicted a plurality of cultures prevailing side by side in a single society. The depiction of so many multiple cultures in a single setup gives the readers a treat to read it as a multicultural piece of writing. As is depicted by Kipling (1901:81), “These merry-makers stepped slowly, calling one to the other and stopping to haggle with sweetmeat-sellers, or to make a prayer before one of the wayside shrines- sometimes Hindu, sometime Mussulman- which the low-caste of both creeds share with the

beautiful of impartiality”. In addition, the people of India began to decorate their buildings, including the churches, as an imitation or adaptation of English or Eastern culture. This resulted in creating multiculturalism and decorating the road to India, on the other on, a broader canvas. This aspect of multiculturalism is depicted by Kipling (1901:106) in *Kim*:

It was Bennett, The Church of England Chaplain of the regiment, limping in dusting black. One of his flocks had made some rude remarks about the Chaplain's mettle, and to abash him Bennett had marched step by step with the men that day. The black dress, gold cross on the watchchain, the hairless face, and the soft, black wide-awake hat would have marked him as a holy man anywhere in India.

Multiculturalism occurs at a different level, as depicted in Kipling's novel *Kim*. Have Not only Indian people adopted the norms, culture, and language of the British, but also the British people have adopted the norms, especially the language of Indian people, to interact and negotiate while living in the same community. According to Kipling (1901:99):

These be the sort' - she took a fine judicial tone, and stuffed her mouth with pan (English)- These are the sort to oversee justice. They know the land and the customs of the land. The others, all new from Europe, suckled by a White woman and learning our tongues from books, are worse than the pestilence.

Moreover, English has been adopted and utilized in the educational institutes of India, which is perhaps the most modernized form of adopting yet another culture, especially in a community of multiculturalism. “Late enough for me. I have



learned to read and to write English a little at the madrassah. I shall soon be altogether a Sahib." (Kipling,1901:168-169).

Acceptance of other people's cultural norms is critical as far as the setup of multiculturalism is concerned. This is seen in Kim as Indians fight against British colonial forces in the novel's first part to get their due rights. Nevertheless, later on, with time, they learn that they have to make amend with the colonizers to have reconciliation. Their melting down leads to the creation of multiculturalism in colonial India. According to Kipling (1901:99-100), "Still, when Brahmins but irritated with the begging demands the mother of his master's wife, and when she sent them away so angry that they curse the whole retinue (which was the real reason of the second offside bullock going lame" .

Movement is a prime feature behind keeping things intact and the Empire of British intake. The novels' most significant events and incidents are associated with transport. For instance, Lama and Kim's train journey when meeting with Sahbia on the Grand Trunk Road is highlighted to readers. Later, Kim is shown disguising himself as a secret service agent and caring for the sick boy on the train. It is essential to quote the remark of the boy who was ill here "The Government has brought on us many taxes, but it gives us one good thing-the train that joins friends and unites the anxious. A wonderful matter is a terrain. " (Kipling 1901:257). It is an attempt on the part of Kipling to get the native people connected with the colonial people on the part of the British regiment in India.

Apart from all the events in a cross-cultural setting like India, it is impossible to interact and negotiate with other cultures without any problems and hurdles. Managing things in a multicultural context is not an easy task. It is essential to comprehend other cultures and norms in such a situation; being

devoid of them will always result in conflicts and issues. It also happens in the case of Kipling's *Kim*, where problems and conflicts arise at two-level. One is among the native people, and that of colonial force, and the other is at a greater level. It is among Russia and Brition as a part of the Great Game. Misconceptions and misunderstandings are recurrent in a multicultural society, and *Kim* is no exception. It can be evident from the following quote from the novel, which takes place between Kim and his friend as:

Well done, indeed? It is a shame and a scandal that a poor woman may not go to make prayer to her Gods except she is jostled and insulted by all the refuse of Hindustan-that she must eat gali (abuse) as men eat ghee. But I have yet a wag left to my tongue - a word or two well spoken that serves the occasion. And still am I without my tobacco! Who is the one-eyed and luckless son of shame that has not yet prepared my pipe? (Kipling,1901:97).

### **2.3 The representation of Multiculturalism in Arundhati's Roy, *The God of Small Things***

*The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy is set in the Indian context culture as she depicts numerous cultural, social, and lingual norms in the novel. As India remained a British colony for over a century, the impact and color of English and British culture is much more evident and cannot be put aside. The first thing that the researcher notices about the multiplied Indian society is the level of social relations. These relationships are enough to pinpoint the religious, cultural and social variables in the Indian context. Muslims, Hindus, Christian and people from other religious backgrounds are mentioned as interacting and

engaging with each other in different domains within the same culture and community. The class-based division between touchable and untouchable is directly derived from the British or Western culture's upper-class and lower-class concepts.

India is one of the most culturally diverse communities, with people from different ethnic and religious groups, so various languages are being spoken. The influence of the English language and culture is evident in the characters and their relationships in the novel. Chacko, the uncle of protagonists Rahel and Estha in the novel, goes to study at Oxford. It is a clear-cut example of multiculturalism as he belonged to different social, religious, and lingual backgrounds besides cultural differences. In the same way, Baby Kochamma also goes to the West to obtain a diploma in gardening. She has Indian culture and background but adopts Western culture's language, culture, and social norms. Both these cultures reside in diverse domains. They negotiate the differences and hurdles and interact in a different cultural setup as a part of multiculturalism in the novel.

It is natural for people from lower social classes to accept and negotiate the upper class's culture, but reverse adaptation is also there as we come across that he meets a waitperson over there during Chacko's stay at Oxford. Her name is Margaret. They fall in love with each other and get married even though they belong to different cultural, social and religious backgrounds. This is a prominent example of multiculturalism in the novel. Later on, after their divorce, they continue their contact, which is uncommon in Indian culture but prevalent in English and British culture. So, different cultures and norms negotiate as a part of multiculturalism in the novel. This feature of multiculturalism does not stop here. Margaret and her daughter Sophie Mol visit and stay with Margaret's ex-husband after Joe, her second

husband, passes away. Again, this is an uncommon feature in Indian society and culture but not unusual in Western culture, so diverse cultures negotiate as part of multiculturalism.

Negotiation and interaction among diverse cultures are also evident in the love affair between an Indian woman, Baby Kochamma, and an Irish priest Father Mulligan. Priests do not marry and cannot have any physical relations with ladies; that is a fact. Baby Kochamma goes to every length to have her love though she remains unsuccessful. Even though their relationship does not materialize into a usable form, it is enough to quote as a part of multiculturalism existing in *The God of Small Things* at diverse levels. Roy is representative of Indian context and culture, while the priest undoubtedly has Western thought, ideology, and cultural background; they negotiate the cultural barrier to come to a close intimately though both are aware that they cannot materialize this relation into a usable form. This is not merely limited to two persons; it indicates two different ideologies and thoughts representing two different cultures.

Another dynamic of this relationship is that the priest is aware of his situation before entering into his relationship with Baby Kochamma. However, he does not hesitate to leave her in a sorrowful state, which Chacko depicts as he speculates about his own family in these words “They were a whole family of Anglophiles. Pointed in the wrong direction, trapped outside their history and unable to retrace their steps because their footprints had been swept away” (Roy,1997:52-53). The priest's attitude also indicates the trademark that Western culture holds about human and family relations. Nevertheless, Indian family members stick to their family norms and tradition despite struggling in their personal lives. However, despite these differences in cultural norms, these cultures coincide as a part of multiculturalism within

the Indian context, which is a multicultural and multiethnic society.

It is incredible to note that the novelist Roy herself is a multicultural figure. Her father is a Hindu, and her mother is a Christian. Later, her mother brought her up and played a crucial role in her literary, political and activist career. Her mother advocated for women's rights in Kerala, later becoming a feminist voice for women in the region. The feminist approach, an English or Western trait at a societal and cultural level, is amply adopted by the novelist and the characters in the novel. Women are projected as independent figures ready to decide their lives. Ammu, Margaret, and Rahel decide about their marriage without concerting anyone. Even after their marriage, when they think it is not appropriate for them to live with their husbands, they take a divorce.

Hence, family breakups and divorces, a common feature of English or Western culture, are adopted by the protagonists in *The God of Small Things*' she marries an alcoholic named Baba, but later on, after the birth of twins Rahel and Estha, she leaves him without considering the consequences it will have on her kids' lives. Margaret leaves Chacko after the birth of Sophia Mol. She was in love with Joe even when she was pregnant with Sophia. So, this is the typical Western culture that has coincided with Indian culture as a part of multiculturalism. Rahel marries after losing her mother and brother, but again she takes to divorce in Boston. This is the third divorce in the novel. Hence, divorces and family breakups have been adopted as routine matters and a source of own liking and disliking in the story. Rahel, Estha, and Sophia struggle and are affected due to this multicultural context of divorce and family breakup.

Kerala and Ayemenem, where the novel is set up, are also places that are classified as multicultural, where people from different social, religious, and cultural backgrounds live and negotiate with each other. Arundhati Roy has consciously chosen this place as the novel's setting as she is fully aware of the multicultural feature of the place. She is enabled to fully comprehend the diverse cultural paradoxes of that place that co-exist. The inculcation of the concept of the caste system in the novel is also purposeful as it is a feature that determines the relation at the social and status-based level, especially when co-existing in a multicultural setting. The caste system is powerful, and it is this system that determines who will meet, love, and interact with whom. However, the influence of English and Western culture is also seen here when Ammu and Velutha break the social norms and have a physical relationship on the beach for almost two weeks outside of marriage though it cannot even be dreamt of in the Indian context.

In the Indian caste system, the untouchable class is not allowed to have much intimacy with the higher class of society, although the effect of the Western and especially the impact of multiculturalism bring them close and have physical intimacy. Physical relation outside marriage was rare and uncommon in Indian society when the novel was written. However, this phenomenon take place as a result of the interaction of multiculturalism in society. Likewise, incest is also very rare, and especially its narration and projection in Indian society and culture which is a strong unusual facet, yet as it is not very uncommon in Western and English culture, so this feature starts marking its steps in Indian society as well. Moreover, Arundhati Roy, a multicultural figure, is bold enough to show it through the

physical intimacy of brother and sister one night among twins at the novel's conclusion, Rahel and Estha.

One of the critical impacts of multiculturalism and colonialism in India is that it has brought cultural transformation in India in their adaptation and acceptance of Western and colonial culture as something valuable and practical. They adapt and negotiate social norms such as women's independence, divorce, family and relationship issues, and lingual aspects such as the English language and educational system. The Caste system and division between touchable and untouchable were also there in earlier Indian culture, but the Western concept of the upper and lower classes further strengthened it. Sophia is liked by Ipe's family members merely because she is wearing a Western dress and her skin is white. The family members also welcome Margaret as she belongs to the white culture.

Therefore, as represented in *The God of Small Things*, the challenges and conflicts result from cross-cultural or multiculturalism in Indian society. Even though characters have adopted the cultural norms of another group yet, some issues arise between them. Chacko and Margaret have two diverse social, cultural, and religious backgrounds, yet they fall in love and marry. Nevertheless, relationship issues arose later on, and they got divorced. Similarly, Ammu and Velutha violate the norms of their society, adopt the norms of another culture, and try to implement them in their own culture. It results in the death of Velutha and the lifelong suffering of Ammu. Divorce and relationship issues imitated and adopted from another culture also broke down families and relations. It also results in several deaths, i.e., Sophia, Velutha, and even Ammu. As kids, Rahel, Estha, and Sophia suffer due to relationship issues the most.

It is essential to mention the central instance of multiculturalism found in both novelists' autobiographical presentations and the adaptation and negotiation of multiculturalism among characters in both novels. Kipling was born to an English family, was brought up in the Indian context, got educated in the English context worked in the Indian context. He narrated the Indian context in his novel but through the lens of the English perspective. Nevertheless, Arundhati Roy is born to a Hindu father and a Christian mother. She was born and raised in the Indian context but in the Christian context's norms and traditions, which are more prone to English or Western context. That is indicated in the novels as her characters are more prone to English culture. Her political and activist personality is also more towards a feminist and independent approach, which is more English and Western than Indian.

However, both novels show a striking difference in how multiculturalism is projected. In *Kim*, an upper-class person adopts the cultural norms of a lower class in the form of Kim, while the novel, *The God of Small Things*, depicts lower-class Westerners embracing upper-class cultural standards. Kim conceives himself more Indian than English, but People in *The God of Small Things*, are more likely to be influenced by English culture by adopting their language, dress, marrying there, and have adopted divorce, broken family, and alcoholic habits from them. However, they are still committed to the name and status of the family at the caste of everything, especially in the case of Ammu's relationship with Velutha.

## CONCLUSION

This paper aims to analyze the concept of mimicry, a frequent idea in colonial and postcolonial studies. Both novels



have diverse layers of imitation or copying of culture, social norms, religious conduct and societal codes. Characters in both novels adopt the norms of a culture other than their own or native norms. It is seen on cultural, societal, religious, and lingual layers as far as dress codes are concerned. In Kipling's *Kim*, a reverse form of mimicry is found. Instead of coping and imitating the norms and manners of the upper class or the people in power, the protagonist, Kim, adopted the norms and cultural traits of Indian people. While the themes and *The God of Small Things'* characters are set in two different cultures, there is a considerable chance that interaction and imitation or mimicry cannot be avoided.

In both novels, the researcher has indicated several aspects that indicate multiculturalism. Kim is the primary source of multiculturalism; he is English by color and origin but was brought up in Indian culture. Despite having Western blood, he is deemed more Indian than English. Ayemenem, where *The God of Small Things* is staged, is a multicultural place where people of diverse social, cultural, and religious backgrounds live and interact. In addition, the Indian context in which both novels are inscribed is a multicultural, multilingual, and multiethnic state where people from diverse races, cultures, and castes live together.

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