

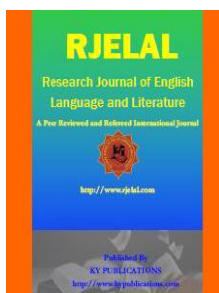


## ANALYZING THE ROLE OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY IN INDIGENOUS CULTURES

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### ABSTRACT

In the postmodern globalized world, cultural conflicts and the loss of indigenous cultures are widely analysed. The commercialization of the culture and culture industry propagates the dominant culture of the time and its institutionalisation. It tries to disseminate this dominant culture across the globe and treats indigenous cultural practices as the 'other'. Therefore, there is a hidden politics of erasing of the diverse specific practises in the world towards the universalisation and homogenisation of the dominant culture. For this cultural diplomacy is a major tool. This paper analyze how the subordinate cultures are erased in the globalized world. it is true in the case of literary narratives too. The genuine regional narrative practises have lost its significance. The emphasis of this paper is the study of how the diverse cultural practices merge into the larger culture as a sort of neo-colonisation.

KEY WORDS: Cultural diplomacy, Indigenous culture, Universalisation, globalization

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### INTRODUCTION

Macauly's introduction of English education in India can be seen as a power exercise to spread a western culture. It is a clear attempt for a mental conquest. English texts and novels are seen as a super power to a mental conquest of ideologies and cultural base. It gradually developed in India a class of people who mentally support the British culture and accepted it as a dominant one, sometimes superior than our indigenous cultural practices. Here the introduction of English text and language becomes a part of cultural diplomacy. According to Milton Cummings, "Cultural diplomacy has been defined as the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their people in order to foster mutual understandings"(110)

It is Mathew Arnold who started the discussion of culture with his most famous *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) that dominated till the 1950's. For Arnold, culture is "the best that has been thought and said in the world"(41). He see the popular culture as a sort of anarchy and this of can be rectify through the institution of education. The Italian philosopher Gramsci introduced the concept "cultural hegemony" to convey how cultural homogenisation happens. When people come under the influence of a dominant culture, they feel an inferiority of being the "other"(124). The ruling class rule by creating a fear in the minds of subordinates. The same things happen in culture too. So they always think under the oppressive state power and the 'panopticon' of the state eye, they have to assimilate and take over the dominant culture of the dominant class.

All the minorities whether refugees or migrated they have their own perception about the world. Gramsci introduces the term counter hegemony that is when the less powerful has no part in the institutions of power it will exhibit violent strategies to protest. Gramsci has taken the concept of Foucault's concept of "discursive practice" in reinforcing the dominant status of powerful classes. Whenever the two cultures claim its separation, there is a possibility of an outbreak of a calamity taking the lives of people. This happens when large scale migration of people from one nation to another due to natural calamities or because of the push factors like war and internal conflicts in various nations. The refugees, who are not a part of any nation forced to adapt with the cultures they are fit into. In many literary narratives too, emphasis has given to the cultural conflicts and distress. Dominant group expects consent from subordinates. It includes the norms, value system, religious practices, sentiments etc. Syrian war in 2011 created mass exodus of Syrian people. As of May 2013, more than four million Syrian citizens have fled the country. Environmental refugees are there due to environmental calamities.

The post migration effects on refugees and their cultural loss will be a disastrous one. They were looked as suspicious by the natives. The refugees and the migrants felt a cultural shock. In the globalized world, the refugee and migration problems raised the question of nationalism. From the perspectives of a nation state, it moves on to the discussion of internationalism. The significance of discussing nationalism and nation formation had already timed out.

Cultural diplomacy generates the notion that, these minorities are accepting and assimilating world's "grand culture". It makes a cultural confusion and contradiction. It is a kind of cold war situation of mutual distress and fear. There will be cultural slaves and masters. A neo- colonisation of brain take place. Rather than a direct entry into the economic structures, they conquer the minds of people. Conquest of the minds will do greater effect than the conquest of the geographical areas of a nation.

In the colonial nations, it is evident that they developed a fancy for the coloniser's culture. Homi k. Bhaba assessed this situation as colonial mimicry. It will create grafted culture. Selling the culture of a country to others; it is a soft power exercise to handle the other nation unknowingly by creating an attraction towards it without any force. Sometimes, when the spreading of culture aims some hidden agenda it becomes a "propaganda culture" (46) when one ethnic group and its cultural identity is taken over by a more wide and dominant ideology, that particular group will become an endangered community. It is affected through an institutionalisation of power. Cultural diplomacy is the way of spreading and creating an attraction towards cultural practices of a country or region before others.

#### CONCLUSION

The paper argues that these burning issues of race, class, refugees, and attacks against migrants were due to the confrontation of culture. That is the expected cultural assimilation is not happening. The controversies over the cultural superiority are still hanging in the air. The superior nations and cultures still need some cultural slaves to obey the master culture. In turn a fear of losing of identity, nationalism, will haunt the migrant too, so they develop a community feeling among them, mutual trusting, organisations, celebrations, mutual collaboration in all walks of social life can be seen in those migrant communities.

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