



RESEARCH PAPER**Investigating Homi K Bhabha's Mimicry in Moni Mohsin's *Diary of a Social Butterfly***

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ABSTRACT

The main objectives of this study are to show how individuals mimic the upper class as they cannot truly reach them, with the lower class placing significant value and emphasis on the elite. The research examines why the middle class mimics the elite and how the elite functions as a colonizer in this dynamic. It explores the motivations behind this mimicry, leading to three outcomes: a hybrid culture, a crisis of identity, and social isolation. Descriptive and qualitative research along with textual analysis, form the methodology. The primary source is Mohsin's *The Diary of a Social Butterfly*, supported by critical literary theory, research papers, and literature reviews. Results reveal that the central character, the Butterfly, imitates and adapts to the elite class's Western-influenced culture. To address these issues, literature must promote cultural blending positively, reconnect individuals to their roots, and emphasize human connection to combat social isolation.

KEYWORDS | Diary of a Social Butterfly, Moni Mohsin, Homi K Bhabha, Mimicry, Postcolonial

Introduction

Mimicry is an interesting subject, often theorized about and investigated by postcolonial writers. Literally, mimicry means copying something from a specific group to attain a particular goal. It is usually an exaggerated copy of different cultures and languages. People mimic for various reasons like to get recognition or success, social acceptability, or because they want to be like someone else. This feature of mimicry is natural to human beings. Aristotle says, "Man is by nature a social animal." (Man as a social animal, 2012, para. 2). Plato says, "All artistic creation is a form of imitation." (Tikkanen, 2011, para. 1).

Pakistan is a postcolonial state. Postcolonial states are those nation-states that emerged out of colonial empires. In a postcolonial state, the effects of colonialism can be seen on individuals and societies as they imitate, copy, and adapt to western culture. Pakistan is also in the spell of Americanization. America's culture is ruling Pakistan as it is defined by a fast-paced lifestyle and fashion and is truly called a melting pot because people from different backgrounds and cultures become one.

The Diary of a Social Butterfly by Moni Mohsin is a social satire as all characters, particularly the protagonist, mimic the Pakistani high society. This is a delightful journal of a socialite in Lahore. Here we meet Pakistan's most bewitching socialite. The central

character is trying to change her social status by mimicking the upper class. The Butterfly is shown as a spoiled brat, who is always attending high society parties. Thus, it is a social commentary wrapped in humor. The protagonist is seen as commenting on events and adventures of the upper class because she is an acute observer of Pakistani high society.

During colonization, the rulers were from other countries but now the rulers are there in the country. During colonization, the colonizers exploited the colonized people by imposing their culture and language on them. But at present, colonization has changed its form. During colonization, outside forces were dominant and ruling but in the current situation, the dominant and ruling forces are present inside the country. Previously, outsiders were attacking the insiders but at present, the insiders are being attacked by the insiders. For example, the household workers in domestic places are not given the incentives according to set standards, the laborers do not get enough wages to run their households properly, and thus, a slave master-relation is becoming dominant. As mentioned above, the different classes have developed colonizers and colonized relations. The elite class becomes the colonizers in relation to the middle class. Similarly, the middle class is like colonizer to the lower class. The elite are now colonizers and are now repeating the oppression but on their people, unlike colonizers who oppressed the others and not their people. Consequently, the middle or lower class starts to mimic the upper class to get rid of all oppression.

Literature Review

The Diary of a Social Butterfly was published in 2008. It is a comedic novel. The novel is in diary format. The novel is set in a posh area of Lahore, and Butterfly takes the readers to different parties and social gatherings.

In the afterword to the book, Mohsin shares the experience of discovering the ideas for writing *The Diary of a Social Butterfly*. She shares her experience of being asked by the editor of "*The Friday Times* in Lahore" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 174) to write "a column that would appeal to women readers" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 174). The main idea for writing the book was "Touching on issues of concern to women" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 174). So, she started writing the column "*By The Way*" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 174) but after two years it became boring and the editor reviewed it as not best pleased so it was discontinued and thought of giving a substitute for it. Then she went to a big party and she "overheard a conversation between two begums" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 174). Their conversation was a "Eureka moment" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175) for her and she started to write "a satirical column based on the lives of the rich and inane" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175). For that purpose, she needed a fictitious character and at this particular point she "Enter the Butterfly." (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175) Here she got the idea for her new column. After the first column got published, it was an immediate hit for the readers because it was new. In one instance, in answer to the question "by whom is the central character inspired?" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175) Mohsin claims that "The Butterfly is the embodiment of my own 'hidden shallows'". (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175) She added, "Many of the incidents ... have really happened, not to me but to others. Many of the conversations relayed here, I have overheard." (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175)

A review in the *Daily Times* said "Written by Moni Mohsin, *The Diary of a Social Butterfly*, talks about so many things that are happening around us at so many levels but interestingly, Mohsin packs it all in a wrapper of light humor." (Shah, 2018, para. 3) The *Daily Times* also wrote that "Butterfly's diary involves the time from 2001-2008, hence it serves to be a social commentary on early 21st century." (Shah, 2018, para. 3)

Rizia Begum Laskar, in her article *The Voice in the Diary: Moni Mohsin's Butterfly Diaries* remarked that "Butterfly represents the extremely shallow upper-class socialites whose concerns remain restricted within the social bubbles of their luxurious lives." (Laskar, 2022, p. 3) Similarly, the language is "Butterfly's sine qua non." (Mohsin, 2008, p. 175)

According to the *Daily Times* review:

Mohsin succeeds in mimicking a certain faction of high society through her character of Butterfly. A character with whom even her husband fails to relate but we being the reader find her palatable because Butterfly is not a fictional character that lives in the mind of Mohsin but is the one that can be seen roaming around at most of the places. (Shah, 2018, para. 7)

According to the Indian daily English newspaper *Telegraph*, they remarked that Mohsin's "Fools are her theme, satire her tenor." (Review: *Butterfly at large*, 2009, para. 8) Thus it is obvious that the well-built element of the diary is satire as there is humor and exaggeration.

According to the newspaper *Dawn*, "The strongest element of the diary is humor, which the new generation Pakistani writers seem to be blind to when writing – this probably stems from taking themselves too seriously." (Review: *Butterfly at large*, 2009, para. 12)

According to a review on a social forum, "The main attraction of this novel is Butterfly who is a typical wannabe socialite with her horrible English language." (Book Review: *Diary Of Social Butterfly*, 2016, para. 3)

According to the *Daily Times* review:

After a really long time, I got to read a book (by a Pakistani author) that gave me ceaseless fits of laughter and made me laugh out so much that even my mother couldn't resist asking me, "Kis baat py itna has rhi ho beta?". But Oh! in case if you're wondering which book, then let me tell you, in Moni Mohsin's style, "Uff taubah, can't you guess? Haan? 'The Diary of a Social Butterfly', baba!" (Shah, 2018, para. 2)

Methodology

The main focus of the research is based on the concept of mimicry. The characteristic of mimicry is natural to human beings from childhood. The human being is the "most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation learns his earliest lessons" (Aristotle, 2008, pg. 6) as argued by Aristotle in his book *Poetics*.

Homi K Bhabha is an Indo-British scholar. He is a leading figure in postcolonial research. He is famous for his books *The Location of Culture* and *Nation and Narration*, which consist of his key concepts including mimicry, third space, hybridity, and ambivalence. These concepts of mimicry, third space, hybridity, and ambivalence describe the ways in which colonizers have resisted the power on colonized.

Bhabha was born in India, then a colony. He spent the rest of his life in England, as a colonized. It can therefore be said he not only presents his theories but also suffers from them. When he speaks of mimicry, it can be said that he has seen or even experienced the colonized's mimicry. In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha has given the theory of mimicry. The basic postulates of the theory are discussed below.

In his theory of mimicry, he argues that “the effect of mimicry is camouflage” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 121) which means that there is some difference between mimicry and camouflage. The difference between mimicry and camouflage is that in mimicry someone tries to copy someone as a whole or in part whereas in camouflage someone tries to blend with their surroundings and not appear obviously. Thus mimicry is an adaptation of something in such a way that makes them copy something whereas camouflage is an adaptation of something with the intention of hiding by blending with surroundings. This camouflaged effect of mimicry is observed in Mohsin’s novels.

He further stated in this book that “mimicry is at once resemblance and menace” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 123) which means mimicry has both constructive and destructive effects. The constructive side of mimicry is that it helps to form as well as strengthen relationships and helps in learning new cultures. On the other hand, destructive effects include loss of originality and true identity. Many constructive and destructive effects of mimicry are observed in Mohsin’s novels.

He further states “mimicry – almost the same but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 123) which means there are similarities and differences as well. Thus, the one who mimics is not only mimicking at a time but trying to be the same and the different as well. The mimicker can be seen like them at one moment and different at another moment. The same is the case with Butterfly in Mohsin’s works.

This whole process of conscious mimicry is done with a desire to look authentic as argued by Bhabha. He says “The desire to emerge as ‘authentic’ through mimicry” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 126). Bhabha states that this “desire” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 126) is the “basis of mimicry” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 126). He says that “A desire that, through the repetition of partial presence, which is the basis of mimicry” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 126). Butterfly did all this with her desire.

Thus, in Bhabha’s words, “Mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge.” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 122) It is elusive in a way that it is difficult to catch and achieve it. It is effective in a way that it is successful in producing the desired or intended results. Mohsin’s Butterfly has demonstrated the elusive and effective side of mimicry. Both the elusive and effective sides are fulfilled by Butterfly as at first she faces difficulty in finding what she needs to imitate. Once she succeeded, she discovers the desires and intentions behind the imitation. Bhabha claims that this whole process causes some kind of personality disorder because of the difference in reality and desire by saying that “Mimicry does not merely destroy narcissistic authority through the repetitious slippage of difference and desire.” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 129) The researcher can thus understand at the end that the character of Butterfly is felt as having some kind of personality disorder therefore she is continuously mimicking and losing herself and identity at the end of the text.

In Bhabha’s words, “in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference.” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 122) By slippage, I mean transmission of power. When someone mimics, it means he is transferring something from others that is worthy and this transferring will continue till equality is gained. By excess, I mean something more than our needs. It can be anything like language, power, culture, etc. So here is the need to transfer which is in excess now. By difference, I mean something which is not similar. When there is dissimilarity, there becomes a desire and need to become similar. So in Bhabha’s words, “Mimicry repeats rather than re-presents” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 125) which means that the process of imitation is never complete and something is always missing. It can be analyzed conclusively by Hosni DhanuPranata’s

words from his article entitled *Mimicry as Mockery in J.M. Coetzee Disgrace*. He says "Mimicry refers to a situation where the colonized people are trying to imitate the colonizer and the imitation is never the same." (Pranata, n.d., p. 39)

Indrastuti, Santoso and Ocktarani in their article *Mimicry and Hybridity of Hobbs in David Leithc's Fast and Furious: Hobbs and Shaw (2019) Movie Script* explain in simple words:

Mimicry is often referred to as a form of imitating colonial culture, both in the form of behavior and manners. For colonized people, mimicry is considered as a way that can be taken to raise their ranks, as well as increase their dignity. By doing mimicry, they will also have the opportunity to have an advanced, better and competitive life. (Indrastuti, Santoso & Ocktarani, 2021, p. 3)

Their words define mimicry clearly. They also express the real intention behind the imitation. The future of imitators is also shown. These words also shed light on the character of Mohsin's Butterfly.

David Huddart in his book *Homi K. Bhabha* has supported Bhabha's argument of mimicry by further explaining it.

Huddart says, "In fact, mimicry as Bhabha understands it is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas. This exaggeration means that mimicry is repetition with difference". (Huddart, 2006, p. 39) A close reading of the text by Mohsin shows the exaggeration in the true sense. The central character Butterfly is exaggerating everything by using her true writing skills.

Pranata in his article has stated that "According to Bhabha views the man who does mimicry (the imitator) will not be one hundred percent the same as the original one." (Pranata, n.d., p. 32) A careful reading and analysis of the text by Mohsin confirm these words in the way that researchers felt the changing nature of the protagonist.

Huddart states the outcomes of mimicry and says "A further consequence of mimicry is the undermining of the colonizer's apparently stable, original identity." (Huddart, 2006, p. 51)

Huddart concludes by saying "We pretended to be real, to be learning, to be preparing ourselves for life, we mimic men of the New World." (Huddart, 2006, p. 48) It is evident that we have all experienced some characters like Butterfly around us, they all 'pretended to be real' (Huddart, 2006, p. 48), they all show themselves as they are 'learning' (Huddart, 2006, p. 48) but still the element of fakeness is visible in them like it is visible in Butterfly of Mohsin.

Indrastuti, Santoso, and Ocktarani have deeply analyzed the consequences of mimicking someone's life. They claim that:

Mimicry is often referred to as a form of imitating colonial culture, both in the form of behavior and manners. For colonized people, mimicry is considered as a way that can be taken to raise their ranks, as well as increase their dignity. By doing mimicry, they will also have the opportunity to have an advanced, better and competitive life. (Indrastuti, Santoso & Ocktarani, 2021, p. 464)

Mohsin's text also approves these observations. The researcher has seen the protagonist making efforts in raising her rank by following the elite class. The researcher

can see her making efforts to increase her dignity by presenting expensive brands. The researcher has seen her showing as living an 'advanced, better and competitive life.' (Indrastuti, Santoso & Ocktarani, 2021, p. 464)

On the other hand Bhabha claims that there is another side of the mimicry. Bhabha asserts that "The effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is profound and disturbing." (Bhabha, 1994, p. 123) This is very true in the case of the Butterfly. She is idealizing the elite to the maximum level but whenever she fails to do so she starts feeling alienated and to cover her alienation she starts blaming them. Therefore, it becomes extreme and ill-adjusted not only for the protagonist but for the researcher as well.

Huddart claims that "This desire is not only that of the colonized but clearly also that of the colonizer". (Huddart, 2006, p. 44) During the process of mimicry, both the mimicker and the one who is being mimicked are filled with aspiration. The mimicker is feeling inferior so he wanted to mimic the other like the Butterfly whereas the one who is being mimicked is feeling superior therefore he is presenting himself in such a high and mighty way. A sense of attraction is there on both sides so without this attraction everyone is the same.

But this sense of attraction is also creating negative effects as Pranata has stated that "Mimicry is a kind of resistance against colonizer because mimicry does not simply imitate, but also mock the colonizer of being difference." (Pranata, n.d., p. 31) In this equation, the superior will keep on feeling superior and will suffer from a superiority complex so his complex will be thus problematic for society. On the other hand, the inferior will keep on feeling inferior to an extent that he will suffer from an inferiority complex and will thus be alienated from society. Therefore, there will be a never-ending race for the inferior to be like superior as he further claims "In the context of postcolonial mimicry becomes a way for inferior to imitate and be like superior." (Pranata, n.d, p. 32)

Majeed Abjel Ferhood and Lajiman Bin Janoory in their article *The Notions of Mimicry and Ambivalence in Rubai-el-Madhoun's Fractured Destinies* have concluded Butterfly's present condition after mimicry that:

Due to the trapping between two cultures, values, traditions, and languages, such people stay oscillating and face the crisis of affiliation as where they belong to. They face mixed cultural identity as the consequence of this ambivalent status and they remain to live a dual life. (Ferhood & Janoory, 2020, p. 204)

The Butterfly is thus seen as "trapping between two cultures" (Ferhood & Janoory, 2020, p. 204) and also seen as facing "mixed cultural identity" (Ferhood & Janoory, 2020, p. 204) and ultimately living a "dual life" (Ferhood & Janoory, 2020, p. 204).

Results and Discussion

Looking at the beginning of the novel, readers and researchers will know what the main character is thinking. She begins introducing herself with words like "Everyone knows me" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6). Her way of introducing her leads readers and researchers to some very interesting and thought-provoking conclusions. These words spark them to know more about her. These words indicate that she might be suffering from a superiority complex in her life therefore she boasts. She doesn't think of herself as a normal human being, so she wanted others to know more about her. By the end of the

novel, the researcher will conclude whether this way of introduction proves beneficial or not. But now it is more important to know more about her.

While introducing her lifestyle, she shows off that she has a “fat kothi” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6) which means a big house to live in, she lives in “Gulberg” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6) which is only affordable for the elite class, and she has all luxuries of life like “ten servants” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6) which an ordinary person even cannot think of. So the reader is constantly getting an elite impression of her, therefore, there is a need to research whether this impression is temporary or permanent. Therefore there is a pinching desire to check whether she belongs to such a class or whether she is mimicking them.

The researcher is constantly getting involved with the elite impression that she is giving. She is moving slowly from her family to her surroundings and ultimately to her family’s occupation. The researcher should observe her careful way of giving minute information about everything which belongs to her. “Did I tell you Janoo is landed? Well, he is” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6). She is sharing but with a bit heavy heart. She gives this impression when she says “unfortunately his lands are not in Gulberg, where everyone could see them and be jay” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6). The researcher is getting the impression that she is happy and not happy at the time. There is always something left that is not according to her and interrupts her happiness like lands are there but not in Gulberg.

Similarly, it can be seen that this exaggerated sense of introduction is not limited to her but is extended to her family that is to her husband Janoo and her only son Kulchoo. She has introduced her family member to wealthy institutions like “Kulchoo goes to Aitchison College” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6), and according to Butterfly, it is “Lahore’s best school for nice rich boys from nice rich families” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6). Similarly, while introducing her husband she says “Janoo also went to Aitchison, and from there only he went to Oxford in London” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6). This entire elaborated introduction for her family again leads the researcher to think that this is not she who is thinking and saying like this but there is something that is forcing her to be like this. It can be seen how she has magnified herself and her family and there is nothing wrong to say that she has done it with some intentions. Therefore, there is a further need for the researcher to know her intentions behind such words.

The change in her mood is evident. In beginning, she says “Everyone knows me” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 6) but as she moves further her mood changes so she says “After all, it can’t be easy knowing me” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 7). This shift in mood seems to be very interesting for the readers and the researchers as it raises curiosity in them to know more about her. From the beginning till now there are evident references that she suffers from complexes, particularly a superiority complex. It gives the impression that she is making constant efforts to be superior. This journey from inferior to superior might attacks her identity.

Butterfly’s impressions are constantly changing so the rise in curiosity is obvious as she changes her impression from elite to typical woman. During a conversation with her husband over the issues of sacrificing animals, she says “one thing I won’t compromise on Kulchoo stroking the knife before we do a bakra in our backyard. Stops bad nazar”. (Mohsin, 2008, p. 12) This shows her typical Pakistani nature. Such statement raises questions about her identity. It is getting challenging for the researcher to set a mindset for her. Her personality unfolds as the researcher moves along; the multiple dimensions of her personality ranging from elite to ordinary woman are revealed.

But these sudden changes are becoming problematic for her family, and they are not appreciated; instead, they are getting irritated by it. This is evident when her husband calls her a “talent-free zone” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 14). Such comments about her from the closest people around her show that she might be different from everyone around her. This further adds to the curiosity, as the researcher becomes more and more intrigued not only about her but also about her family, who seems so unlike her.

After introducing herself, her family, and her surroundings she starts bragging about the expensive things she has. There are multiple references to high-priced things such as expensive and antique shawls like “jamawar” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 20) and “shahtooshes” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 20). These shawls are expensive because they are hand-woven. It usually takes years or even decades to weave a single shawl.

The Butterfly is unpacking herself by commenting on different events happening around her. She comments on everything ranging from her personal life to social turmoil and even the political turmoil happening around her. Her remarks help us to understand her.

The Butterfly is seen as preparing for attending an elite marriage with intentions of getting married her only son with such a grand wedding. Even her husband refuses to attend that wedding but she is going with the hopes that otherwise no one will come to their only son’s wedding. It shows that both husband and wife are poles apart; the husband is anti-social or selectively social and the wife is more than social. Butterfly justifies her socialistic nature by saying that she is getting social for many reasons. The most prominent one is that otherwise, no one will attend her son’s wedding. “I went up to everyone and said at least eight hundred hellos. I know because I kept count.” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 23) The reason behind this is shared by her “I’m not doing it for myself but for Kulchoo.” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 23) The intention behind such behavior reveals a side of her that she is performing such tasks, not for her benefit. This gives a message that she might be copying others for some reasons; the most obvious reason is to get the same attention she is giving to others. This might raise questions about her that why she idealizes others and why she is wanted to be like others. This situation leaves the researcher with many questions.

Butterfly’s knowledge of the Twin Towers attack and the American “excuse to evade Afghanistan and then Iraq and then Iran and then Syria and then Sudan and then maybe Saudi also. He wants their oil, na” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 25) unfold one side of her that she is interested in America and therefore she is considering American culture to be superior. Despite such a tragic event, she is not sad about the loss of innocent lives but only regrets that her trip to America is postponed. The researcher is getting a hint that she might be idealizing Americans. She confirms her sentiments by showing sympathy towards them. She sadly says that “planes-shlanes thing happened. Worst timing. Kya tha if they’d waited for another two weeks? Main ho hi aati New York.” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 24) So, it can be seen that she is the one who is most upset than the whole world; this sadness is accepted by her in a way that “If anyone should be upset, it should be me.” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 24) These facts are taking the researcher to the conclusion that she wants to mimic American culture. But a question arises whether going in their directions, she will be having the same identity or there will be questions regarding her identity as well.

According to Pakistan’s religious values, the New Year starts with the Islamic month, but Butterfly seems to be deviating from her values that all she wants is “I wish the year was full of Decembers and Januarys and Februarys” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 32) which

is western cultural norms of spending a month before and a month after New Year eve in clubs and parties. The religion in Pakistan never allows the free mixing of males and females in any gathering but Butterfly is happy in doing them although she has shown her religious side in many instances. Her likeness to the New Year parties is adding to the researcher's mind that she has changed her mind from eastern to western.

It can be seen that she is commenting on each and everything and obviously with some intentions which would be clear by the end. Looking closely, it can be seen that she has used many references from day-to-day life and a bit of close reading will help to understand her mindset.

Even the references to food and drinks are not according to Pakistan's local food, from the cover book to the end of the novel; all the preferred dishes are western like "Bar flowing bar-bar" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 33) which is prohibited in Pakistan's religion and culture. By giving such references she is replicating the western and might be a portion of our society that is labeled as elite. Butterfly's intentions which are rooted in the western lifestyle are now clear to the researcher. By following them she is happily accepting every right and wrong and is thus setting wrong patterns for the rest of society.

There is a discussion about the tough times in the country like earthquakes or bomb blasts. Such discussions also show how different she is from other people. At such times, people used to get worried about their country first. But like always, Butterfly and her husband are poles apart in every situation. It is evident through their different reactions in the same tough situation when Butterfly is constantly passing hopeless comments about leaving the country in tough situations like she says "All this time I've been telling Janoo ke chalo" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 41) but on the other hand, her husband says "I'm not deserting my country in its hour of need" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 41). The more the husband is optimistic, the more she is pessimist. Again Butterfly's thoughts are not toward her people. They give an impression that something is there which is more important to her. She is not worried about the place she lives in, which is an evident example of inclination.

The researcher is now getting clear references to her manifold sides. Moving along the pages, her moves and actions are getting clear. She has thrown dinner for her relatives who arrived from abroad. The intention is "to show off my trendy new nephew" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 44) so that "Unko bhi pata chaley, in how much water we are" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 44) It gives a message that those who are from abroad are of more worth to her than those who live here. It also gives knowledge of her standards of judgment which are bending towards the west. So the impression of her western mindset is evident.

Once again, Butterfly regrets her luck for not getting a British visa and thinks "There's only one solution. If I don't get it, I'll have to go and hide." (Mohsin, 2008, p. 46) It shows that her country is not worthy of her to live. It gives an insight into her mind and what is more important for her. She is planning to hide in a place that she is planning to leave. This adds to her double nature. This proves that she continuously prefers abroad over her land.

Every time pages are turned, there is a message that she has a very poor standard of judgment. She pretends to be solid, but she is a hollow woman. She does not appreciate what is worth appreciating. This becomes apparent when she compares Arundhati Roy, an Indian author, and winner of many prestigious awards, to brands and all artificial stuff. Instead of appreciating the power of her brain and the power of her

pen, she is remarking that “she wasn’t even wearing a designer jora!” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 49) Honestly speaking, she is a hollow woman and for Butterfly superiority of thoughts is nothing. All she is worried about is appearances and it is a fact that appearances are often deceptive. This proves that for her, western appearances are more important rather than worthy minds.

Furthermore, she defines her life with these words “parties khatam, balls khatam, life khatam” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 62). The lifestyle she loves is all about gatherings and events, which are the cultural values of Americans basically and now ours, particularly the elite class. The above discussion proves that she is replicating the west, particularly the Americans. Therefore, she has lost her true identity. Her identity is now hybrid. But still, it is important to see how this identity loss will benefit her. There is a need to examine whether she will feel happy with this new identity or if she will again make as many efforts as she can to gain her lost identity. Either this new identity will take her to a new world, or she will be finally alienated from her society. Shah’s analysis is directly linked to Mohsin’s Butterfly. He analyses that:

The Primitive Man was alienated due to the hostile Nature but Modern Man’s Alienation is caused by the hostile environment created by him-self ... civilized man has become a helpless puppet in the hands of the environment of his own making. (Shah, 2015, p. 49)

The description of the servant’s miscarriage scene also gives a glimpse of a westernized and elite culture where bearing fewer children is considered ideal. The Butterfly is accusing the servant of having more kids; she bitterly says that “they think about ‘That Thing Only’” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 72) This concept of having fewer children is taken from the west and is now idealized by the elite class. So it can be said that the concept of a lower birth rate and child-free life is introduced by the west and is now idealized by us.

The researcher is now clear about where she is moving. She is moving towards a western ideology that is also an elite ideology now. She is looking at every matter of life through their lens. For her, some are perfect, and others are flawed. The very personal issues of having kids and how many kids should be there have been analyzed with western ideology. It means they are now the new advocates for people. People should have to plan and spend their life according to them. This shift will raise questions about everyone’s true identity. But Butterfly is happily enjoying it without any fear of consequences. As Bhabha says it is difficult to distinguish between the cultures that are “discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 159) and “discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 159). The character of Butterfly has lost her identity in western ideology.

Eid is a festival and time of celebration for Muslims around the world. Mostly it is celebrated with traditions and cultural food. The Butterfly is objecting to her in-law’s Eid menu that “Na koi pizza, na koi pasta, na koi cold slaw, na koi trifle.” (Mohsin, 2008, p. 129) She is so involved in the elite and western traditions that all events even Eid should be celebrated with a menu that is not cultural dishes. She likes not only the western lifestyle but their foods as well. Her standards of judgment are in line with the west and they are ultimately followed by our elite. Therefore, it is true to consider the elite class as the west.

From the very start of the text to the end, Butterfly is giving more and more attention to events to which she is not culturally linked. All she is doing is mimicking

multiple cultures at a time. She is following someone's food, another's dress and from somewhere else the events.

Butterfly and her husband Janoo used to fight for every minute reason. Janoo is an intellectual with knowledge about what is happening around him. He keeps an eye on worldwide affairs. On contrary, Butterfly only keep eye on the fashion sense. At this particular point, Janoo tries to end the fight with an intellectual question "'Go on, then, name one book you know well.'" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 155) And Butterfly reveals her inner sense by answering ridiculously "'Cheque book!'" (Mohsin, 2008, p. 155) Like the west and the elite, her only preference in life is money and nothing else. She can go to any extent to get it. She feels pride in it.

Ferhood and Janoory in their article *The Notions of Mimicry and Ambivalence in Rubai-el-Madhoun's Fractured Destinies* have concluded Butterfly's present condition after mimicry that:

Due to the trapping between two cultures, values, traditions, and languages, such people stay oscillating and face the crisis of affiliation as where they belong to. They face mixed cultural identity as the consequence of this ambivalent status and they remain to live a dual life. (Ferhood & Janoory, 2020, p. 204)

Butterfly also faces a crisis of association regarding her identity.

Setyowati in his article *Homi Bhabha's Mimicry as reflected in Tanizaki's Naomi* claims that "Bertens and Young claim that Postcolonial studies examine how two different cultures meet at the beginning, and one of them dominates another with their superiority and finally becomes new culture and civilization" (Setyowati, 2018, p. 604)

Consequently, it can be seen how Butterfly has changed throughout the text. She starts to introduce herself with the fame and wealth that she has. She moves on to introduce her family which is her husband and her son with wealthy institutions and professions. She passed comments on every happening around her but the researcher has seen from the very beginning to the end that her remarks were not as encouraging as they should be. It is an agreeable fact that the land people live in is their identity. Its culture and its values are their values. They felt pride in them. But Butterfly is opposite to such expectations. She is physically here but mentally she is not here, she is somewhere else. Her thoughts and inclination towards western ideology reveal that she is idealizing the west. She is admiring western ideology, culture, and values. She is more concerned about what is happening in the west and is least concerned about what's going on in her land. So it can be said that land which is one's identity is targeted by her. A culture that is attached to that particular land is pointed out by her. This proves that she no longer belongs here. She has lost her true identity and thus a gained hybrid identity. Pranata has stated that "According to Bhabha views the man who does mimicry (the imitator) will not be one hundred percent the same as the original one." (Pranata, n.d., p. 32) Thus, Butterfly is not hundred percent original.

Conclusion

Homi K Bhabha's theory of mimicry is fully practiced by and applied to Moni Mohsin's Butterfly in *The Diary of a Social Butterfly*. As Bhabha talks about the camouflaged effects of mimicry, it can be seen in the case of Butterfly. Like a camouflaged person, she has blended with her surroundings. Bhabha's description of constructive and destructive sides of mimicry is thus obvious in the case of Butterfly. The

constructive side can be observed at the time of the formation of hybrid identities and hybrid cultures as by the end of both texts, she was neither having her original identity nor she belongs to her original culture. The destructive side can be observed during the loss of the original identity and original culture. Similarly, Bhabha's claims of similarities and differences at the time of mimicking can also be observed in the case of Butterfly because as a mimicker she was similar and different to those whom she mimicked.

Mimicry is a distinct feature of human beings. They are mimics since their birth and will continue it to their death. Mimicry is of two basic types. The one which is done intentionally is called conscious mimicry; the other is done unintentionally and is called unconscious mimicry. As conscious mimicry is done intentionally, there are certain aims and objectives behind it. On the other hand, unconscious mimicry is done unintentionally; still, it affects that particular person or group of people involved in it. When mimicry is done whether intentionally or unintentionally, it leads to identity conflict. Whether done intentionally or unintentionally, the identity of the one who is involved in mimicking no longer remains the same. Therefore, mimicry leads to identity conflicts.

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