

Hybridity, Identity Crises and the Subaltern Voices: A Postcolonial Analysis of Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* and Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree*

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Abstract

Megha Majumdar's A Burning (2020) and Sairish Hussain's The Family Tree (2020) are both postcolonial texts, and both writers have discussed a variety of issues faced by people living in the postcolonial context. This is a qualitative study, and for the textual analysis of the selected novels, the Postcolonial lens is used. The selected theoretical framework is mainly based on key terminologies like "Hybridity" and "the Third Space", given by Homi K. Bhabha in his book "The Location of Culture" (1994). Another theoretical framework used in this study is drawn from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's immensely significant essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" published in the book "Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture" (1988). These theoretical underpinnings are employed to examine how characters struggle to develop identities within oppressive, coercive sociopolitical systems. Through a close analysis of the selected texts, this study examines marginalisation, identity formation, cultural hybridity, mixed identities, third space, power, resistance, socioeconomic inequality, and gender inequality in the context of Hindu nationalism and the British colonies. By bridging the selected novels with the chosen postcolonial theoretical stances, the study aims to demonstrate how A Burning (2020) explores contemporary postcolonial challenges and the efforts of individuals to assert their identities in postcolonial settings. This study also sheds light on how the characters' lifestyles depict the blending of cultural practices through language and traditions in The Family Tree (2020). The findings of this research paper demonstrate the selected novels' engagement with postcolonial tensions and the continuing relevance of Spivak and Bhabha's theories for understanding the issues faced by marginalised communities in the contemporary world.

Keywords: Subaltern, Marginalisation, Political Oppression, Resistance, Voice and Silence.

Introduction

Postcolonial literature shows how formerly colonised nations negotiate questions of identity, power, and oppression in the shadow of imperialism. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who investigates the silencing of subaltern voices, and Bhabha (1994) who highlights the hybrid identities in the

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postcolonial societies, are among the two most prominent theorists in postcolonial studies. The theoretical underpinnings of these authors have helped us analyse the above-mentioned crises of colonised people as presented through characterisation in the two novels selected for the current research paper: Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* (2020) and Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020). Spivak (1988), in her groundbreaking article "Can the Subaltern Speak?", argues that marginalised people, particularly women from South Asia, are conventionally unable to represent themselves within dominant narratives. However, Bhabha (1994) proposes the idea of hybrid identities generated by colonial encounters, in which mimicry serves both as a tool of adjustment and as a form of resistance, arising from the "in-between space or gap" known as the third space.

Megha Majumdar's novel *A Burning* (2020) introduces rich ground for postcolonial analysis of the characters facing such situations in the backdrop of colonisation and its aftereffects. Set in India, the novel narrates the stories of three protagonists: Jivan, a young Muslim woman accused of a false terrorism charge; PT Sir, a schoolteacher seeking political power; and Lovely, a transgender woman aspiring to become an actress. This research explores how Jivan represents the silenced subaltern in accordance with Gayatri Spivak's defined criteria, while Lovely embodies hybrid resistance. We can best analyse these characters using the lenses of Spivak and Bhabha, respectively. In that vein, Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020) explores hybrid identities among British-Pakistani characters as they navigate linguistic, cultural, and generational negotiations.

Research Objectives

- To critically assess *A Burning* (2020) novel's subaltern silencing techniques, demonstrating how power and political frameworks oppress the representation, voice, and agency of the marginalised people in communities.
- To examine the play of mimicry and hybridity as strategies which help foster the production of marginalised identities, resistance, survival, and negotiation in *A Burning* (2020).
- To represent the ways in which the character's lifestyle depicts the blending of cultural practices in terms of language and traditions in *The Family Tree* (2020).
- To explore how *The Family Tree* (2020) highlights the issues of people living in a situation known as the "Third Space".

Research Questions

1. How do the characters like Jivan show the silenced and unspeakable status of subaltern people in the postcolonial narratives, especially in light of the novel *A Burning* (2020)?
2. In the novel *A Burning* (2020), how are hybridity and mimicry seen as tools deployed by people like Lovely having oppressed identities to establish recognition, resistance, and placement within contemporary sociopolitical frameworks of colonialism?
3. How does *The Family Tree* (2020) examine the concept of cultural hybridity through the lifestyle of characters portrayed by Sairish Hussain?
4. How is *The Family Tree* (2020) a portrayal of the moments where the cultural aspects clash or merge to form a "Third Space" identity?

Research Methodology

The research design of this study is qualitative, and the research comprises textual analysis of the two selected novels, *A Burning* (2020) by Megha Majumdar and *The Family Tree* (2020) by Sairish Hussain. The theoretical framework for this research is based on postcolonial theory, and the characters' analysis is conducted by deploying the theoretical stances of Homi K. Bhabha and

Gayatri Spivak, drawn from their books on Postcolonial theory. The first theoretical framework is thoroughly consulted from the book “The Location of Culture” (1994) by Homi K Bhabha, and the second framework has been taken from a very influential essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” by Gayatri Spivak published in the book “Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture” (1988). The sources of data collection are primary and secondary. Primary sources include the original text of the novel *A Burning* (2020) by Megha Majumdar and *The Family Tree* (2020) by Sairish Hussain. These are two groundbreaking literary narratives that examine the issues faced by people in colonised countries and portray the hardships they endure in the face of opposing forces, analysed through the lens of postcolonial theory. Secondary sources consulted for this paper include published research articles on relevant themes and literary viewpoints, research journals, newspapers, interviews, and other sources that help further explore the postcolonial realities represented in the works of Majumdar and Hussain, respectively.

Research Significance

This study improves understanding of the characters and their life experiences in postcolonial spaces, analysing them through the lens of postcolonial studies in the selected novels *A Burning* (2020) and *The Family Tree* (2020), focusing on engagement with postcolonial representation, conflict, and identity. Additionally, it offers valuable insights into the lived experiences of marginalised people under rising nationalist and socio-political pressures, and into the identities of people, shaped in the context of colonial rule and power.

Literature Review

In previously colonised countries, postcolonial studies examined how power dynamics, identity, and visual representation are still shaped by historical colonial dominance. Orientalism, a concept established by Edward Said in 1978, still remains central as it shows how Western discourse, in order to support political and cultural supremacy, presents a stereotypical image of non-Westerners. Later critics build on this idea to examine how colonised populations are never given a chance to represent themselves, and how the West always speaks for them in the discourse it establishes.

Building on the themes of this research paper, Ashcroft et al. (1998) emphasise that literature is a vital space for resistance and re-negotiation of meaning. He also presents important postcolonial concepts such as subalternity, hybridity, and otherness. In a similar vein, Loomba (1998) contends that, rather than being merely a theoretical or textual framework, postcolonialism should be understood in the context of tangible elements such as class, gender, and power. These viewpoints demonstrate the importance of social hierarchies in postcolonial narratives. The most convincing explanation for the problem of subaltern representation, according to Spivak (1988), is that dominant ideological frameworks either conceal or process subaltern voices. Her work raises significant concerns about agency and representation, especially when institutional authority silences the downtrodden.

A more flexible understanding of identity was provided by Bhabha's (1994) framework of hybridity, which introduced the concept of the "third space" as a location where cultural interpretations are frequently debated and challenged. This concept blurs the boundary between the coloniser and the colonised, especially in modern metropolitan tales. By situating the concept within the larger historical development of post-colonial ideas, Young (2001) emphasised its relevance to contemporary global circumstances.

The current study demonstrates how overlapping aspects of class, gender, and religion affect the experiences of the characters in the book, much like Singh's (2023) intersectional analysis. *A Burning*

(2020) thus becomes a noteworthy postcolonial work that symbolises the ongoing struggles for recognition and voice in contemporary India when viewed through the lenses of hybridity and subalternity. The book shows how society structures, media discourse, and state authority mute marginalised communities.

Drawing on the ideas of Karl Marx, the research paper "Class Struggle, Capitalism and Commodification in 'The 8 Show': A Marxist Analysis" (2025) examines how capitalist institutions facilitate exploitation and the creation of class hierarchy. By analysing The 8 Show, the current study shows the commodification of human existence and the imbalance of power between the dominant and subordinate groups. The work adds to a broader critical debate by illustrating how contemporary media texts reflect capitalist oppression and structural injustice. Because it aligns with postcolonial concerns, in which cultural control and economic supremacy at times coincide, this perspective offers a theoretical link between Marxist and postcolonial frameworks in the examination of literary and cultural texts (Yousaf & Qadir, 2025).

"Traversing Third Space: Analysing Global Identity, Colonialism, and Hybridity through a Bhabhaian Lens in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Admiring Silence*" employs Bhabha's theory to understand how people negotiate their identities in the context of colonialism and cross-cultural relationships. This essay argues that Gurnah's book clarifies how colonial legacies shape identity development and hybridity (Shalini & Singh, 2022).

Taken together, these studies confirm that Bhabha's ideas of *hybridity* and *the third space* do more than simply involve the overlapping and mixing of cultures; they encourage readers to practice them. When critics trace hybrid moments in code-switched dialogue, mixed musical scales, or tourist performances that blend culture, they invite readers to recognise similar in-between spaces, also known as third spaces, in their surroundings and in the literary canon.

Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial theory is about studying what happened after colonialism and how its effects are alive in the contemporary world. Both texts have been analysed through the lens of post-colonial theories, with a particular focus on Bhabha's (1994) concepts of mimicry, hybridity, and the third space, and on the concepts of the subaltern and the silenced proposed by Gayatri Spivak (1988).

"Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988)

The theory of Subalternity by Spivak focuses on marginalised groups outside hegemonic structures of power, who struggle to have their voices heard within the dominant discourse. Spivak's concept helps us understand the difficulties of identity and representation of the marginalised individuals and communities. The subaltern, after all their efforts, is then forced to silence their voice, as we can see in many such examples in postcolonial narratives. In the words of Spivak (1988), the concept is defined as "the subaltern cannot speak" (p. 308). In this, the subaltern refers to people who are systematically excluded from hegemonic power and mainstream representation, as their voices are not acknowledged within dominant discourse and literary frameworks. The character of Jivan in the novel *A Burning* (2020) is thoroughly analysed in the current research paper, drawing on Spivak's theoretical framework.

Bhabha's Mimicry

Mimicry, according to Bhabha, is "almost the same but not quite" and plays its part as a strategy through which marginalised people internalise and challenge the norms of hegemonic power. In the novel *A Burning* (2020), Jivan embodies these concepts, and, to the same extent, so do Lovely and

PT, Sir. On the other hand, this strategy of mimicry has proved beneficial for analysing the characters represented by Sairish in the novel *The Family Tree* (2020). Although she does not define mimicry, Spivak briefly refers to it critically in relation to colonial power. A key cited line is: "...the narrow epistemic violence of colonialism... even when preaching a civilising mission... contradicted itself by forbidding the act of mimicry" (p.28, 1988).

Bhabha's Theory of Hybridity (1994)

It is the most widely used literary framework in postcolonial literature and helps analyse the issues and challenges faced by colonised people. This idea of hybridity refers to the mixture of cultures and identities among coloniser and colonised people. This mixture is not fixed but keeps on changing and developing over time. Instead of choosing one culture or the other, they create a new, mixed identity, giving rise to the concept of hybrid identity, which emerges from being in a place known as the third space. Bhabha speaks of this area as the "Third Space," where the two cultures come into direct contact and affect one another. The area where hybrid identity compromises established labels is commonly referred to as the "*Third Space*." (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86)

Textual Analysis

Post-Colonial Analysis of the Novel *A Burning* by Megha Majumdar

In Majumdar's *A Burning* (2020), Jivan's experiences exemplify Spivak's subaltern voices, as her voice is repeatedly silenced by legal authorities, media, and communal hierarchies. For instance, during her trial, Jivan's statements are manipulated, and her agency is curtailed by political and social structures (Majumdar 41, 162). The idea of hybrid identity and the conflicts between alienation and belonging are aptly illustrated by Jivan's words in *A Burning*: "I am neither fully one nor the other, caught between worlds" (Majumdar 78). Jivan is a Muslim, and she has little influence in society. Although she advocated in opposition to violence on social networking sites, she faces repeated attempts by others to quiet her. This demonstrates how marginalised individuals who are already subjected to injustice struggle to express themselves and assert their identity in such societies. Lovely is a transgender (hijra), someone who defies easy categorisation as either male or female, represents a state of existing between two distinct identities and not entirely fitting into one.

The discourse of PT Sir: "If I join the Party, I will have respect. No more small-time games teacher. I will be someone." (Majumdar 123) PT Sir begins as a modest, unimportant individual (a gym instructor). However, he later becomes a member of the influential political group. This demonstrates how people sometimes alter who they are to fit in with those in positions of authority, even if doing so means compromising their beliefs.

Jivan as an Advocate of the Subaltern: The Contemporary Politics of Repressing and Silencing

Jivan faces multiple forms of discrimination as an economically disadvantaged Muslim woman. Her mom cautions her: "Girls like us must stay quiet to stay alive" (p. 20). Silence evolves into an instrument of survival, which is not a sign of acquiescence under this cultural logic. For anyone in her identity classification, Jivan's minor act of leaving a Facebook post becomes an unacceptable offence. Her demise is the complete silencing, echoing Spivak's last assertion that the story of the subaltern woman is muted at the intersection of racial oppression, patriarchy, and state authority. In line with Spivak's concluding assertion that the subaltern woman's story is completely suppressed at the intersection of racial oppression, state power, and patriarchy, her demise is the result.

The remarks of Jivan are selectively recorded by the police, turning her towards an embodiment of anti-national attitudes. "They were twisting everything I said," Jivan muses during questioning (p.

41). Spivak's differentiation between saying (uttering words) and getting heard (entering the predominant discourse) aligns precisely with this. Institutional mediators constantly intercept and reinterpret Jivan's remarks. Both the defending attorney and the magistrate judge in the proceeding invalidated her experienced realities. Narrative appropriation of something unfolds in the courtroom: "I was talking, but no one seemed to hear me" (p. 162). This is similar to Spivak's stance, in which those perceived as having authority "speak for" the subaltern.

Bhabha's notion of " Hybridity and The Third Space" seen in *A Burning*

Lovely's character, who has multiple split identities, truly embodies Bhabha's concept of hybridity. "I am neither this nor that," she said. "I'm somewhere in the middle" (Majumdar, 2020, p. 78). So, she chooses her survival over truth in such circumstances. This feeling of Jivan's character embodies Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space," where identity is seen as a changing, adaptable process. This incident illustrates Bhabha's claim that hybridity is not merely a liberator but is highly entangled with power systems. Only when Lovely connects herself with powerful institutions and participates in Jivan's silencing does she achieve mobility.

PT Sir: Using Mimicry to Negotiate Nationalism and Power

Mimicry is a strategy which is used by the oppressed and less heard colonised individuals. They use this technique to mimic and become part of the dominant culture in that community. The best example of the worst type of mimicry in this novel is the character of PT sir. He is an oppressed member of society and mimics authoritarian systems in order to obtain power. He also confesses at one point that "I wanted to be someone important" (Majumdar, 2020, p. 123), and in that case, he has to mimic authorities in order to become important and present himself as a part of them. Mimicry of state ideology can also be seen as a concept through the same character. When he joins the party, he follows the party's agenda: "these anti-nationals ought to be provided with a lesson" (p. 145). This transformation is not sincere; it is performative. Thus, it exposes the hollowness of mimicry; this is what Bhabha refers to when he describes it as an "excess."

Rewarding Engagement in the Colonial Systems

PT. sir's accomplishments reveal how colonial systems of punishment and reward persist in postcolonial nation-states. Similarly, as Fanon's criticism of the postcolonial bourgeoisie's beliefs says, the bourgeoisie replicates the systematic violence of the colonial era to serve their selfish ends and PT. sir's rise above his existing status is proof of it. PT. sir does not even hesitate to betray his fellow members in order to please the authorities and the colonial powers around. His statement is proof of Jivan's clear betrayal: "If helping her means losing everything I have worked for, then I cannot help" (p. 201). By adopting the party's goal, PT sir upholds a system and philosophy that kills Jivan. Mimicry results in integration into the repressive ideological system rather than resistance. Majumdar criticises nationalism's use of morality as a tool to subjugate common people. By revealing how minority voices are regularly muted through interwoven legal, administrative, and media discourses, the current study shows that *A Burning* (2020) addresses issues of the colonisers. Majumdar's *A Burning* (2020) embodies postcolonial anxieties about authoritative violence, discursive power, and identity. Through PT Sir's imitation of authority, Lovely's hybrid identity, and Jivan's silence, this novel demonstrates how marginalised people interact with discriminatory national structures. Through the use of Spivak and Bhabha's lenses together, it becomes explicit how power, identity, and representations function in modern Indian society. In the final chapters, the book

highlights the importance of paying attention to marginalised and suppressed voices and their concerns, making the novel an essential component of current postcolonial debates. Cultural Hybridity and Blending of traditions in the everyday life of the characters portrayed in *The Family Tree* (2020) by Sairish Hussain. At the heart of Bhabha's idea is hybridity, the surprising and sometimes disturbing result of cultures meeting under colonial rule. He writes, "hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal" (Bhabha 112). For him, hybridity is not just a mix but also a place of creative struggle. When people living under colonial rule take part in, change, and show parts of the coloniser's language, customs, or institutions, what they do is not just copy, but they become what is called a hybrid. Hybridity, as Bhabha adds, "reverses the formal process of disavowal," revealing the harm and eliminations that colonial rule depended on" (p.114). Because hybrid identities are always unfinished, neither fully one culture nor fully another, they expose the idea that any culture can stay pure. In *The Family Tree* (2020), Sairish Hussain brings this idea to life. Saahil and Zahra, for example, exchange dialogue in Urdu at home and in English at school as effortlessly as breathing. "They eat biryani for dinner one day, symbolising their heritage, and then they grab for fish and chips the next" (Hussain 23). This shifting between the Pakistani traditional and British food choices reflects the idea of the mixing of cultures and traditions. Their family's everyday activities include prayer rugs of various textures next to British textbooks and a home that occasionally smells of Yorkshire rain and other times of Pakistani spices. The children's hybrid identities are not pushed; rather, they develop naturally as a result of the regular blending of customs, languages, and tastes that permeate their home. These instances demonstrate that hybridity is more about the subtle, everyday ways people blend, adapt, and flourish than it is about conflict, as it can be best seen through the novel *The Family Tree* (2020).

The Family Tree (2020) and the concept of "The Third Space"

All of these creative processes, such as hybridity and transformation, occur in what Bhabha calls the Third Space. According to Bhabha, "it is the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (Bhabha, p. 38). The third space is also an area where cultures converge, battle, and continue to reshape one another. Therefore, neither the colonisers nor the colonised people entirely own this Third Space; rather, it is a dynamic space of contact where cultural meanings constantly evolve and are subject to change. He continues by saying that the third space originates from histories that don't fit together perfectly, making "a cultural space where the negotiation of incomparable differences creates a tension peculiar to borderline existences" (Bhabha 218). In this place, strict lines East/West, coloniser/colonised, tradition/modernity start to blur, making room for new and blended identities. It may feel uneasy, but it is always fertile ground for creativity.

Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020) is a fitting text for the right application of Homi K. Bhabha's ideas of cultural hybridity and the Third Space. This paper analyses moments such as a dinner table serving biryani alongside fish-and-chips, a sentence that starts in Urdu and ends in Yorkshire English, a silk pashmina that hangs in a very British terraced house, and children who juggle mosque lessons and school exams on the same day. When food, language, or objects blend, the researcher will label that hybridity. When the home, street, or classroom becomes a zone where old and new customs overlap, the researcher will call it the Third Space. Through the characters and their life experiences, especially Ahmad's, the third space comes to life and offers realistic examples of the theoretical concept. The novel naturally incorporates these mixed moments into its plot; it

offers a solid, varied set of evidence to support Bhabha's claim that identity is always in-between and never fixed on one side or the other.

Ehsan's displeasure with the racial discrimination he experiences is reflected in this statement, as he feels they were turned away from the school due to their Pakistani origin. It draws attention to the "third space," where Ehsan faces prejudice while attempting to manage his hybrid identity and battles the difficulties of living between two cultures. Amjad's feeling of alienation from specific social settings can also be seen, as he presumed that individuals from better socioeconomic classes, such as those from Leeds, York, and Harrogate, belong in settings like the theatre. It illustrates the "third space" where Amjad feels uncomfortable in more "posh" settings due to his hybrid identity, which is formed by both his working-class Pakistani heritage and his life in Britain. This can be seen through the words of Sairish, "those who were similar to him did not attend the theatre. He believed that the most frequent visitors were affluent people from York, Harrogate, and Leeds" (Hussain, 2020)

The Family Tree (2020) illustrates the richness of daily living rather than abstract theory to bring postcolonial hybridity to life. Using Bhabha's concepts of "hybridity" and the "third space," we can see that having a diasporic identity is not something you inherit and then carry with you. It is a live process moulded by knowledge of language, home, family, and the small details of everyday existence. By emphasising these "in-between" areas, particularly in the home and in language, the book presents a distinctive, nuanced view of what it means to fit in, adapt, and continuously create oneself in a world that is constantly changing.

These novels by Majumdar and Sairish portray the true evils of colonial rule. The characters face different problems and issues in these colonised spaces. They are forced to the margins, their voices are silenced, their identities are changed and reshaped, and their true selves are lost somewhere in this colonised world they are living in. Furthermore, as migration and globalisation alter identities, Hussain narrates the examples of shared meals, household chores, and academic routines that demonstrate how ancestral and cultural memory persists (Hussain, 2020, p. 25, 36, 148). In a similar vein, *A Burning's* social isolation, legal proceedings, and media scrutiny demonstrate how political and institutional constraints dictate who is permitted to speak, whose identity is accepted, and whose story is erased (Majumdar, 2020, p. 14, 41, 119, 162, 187). By connecting every day and systemic aspects, the study demonstrates how postcolonial identities are contingent, performative, and negotiated across multiple social, cultural, and political arenas.

Discussion of Research Findings

Relying on the theoretical underpinnings of Bhabha and Spivak, this research shows that subalternity and hybridity interact within postcolonial frameworks in both novels and helps us best understand the issues of the people living in a place known as the hybrid. Both Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020) and Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* (2020) examine hybridity and subalternity through everyday, concrete activities that shape the characters' identities. Hussain depicts more nuanced forms of negotiation and identity construction among diasporic narratives of British-Pakistani families, whereas Majumdar's work concentrates on institutional oppression and the violent silencing of minority voices in postcolonial India. When taken as a whole, these writings show that postcolonial experience includes both subtle, experienced hybridity and overt socio-political exclusion.

In *A Burning* (2020), Jivan, Lovely, and PT Sir serve as examples of the power and resistance dynamics that Spivak and Bhabha. Jivan's experiences demonstrate how representation relies on authoritative systems that uphold dominant narratives, and her repeated silencing exemplifies how

subaltern voices are frequently silenced in public, legal, and formal spheres (Majumdar, 2020). Lovely's hybrid identity, which alternates between visible and hidden, masculine and female, normative and transgressive, embodies the flexibility and ambivalence of Bhabha's "Third Space" and reveals hybridity as both powerful and complicit within existing power systems (Majumdar, 2020, p. 78, 94, 100). Spivak's claim that the subaltern is theoretically exempt from articulating is reflected in Jivan's persona. Jivan's voice is shaky and hesitant early in the book: "I only wrote what I saw" (Majumdar, 2020, p. 14). A state apparatus intended to frame her doesn't care what she "saw." Despite being straightforward, factual, and politically innocuous, her statement is deemed illegal. However, PT Sir is a prime example of opportunistic mimicry; his political assimilation shows how mimicry can reinforce rather than weaken institutional authority, highlighting the ambivalence of resistance tactics in postcolonial environments (Majumdar, 2020, p. 123, 201).

By serving as a mediator between cultural retention and adaptability in diaspora environments, Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020) illustrates how the Third Space fosters identity-building in everyday life. Hussain highlights hybridity in the texture of daily life in *The Family Tree* (2020) by showing how language, cultural norms, and material belongings serve as sites of negotiation. Examples of the dynamic interplay between history and adaptability include making biryani with fish and chips, siblings toggling between Urdu and English, and the symbolic presence of a pashmina shawl (Hussain, 2020, p. 19–20, 23, 270, 377, 401). In Bhabha's *Third Space*, the characters' interactions with contemporary technology, educational institutions, and social standards demonstrate how identities are always being formed. Hussain portrays hybridity as a generative place where identity develops naturally through family rituals, language, and cross-cultural navigation, in contrast to Majumdar, who links it with systematic oppression and survival tactics.

Conclusion

This study shows how postcolonial theory remains relevant in contemporary literature, particularly in the two selected texts, Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* (2020) and Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020). Megha Majumdar's 2020 book *A Burning* is a perfect illustration of the violent silencing of minority voices, where subalternity's confluence with gender, religion, and class creates vulnerability within the nation-state. Lovely's hybridity illustrates how identities are negotiated; she is both capable of resistance and, at times, complicit with systemic power. PT Sir emphasises the ambivalence of mimicry as an opportunistic strategy that both supports and challenges authority.

The Family Tree (2020) and *A Burning* (2020) provide potent illustrations of postcolonial hybridity and marginalisation. In Majumdar's work, the power of institutions silences subaltern voices, and oppressive social systems make it difficult for hybrid identities to thrive. Sairish Hussain's *The Family Tree* (2020) examines the nuanced, daily creation of hybrid identities in diasporic settings. Characters traverse the "Third Space" in ways that enable innovative adaptation, intergenerational negotiation, and the preservation of legacy through the mixing of home rituals, languages, and cultural practices. Hussain's work illustrates how hybrid identities are handled in daily life by integrating cultural history with contemporary British society. The findings of this study show that these narratives demonstrate the ongoing impact of colonial legacies on identity, belonging, and agency. They draw attention to the complexity of existence between worlds, the difficult ethical dilemmas people face when their basic survival is at stake, and the constantly changing potential of the Third Space.

In the end, this research provides a comprehensive perspective on postcolonial literary landscapes by reiterating the importance of elevating the voices of the disadvantaged and analysing hybrid identities as dynamic and evolving. It draws attention to the coexistence of resistance, compromise,

and adaptation in postcolonial life, highlighting the vulnerability and resiliency of subaltern and hybrid subjects in modern, globalised situations.

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