

## **Mirroring and Mimicking: A Postcolonial Study of Khushwant Singh's Story "Karma"**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Paper aims to investigate Khushwant Singh's short story "*Karma*" placing in perspective postcolonial literary studies and exploring how the protagonist Sir Mohan Lal's migration to the West to acquire professional educational qualifications transforms him into an ambivalent colonial subject. The story raises certain questions about his stay at Oxford and articulates how the West became a standard identity marker for his lifestyle and how his personality mirrors the marks of colonial inscriptions on his identity. Singh sharply captures the Western-educated Indian's mimicking mindset to show how the colonial ideology influenced the identity of a native Indian and how Indian cultural-linguistic traditions have been erased and replaced by Western ethos.

### **KEYWORDS**

Ambivalence; civilized; colonialism; culture; identity; mimicry; mirror; territory.

Khushwant Singh is a well-known postcolonial novelist, short-story writer, journalist and historian who earned fame for his well-known novel *Train to Pakistan* which was inspired by his experiences of the Partition of the country in 1947. He has been the editor of *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, India's pre-eminent newsweekly and his weekly column series '*With Malice towards One and All*' was published in the leading English language dailies of India. Singh occupies space in the canon of Indian Writing in English for his pungent comments, sharp criticism, and witty humour. Originally published in 1989 in *Collected Stories*, Khushwant Singh's short story "*Karma*" is a bold statement on the colonized Indian society that offers an occasion for a candid introspection to those who took pride in blind imitation of foreign culture in the colonial era. In his typical humorous narrative style, the

author takes the reader back to colonial pre-Independence India, when many Western-educated Indians prided themselves on their superior culture and demeanour. The author resurfaces the issues that relate the story to the post-colonial theory of migration and the identity 'crisis' that migrants undergo when they move from one place to another in search of better opportunities for employment or education. The colonizers had inscribed indelible marks on Indian politics, language, culture and society and the post-colonial Indian psyche can hardly claim to be free from the impact of colonialism.

"*Karma*" focuses on an anglophile Indian gentleman Sir Mohan, originally a native Indian, but pretends to follow English culture and traditions and feels uncomfortable with his own culture, lifestyle and customs as opposed to his

wife Lachmi. The very title 'Sir' added to his name carries an ironic suggestion regarding the honours one received from the British colonizers. He is supercilious enough to adopt the upper class 'English' culture and lifestyle displayed through his 'Oxford English' distancing relationships with his Indian wife Lachmi who is 'othered' for her cultural naivety because she is unable to appreciate his ostensible aristocratic English manners and cultural values. The author, with an air of satire upon native Indians like Sir Mohan, articulates the metaphoric of mirroring and mimicking as symbolic representations of transparency and self-reflection to resolve the problem of identity which is caught between the epistemological questions of appearance and reality.

"*Karma*" is a much-discussed term in the context of Indian Philosophy which literally means deed or the work done; the doctrine of *karma* means that one's deeds or actions in the present hour or life continue to have an effect in the next life or incarnation and it also connotes the idea of destiny. A good deed or act pays us positively while evil deeds cause pain and make us suffer; having similarity with the Greek idea of nemesis, it suggests that Justice is accorded to human beings taking consideration of their karmas. Khushwant Singh's story relates to the colonized-colonizer relationships where the author looks at things through the lens of post-colonialism. The story takes shape within the landscape of a railway station – a colonial creation on Indian territory by British colonizers – as Singh tries to grasp whether and how one's fate is determined by one's *karma* or actions/deeds in relation to the post-colonial identity crisis in the lives of Sir Mohan Lal and his wife Lachmi. Situating the story on the railway station, the author tries to grasp the text in relation to this colonial creation that was not only essential for the movement of British imperialism in India but its first-

class waiting room also became a site of imposition and re-inscription of colonial authority as well as cultural hegemony within the periphery of the Indian nation.

Post-colonial literature has observed a split between the colonizers and the colonized characterized through a display of mastery, supremacy or superiority of the colonizers and displacement, inferiority or fantasy of the colonized subjects. Homi Bhabha, in his essay "*Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*" (1994) asserts that the colonized subject mimics the colonizer by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values and desires to appear *imperious* as well as *reformed* and "emerge as 'authentic' through mimicry" (126) not realizing that "mimicry is at once resemblance and menace" (123). Bhabha postulates mimicry "as one of the elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" (122) and in his opinion "colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*" (122). Bhabha comments that colonial discourse is always characterized by ambivalence and mimicry. Any Indian mimicking the English culture is obsessed to become almost the same as the White European subject but rather becomes 'the other' from the post-colonial perspective because such an Indian ends up not as an exact copy – which is not possible – but as a blurred image/copy of the colonizer revealing ambivalences in his identity. Because of the presence of a hybrid cultural situation in his identity, Sir Mohan as a colonized subject constantly fluctuates between what postcolonial critics determine as a simultaneous attraction towards and repulsion from the opposite cultures. The mixed-ness, the in-betweenness, and being one 'self' and desiring to be its opposite 'self' leaves him as a disempowered non-white, non-native.

Albert Memmi (*The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 1957) also believes that the colonized subject is a kind of product who is manufactured by the colonizers who very closely copies their habits, clothing manners etc. even if it is inappropriate. Frantz Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), talks about the colonized people's dislike of all things native and their imitation of the culture of colonizers. On account of the colour of the skin, the colonized subjects, however, educated and westernized they are, become objects of derision and denigration. Khushwant Singh satirically foregrounds how the colonizers, though low in rank and education, conceived of themselves as civilized and superior while an Indian remains a 'nigger', an 'Other' on the railway platform/compartment in his own country/land/territory to be ridiculously exploited and humiliated in the most uncivilized manner at the hands of those very Englishmen whom he cherished most for their civilized culture. Sir Mohan is one such example of a colonized subject who, obsessed with an inferiority complex for his own culture, accepts the Western ethos and cultural values as absolute.

Khushwant Singh captures the psyche of native Indians like Sir Mohan Lal who had cherished blind admiration for the British masters and their ways of life, left no stone unturned to mimic English culture, looked down upon with contempt and even despised their mother culture during the British raj. Members of a colonized society, like Sir Mohan, imitate or copy the language, dress or cultural attitudes of the colonizers who are the *person in power*; dreaming to have or exercise the same 'power' they intentionally camouflage and conceal their own *true* cultural identity. The colonized feel rich by adopting the civilizing ideals of colonizers in their lives and repeat the colonial mimicry for power and domination not knowing that they would turn into comic figures. Within this

conflictual situation distancing themselves from their original culture, the colonized, in the same fashion as Sir Mohan Lal, fail to see the untranslatability of culture. According to Bhabha colonialism "exercises its authority through the figures of farce" and "mimicry represents an *ironic* compromise" (122) and, therefore, the mimic can never succeed in their intentions either to be identified with the colonizers or copy them exactly; such a performance exposes the artificiality of all the imagined presence of power. Khushwant Singh exemplifies through the story how mimicry failed in empowering Sir Mohan Lal because the unstable elements of culture borrowed with a dream for superiority ironically do not help those western-educated Indians such as Sir Mohan to survive.

The story opens with Sir Mohan Lal, a Barrister, conferring upon himself a utopian identity with his *refined* looks and his *imported* appearance in the neat and perfect attire *borrowed* from the foreign land that is manifested in his habit of how he "smoothed his Balliol tie for the umpteenth time" (Singh, 126). How his appearance means a lot to him is very much obvious for the reader encounters him in his Western suit imported from Saville Row, expensive cosmetics, Oxford education and cultural demeanour looking at his own image in "the mirror of a first-class waiting room at the railway station" (Singh, 126) with an illusion of himself to be a "Distinguished, efficient - even handsome" (Singh, 126) fellow different from "India with his dirty, vulgar countrymen" (Singh, 129). Sir Mohan, who does not *see* himself as being an Indian, feels very uncomfortable with Indian space, territory, culture and lifestyle and pretends himself to be superior to all Indians including his wife Lachmi, is ironically shown smiling with disdain at the mirror:

The mirror was obviously made in India. The red oxide at its back had

come off at several places and long lines of translucent glass cut across its surface. Sir Mohan smiled at the mirror with an air of pity and patronage (Singh, 126).

Enslaved by his inferiority the native *nigger* intentionally cherishes an ambition to civilize and modernize himself unknowingly denying himself the autonomy to belong to those very spaces where he *belongs*. Being a product of western culture, he remains a culturally alienated colonial man to whom Indian cultural spaces appear hostile. The *made-in-India* mirror which is in a bad condition and does not reflect a *first-class* clear image of Sir Mohan metaphorically mirrors his fate and future reminding him that he does not fit to be there in this first-class railway space reserved for the Englishmen in colonial India. Singh explores the persisting question of identity where Sir Mohan, confronted with the stereotype image of himself as a Westernized black man in the mirror, negates his Oriental identity. The railway platform emerges as a space of re-inscription of the black man's identity for the mirror renders Sir Mohan's image as, to quote Bhabha, 'a liminal reality':

the image...marks the site of an ambivalence...it makes present something that is absent...The image is at once a metaphoric substitution, an illusion of presence, and by that same token a metonym, a sign of absence and loss (73).

In this postcolonial text, the mirror does not emerge as an *epiphany* but as a *fallacy* because the reality remains invisible or absent to Sir Mohan since he is a mimic figure living transgressively on the borders of the white world hiding his true identity.

Travelling to the West, Mohan Lal, a native Indian, completely transformed into *Sir Mohan Lal*, becomes "a 'reformed' colonial subject" (Bhabha, 124), the *different* who exists in a third space – a

hybrid territory or space – which is an ambivalent site. Mimicry – the act of mimicking the elevated ideology of colonizers – dispelled the idea of pure native culture and true Indian identity in Sir Mohan Lal replacing the Indian *image* with the *reality* of hybrid culture and identity. Sir Mohan's encounter with a different culture – the so-called superior culture – locates him into, in the words of Homi K. Bhabha, "the ambiguous grey area" (74) to live a life of ambivalence and face the dilemma of belonging neither 'here' nor 'there' but somewhere else. As soon as he desires to be considered someone else and demands to be noticed as something else, other than what he originally is, he negates his primordial transparent identity and moves toward an image that is opaque or translucent. The self-conscious but incomplete western incarnation of Sir Mohan, transformed into an ambivalent Indian evokes mockery and irony when he makes an effort to assimilate an authoritarian Western image in his person through Anglicized Hindustani failing to merge with the Indian landscape but "Under cover of camouflage, mimicry, like the fetish...mimes the forms of authority at the point at which it deauthorizes them" (Bhabha, 130). Endorsing Lacan's views on the relation between mimicry and camouflage as expressed in his essay "*The Line and Light*" that "The effect of mimicry is camouflage" Bhabha says that

mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonization of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying it in part, metonymically (128)

Mimicry is thus the sign of double articulation of *self* that gives the ambivalently situated colonized subject a partial presence because the half-Westernized/half-native hybridized self is everywhere and still nowhere.

The reader finds incongruities in the "unsatisfactory identity of diasporic,

once-colonized communities” (Nayar, 186) that swing between the snobbish imitation of Western high culture received from their *reformed* education in the foreign country as well as their own indifferent outlook towards their native identity that they assume to be inferior, dirty and vulgar in comparison to the West under the influence of Macaulayism<sup>1</sup>. Macaulay’s strategy behind the education reforms in India was to propose the image of Western education and learning as superior to Oriental learning to colonize the Indians’ minds.

Macaulay

          faced with the challenge of conceiving of ‘a reformed’ colonial subject...can conceive of nothing other than...a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions (Bhabha, 124-25).

Khushwant Singh highlights linguistic colonization and exposes colonizers’ intentions who exploited the role of language in the process of colonizing Indian minds; by erasing the knowledge embedded in cultural/linguistic practices of the East they intended to plant the Western cultural ideals and ideologies to reshape the non-European cultures in a racialized way and justify their civilizing mission in the East. Sir Mohan, a product of Macaulay’s intentions, raised through Oxford education, becomes “a flawed mimesis, in which to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English” (Bhabha, 125). He alienates himself from the discourse of the ‘Orient’ – Edward Said argues that ‘Orientalism’ is the European construction of the East as primitive, savage and uncivilized – out of his ‘desire’ for “the narcissistic demand of colonial authority” (Bhabha, 126). He imitates the cultural and linguistic practices of the West but ends up creating in himself a mixed and double-figure. Alienated from his native culture he is partially reformed and remains “an empty form of ‘the imitation’

of English manners” (Bhabha, 124) who pretends to be *real* but, in fact, he is diminished to be a *mimic* man of the post-colonial India.

Sir Mohan Lal feels inferior to be an Indian and pretends to be a ‘resemblance’ of West sitting in the first-class waiting room at the railway station, travelling in the first-class compartment seeking an ‘English’ travelling companion instead of his own wife’s company. He liked to be serviced by a lot of waiters/bearers around him to make him feel rather superior. He imitates the western dressing style that is displayed through the Balliol tie he always wears while travelling dreaming that “perhaps someone would recognize” (Singh, 129) him with it; he is found spending time drinking Scotch/Whisky or smoking “English cigarettes in India” (Singh, 129). He would always speak Oxford English with an anglicized accent and read an English newspaper because “*The Times* always attracted attention” (Singh, 129). He always projected himself as powerful as the British colonizers in India on account of the linguistic supremacy he enjoyed and his preference for the English language is evident:

          He rarely spoke Hindustani. When he did, it was like an Englishman’s – only the very necessary words and properly anglicized. But he fancied his English, finished and refined at no less a place than the University of Oxford. He was found of conversation, and like a cultured Englishman, he could talk on almost any subject – books, politics, people. How frequently had he heard English people say that he spoke like an Englishman! (Singh, 128-29).

          His sense of superiority was a direct outcome of his five years of life at Oxford:

          Excitement, bustle, and hurry were exhibitions of bad breeding, and Sir Mohan was eminently well bred. He wanted everything ‘tickety-boo’ and orderly. In his five years abroad, Sir Mohan had acquired the

manners and attitudes of the upper classes (Singh, 128).

The author has also noticed the enormous difference between the socially rich and the poor classes existing in that era and thrusts his satire at those people like Sir Mohan who treated their relatives with inequality; Sir Mohan did not like Lachmi's "poor illiterate relatives hanging about his bungalow" (Singh, 127) which was a symbol of colonial aristocracy during the era. The "five years of grey bags and gowns, of sports blazers and mixed doubles, of dinners" (Singh, 129) that he spent overseas had been essentially stamped on his personality as part of the colonial "reforming, civilizing mission" (Bhabha, 123) and were far more worthy to him than the "forty-five years in India with his dirty, vulgar countrymen, with sordid details of the road to success...with old Lachmi, smelling of sweat and raw-onions" (Singh, 129).

The irony intensifies with the appearance of Lachmi alias Lady Lal on the scene, *uncivilized*, neglected, undermined, suppressed, marginalized and dominated though she is an embodiment of down-to-earth Indian traditions, manners and morals and cultural values. Sir Mohan dislikes Lachmi and ostracized her within and outside the boundary of home because she fails to adapt and import foreign culture and manners into her life. Lachmi is quite comfortable in her Indian surroundings and is least interested in changing her Indian way of life. As opposed to Sir Mohan's complacent choice of the *closed* alien space of the first-class railway waiting room, his wife Lachmi, a simple native Indian woman, is at home and happy with her *open* Indian territory on the railway platform where she sits on a steel trunk "chewing betel leaf and fanning herself with a newspaper" wearing an ordinary "dirty white sari with a red border" (Singh, 126) and satisfactorily travelling in "my zenana<sup>2</sup> inter-class" (Singh, 127). She knows no English but is

quite comfortable with her colloquial Indian language and home-cooked Indian food. She carries her betel-leaf case and a brass Tiffin carrier from which she "took out a bundle of cramped chapattis and some mango pickle" (Singh, 127); she does not mind having her meals on the platform publicly "licking the stone of the pickled mango", then go "to the public tap to rinse her mouth and hands" and dry "her mouth and hands with the loose end of her sari" (Singh, 128). She unhesitatingly, irrespective of any class consciousness or pretensions regarding social status, fondly chats with an ordinary Indian coolie 'brother' on the railway platform, thus, representing the essence of Indian cultural values amid colonial influences in her surroundings.

Lachmi prefers to be an independent 'self' without any complaints about her *superior* husband or any illusions about her native identity. She is candid enough to confess the colonial *borderline* that separates her from her husband Sir Mohan:

He travels first class. He is a vizier and a barrister, and meets many officers and Englishmen in the trains—and I am only a native woman. I can't understand English and don't know their ways, so I keep to my zenana inter-class (Singh, 127).

Lachmi, confronting Sir Mohan's colonial *pride and prejudice* without any oscillation, remains unchanged and sticks to her native identity with confidence. The author constitutes in her person the post-colonial image of Indian society without any incongruities, dilemmas or ambivalences of the hybrid cultural identity against her husband who is a prototype of an act of imitation and mimicry of Western lifestyle and 'high' culture and pretends to 'shadow' his own 'inferior', native identity.

The author satirizes Sir Mohan's attempts to transform his native identity at the cost of his own nationality and

civilization because all his endeavours to change himself completely are shattered towards the end of the story. Sir Mohan's personality is constituted of those values, labels, roles, stereotypes or other preconceived notions of a *reformed* individual who could not fit well within the framework of colonial supremacy and authority. His hybrid identity is an example of a split personality who switched over to arbitrarily attributed categories of cultural refinement. Alienated from his country, his own wife, own people, and own culture, he is desperate to become what he is not in his own land but suffers a 'crisis' because of those English people whom he conceives to be a part of *his* territory threw him away from *their* space to which he never belonged nor could he hold any claim to that space on account of his Indian nativity. In fact, Sir Mohan Lal is an arrogant Indian with Western education who feels contemptuous of his country's culture, manners and lifestyle. His imitation of foreign culture and his condescending and supercilious attitude toward his wife sound altogether disrespectful. Sir Mohan Lal puts on airs about his Oxford education and perfect English accent, only to be humiliated by a pair of ill-educated, drunken and boorish English soldiers who not only dislodge him from his reserved berth but first strike him on the face, and then fling him out of the train. This traumatic experience shocks him into realizing his true identity.

The story executes the crises and ambiguity in Sir Mohan's act of imitation of western culture and ironizes as well as mocks the juxtaposition of the white-masked identity of the black-skinned Indian. His *camouflaged* superiority over ordinary Indians compelled him to travel away not only from *other* Indians but to abandon his own wife leaving her all alone to travel in the inter-class *zenana* compartment. He felt proud to have boarded the first-class compartment of the train, his heart visualizing the prospect of

an impressive conversation with some English officers travelling along with him in the first-class compartment of the train: "His 'face lit up as he saw two English soldiers trudging along, looking in all the compartments for a room" and he "decided to welcome them though they were entitled to travel only second class" (Singh, 130). Here, the story, ironically, surfaces the racial hatred of the two English soldiers who misbehaved with Sir Mohan Lal and abused him by calling him a nigger because to them he was a black-skinned Indian who was not entitled to travel in the first-class compartment. Dismissing all his pleas they shouted at him and threw him out of the train with all his belongings including the *prestigious* newspaper *The Times* leaving Sir Mohan humiliated and "livid with rage" (Singh, 130). The inclusion of the English newspaper *The Times* in the narrative shows that the author is witty enough to use it as a symbol of the superiority of the Western culture that paradoxically gets rejected as soon as the newspaper is thrown out by those soldiers who themselves are part and parcel of the same *civilized* culture, yet unable to maintain the civil behaviour.

Dispelling all the illusions Sir Mohan Lal cherished for himself as an *Englishman*, he is asked to get out of the first-class compartment in anglicized Hindi in spite of his protests in Oxford accent. The English soldiers were contemptuous enough to treat him as a black man and mockingly throw in a racially derogatory remark thrusting him out of his long-cherished Oxford stupor: "Get the nigger out" (Singh, 130). The illusion of *The Times*, the tie and "a fairyland of Oxford colleges" (Singh, 129) is shattered. With his nowhere identity and belonging he could belong neither to the Balliol tie nor to the betel, neither to the first-class nor to the inter-class. To be anglicized does not necessarily mean to be English. Sir Mohan's vulnerability is due to his allegiance to more than one cultural territory; he

belongs to the category of those cultural interstices who are the inhabitants of an intervening space alternating between the East and the West and, therefore, this in-between position lands him out of the first-class railway compartment. The railway compartment here emerges, to quote Bhabha, as “the site of interdiction” (128), a prohibited territory, a racially forbidden space for Sir Mohan, the mimic man who is “almost the same but not white” (Bhabha, 128) and therefore not allowed a free movement in that space/territory.

His illusions disappear as he is shown the ‘mirror’ by the Englishmen whose culture he has been mimicking so far forgetting his roots in favour of the cultural habits of English society. In accordance with Indian Philosophy, the concept of *karma* is interpreted as the sum total of one’s actions, good or bad; good deeds are always rewarded, while the bad deeds pay for the wrongdoing. Justice is awarded according to one’s *karma* and Sir Mohan Lal and Lachmi share their *karma* attached to the Indian thought as it is determined by their *previous* actions. Sir Mohan accumulates bad *karma* as he embraced English culture with pride and this *sin* was destined to be punished; he receives a good lesson on his train journey; contrarily, Lachmi is attuned to good self and remains happy. The story demonstrates in its attribution of justice that the *karmas* of Sir Mohan and Lachmi reaped at the end of their journey the fruits of their own respective actions.

“*Karma*” is also a story about man-woman relationships in the Indian socio-cultural milieu, especially in the backdrop of colonial India, where the writer has ironically captured and satirized the collective frustration of those Indians who, permeating between the native and colonial zones, display desire and demand for authority. Singh here comments on the Indian society governed by patriarchy, men suppress women as inferior never allowing them to be human beings with

equal status within the socio-familial structures. It is worth noticing that Sir Mohan has allotted a subservient position to his wife at home as well as outside. She, being a native (un)civilized Indian, stands out as an ‘inferior’ to him and does not qualify according to his Western standards to accompany him in the first-class compartment – neither equal enough as a wife nor as a human being. Sir Mohan is portrayed not simply as Lachmi’s husband but as her ‘master’ as if he is privileged with the ownership of the woman to exercise authority in the same way as the Western colonizers enjoyed possession over the Indian territory in colonial India. She is not more than a servant to him as he “just ordered her about in anglicized Hindustani, and she obeyed passively” (Singh, 127-28). But at the end of the story Sir Mohan is left alone on the platform as the train moves off with the two British soldiers and his wife Lachmi as well suggesting that should an individual like him tries to exchange the virtues of his own culture, manners and morals he would belong nowhere except that his identity is nullified leaving his complacency wounded; it is next to impossible to transform one’s identity into something that never belongs to one’s own roots and culture. Lachmi represents Indian culture and through her character, the writer creates a contrast to Sir Mohan who is portrayed as quite different from ordinary Indians as he tried to be something he was not; he was neither a born Englishman nor his Western education makes him an Englishman, and therefore, he stands rejected by both cultures, Indian as well as Western.

Thus, Sir Mohan gets punished for his *karma* i.e., for betraying his original culture and his own country and imitating the foreign culture. Singh places the mimic in an ambivalent position and satirizes how those Indians who in the manner of Sir Mohan betrayed their Indian descent were ‘excluded’ from Indian society and at the

same time rendered unable to enjoy the privileges that go along with the colonial authority on account of their Western education. The two white soldiers in the train whom he thought commendable for their Englishness mistreated him as a worthless black Indian and kicked him out of the train contemptibly reducing him to a *deauthorized* position, dismantling his fantasy and fascination for English culture and education that made him feel distinguished and powerful. But his wife Lachmi does not encounter such humiliation and she travels quite easy and comfortable in the inter-class *zenana* compartment.

Khushwant Singh as a post-colonial Indian writer exhibits mimicry and cultural in-betweenness as anti-colonial dictates to

voice his opinion against Western hegemony. Locating the cultural identity of the native Indians in Lachmi, he dislocates the supremacy of English culture and language through the satiric representation of Sir Mohan's mimicry of foreign culture. He deconstructs the linguistic and cultural hegemony of the West through an act of code-switching and code-mixing between Indian vernacular expressions and English in his literary discourse in this short story. Singh decolonizes the Western outlook through the portrayal of Sir Mohan and propounds the idea that lest one forgets the dangers of mimicking the West at cost of one's roots, one becomes a butt of ridicule and a comic figure to be derided by the western people.

#### END NOTES:

1. Macaulayism refers to the colonial policy of introducing the English education system to British Colonies including India. The term is derived from the name of Thomas Babington Macaulay who was instrumental to introduce English as a medium of instruction for education and establish an educational system based upon the British model which aimed to introduce Indians to European cultural ideals.
2. Zenana is an Urdu word that refers to the part of the house that is meant exclusively for women's residence; the separate housing for women was intended to protect them from the undesired male gaze; (in this story the zenana inter-class refers to the railway compartment that houses only women to travel in it).

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