

ISSN 2071 - 1964

**Revue interafricaine de littérature,
linguistique et philosophie**

Particip'Action

**Revue semestrielle. Volume 17, N°2 – Juillet 2025
Lomé – Togo**

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Indexation SJIF 2025 : 3.66

ISSN 2071–1964

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LIGNE EDITORIALE DE *PARTICIP'ACTION*

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Résumé en français. Mots-clés, Abstract, Keywords,

Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

Par exemple : Les articles conformes aux normes de présentation, doivent contenir les rubriques suivantes : introduction, problématique de l'étude, méthodologie adoptée, résultats de la recherche, perspectives pour recherche, conclusions, références bibliographiques.

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Police Times new roman, taille 12 et interligne 1,5 (maximum 30 000 mots). La revue *Particip'Action* permet l'usage de notes de bas de page pour ajouter des précisions au texte. Mais afin de ne pas alourdir la lecture et d'aller à l'essentiel, il est recommandé de **faire le moins possible usage des notes (10 notes de bas de page au maximum par article).**

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Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point. Insérer la pagination et ne pas insérer d'information autre que le numéro de page dans l'en-tête et éviter les pieds de page.

Les figures et les tableaux doivent être intégrés au texte et présentés avec des marges d'au moins six centimètres à droite et à gauche. Les caractères dans ces figures et tableaux doivent aussi être en Times 12. Figures et tableaux doivent avoir chacun(e) un titre.

Les citations dans le corps du texte doivent être indiquées par un retrait avec tabulation 1 cm et le texte mis en taille 11.

Les références de citations sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, de la façon suivante :

- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ; - Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées). Exemples :

- En effet, le but poursuivi par **M. Ascher (1998, p. 223)**, est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupée du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...) ».

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation sociohistorique et une inadéquation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

Pour les articles de deux ou trois auteurs, noter les initiales des prénoms, les noms et suivis de l'année (J. Batee et D. Maate, 2004 ou K. Moote, A. Pooul et E. Polim, 2000). Pour les articles ou ouvrages collectifs de plus de trois auteurs noter les initiales des prénoms, le nom du premier auteur et la mention "et al" (F. Loom et al, 2003). Lorsque plusieurs références sont utilisées pour la même information, celles-ci doivent être mises en ordre chronologique (R. Gool, 1998 et M. Goti, 2006).

Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

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Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit : NOM et Prénom (s) de l'auteur, Année de publication, Zone titre, Lieu de publication, Zone Editeur, pages (p.) occupées par l'article dans la revue ou l'ouvrage collectif.

Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Editeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2^{de} éd.).

Ne sont présentées dans les références bibliographiques que les références des documents cités. Les références bibliographiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique des noms d'auteur. Il convient de prêter une attention particulière à la qualité de l'expression. Le Comité scientifique de la revue se réserve le droit de réviser les textes, de demander des modifications (mineures ou majeures) ou de rejeter l'article de manière définitive ou provisoire (si des corrections majeures doivent préalablement y être apportées). L'auteur est consulté préalablement à la diffusion de son article lorsque le Comité scientifique apporte des modifications. Si les corrections ne sont pas prises en compte par l'auteur, la direction de la revue *Particip'Action* se donne le droit de ne pas publier l'article.

AMIN Samir, 1996, *Les défis de la mondialisation*, Paris, Le Harmattan.

AUDARD Cathérine, 2009, *Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ? Ethique, politique, société*, Paris, Gallimard.

BERGER Gaston, 1967, *L'homme moderne et son éducation*, Paris, PUF.

DIAGNE Souleymane Bachir, 2003, « Islam et philosophie. Leçons d'une rencontre », *Diogenes*, 202, p. 145-151.

DIAKITE Sidiki, 1985, *Violence technologique et développement. La question africaine du développement*, Paris, Le Harmattan.

NB1 : Chaque auteur dont l'article est retenu pour publication dans la revue *Particip'Action* participe aux frais d'édition à raison de **55.000** francs CFA (soit **84 euros** ou **110** dollars US) par article et par numéro. Il reçoit, à titre gratuit, un tiré-à-part.

NB2 : La quête philosophique centrale de la revue *Particip'Action* reste : **Fluidité identitaire et construction du changement : approches pluri-et/ou transdisciplinaires.**

Les auteurs qui souhaitent se faire publier dans nos colonnes sont priés d'avoir cette philosophie comme fil directeur de leur réflexion.

La Rédaction

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RACE, CLASS AND INTERCULTURALISM IN MONICA ALI'S *LOVE MARRIAGE*

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Abstract

Overcoming racist and economic issues faced by ethnic minorities in Britain and promoting their integration into the nation are central motives in contemporary immigrant women's fictions. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that through the interracial relationships between her fictionalized characters portrayed in *Love Marriage* (2022), Monica Ali contributes to the building of Britain as an intercultural British society in which both white and black people coexist for the development of the nation. Using textual analysis method and Homi Karshedji Bhabha's (1994) postcolonial perception of "hybridity" and "moving forward", this study highlights how Joe Sangster and Yasmin Ghorami's marriage connects their social classes and pleads for interculturalism in British society. The study ultimately reveals that the intimate communion between interracial characters portrayed in the novel helps the writer to bridge cultures in Britain and promote diversity and interculturality.

Keywords: Immigrant women, Britain, novel, characters, interracial marriage, interculturalism,

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Résumé

Surmonter les problèmes raciaux et économiques rencontrés par les minorités ethniques en Grande-Bretagne et favoriser leur intégration au sein de la nation sont des thèmes centraux des fictions contemporaines des femmes immigrées. Cet article vise à démontrer qu'à travers les relations interraciales entre les personnages mis en scène dans *Love Marriage* (2022), Monica Ali contribue à la construction de la société interculturelle britannique où Blancs et Noirs cohabitent pour le développement de la nation. L'étude, s'appuyant sur la méthode d'analyse textuelle et la perception postcoloniale de « l'hybridité » et de « l'évolution » de Homi Karshedji Bhabha (1994), met en évidence comment le mariage interracial de Joe Sangster et Yasmin Ghorami les unit et plaide pour l'interculturalisme dans la société britannique. L'étude révèle finalement que la communion intime entre les personnages interracialisés représentés dans le roman permet à l'écrivain de rallier les cultures, de promouvoir la diversité et l'interculturalisme en Grande-Bretagne.

Mots-clés: Femmes immigrées, Grande-Bretagne, roman, personnages, mariage interracial, interculturalisme.

Introduction

The integration of immigrants into British society is a major subject in migration literature. To break down cultural barriers and foster intercultural relationships in today's increasingly globalized world, migrant writers create compelling works which draw attention to these issues. In this context, B. N. Prakash (2013, p. 163) opines that "Subaltern studies in India first arose in post-colonial era where scholars sought to challenge the historical narratives which glorified the Western civilizations and left little agency for Indians." As highlighted, living together is unavoidable because people need each other in order to create international ties and prosper.

Race refers to people who share the same culture, ancestry, traditions and social mores as S. Thomas (1994, p. xiii) points out that “race designate[s] ethnic groups of various sorts—by race, religion, or nationality.” Class relates to the social classes or economic levels of individuals in the society as identified by Marxists: the lower class, the middle-class and the upper class. For G. M. Osman (2017, pp. 27-28), “In Marxism, Marxian class theory asserts that an individual’s position within a class hierarchy is determined by his or her role [. . .] Marx defines modern society as having three distinct classes: Capitalists, or bourgeoisie, workers, or proletariat and a small, transitional class.” As far as interculturalism is concerned, it can be understood as the perfect interactions between people from diverse cultural backgrounds. According to Gérard Bouchard, “Interculturalism advocates in favour of integration, thus emphasizing the need for interactions and connections” (B. Gérard, 2011, p. 450). In the same vein, W. Joy (2012, p. 7) has this to offer, “The key features of interculturalism are its sense of openness, dialogue and interaction, and its recognition of inequality within our society.” With regard to these definitions, the following questions can be put: how do the marginalised characters in Ali’s novel overcome issues of race and class? How does the narrative advocate intercultural relationships? This article aims to demonstrate that the main characters in *Love Marriage* transcend racial and class distinctions by fostering intercultural connections through marriage.

Love Marriage is a story about the life of the protagonist Yasmin Ghorami who prospects a marriage with her fiancé Joe Sangster. In fact, as the plot unfolds, the reader learns about the strong love between Yasmin and Joe whose families do not match in terms of social classes. This complex relationship between their families initially hampers their romantic love since Joe’s mother, Harriet who is an upper-class woman worries about connecting her son to a middle-class girl, namely Yasmin. Yet, as the love

between the young partners develops strongly, they both eventually overcome all hardships and get the approval of their conflicting families to tie the knot. Thus, the ultimate wedding that binds the two families can be seen as representative of interculturalism in British society. This union merges the Ghoramis and the Sangsters, which are Indian and British families respectively.

To the best of our knowledge, little has been known about the issues of race, class and interculturalism in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage*, hence the significance of this study. The most striking issues raised in the novel revolve around the complexities of family relationships, love, betrayal and the quest for identity as *The Guardian* comments on it as 'an entertaining exploration of multicultural modernity, love, sex, class, politics, faith and family.' Combining *Love Marriage* with other novels in her study, Ankita Nandi has solely explored the issue of sexual relationships in the novel. Deploying queer theory, she demonstrates how "diasporic texts require a nuanced framework to understand the impersonality of sex and blurrings within relationships and intimacies" (N. Ankita, 2024, p. v). By lingering on this aspect of sexuality in the novel, she actually failed to consider the intercultural ties that bound characters to live together in British society, which is the key point that this study seeks to address.

This study claims that through intercultural relationship between her fictionalized major characters portrayed in *Love Marriage*, Monica Ali tries to contribute to the building of Britain as a hybrid society in which both white people and immigrants coexist for the development of the nation. It mainly argues that both the protagonist Yasmin and her fiancé Joe break social rules and create intercultural relationship that ties up their communities.

In this study, Homi Kharshedji Bhabha's postcolonial theory and textual analysis method are deployed. According to Bhabha, no individual

can be self-sufficient today since we need one another to live, work and grow together. For him, colonizers and colonised are tightly unstable and hybrid owing to their identities. In his work *The Location of Culture*, he leans his reflection on the concepts of 'hybridity' and 'moving forward' which serve as bedrocks to explore the main characters' relationships and the power dynamics that shape their lives. As to textual analysis, it is a method of reading a text closely in order to uncover its underlying messages as A. Aneri (2020, p. 173) points out that "Based on interpretative approaches, textual analysis is a type of qualitative analysis that focuses on the underlying ideological and cultural assumptions of a text."

This study consists of three sections. The first section deals with an exploration of racial proudness in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage*. It illustrates how the main characters portrayed in the novel are stuck to their cultural heritage and roots as a sign of their desire to promote and preserve them while being abroad. The second section explores the portrayal of class struggle between families. It demonstrates how economic empowerment shapes the relationships or connections between the central characters in the novel. The last section examines the representation of interculturalism in *Love Marriage*. It sheds light on how Yasmin and Joe's wedding is representative of the perfect interactions between diverse cultures in Britain thereby reinforcing the seeds of interculturalism.

1. An Exploration of Racial Proudness in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage*

One of the central tensions in *Love Marriage* is the conflict between assimilation and cultural heritage. Yasmin initially perceives her Bangladeshi background as a set of rigid traditions that she must navigate rather than embrace. Her father, a successful doctor, embodies a version of immigrant success that emphasizes professionalism over cultural

expression. In contrast, her mother, Anisah, represents a more nuanced engagement with their heritage, demonstrating resilience and adaptability while maintaining a strong connection to her roots. The commitment of Anisah to keep her cultural heritage is expressed through this “she told about Ma’s demonstration to an eager audience of how to put on a sari” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 263). The fact for Anisah to teach to the audience how to put on a sari demonstrates the proudness of Yasmin’s mother to valorize Bangladeshi culture in the British society. Preserving her cultural practices allows her community to maintain a connection with their roots, strengthen their sense of self and contribute to a positive and stable societal expectation. This connection, in turn, promotes mental well-being and a stronger sense of community, mostly where Hindu culture is getting lost.

The racial proudness of Yasmin’s mother is likewise observed during Harriet’s party. Brandishing her traditional garment in a party gathering British men, Anisah incarnates this Bangladeshi heritage culture and also the envy for her to always show out the necessity for a community to keep its cultural attributes. To prove her racial heritage and proudness, Yasmin describes the way her mother is dressing, “Ma wore her most dazzling sari, cream silk with a border and a gold choli that was perhaps a little tight under the arms. Her hair was coiled and piled high on her head, studded with diamante grips” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 372). Through this passage, one can understand Yasmin’s mother’s proudness vouched for her cultural heritage. Anisah’s determination to light up her cultural attributes in a society where the British ones seem to swallow the other cultures unveils a fight for her to withstand the dominated culture. Culture in its shape is indispensable in the life of any given people, population and community because it is the direct mirror which valorizes their existence on the earth. In the light of this statement, N. Thomas (2001, p. 2) states:

Culture refers to a set of ways that emerge when a group uses the basic tools inherent in its members to address the problems presented by the larger ecological context in which the group exists in order to meet biological needs and social motives. Culture presents a solution to the problem of how to survive, adapt and fulfill the physical and social needs of individuals within a society or community. Culture is essential for our individual survival and for our communication with other people.

Through this quotation, Norma Thomas helps understand that the survival of an individual's existence on the earth depends on his cultural attributes. In fact, cultural heritage includes all the elements that a community uses to construct its identity and its sense of the past, the present and the future.

Under threat as a result of industrialization, rapid urbanization, technological advancements, climate change, mass tourism, war and conflict, cultural heritage knows a deteriorated rate. Thus, Yasmin's mother's attitude with her cultural heritage results in the fact that she is struggling to protect and preserve her community's cultural heritage for future generations. Yasmin's mother uses the power of social festivals like 'Harriet's party' to create a global movement for young people, mostly her Hindu community to take action for the safeguarding of their cultural heritage under threat of the dominant culture in Great Britain. Hindu tend to lose their language identity because of the domination of English as underlined by the following extract "if you feel uncomfortable because English is becoming a foreign language in your own town, your kids' school, doesn't mean you're prejudiced. It's not about race, it's about culture and belonging" (M. Ali, 2022, p. 375). Through this excerpt, one can understand the worries of Hindu young men about their culture and belonging, which seem disappeared, for they are considered as a subculture to the benefit of English, which is the dominant culture. A. Scot (2022, p. 1) defines subculture as:

Subculture is defined as a culture derived from a small group of people present within a culture that separates itself from parental culture. It can also be described as a group among a large group of interested people who believe in a different culture.

This quote helps understand how subculture can easily disappear if nothing is done to protect it or to make promotion for future generations. Thus, through *Love Marriage*, Monica Ali teaches how important it is for minorities to boast their cultural heritage and identities. Minorities' cultural heritage and identities need to be published in order to give them credits within human society. The Promotion of minorities' cultural heritage and identities is blatant through this conversation:

I think it's great that publishers are doing this sort of thing at last. Some people are [. . .] a bit funny about it, but *I think* it's long overdue.'

'What sort of thing?'

'Giving a leg-up to minorities.' (M. Ali, 2022, p. 382).

Through this conversation, one can grasp how Monica Ali creates the character of Nathan to call for the importance to promote subcultures because they are also indispensable. Their indispensability finds root in the fact that subcultures allow to trace and keep the identity of any community throughout the world.

Joe's family, particularly his mother Harriet, serves as a counterpoint to Yasmin's experiences. Harriet is a progressive feminist who prides herself on open-mindedness but occasionally exhibits a condescending attitude toward Yasmin's cultural background. This dynamic reflects the subtle racial biases that persist even in ostensibly liberal spaces. Yasmin's journey toward understanding her own racial proudness is shaped by these interactions, leading her to a deeper appreciation of her identity. Joe's mother then teaches Joe and Yasmin how children behave in front of their parents in India through this assertion "In India, children bow down and kiss their parents' feet," said Harriet, folding her legs, an unfamiliar, uncertain

tone in her voice” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 385). These teachings are for Harriet to guide Indian children to embrace their cultural identities. These cultural teachings highlight the racial proudness of Harriet to belong to Hindu community. She is encouraging those children to love their racial and cultural identities; even though their cultures are considered inferior to the dominant ones.

The novel challenges the notion that racial proudness is a fixed or singular experience. Yasmin’s evolving relationship with her cultural identity demonstrates that pride in one’s race is often mediated by personal growth and lived experiences. Over time, Yasmin shifts from a position of cultural detachment to one of acceptance and empowerment. This transformation is not just about embracing her Bangladeshi roots but also about rejecting the binary of assimilation versus tradition, instead of forging an identity that integrates multiple influences. Yasmin’s cultural embracing can be sustained by this excerpt “Her pink and yellow sari, the bangles on her softly padded wrist, the messy crown of hair, the round nose that twitched when she was emotional” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 508). This sentence unveils the commitment of Yasmin to her cultural heritage and identity. Involving in her community, cultural identity demonstrates her racial proudness as a young girl in a world where the European culture is the dominated and appreciated one. Through Yasmin’s journey, the novel illustrates that racial identity is not merely inherited but actively constructed through personal experiences, family influences and societal interactions. Ali’s nuanced portrayal of characters and events challenges essentialist views of race and encourages a broader understanding of how cultural pride is manifested in a multicultural world. Ultimately, *Love Marriage* contributes to contemporary discussions on race, identity, and belonging by demonstrating that racial proudness is not about conformity to fixed

narratives but about embracing the complexity of one's heritage and selfhood.

Similarly, Joe undergoes a process of self-awareness regarding his own racial position. While he initially appears comfortable in his liberal values, his relationship with Yasmin exposes blind spots in his understanding of race and privilege. The novel thus presents interracial relationships as sites of learning and unlearning, where racial identity is continuously reshaped through dialogue and introspection. Joe who grew up in a privileged home has his own inner struggles. Even though his life seems perfect, he feels pressure and conflict inside. His differences from Yasmin in term of social class and culture show the novel's big ideas about identity, social class and how personal history affects relationships. By the end, Joe can be interpreted as a postcolonial figure not because he fully transcends his background, but because he begins to engage with it critically. His willingness to marry Yasmin and integrate aspects of her culture into his life symbolizes an attempt to embrace interculturalism. In this sense, Ali uses Joe to highlight how postcolonial Britain must grapple with its colonial past by fostering intercultural respect and acknowledging the lived realities of minority communities. Postcolonialism becomes more than a theoretical concept in the sense that it calls for hybrid marriage. Indeed, the notion of hybridity begets the dynamic of any culture, which facilitates the interracial marriage between the colonized and the colonizer. In this respect, K. S. P. Dharmesh (2022, p. 244) reveals :

The concept of hybridity is central to postcolonial studies, encapsulating the blending and merging of cultures that result from the colonial encounter. Homi Bhaba's theory of hybridity emphasizes the creation of new cultural forms and identities that arise from the interactions between colonizers and the colonized. This hybridization process challenges rigid notions of purity and authenticity, instead highlighting the fluid and dynamic nature of cultural identities.

This passage highlights how hybridity helps overcome internal barriers in marriage. In short, Joe and Yasmin embody the significance of cultural hybridity through their union, reflecting its role in promoting inclusivity and diversity in British society.

2. Portrayal of Class Struggle between Families

In the narrative of *Love Marriage*, the clash between the Ghorami and the Sangster families is noteworthy. Markedly, the traditional values of Yasmin's family contrast with the modern aspirations of Joe's family. Thus, the love Yasmin and Joe develops for each other becomes complex because of the discrepancies between their families. In spite of the fact that both young people truly fall for each other, they suffer because they have to comply with familial norms as the narrator comments "She would tell Joe about dinner with the Shaws. Her parents had never spoken it. Yasmin had never told her friends. That was what was wrong with her family: they never talked about anything. They weren't open like Harriet and Joe" (M. Ali, 2022, pp. 30-31). This excerpt reveals that Harriet is reluctant to Joe's engagement with Yasmin because she senses that they do not belong to the same social class. While Yasmin comes from Indian folks, Joe is a wealthy white British man. Thus, Yasmin and her family members are othered by Western people represented by Joe and his mother Harriet. It is probably what W. Mélissa (2023, pp. 10-11) accounts for when she writes:

Despite the measures taken in favour of immigration and against discrimination, the integration of ethnic minorities in the 1980s, integration and acceptance remained complicated for the second and the third generation of immigrants who still did not fit in and experienced prejudice based on "otherness" even though most of them were born in Britain and could no longer be called "immigrants."

Family expectation is also a recurrent class issue in the narrative of Ali's novel. As a matter of fact, being a modern woman with high ambitions

and expectations, Harriet wants her son Joe to prospect a union with a woman from the same cultural and economic background as him. Since Yasmin is not a white woman, it becomes difficult for her future mother-in-law Harriet to accept her. Through the following dialogue, Harriet warns Yasmin:

'Enter,' said Harriet. 'Ah, Yasmin, yes, yes, come.'
'Thanks. I need to talk ...' She didn't know how to start [. . .]
'Well?' prompted Harriet.
'There's something I need to ask. A favour. It's a bit awkward, actually.'
'I see. Then allow me to say something before you proceed.' Harriet slid her feet to the floor and stood up. 'It's not a crime to love your own child,' she declared grandly and mysteriously. 'To a fault,' she added. 'I make no apology.'
'Right,' said Yasmin. 'Sure.' Harriet had thrown her off balance.
'Message received,' said Harriet. 'Loud and clear'
'Sorry? What message?'
'Get out and stay out.' Harriet smiled a terrifying icy smile. 'Stay out of the wedding arrangements. Don't go into his [Joe's] room without a formal appointment. Do it surmise correctly?' (M. Ali, 2022, pp. 387-388)

This quotation substantiates racism worsened by a blatant social disintegration of the British society. In light of this conversation, it is probable that Yasmin could only get the approval of Harriet to engage with her son if she were from a wealthy white family. Yet, the fact that she originates from an Indian family, she is othered by the Western figure Harriet. In this context, Yasmin's integration in British culture seems to be hampered as S. Aglavia (2020, p. 23) observes that "Home is a complex notion that monopolizes the immigrant narratives due to its contingent character. Home does not seem to be the host country, Britain where they work and reside, but their original homelands where they wish to return."

In this novel, it is further discovered that economic disparities are emphasized. Indeed, in terms of wealth, the gap between Joe's family and

that of her fiancé Yasmin is considerable. This is probably the reason why Harriet usually takes the Ghoramis for granted. Being a wealthy feminist, writer and artist, she feels superior to them. According to S. R. Kishan (2021, p. 48), “The European [representative of Harriet] constructs his [or her] identity through his [or her] relationship with the colonized on the basis of difference.” Strikingly, in all circumstances, Anisah is, for instance, compelled to follow her decisions because she cannot intellectually and economically compare herself with her. This is why, in their conversations throughout the novel, Harriet’s views or arguments are more imposing and convincing than hers. As a conventional Muslim housewife and homemaker, Anisha is helpless in front of the wealthy artist Harriet. Under such circumstances, it can be admitted that Harriet’s economic empowerment helps her exert power over middle-class people like Anisah. Commenting on the Ghoramis’ poor living conditions, the narrator reveals:

Mr Hartley was the old man who lived next door. He had been ancient, as Yasmin remembered it, even when Ghoramis had moved into the street, twenty years ago. Before that they had lived in a succession of rented flats and houses that all had some things in common. The traffic grumbled all night long and when you stepped out of the front door you were surrounded by people and smothered in petrol fumes. Baba always said you got more for your money living on a main road so Yasmin was surprised by the stillness here. You know what this place is called? Shaokat had asked his daughter as the removal men lugged crates and furniture. Yes, Baba, Tatton Hill. Baba shook his head and swept his arm in a gesture that encompassed the sleepy houses, the blinds half closed against the Saturday-morning sun; the shiny hedges and blank-faced garages; the grass verges and broad-shouldered trees lining the road. He spoke solemnly. It is called our little piece of heaven on earth (M. Ali, 2022, pp. 20-21).

This demonstrates that Anisah is compelled to follow the rules or recommendations of Harriet because she is economically inferior to her. Thus, Anisah’s willingness to allow her daughter’s marriage with Harriet’s son Joe is fully understandable. When this wedding happens, Anisha is likely to fill the economic gap that long exists between both families. Actually, while the Ghoramis (Shaokat, Anisah, Aril and Yasmin) originate

from South London middle-class Indian folk, the Sangsters (Harriet and Joe) have their roots in West London area. Merging the two families through a wedding can not only give Anisha the possibility to achieve social class mobility but also foster interculturalism in British society as the narrator witnesses:

Ma, well, as long as she was busy with wedding plans she would be happy. Ma was proud that her daughter was marrying the son of a famous writer, someone who had written not only books but also an opera, and plays that had been performed on the radio. She had said as much to Yasmin, and to the neighbours, and to relatives on three continents” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 16).

Additionally, Harriet’s clothing style determines her social class. In fact, the most expensive clothes she wears demonstrate that she is not at the same level with Yasmin and her folks. In many circumstances, she acts like she is the only one who can provide Yasmin with suitable outfits. Without her, it seems there is nothing Yasmin can do to support herself as the narrator accounts for it:

She [Harriet] put the A4 pad in the dressing-table drawer and hunts in the jewellery box for the earrings she has in mind for tomorrow evening.

What will Yasmin be wearing? She [Harriet] wonders. With a little coaching the girl could look quite striking. No, perhaps not striking, but more attracting. She doesn’t make the most of herself. The dreary pastel palette! Those prim and shapeless shift dresses!

Harriet drifts to her dressing room and passes a hand along the rack of evening gowns. What to wear? What impression does she want to give when she gets up on stage to receive her Lifetime Achievement Award? Now this dress would be fantastic on Yasmin. This colour. But it wouldn’t fit, and even if it would it would be entirely wrong to suggest it. That kind of mother-in-law would deserve to be the butt of the joke (M. Ali, 2022, pp.126-127).

This extract suggests that Harriet represents an upper-class woman while Yasmin stands as a middle-class girl waiting for wealthy people like her future mother-in-law to provide her with the best clothing. Under such circumstances, white supremacy over immigrants is revealed through Harriet’s boastful conduct towards Yasmin. Through these female

characters' interactions, Ali showcases how Indian immigrants are faced with Western hegemony leading to their marginalisation in British society. To subvert the superstructure of the dominant culture and restore immigrants' self-esteem in Britain, B. N. Prakash (2013, p. 165) proposes:

Different groups of marginalized women can create new spaces and social locations for themselves within the dominant culture, marginality (be it represented as racial, sexual, historical or cultural difference) will therefore be the point of intersection for identity politics, the location where identity politics finds full expression. By creating these new spaces and locations, [immigrant] women take the margins to the centers and vice-versa.

3. A Representation of Interculturalism in *Love Marriage*

Cultural diversity is an undeniable reality in modern societies. Instead of being embraced as an advantage, it has become a major source of conflict. In this context, Monica Ali's novel, *Love Marriage*, presents interculturalism as a potential solution to the numerous cultural conflicts prevalent worldwide, especially in Britain.

In *Love Marriage*, cultural difference between the characters gradually diminishes as they form relationships and interact. As a matter of fact, the contact between people from different cultures bridges the gap between them and fosters understanding. Therefore, there are less tarnishing stereotypes in their interactions, as is the case with the Ghorami and Sangster families. An example of interaction between the two families is revealed by the narrator who states that Yasmin's "parents would meet Joe's mother for the first time. They'd all eat dinner together at her house in Primrose Hill and discuss wedding plans and make polite conversations. Big deal!" (M. Ali, 2022, p. 15). The meeting between the two families is the opportunity for them to know each other. The gathering is the contact locus from where they can understand their differences and move beyond their prejudices.

From then on, the meeting between the two families has an intercultural connotation. The intercultural spirit that lies in socialisation is confirmed by P. Wood and C. Landry (2008, p. 164) who state that “A reliable sign that two people of different ethnicity have engaged in a way from which they and society might benefit is if they forge a liaison with some emotional content. This might be friendship, a romantic partnership, a marriage or joint parenthood.”

Visibly, the friendship between the Sangsters and the Ghoramis does not take long to work wonders as Anisah, Yasmin’s mother begins to be influenced by White women’s manners. Indeed, by leaving her usual world to meet her British in-laws, Anisah leaves behind some of her Pakistani values. As she interacts with Mrs. Sangster, Anisah has a new worldview. She is now able to think and act for herself. As a result, Mr. Shaokat sees his domestic power wobbled. His wife’s new assertive behaviour, inspired by Mrs. Sangster, prompts her to leave the house, and she even goes further by falling in love with another woman. Therefore, Yasmin is shocked when Harriett tells her that “do you realise that your mother has begun [. . .] a relationship with Flame” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 390)?” This revelation is a shock to Yasmin. How can her mother, a pious Muslim woman, allegedly indulge in Lesbianism? However, the answer is to be found within her new friendships, particularly with the feminist and single woman Harriet Sangster. Through Harriett’s mentorship, Anisah is under the spell of a new cultural paradigm that enables women to act on their own account. She discovers in Western women a freedom and agency that attract her.

For G. Divya (2015, p. 4) the cultural transformation of migrant women like Anisah is the evidence that interculturalism is operating in Britain. Thus, he posits that “Interculturalism is based on the notion of universal women’s rights and the universal justice of recognition for women.” This quote suggests that in an intercultural society, people are

influenced by the different cultures they come in touch with, and their actions become the expression of the different cultures they embody. That is why Anisah, a pious Muslim woman, is attracted by a same-sex relationship. She has found in Western feminism an opportunity to address a problem her Islamic upbringing had led her to endure for so long.

Anisah's cultural amenability proves how a postcolonial subject is. Indeed, in this postcolonial era, individuals are not destined to remain unchanged, particularly after living their homeland to live abroad. In this respect, being a postcolonial immigrant, especially a Muslim woman in the West, has numerous advantages as Ayaan Hirsi Ali opines. She argues that by adjusting to host cultural values, "Muslim women in the West will benefit more from the dominant Western culture that is adhered to by the majority of the population and that offers them good opportunities to shape their lives according to their own insights" (A. H. Ali, 2006, p. 18). Through this quotation, Ayaan Hirsi Ali clarifies that to prosper in a postcolonial society like Britain, minorities should engage openly with local cultural practices rather than isolating themselves.

Another sign of interculturalism in *Love Marriage* is the spirit of tolerance that prevails among the characters. The evidence of tolerance is noticeable within the Shaokat family where the husband has assimilated to Western culture while his wife is still immersed in Islamic customs. This situation never creates conflict in the house. On the contrary, Anisah is thoroughly dedicated to her family and hold her husband in high esteem as demanded by Islam. The evidence of the cultural tolerance in the Ghorami family emerges when the narrator reveals that during the dinner at the Sangsters', "Shaokat permitted himself a deep sip of Wine and ran his tongue around his lips" (M. Ali, 2022, p. 34). Shaokat's behaviour in front of his wife testifies, at once, to his cultural versatility and his wife's cultural comprehension. Both, husband and wife know that they live in a world

where it is necessary to accept each other despite their differences. Thus, Shaokat never hesitates to drink alcohol in front of his wife and Anisah never complains about her husband's un-Islamic behaviour.

Eventually, White people involvement in the British intercultural trend is highlighted through the White characters' intent in knowing about Indian cuisine, sartorial policy and an Oriental religion like Islam. Actually, as identity is a multifaceted concept, it can be acquired through various practices. Hence, while some people highlight their identity through food, others do it through fashion and spirituality. In this respect, many White women stop patronizing the likes of Anisah and try to have a clear understanding of her oriental culture. In this regard, the narrator states that "When Anisah attended the salon, Belinda asked if she would teach her to cook Bengali food. Rachel Tyler said she'd love to learn how to wear Sari [...] Emma Carmichael expressed interest in the rituals of Islamic prayers" (M. Ali, 2022, p. 259). The growing interest White people have in Oriental culture has nothing to do with orientalism or any patronizing behaviour. It is rather the evidence of White people's quest for a way to engage with the cultural diversity of this modern era.

The condescendence that used to characterize many Europeans has created a big chasm between Whites and migrants. Hence, White people's sudden interest in migrants' culture is a way to tell minorities, like South-East Asians, that their culture also matters in a former colonial power like Britain. These cultures from Britain's former colonies are now integral part of the modern British cultural landscape. In this respect, it is every citizen's duty to engage with the different cultures on the spot in order to turn diversity into a strength for the country.

Interculturalism is also an opportunity for British minorities to discard all their prejudices about the host society. Actually, since the relationship between minorities and Whites is often strained, migrants tend

to believe they are victims of a racist system. However, this misunderstanding occurs in places where there is no contact between the different groups. Henceforth, in *Love Marriage*, the integration of the Ghoramis into British values leads Shaokat to rebuke his son when the latter suggests that Britain is an Islamophobic society. This is what he tells to his son “What do you know about violence against women ? Do you know in India how it is? Do you care to know before you criticize this country how it is for these women where they come from ? Do you think they would be better off elsewhere” (M. Ali, 2022, p. 169)?” This set of questions asked by Shaokat is the evidence that there is no more room for stereotypes in his house. For him, every society has its own flaws and it is unnecessary to blame one group when we do not know what is happening in the others.

Shaokat's reaction shows that people have to often move from their familiar surroundings to encounter the wider world because, as T. Mark (1869, p. 491) stated in *The Innocent Abroad*, “travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.” This quotation means that as shaokat knows about both Britain and India, he knows that racism against Muslim women exists in both countries. Therefore, one has to be careful not to consider racism as a Western practice only. The importance is to take the good aspect of every culture we come in touch with in order to integrate into the society we live in, and this begins with rejecting harmful stereotypes and prejudices.

Conclusion

From this study, it follows that although immigrant characters are mostly neglected in their host countries, the ones in Monica Ali's *Love Marriage* find ways to support themselves. One of the most efficient ways in which these immigrants back up themselves in this hostile environment is through promoting their culture and preserving them. The protagonist's mother, Anisah is a prime example. She not only manages to create

intercultural friendship with the white woman Harriet, but also succeeds in valorizing her Bangladeshi culture in Britain by wearing traditional clothes like the 'sari'. In doing so, she demonstrates her strong attachment to her customs despite being abroad.

It has further been found out that another way in which immigrant characters represented by Yasmin and Anisah overcome class issues in the novel is through marriage. Anisah's decision to allow her daughter's marriage with a wealthy white man, Joe breaks the economic disparities between their families. This sacred union with the Sangsters thus lifts the Ghoramis from the bottom to the top as they now enjoy the same economic privileges. In marriage, the characters Yasmin and Joe are tied forever in happiness and sorrow ; and so are their families.

The study ultimately maintains that cultural preservation, economic equity and requited love are key factors that promote diversity, harmony and interculturalism in Britain. As discussed, this appreciation of diversity in the novel is in clear-cut connection with Bhabha's postcolonial concept of hybridity, which has helped throw light on the healthy interactions that happen between white and immigrants ; that is the Sangsters and the Ghoramis. In the final analysis, it can be admitted that through this novel, Monica Ali makes a clarion call for both white and immigrant folks to stick together for the development of British society.

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