SELF IN LANGUAGE AND SUBJECT POSITION: BAKHTINIAN PERSPECTIVE IN *THE FAR PAVILIONS, THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN* AND *MOTH SMOKE*

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Abstract

Out of the many concepts that social sciences take a keen interest in identity is perhaps the most elusive, slippery and amorphous one. The self is first and foremost embedded in language; hence identity is shaped by its context and socio-historical specifications. *The Far Pavilions* (1978) by M.M. Kaye, *The Jewel in the Crown*(1966) by Paul Scott, and *Moth Smoke* (1998) by Mohsin Hamid serve as the location where language upholds, rejects or reinstates the formation of self as subject. The perception about self emerges out of the grounding of the self as subject in various contributing elements, language, culture, gender, ethnicity etc. This article endeavors to locate what subject positions are taken by the self in language and views the chosen texts from a Bakhtinian perspective and his concept of Architectonics.

Introduction

Paul Kockelman (2005) writes that subjectivity means different things to different people. He distinguishes between the 'subject' being ruled over or mastered over by a political superior or sovereign and the subject that emerges out of the cognition of a selfhood. According to him

> There are subjects in the sovereign political sense, which most directly relates to agency: that which is simultaneously 'subjective' (say, capable of decision) and 'subjected' (say, pliable with coercion). Relatedly, there are subjects that relate to selves: the speaking subject, as that which can say 'I,' and hence be both speaker and topic; and the interpellated subject, as that which can be called 'You,' and hence be both topic and addressee (p.8).

It is noteworthy that the ability to make decisions and the power to enforce them either through physical or non-physical coercion is always through language, whether spoken as an utterance of command or written as a directive ordering a certain state of affairs into being. This shows that language is directly implicated in (and) provides the basis by which human beings as social beings are regimented into and subjected to a system of power relations which includes above all the crystallization of

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their notions about their own place in that system of power relations. The estimation of the power system and ones to exact conformity to its dictates and world-view shows itself through language use as well. Language thus enables *subjectification*in the broadest and the most fundamental sense; it enables not only the self-conscious subject but also the process by which that subject is subjugated to the ideological and discursive process of ordering of subject-hood.

Bakhtinian Concept of Self as Subject

Self as subject from a Bakhtinian point of view entails existence as a conscious being, one who occupies a unique place in time and space. Bakhtin (1981) argues that this unique place in time and space can be located only through a reference system appropriate to a particular situation. Michael Holquist (1990) explicates that "from an external perspective, the human subject is unique, but the unique place is always *one among others"*(p.165). We share this place with others through language, through communication. The key distinction of self and other, according to Holquist (1990), is the way language moves constantly between static to dynamic and formal to semantic to produce the subject (p.169). Combined with referential nature of the organization of subjectivity as explained by Kockelman, Bakhtin's world-view becomes a notational system for capturing the elusive plurality and multiplicity of self-hood inscribed in the countless but purposive, determinate and determined speech-acts of subjects constructed out of finite linguistic elements the totality of which defines sociality as such. Although Bakhtin is not the first in positing a subject produced by language, he insists on the responsibility necessitated by subjectivity. Holquist (1990) explains this in more detail

> When we are invaded by language…. (Or as we might more hopefully say when we enter language-descriptions being accurate under different conditions) it is not language as such that invades us or which we enter rather each of us makes an entrance into a matrix of highly distinctive economic, political, and historical forces – a unique and unrepeatable combination of ideologies, each speaking its own language, the heteroglotconglomerate which will constitute the world in which we act. (p.167).

It is in this 'heteroglot conglomerate' that these ideological forces impact and influence their own language and in doing so create a self as subject rooted in language. However, it should be mentioned that these disparate ideological, economic, political and historical forces, formed into force-grids of differing magnitude and velocity, do not simply exist in an ideal space that lacks conflict. To be sure, at any point in or through time, there is a lot of friction being generated through sometimes functional, sometimes dysfunctional struggle of these forces and amongst the people who are caught up in the cross-fire of these struggles. This friction performs two fundamental functions. First, it serves to exclude those ideas and those actions that are not compatible with these dynamic forces in that they do not serve to increase the capability of this complex of forces to perform the task of creating hegemony in a sustainable manner over the major sectors of the social formation. Second, this friction promotes those ideas and those actions that maximize the chances of these competing force-grids to establish dominance distributed both vertically and horizontally. Vertical dominance allows these forces to establish dominance in such a way that all social sectors are organized in such a manner that the forces in power occupy the high points of all discursive and productive spaces. Horizontal dominance allows the dominant force-grid to institute hegemony on and in that social totality from which it originated in the first place. Vertical dominance is primarily based on violent use of force; horizontal dominance is primarily based on the non-violent use of force aiming at consent. Language serves to undergird both kinds of dominance. These dominances are an ongoing project and never seem to come to end. The never-ending quality of the struggle of force-grids in a dialectical manner permanently creates the world that we experience through an equally unending process of destruction that survives, sustains and struggles with the permanent creation of the world in ideological, political, economic and social terms. Ashton, Hari and Daru are caught (like all human subjects) within this matrix of competing ideological, political, economic and social forces, yet each 'I' as a subject is different from others in the way it perceives language, uses it and operates within it. Implicit within the 'I' as subject is the interaction between the self and other, the self "needs the other to become an I-for-the-other, to assimilate temporarily the other's point of view in order to be an I-for-myself and vice versa"

(Bakhtin, 1981, p. 246). Each 'I' also continuously and ceaselessly moves across different force-grids shaping and being shaped by the traces of struggles for dominance going on amongst and within these force-grids.

Viewing things from a Bakhtinian lens means being especially sensitive to flows of power, and the distribution of power in any social or discursive situation. These flows are manifested in social practices and the tendency of subjects to seek dominance before conviviality. This necessarily entails that beneath every social practice and in every speech-act there is buried another the inferiorization of which preceded that visible practice or act. Language may be singular but its use is not and constantly presupposes legitimated choice which is both inclusive and exclusive at the same time. What is of significance in the case of this research is how the cognizance of self is constituted through narratives i.e. discourse and language. This cognizance will be constantly affected by the multiple voices that make up language, thus making narratives palimpsest-like with successful super-impositions and failed inscriptions existing as discursive echoes trying to be heard through dominant narratives.

Architectonics of the Self

Holquist (1990) explains that 'self' is only able to know its identity through its encounter with an 'other'. According to Bakhtin, it is a fact that the 'self' and the 'other' are irreversibly separated from each other in time and space. This provides the possibility for them to come into being (p.19). The 'I-for-myself' is an undependable source of identity, because the 'self' cannot make sense of itself alone or in isolation. Instead it is the 'I-for-the-other' and 'the-other-for-me'. The I-*for my self* refers to how I as a person view the cultural, social etc. context from which I am emerging and how it feels to my cognition. The second part is the *I for the other*. This position refers to how those outside of my being perceive and relate to my sense of who I am. This aspect relates to the 'I' that is still my 'I' in the sense that I am inwardly aware of it, but its source is not my inner self. It is a combination of what others see me as, what others project onto me, and what I then incorporate into my self-image. The third position that self is embedded in is the *other-for-me*. This model is the other side of the *I for the other*. For ourselves as well as for others, our perceptions and our sense of who we are, all cross this

threshold, this boundary of the *other-for-me* before getting registered as a self. Bakhtin, asserts, that views of others are an essential element in the formation of any self. This model is about how others see myself and how my self sees their self. We are at any given time a mixture of these I's, fluctuating from different perspectives, endorsing some views, negating others, changing the views of others and in return being changed by their views (Kumamoto, 2002, p. 72).

The I-for-myself is an unreliable source of identity, and Bakhtin (1981) argues that it is the I-for-the-other through which human beings develop a sense of identity because it serves as an amalgamation of the way in which others view 'me'. Similarly, 'other-for-me' describes the way in which others incorporate 'my' perceptions of them into their own identities. Identity, as Bakhtin describes it here, does not belong merely to the individual, rather it is shared by all.

As the self does not remain the same kind of ontological and epistemological self, the positions it takes also keep changing. It shifts from being the self, to being the other, to being the othered or being in the power position of doing the 'othering'. The subject 'I' and the "other" exchange places at times, depending on the perspective. Holquist (1990) dilates upon this dialogue between self and "other" and writes that

> 'I' is a shifter, because it moves the center of discourse from one speaking person to the other – its emphasis is the no man's land in which subjects can exchange the lease the hold on all of language by virtue of saying "I". (p.23)

The-I-for-Myself corresponds to Bakhtin's concept of the architectonic model of the self. This aspect of the 'I' is related to the way the self sees itself from within. This aspect is connected to how we become cognizant of our social, cultural, moral, etc. contexts, simply how we feel to our inner selves. Like all aspects of the self Ashton, Harry and Daru have their 'I' position which is connected to their inner being, and inner self. Before any self is able to engage in dialogue with others it can only do so once it has a sense of its own self.

Subject Position in Language

In the novels under study it is observed that any notions of the self are dependent upon, and set within, relations of power with emphasis on who the 'other' is. The ways in which self and other are positioned

within these narratives reveals the subject position that the self takes in language. Ashton, Hari, and Daru, are constantly held into contentions with the other regarding their concept of the self. Chris Wheedon (2004) elaborates on this tendency of dominant discourses to be dismissive or restricted in granting recognition to who can identify with them

> Identification is central to the mechanisms through which individuals become knowing subjects. Yet the wide range of identities available in a society and the modes of subjectivity that go with them are not open to all people at all times. They are often restricted to specific groups, usually on the basis of discourses of class, gender and race, which are exclusive to and policed by the groups in question. Non-recognition and non-identification leaves the individual in an abject state of non-subjectivity and lack of agency. At best the individual concerned must fall back on subject positions other than the ones to which s/he is denied access. (p.7)

The three characters under study come to identify themselves with the groups that the superior others relegate to them in varying situations. Hari and Daru are pushed to the margins of the race and class, respectively to which they believe themselves to belong. Each time Hari uses the subjective 'I' he identifies himself as 'Coomer' yet he is left in an 'abject state' once those in power to do the assigning of identities respond with 'non-recognition and non-identification' that Wheedon (2004) talks about. To the whites he is just a 'black laddie' who spent a few years in England and has a chip on his shoulder. Similarly Daru is not granted recognition or identification by the class that he strives to be a part of but is actually from a "no-name middle-class background" and his father's distinguishing quality is "being dead" (p.186). Ashton is also made to suffer at the hands of the superior others but being a member of the empowered race his identification is somewhat independent of seeking recognition as a subject, his ability to have more agency then Hari and Daru stems from being a member of a race that has the confidence of taking matters into control or having the courage for abandoning everything in search of a new world. Hari and Daru, therefore, inhabit a world marked by double negation: the negation of the superior others to accord them entry into a world which they would have liked to be a part of and their own negation of the lower world into which

they are tossed by the refusal of the world which they seek. The second negation is more subtle since Hari and Daru may themselves never become aware of it but their frustrated aspirations point to the simmering but unself-conscious existence of this negation which they carry inside their souls. While Ashton's suffering stemming from non-recognition of the superior other is linear both Hari and Daru remain stuck in the cycle of double negation.

In *The Jewel in the Crown* and *Moth Smoke*, the characters move in an environment that doesn't allow them too much freedom of becoming, however their agency as speaking subjects is restored to them in providing them space where they can narrate things from their point of view. Most of the textual space assigned to Hari is in the form of Sister Ludmila narrating what he shared with her, Lady Chatterjee's opinions, and Daphne's letters. While letters written by Hari are those that he wrote to Collin Lindsey but none of them truly depicts his true feelings. Since he was too refined and Anglicized (refinement and being English were considered corollaries) to complain in his letters to his only friend back home. Sister Ludmila sums this up

> He did not hold himself entirely free of blame for what happened because when he wrote he did not tell Lindsey what was in his heart. Perhaps he did not tell him because he could not. Did not tell him because he did not know himself. (p.317)

Hari in his confessions to Sister Ludmila, says that as an Anglicized Indian, he could not in his letters to Lindsey admit his horror of India because he did not want to be labeled hysterical, but what he succeeded in doing was confirming to his best friend that "I had returned to my natural element" (p.331).

Ashton's identity related troubles start once he reaches England. Ashton is reminded time and again from his relatives in *Belait*that he is not one of them, and then again back in India he is made to re think who he really is from the very people he thought were the "pillars of his imaginary house" (p.817).

> Ash had been away for eight months, during which time he has spoken English perhaps half a dozen times at most, and for the rest had talked, thought and dreamed in the language of his adoptive mother, Sita. (p.470)

Ashton feels unwelcome at the cantonment after returning from eight months duty as escort to the Princesses Bridal entourage, but meeting Zarin and Koda he feels it was like a homecoming.He could talk freely with them because both had been "intimately linked with his childhood that there was little they did not know about it".

Hari Kumar is not only made to shed those aspects of his identity that he felt were intrinsically his own, but also made to suffer physical torture at the hands of Ronald Merrick who is in a position of power and represents political/colonial law. This representation is marked by the superior status of the colonizer in the economic-ideological scheme of things as

> the legal subject is the abstract commodity owner elevated to the heavens. His will – will understood in a legal sense – has its real basis in the wish to alienate in acquisition and to acquire in alienation. (Pashukanis, 2003, p. 121)

Ronald Merrick represents the 'abstract commodity owner elevated to the heavens' in relation to Hari who is denied by the colonial law to own any commodity not sanctioned by the law of the colonizer. So what is 'alienated in acquisition' is the self-hood of the colonized and what is 'acquired in alienation' is the right to property of the colonized free of the generalized legalized will of the colonizer. In Hari's case he is barred from acquiring anything that will give succor to his rapidly decreasing Englishness. For instance his effort to buy "Odol toothpaste and some pears soap" (p.297) stem from his confidence that he has "only to speak to one of them to be recognized, to be admitted"(p.297). The moment Hari asks for the soap the shop keeper seems to be at a loss, "assessing the evidence of his eyes and the evidence of his ears"(p.299). Startled at being addressed in 'sahib-inflexions' by a non-sahib he assumes that Hari is there to buy soap for his master. Hari feels offended and defeated because he cannot buy soap in bulk, as the *sahib-log* do, and is directed to his place of belonging (by someone he in his self-consciousness felt was someone inferior to him), i.e. the Chillianwallah Bazar "because there they are taking no notice of regulated retail price"(p.300). Hari Kumar is silenced and reduced to having no voice in the course of the novel. The chatty Chillingborough school boy, who talks passionately about cricket to his cronies and writes long compelling

detailed letters to his friend Collin Lindsey, is reduced to an Indian who is facing trial for his complicity in the gang rape of an English girl.

Daru, strives to move within the circle of the rich but all he manages to do is be pushed to the peripheries of the very class. He loses the friendship he had with Ozi, the one person who claims to have "given him his pedigree"(p.186) because he does not belong to the social class of the rich and the famous. The way *Moth Smoke* is structured, i.e. each character comes and narrates the story in an attempt to prove his/her innocence, presents various aspects of the subjectivity of the characters. These narrative accounts posit the characters not just as speaking subjects but also as explaining ones. Embedded in the narrative of each character is that aspect of the self which is a speaking or a narrating subject'. According to GayatriSpivak (1988)

> The possibility of explanation carries the presupposition of an explainable (even if not fully) universe and an explaining (even if imperfectly) subject. These presuppositions assure our being. (p.143)

In the context of this research self in language refers primarily to that aspect of the self which is the narrating or the speaking self, the self that gets embedded in the way we tell or narrateour stories. Self is the negotiable site within which telling stories or narrating becomes the most potent form of identity constitution within language. It may not be too irrelevant here to note that the narrative of the repressed and the subjugated may also feel like the testimonies of the accused and the defendants. It is surprising how narrative and the act of reading or listening to a narrative can reproduce some of the features of the recording of the testimony of a legal witness. The way Daru speaks and narrates his story is an extension of his character. Mohsin Hamid solidifies Daru's notion of the self by giving him a personality and ample textual space for his narrations. In his case (as with other characters) Hamid does not slip into omniscient narrative but letsDaru speak for himself. Structurally too the novel is divided so that the chapters given the titles in numbers are all extensions of Daru's inner dialogue and thinking. Daru appears as a self-conscious person from the beginning of the novel, his moral ambiguity is reflected in his choice of words. Enmeshed in these words is his identity struggle, he consistently strives to locate himself between varying identities in the hope for one that will

be accepted and sanctioned by the circles in which he wants to move. The opening lines of his narrative talk about the shadow that is prevalent in his cell, a shadow that is cast upon the rest of his story. His admission "I hesitate before I rise to my feet" (p.5) depicts his fear and uncertainty about his plight and the mess he is entangled in. As the time shifts to the days and his life before being on trial, it can be seen that Ozi's arrival has filled Daru with anxiety, he narrates "I'm a little nervous because it's been a few years" and then adds that "maybe because my house is the same size it was when he left"(p.11). Daru's narrating 'I' when talking about Ozi or the world of the jet set party is always self-conscious, self-deprecating and he laments his inability to be at par with their lifestyle. He is sardonic and derisive while introducing Ozi's father to the reader; "the frequently investigated but as yet unincarcerated Federal Secretary (Retired) Khurram Shah", yet he has grown up on hand-me-downs and financial support from him, and later yet seeks his aid while looking for a job. His description of his uncle i.e. 'TinkyPhoppo's husband' can be compared to Khurram Shah, he says about the uncle that "he isn't corrupt so they survive on his pitiful salary and a small inheritance" (p.55).

      Even when he is being charming and witty in his first meeting with Mumtaz, he is conscious of his inability to meet her eyes. He says "I hope she doesn't notice, but she probably does. Then again, maybe I am thinking too much. Stoner's paranoia" (p.14).Daru's narrative has a very perceptible quality that lets the reader see the area where he is excessively conscious. He feels his house is still small; he has no job and a car that does not give him an aura of authority. He uses animal analogies at times to talk about himself, like when he eats extra at his Uncle Fatty's place and wonders at his increased appetite he answers himself, "animals tend to fatten up in anticipation of lean times ahead. I belch loudly as I drive, quite a roar, freeing up some space inside" (p.58).

      However in a position where he feels empowered by his social or educational status his narrative changes, he speaks confidently and assertively. Take for instance his conversation with MuradBadshah, who is his dealer and displays his gun to Daru;

          "Is it real?" I ask him.
          He looks offended. "Of course", he says.
          "Why are you carrying it around?"
          "DarashikohShezad, do you listen to nothing that I say?"

"You don't need to impress me". (p.41)

MuradBadshah is not elite enough to impress Daru. When Mumtaz calls him and says I am outside your gate and I am calling from my mobile Daru's immediate reaction is "Her mobile. How classy". (p.43) While his conversation with MuradBadshah is followed by Daru thinking about him disdainfully and deciding that "I don't like it when low class types forget their place and try to become too frank" (p.42). The over conscious Daru at parties where his car feels too small compared to all the Pajeros ("I notice the difference in the sounds of slamming car doors: the deep thud of the Pajero and Land Cruiser, the nervous cough of my Suzuki"(p.81) himself is quick to allot a position of low-class to a fellow being , he even blames himself for allowing MuradBadshah to be so frank and says "but it's my fault, I suppose: the price of being a nice guy"(p.42). Just as Ozi justifies his intentions and actions Daru too finds reasons for his condescending attitude towards MuradBadshah and also his servant Manucci. He doesn't pay him for months on end (he does not have any money) and justifies it thus:

> I know I haven't paid him in a long time. But he isn't going hungry: he eats food from my kitchen and sleeps under my roof. Sometimes servants want their pay so they can leave, and if that's his plan I won't make it easy for him. Not that he has anywhere else to go. (p.217).

Later in the novel, he slaps Manucci which results in his running away and finding a new job with Mumtaz.

The subjected and the subjective are all matters of location within language. As Foucault expounds that power is "dispersed though out social relations" (qtd in Griffin,p.101), the self too is affected by its position as opposed to and in relation with others. The impact and the influence of the speaking/narrating self can be realized in its selection of the words, and when those words formulate utterances, embedded in them is the position that the self takes. Ashton's choice of words while speaking to Wally is different from when he is speaking to anyone else. Since language is not something finalized and fixed, Bakhtin recognizes utterances as the fundamental unit of communication. According to Bakhtin speech exists only in the concrete utterances of individual speakers, i.e. the speech subjects. He explains further that "speech is always cast in the form of an utterance belonging to a particular speaking

subject, and outside this form it cannot exist" (p.71). Utterance or speech is embedded in the social activity that the individual takes part in. One's communication becomes meaningful within an ongoing system of discourse and any utterance is a response to what has been said already and anticipates what is yet to be said. Any human communication is exchange of these positions. This is a lifelong process, says Bakhtin(qtd. by Holquist in *Authoring as Answering*),

> to learn to speak means to learn to construct utterances ... We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when we hear others' speech, we deduce its genre from the first words; we anticipate in advance a certain volume (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) as well as a certain compositional structure. We foresee the end; that is, from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole. (p.63)

For instance from the outset of *Moth Smoke* we gauge from these words what DaraShikohShezad's story is going to unfold. He is introduced as a "man capable of anything and afraid of nothing" and as the "terrible almost-hero of a great story: powerful, tragic, and dangerous" (p.8). Reading a novel is somewhat like learning to speak, as we read on in our mind we are constantly constructing utterances, i.e. in the form of opinions about the story, the characters, the plot etc. Our relation to the novel is the same as it is to language; from limited linguistic and narrative resources, we set out to make infinite utterances and anticipation of limitless plot directions and developments.

The self is not only shaped by its interactions with other but also by relations of power. Self is entrenched in language and is formulated through effective dialogue. From the moment of its inception it is co-created. It is because of our varying positions that we view the other in ways that we can never view ourselves. Our subjective experience can never be "so complete, finalized and consummated" (Morris,2003, p. 7) that it can result in a holistic sense of the self. That is why Ashton feels complete when he finally finds in Anjuli the "answer to his nagging feeling of emptiness that had bedeviled him for so long. It had gone forever, and he had been made whole again, because he had found the thing that was lacking…his own Juli. Not part of his past, but quite suddenly, and for always, a part of his heart"(p.253). As for Hari and Daru it is not so, not only do the people in power do not validate and

approve of their sense of belonging, they are deprived of the completing benevolence that love can bestow upon a being. Hari's love story is doomed from the start because it has to be judged by the 'white robot' which could not distinguish between love and rape. As for Daru, there is little hope in finding redemption through the love of a woman who herself was striving to get out of the matrix of oppressive powers. For her real self-fulfillment comes through writing as ZulfikarManto, Daru is just a means to assert her breaking away from the shackles of a marriage she no longer cared for.

Ashton, Hari and Daru are products of the environmental forces that they respond to and these forces are organized into coherent grids enabling the flow and distribution of power relations in their social worlds. Ashton has no choice as regards to be renamed Ashok or being forced to become Ashton again once in*Belait.* Hari also is not autonomous as far his plight that plunges him on the wrong side of the river. Daru would have preferred to be in control and have a highly paid job and live the life that Ozi enjoys as his rightful inherited lot. Up until this point they are all just responding to their environment from their respective positions. Michael Holquist writes that "what the self is answerable to is the environment; what it is responsible for the author ship of its responses" (p.167). It is how each self uses language that lets it inscribe meaning to words and thereby be responsible for. For instance the narrative accounts of all the characters in *The Jewel in the Crown* serve the purpose of etching their bit into the collective story that emerges. Each character as it narrates views things in hindsight, with more clarity and comes to a better understanding of how things came to be and what they could have done to avoid or make it better. In Bakhtinian sense this chance to narrate their story from their subjective position gives them a 'surplus of seeing'.

Hari and Daru are subjugated their position is weakened by their social and economic class. Ashton in 'othered' in various situation but he is after all a white man in India, entrenched in a position of privilege in the military. Similarly Daphne is a member of the race which is in a position of power; she doesn't need any validation to prove her identity. Mumtaz comes from a background which poises her securely to think with her own ideological inclinations. She is a strong woman who knows

the power of language and discourse; using which she strives to bring awareness and bring about a change by highlighting certain social issues.

Hari Kumar is consciously an Englishman, he thinks, speaks, and behaves as an Englishman; yet he is "invisible" to white society and compelled by circumstances to live as Hari with the blacks "on the wrong side of the river" (*p*.229). In his first interaction with Merrick, when he asks him in the Englishman's Urdu "*tumahranamkyahai*", he speaks in perfect English, better accented than Merrick's: "I'm afraid I don't speak Indian", Hari asserts his Englishness:he does not speak Indian language and speaks English more properly than Englishmen. He even imbibes "white" prejudices against Indians, he finds the Indians smelly and dirty.

> He felt an unexpected resistance to the ideas of an Indian doing an Englishman's work. When he paused to consider this resistance he realized that he had responded as a member of a subject race. The thought alarmed him. (p.256)

For instance Ashton and Hari Kumar seem to have similar place in the language of the other but each person's experience is unique and different. Hari and Daru are similar in the location allotted to them as subjects by the dominating specific other. Hari has Merrick as the imperialist other who has the power to reduce his status to a person of little agency. Although Hari opts for silence while being investigated for Daphne's rape, it is Merrick's indirect influence as the member of the dominant race that has Daphne fear for injustice. Her fear is engendered out of her firsthand knowledge of the colonizers and their ability to view the colonized not as humans but as mere objects, to be oppressed and rejected. Hari transforms from a speaking subject to one who is silenced. Though it seems his being silent is his choice and because Daphne makes him promise. Daphne herself admits that it was a promise she imposed on him because she believed that as the member of the superior race she knew better what was right for both of them. Daphne writes in her letter to her aunt

> I never gave him a chance because even in my panic there was this assumption of superiority, of privilege, of believing I knew what was best for both of us, because the colour of my skin automatically put me on the side of those who never told a lie. (p.542)

Daru is also incriminated for a crime he did not commit, and being placed in the jail thinks about how things have changed for him. Ozi as the powerful other exerts his authority and places Daru in a situation where he is unable to do anything for himself, because he occupies a position outside of the centers of power. He from his position tries to grapple with his changing circumstances by attempting to change his self but is met with disappointing results.

Conclusion

It is established by linguists such as Saussure, Kant, Chomsky that language can function fully only when it is an exchange between many subjects. There is a preceding insight at work here that language can exist only in a social plural context. It may safely be assumed that solitariness was not the original condition of language. However, in most theories it produces the subject/object divide. Bakhtin's concept of dialogism takes it further and liberates it form the limiting subject/object distinction. Bakhtin asserts that language can work only when it is shared by more than one aspect of self within the subject. Meaning is situated within time and space.There is a perception of the subject by the subject and there is another time and space within which is entrenched the subject's perception of other's and vice versa. Hence the position taken by the self in language is not one that is static; it is dynamic and ever changing.

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