

The Neo-Liberal Subjectivity of Native Culture in Diaspora Writing: A Sartorial Reading of the *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal

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Abstract

This study seeks to establish how women's sartorial choices are subjected to both internal and external forces of oppression through the study of *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal. Using postcolonial subjectivity to understand the convergence of vestigial structures of post-colonialism and a globalizing subjectivity, this paper challenges unified notions of national identity through the analysis of socio-cultural norms, dress, language and food in selected Anglophone Pakistani literature. It also unravels the 'liminal spaces' of destabilized identities and fragmented subjectivities that mark the postcolonial condition. Further, it illuminates the role of sartorial structures by incorporating Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of 'de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation'. Accordingly, globalization of everyday experiences makes it even more difficult to maintain a stable sense of local cultural identity, including national identity, as our daily life entwines itself more and more with the influences and experiences of a global world. In such conditions, the diaspora writers present the local sartorial culture as a conspicuous site of identity inscription, negotiation, and reinvention.

Keywords: Sartorial, neoliberal culture, de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation, identity

Literary Representation of Sartorial Subjectivity

Over the past few decades, the question of identity has aroused manifold debates based on the enmeshing local/global interface. In such times, the core of a singular identity has been shaken and

the choice to identify oneself with its own preference has grown. In this context, diaspora writings have become particularly significant in discussing the native cultures in relation to the global culture. In constructing the identity, some of the writers preferred to be ideological and epistemological while some others have remedied the identity dilemma by projecting a convergent threat to indigenous cultural and social issues. Having said that, diaspora writers tend to be smart enough to not create an antagonistic binary between western culture and their native culture. Encoded in textual accounts reliant on the position of author, some farfetched notions are addressed which is why the experience of some is generalized to everyone in that community.

In this study, the politics of dressed bodies is discussed with reference to female agency and dress as a marker of class and caste in Pakistani context. Literary characters are defined through their dressed bodies to either conform to or resist the power structures. Dress also maneuvers the virtue and vice, good and evil, bold and naïve, contemporary and conventional etc. It is also a signifier of time and space that takes the reader to time immemorial and places unimagined. Dress is also revealed to demarcate the sphere of home from the external world, contribute to reinforcing the nativity through this sartorial representation. Sartorial switching envisioned in some diaspora texts functions as a survival strategy, allowing these young characters to navigate different worlds, while simultaneously emphasizing a vision of them as caught up in a clash of cultures.

To explicate this discussion, I have selected *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal which is a re-embodiment and a modern re-telling of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. *Pride and Prejudice* has the honor to get re-written and imitated by many writers around the world yet the famous saying from “*Beauty and the Beast*” goes, “Tale as old as time...” (n.p) signifies as much as the story has been retold it never gets old for the fact another culture’s vibe. Every culture has their own version of *Pride and Prejudice* that stimulates readers’ imagination. Through the embeddedness of such writings, the diaspora writers emphasize how locally embedded forms of practice and dominant

representations have ‘normative’ stand in close affinity with each other (Pemberton and Nijhawan 1). This similarity and close affinity allows a deeper understanding of human nature and values universally. Through their writings, the diaspora writers reflect their close affinity with their homeland as to indicate “diaspora exists precisely because it remembers the ‘homeland’. Without this memory, the image of ‘their’ Pakistan (Home), these migrants and settlers would be simply people in a new setting, into which they merge, bringing little or nothing to the new ‘home’, accepting in various ways and forms the mores and attitudes that already exist in their new country and society” (B. Lal 18). This implies the story of *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal, which is also a rendition of Pakistani *Rishta* process and search for a prospective marriage. Although the writer never lived in Pakistan however, her narration of the *Rishta culture* is Pakistan, the socio-cultural manifestation of marriage, the insecurities of daughters’ parents and entrenched class/caste system is relatable for her readers. Kamal’s reading of *Pride and Prejudice* connected her with Pakistani cultural roots by reminding her of this cultural practice. Such writings are in Deleuze and Guattari understanding the “lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also the lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification” (03) and through these intersections the local traditions become a global knowledge. The writers “constitute an assemblage” (Deleuze and Guattari 04) with the existing writings and in literature, the nexus between body, dress and self is sometimes extended towards a metonymic process, where “the literary garment acts as pars pro toto; that is, it comes to stand for the character” (Pereira-Ares 18). Dress, as a marker of socio-cultural identity has also religious connotations in certain contexts where it possess ‘extremely conservative and traditional views’ where it was considered ‘as a thing that could transmit spirit and substance’ (Bayly 287). Here my objective is to bring attention to matters of dress in today’s diaspora novel of Kamal and to discuss despite being located in different geography, the sartorial incidents described by her, points to the intimate connection between dress, body and local cultural identity. Especially in the context

of the ‘contact zone’ (Pratt 1992), the writer has reworked fashion, by presenting fluctuations in sartorial attitudes of Pakistani community based on local and global taste. From discussing *Sari* to *Lehnga*, *Gharara* to *Dhoti*, *Bustier* to *Balero*, *red-soled black platforms* to *redsoled nude Louboutins* (Kamal 99), Kamal has beautifully sketched a modern day Pakistan by negotiating the question of what to wear transcends the cultural– religious sphere, and the process of choosing a particular style often underscores aesthetic, as well as a symbol of identity, social or ideological messages. This is even more so in an age when, as Paul Gilroy has argued, identity and ethnicity are often expressed through ‘the contentious cultural terms of life-style and consumer performance’ (Pereira-Ares 28).

The selected text’s sartorial emphasis and projection serves to illustrate the crucial role that the dressed body has always played in the understanding of certain contexts. Here, in this story the mother of five daughters is in hunt of proposals of high fortune for her daughters. For that matter, she would make every possible effort so that her girls appear more presentable with modern and trendy outfits. Interesting to discuss here is that as much as she has taken her daughters a commodity to get exchanged with high fortune, the dresses they ought to wear also embody the fetishized commodities. For instance, the writer narrates the wedding ceremony of Nadir and Fiede’s which turned into a display of high fortune and traditional-cum-modern dresses designed by some highly expensive designers from Lahore. The bride wore “crimson-and-gold *gharara*” (52), the groom wearing “custom-made *sherwani* with a tall crimson *turban*” (51), male guests in “raw-silk ivory *shalwar kurta* with a teal mirrored waistcoat” (Kamal 53), “waiters in white uniforms with gold buttons” (51). Within such glamor, “Mrs. Binat’s choices for the girls’ attire this evening were long flowy chiffon *anarkalis* with mukesh- and *zari*-embroidered bodice and hem, matching *dupattas* paired with matching silk *thang pyjamas* and jewellery courtesy of Ganju *jee*, and topped with expensive shawls. Mrs. Binat wanted Jena to once again stand out as the epitome of purity and had picked for her white chiffon – paired, however, with a real diamond set” (50). The walima ceremony

held in Lahore where “the villa’s main gate and boundary walls were strung with thick floral ropes. A tunnel of candlelit flowers engulfed the brick path from the gate leading to the driveway and a mini-fountain awash in petals” (90-91). Again in this ceremony, “Jena looked striking in a peach *zardozi kameez* and seed pearl embroidered open front gown paired with a white silk *thang pyjama*, a *shahtoosh* shawl, and Ganju jee’s rubies and “Alys had chosen to wear the sari ... It was the color of Kashmiri pink tea” (90). In discussing and detailing these dressing formalities of a wedding function in Pakistani culture, the writer implies a very delicate and intricate practice of match-making carried out in Pakistani wedding functions. With this tradition in her mind, the writer is also mindful of class differences engrained in this society, therefore, her depiction of the whole ceremony was clearly marked with the class differences on account of how people were dressed. Apart from that, the common life presented in the text seeks notable attention to detail when it comes to situating characters within a specific class context, Alys commutes everyday via the school’s vans, the Binat sisters get their clothes stitched from a trusted tailor instead of buying designer ready-to-wear lawn suits, and Alys’s secret indulgence of smoking doesn’t make the Binat sisters feel less awkward at the drug-laced parties thrown by rich Binglas and Darsees. These ‘dressed bodies’ cast individuals into the categories of ‘superior’/‘inferior’, ‘outsider’/‘insider’, or as a palimpsest on which different social, religious and cultural interpretations lie. These demarcations become the signifiers that orient the subject’s cultural and ideological position. Žižek notices that even when subjects are thoroughly disenchanted with an ideological master signifier, they do not necessarily adopt a new one. Instead, they replicate the existing ideas to the extent they could exercise an ‘individual liberty’.

Fashion, as an art form is embodied in literature manifold ways. Dress is used as a device to create effects and description of the characters, as Clair Hughes wrote dress is a quintessential descriptive device in literature. It contributes to the so-called ‘reality effect’ lending ‘tangibility and visibility to character and context’ (02). Sartorial descriptions are also used as a source of spatial and

temporal markers that help develop the character traits. The social classes depicted in the selected text is also made clearly visible through their sartorial representation when Alys dropped Jena for a polo match and decided go for a walk in the park “where the park gardeners ... shalwars pulled up over ashy knees, their sun-wrinkled legs planted firmly on the earth... The veiled woman was feeding the bearded man with her fingers ... moving ahead “Alys gazed some boys playing cricket ... The fielders stood waiting in their jeans and knockoff Tshirts” (65) whereas the sartorial description of polo spectator was “designer sunglasses (65) in culottes and a Swarovski-embellished cardigan” (66). With such sartorial description, the writer gives the hint to the readers that affluent people have their own places of entertainment and commoners have their own.

Deploying a socio-cultural literary approach, the remainder of this paper will further discuss the sartorial binaries merging rapidly in modern day Pakistan mapped out in *Unmarriageable*. The writer’s choice to rewrite a modern day *Pride and Prejudice* in Pakistani context is reminiscence of how she corresponds to the growing mix and merge of Pakistani culture and tradition. It is also reflective of the fact that how as an insider she is projecting the problems of Pakistani marriage with its future prospects yet she maintains her outsider gaze to highlight Pakistani culture rapidly transforming and replicating the international influences. Through the sartorial choices, the writer also maintains the female agency which is considered to be suppressed enormously considering the social, religious and cultural implications. Her female characters wear “tight jeans and tight T-shirt saying GALZ RULZ on her plump bosom” to mark their own free will and choice of clothes (107). However, in a global world, the politics of dress is used to ascertain binaries of individual vs. collective, feminine vs. masculine, power vs. vulnerability and modernity vs. tradition. Stepping out of class/caste oppression, these women become victims at the hands of commodity culture. “Nadir and Fiede were wearing matching yellow-and-black ensembles designed by Qazi, for which, it was rumoured, the designer had charged enough to enjoy at least five sumptuous holidays” (Kamal 91).

In a social context where a larger section of society lacks the basic necessities this extravagancy becomes a mark of status symbol. The aspiring brides also consider this perfect for garbing an opportunity of a “ring [that would] possess magical powers to transform into princess” (Kamal 10).

Anglophone Pakistani literature celebrates nationalism by embedding Pakistani linguistic idioms, cuisine, dress and festivals in their writings. As with Austen, whose books could be read as acerbic examinations of class and women's choices (and lack thereof), Kamal's *Unmarriageable* succeeds in commenting on class in post-colonial, post-partition Pakistan, where the effects of the British Empire still reverberate in personal sartorial choices of elite. Kamal's novel stays in close affinity with its prototype *Pride and Prejudice* in presenting a society deeply entrenched in class and caste structures. Given this social injustice, gender bears the testimony of such indifferences the most. Therefore, along the lines, we observe nuanced social commentary by Kamal in Austen's flair. However, in its representation of dressed bodies, Kamal's pattern of clothing also signify a variety of social and political ideas “hierarchy, seclusion and respect, a relationship between dress and social order in terms of power, authority' gender, status, and class” (Bahl 2). The writer engages with the display of status, respectability and wealth through sartorial choices, for instance, “Hammy and Sammy were air-kissed by a slinky woman in a silver halter top and QaziKreations' most expensive *mohiti*, the miniskirt *dhoti* shimmering with semi-precious stones.

‘Amazing outfits! Love the shoes!’ the woman said, looking Hammy and Sammy up and down as they tottered in red-soled black platforms. Hammy was in black leather biker shorts, a red lace bustier, and a black mesh bolero, and Sammy was in red leather biker shorts, a black lace bustier, and a red mesh bolero” (Kamal 99). In order to explain the psyche of the social class, Žižek believe that psycho-analytical insight into human behavior is relevant here. Ranging from ‘subject of desire’ as the mother is eager to get her daughters married in affluent families with prospective future yet as ‘subject of the drives’, Alys is content in her singleton (or her growing unmarriageability, given her

gender, age and class status), her ability to earn her own living teaching English literature and her illicit excursions to the graveyard behind her house to smoke with her best friend Sherry (Žižek 7).

Burton discusses ‘a particular kind of diasporic corridor between South Asia and the [...] global world’ where the characters are positioned between the local and global interactions of socio-cultural subjectivities (Burton 32). The social identities are observed seeking validation from without, the Anglophone texts map the presence of the colonial subject at the periphery and colonizers are at the center stage. Kamal adds Macaulay’s ‘Minute on Education’, (1835) in her novel, that “I have no knowledge of either Sanscrit or Arabic ... I have never found one among them [Orientalists] who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western Literature” (n.p). What is troubling here is the colonizers lack of understanding of indigenous cultures and languages yet the belief of their own superiority is above all. This is manifested in the writings of Anglophone writings where writers would translate the cultural injustices to the colonizers and make it subject of global subjectivity and vulnerability. Placing this discussion in the context of selected text, the vulnerability and subjectivity of Pakistani women is a subject of many writers and critics mainly due to their socio-religious background. Through the construction of Pakistani woman in twenty first century, although the writer presents characters with conscience who believe “It is a truth universally acknowledged,” she says, “that hasty marriages are nightmares of bardasht karo, the gospel of tolerance and compromise, and that it’s always us females who are given this despicable advice. I despise it” (Kamal 59). On the other hand, the novel also captures the way women in Pakistani society are allowed limited ways of being in the world, and how these options become even more limited the more time they spend being unmarried. Sherry’s decision to marry the much older widower Kaleen, who has children of his own and a hard-to-tolerate personality and who she does not love, in order to avoid the scorn of her brothers and of society at large, seems plausible when she outlines the things

she stands to gain from the marriage: “Children. Hello: S-E-X. Car, driver. And he’s a British citizen because of which I will become a British citizen. And then I will be able to sponsor my parents ... I’ve been working outside the home ever since I can remember, as well as inside cooking and cleaning, and I want to be in a relationship where duties will be shared” (Kamal 48).

Dress in literature is significant in providing an insight into social, cultural, religious and economic identity. The term ‘literary clothing’ is close to the notion of ‘written clothing’ devised by Roland Barthes, since both use verbal language as their ‘substance’ (88). However, the fashion magazines give expression to real object whereas; literature would give voice to an imaginary character. Dress, therefore, is what adds meaning to the character and help the readers to identify with the characters. For instance, the affluent characters are shown wearing branded dresses along with expensive ornaments as “Sherry’s brand-new designer clothes for a gala Eid lunch, gold bangles and earrings and necklace set to match” (129) ... “*Wickaam Sahib had seduced them by promising them marriage, money, gold earrings, etc.(149)*. Through this added description, it becomes easy to understand the socio-economic condition of these characters.

The belief that human body is a dressed body, as suggested by fashion theory holds that the existence of fictional bodies representing human subjects are also dressed bodies. The characters in literary texts are always believed as dressed bodies even through the writers do not give sartorial description. Through a common understanding, it is perceived that the literary characters are dressed. However, other artistic manifestations painting, theatre, cinema and sculptor lack this common perception and there the artists have to be vigilant to present their characters to be dressed or undressed. Engaging with the term “‘dress and, by extension, ‘dressed body’—is used here to refer to all forms of clothing, adornments and bodily modifications, from garments to shoes, from headgear to jewelry, from scents to hairstyles, make-up” (Eicher and Roach-Higgins 28).

As Chaudhuri discusses the sartorial reality of the Indian subcontinent and believed it to be extrapolated to the South Asian sartorial reality in Britain “clothing and adornment were and continue to be as much an expression of the nature of things Indian, as any other human activity, say, politics, social and economic life, culture as embodied in literature or art could be” (ix). The writer’s choice to dress the characters in a certain way implies to be interpreted and understood. These dressed bodies are used both as a power tool and a resistance in the face of power. In current times, dress as a symbol of establishing so-called “authenticity”, identity, and freedom is getting more complicated. As it can also be regarded as the biggest strength of *Unmarriageable* is the way in which Kamal situates the modern and contemporary touch to the characters of *Pride and Prejudice* where Bungles’ family is “in Darsee’s car on their way to the New Year’s party, having gone to their homes to change out of their wedding finery and into party clothes, which, for Hammy and Sammy, meant the skimpiest outfits the current state of their slim figures would allow” (Kamal 98). On the other hand, Binat sisters costumes for a night party included “Mari’s local garb, so out of place at such a happening event as her New Year’s bash, at Qitty in a crushed-velvet black tent, at Lady in white jeans and a T-shirt that said UNMARRIAGEABLE in glitter and showed off her ample cleavage” (Kamal 99). This event also marked the class difference based on sartorial choices.

Homi Bhabha explores how relations of mimicry and ambivalence dominate in a postcolonial region. Following Fanon, he argues, that the person of color can only ever imitate, never identify and Bhabha draws upon a distinction made by the psychoanalyst Annie Reich, ‘It is imitation. . . when the child holds the newspaper like his father. It is identification when the child learns to read’ (Bhabha 120). The novel is also rich with examples from Christmas party to New Year party and night parties that were not a part of native culture few years back but now these trends are absorbing in different arenas of life.

In neoliberalism, Harvey proposes a ‘utopian’ world with “a very complex process entailing multiple determinations and not a little chaos and confusion” (09). His idea of a state encompasses personal and individual freedom in the marketplace has to be guaranteed, each individual is held responsible and accountable for his or her own actions and well-being. This principle extends into the realms of welfare, education, health care, and even pensions ... Individual success or failure is interpreted in terms of entrepreneurial virtues or personal failings rather than being attributed to any systemic property. Nevertheless, he argues that the redistribution of wealth to the upper classes of a given country is a consistent structural feature neoliberalism. For this matter, he also believes that state intervention in markets should be kept to a bare minimum level. Now for any country’s social and economic growth markets and traders are a significant players and contributors. When the government or state allows free trade the significant capitalist countries become the major distributors of product and the locally produced manufacturers could not perform equally well due to the weak infrastructure. Only a selective class is benefited in this process whereas the local/indigenous entrepreneurs are pushed back to margins. This unjust distribution of economic opportunities creates a socio-economic vacuum which becomes government’s liability. In the developing world, the pressure of liberal economies is not only faced by people but also the governments face the crisis because the exports are not as high as the imports so the external and international economies thrive on account of local/indigenous economies. This understanding can be found in the selected text *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal in which she highlights the lifestyle of the elite predominated with the influences of neoliberalism. Living in Pakistan, this class demarcates itself clearly from other social classes and people. Their lifestyle is deeply influenced with neoliberal choices of clothing, spending, living and owning the things. This class values relationships and interactions keeping in view the material gains. Kamal sarcastically captures this in *Sammy and Hammy’s* argumentation with their brother bungles who is after Jena. The two sisters try to convince

the brother to stay away from the girl. Hammy say, “I don’t believe Jena Binat is interested in you. She sits there without a smile. She barely says two words when you ask her a question. If she’s a gold-digger, she’s not a very good one.’

‘Perhaps,’ Bungles said in a hesitant voice, ‘she’s not a gold-digger at all.’

‘Her mother is a gold-digger!’ Hammy said. “‘Like mother, like daughter,” they say.” (Kamal 98). This is how the upper class views the people around them are after their money. Their own material perspective is reflected in every action of them. On the hand, the lower class is also seen struggling to become a part of elite by any possible means as in this case the girls and their mother are dreaming of a prospective husband who will bring good fortune.

Neoliberalism, “an overarching dystopian zeitgeist of late-capitalist excess”, (Venugopal 2015) that empowers the elite class/ capitalist class. This elite class is used as a tool to spread the global economy into local regions and benefit the capitalist economy. Similarly, the elite class in the developing world is also the capitalist class that exploits the native cultures and people by engaging them in a wide array of modern and trendy lifestyle choices that appeals the masses. Through this, a process of consumption excels where one cannot differentiate between the need and desire. The desire is saturating because with each passing day the trends are changed and markets offer new products. Going with the global trends and Pakistani society in transformation has been beautifully captured by Soniah Kamal. She has introduced characters living the westernized/globalized lifestyle yet on the other hand, characters who have become entrepreneurs with the growing opportunities of consumer friendly environment. A prime example of this happened when “Three years ago Nona had baked an Arabian Nights cake for her daughter’s birthday at school. The children had fallen silent at the sight of the fondant bed with yellow marzipan pillows, the strawberry pantaloons-clad storyteller, Scheherazade, and her blueberry pantaloons-clad sister, Dunyazade, on the bed,

surrounded by crystal-sugar characters from the stories: Aladdin, Sinbad, Ali Baba, and Prince Shahryar turned chocolate giant with liquorice whiskers (63). This becomes an economic opportunity for Nona and Falak and they opted it for their business. “Soon, white boxes with lace calligraphy saying NONA’S NICES were being sold to weddings, birthdays, graduations, anniversaries; Quran starts and finishes, Eids, Iftars, Christmases, Holis, lawn launches, fundraisers, et cetera. Nona and Nisar were, Falak and Pinkie often marveled with dazed pride, minting money” (68). This money-making interest the local people and we observe that free- market has paced the competition so in order to be unique and creative the producers and entrepreneurs try to merge the local and global trends so that the consumer feels modernized and contemporary. For that reason, their ties with territory weaken and they go beyond the limitation of time and space.

The idea that postcolonial culture is a hybrid one derives straight from the notion of de-territorialization, which enhances the disappearance of the relationship between culture and place and the mixture of the uprooted cultural identities. It is a view that deals with borders, the overlaps, and the in-between places, between two or more cultures. The growing mobility of people has complicated the meaning of identity and subjectivity. It has also increased the importance of the role of external forces in shaping individual identities and freedom of choices. This freedom of choice is also relative because it allows freedom to resist one form of oppression and fell in another trap. As mentioned in the text the Binat family chooses to wear the traditional dresses but when they see that the affluent people whom they hang out with are more inclined towards western dresses they couldn't resist to wear “jeans and turtleneck” (70) , T-shirt and tracksuit trousers (71), red V-necked sweater and jeans” (71). This ideological manipulation of a certain socio-economic class is reflective of culture at threshold. In addition to the string of colonial prejudiced implications underlying it, this local/global sartorial preference attests to the current obsession with the dominant culture. It is also symptomatic of the socio-economic prejudice against native dressed body and, in particular, the

female dressed body is currently subjected to more vulnerability and exploitation in this sense. The text presents that women chose to wear what appeals and attracts their male counterparts. In this story, the prospective men belong to the cosmopolitan lifestyle which embodies “an Eden within an Eden” (90). The wedding décor was described as “It was fashioned like a bower, on which Nadir and Fiede sat enthroned as if they were Shakespeare’s fairy royalty, King Oberon and Queen Titania, greeting their florally smitten guests” (Kamal 90). In her depiction of the neo-liberal lifestyle in Pakistani culture, Kamal has intricately embedded the traces of colonial and global forces that continue to shape and affect the local culture.

In neo-liberal attempts of re-designing the local sartorial with the embellishment of global culture are seen destroying the essence of the local/indigenous designs. The other view holds it a creative attempt that excites the consumers and they feel more relevant on a global scale since people are connected worldwide through social networks and means of technology so as for the postcolonial theorist it is the destruction and marginalization of local culture. For the neoliberal economic theorists it is an opportunity for the marginalized and vulnerable to grow on a global scale by merging the local with the global culture. Nevertheless, this debate remains unresolved on account of the unequal opportunities for locals and global. Also, in this distribution of economic opportunities the conflict of social classes becomes an obstacle for the vulnerable to grow and become a part of process.

All in all, *Unmarrigeable*’s sartorial description establishes the society divided along class and caste lines hence, affecting people’s choice of clothing. Dress is used as a marker of socio-economic identity therefore it has also reduced to a commodity. Previously, dress was a symbol of modesty and elegance which has now all together changed and its social and cultural connotations have lost their significance as Nirad C. Chaudhuri wrote “clothing and adornment were and continue to be as much an expression of the nature of things Indian, *rerum Indicarum natura* as any other

human activity, say, politics, social and economic life, culture as embodied in literature or art could be” (ix) but now we see it becoming a socio-economic commodity to define one’s material significance. In this context, the selected writer projects a scenario, where dressed bodies’ only significance lies in material gains and the dress worn has no element of personal satisfaction. It is worn with an intention to grab people’s attention. This materiality and commodification of dress is also the reason to cause identity crisis. As Kamal highlights “Demand is so high for up-and-coming designer Boobee Khan’s Nangaparbat Lawn Collection, we hear two eager customers slapped each other to be first in line” (104). In all this sartorial competition, the territory has been defied and in the process of re-territorialization local culture has become subjective to the global cultural flows.

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