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# The Need for a Native Critical Theory for Post Colonial Literature in India

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**ABSTRACT:** Post colonial literature is a body of literary writings that react to the discourse of colonization. A large number of Indians use the English language as a medium of creative expression. Post colonial can be defined as literature written by colonized and formerly colonized peoples. R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao tried their best to give new identity to Indian writings in English. Writers like Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya had chalked out a plan to altar the map of post colonial Indian English literature. In this paper we discussed the writings of Kamala Markandaya, Khushwant Singh, Salman Rushdie, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala Anita Desai and Arundhati Roy on the map of Post Colonial English Fiction.

**KEYWORDS-**Post, colonial, literature, English, fiction, writings

## I. INTRODUCTION

The term Post Colonialism is a critical theory which focuses colonial experience from the colonized society's point of view. The term Post Colonial came after the term 'Colonial' which was based on the theory of the superiority of European culture or imperial culture and the rightness of the empire. Colonial literature means the literature written by the native people including the writings by creoles and indigenous writers during the colonial times. Post Colonial literature means the literature written after the withdrawal of the imperial power from the territory of the native people. Having got the freedom from the colonial rule, the postcolonial people thought of having their identity. Post Colonial literature is a body of literary writings that reacts to the discourse of colonization. Post Colonial theory deals with a wide spectrum of issues like hybridity, otherness, globalization, homelessness etc. it is an essential condition that post colonial literature must be written in English. In closing decades of twentieth century the term 'Post Colonial' has gained currency and what is more it has eclipsed terms like postmodernism, post structuralism and so on. Indian writing in English has acquired a great significance in recent years not only in India but all over the world. A large number of Indians use the English language as a medium of creative expression. Post colonial can be defined as literature written by colonized and formerly colonized peoples. In this paper we are going to discuss the writings of Kamala Markandaya, Khushwant Singh, Salman Rushdie, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, and Arundhati Roy on the map of Post Colonial English Fiction. R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao tried their best to give new identity to Indian writings in English. A new group of writers have arrived on the Indian scenario for example Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Arun Joshi, Salaman Rushdi, Shobha De, Shashi Deshpande and Arundhati Roy. Indian English fiction succeeded to win almost every well known literary prize in the world. Actully speaking the most interesting aspect of the fiction at the turn of the present century from the Indian point of view is the emergence of new talent.[1,2,3] The most sensational literary event in the recent past was probably the publication of Salman Rushdie's masterpiece 'Midnight Children' which become an international success instantly in its release. Salman Rushdie's novel 'Midnight Children' won the prestigious Booker Mcconnel prize for fiction in 1981. It has been recognized as a landmark novel and important turning point in post independence Indian fiction in English. His novel 'Midnight Children' is extremely complex context of post colonial Indian English literature. Post Colonialism in Indian English literature can be termed as the continual shaking off of the old skin of western thought and the emergence of new consciousness cognizance and celebration. Among many female writers Ruth Pravar Jhabvala is one who has explored the contexts of the real complex intercultural conflict. She has virtually reached her own conclusions regarding the interaction between eastern masculinity and western femininity in post independence era. Jhabvala's 'A Backward Place' shows a very fusion of the east and the west as her European sensibility mixes with Indian sensibility and presents the compare and contrast of two cultures. The material of most of Jhabvala's novel is couched in post colonial Indian setting. Her creative world is full of refuges wanderness, westernness and those who have lost of sense of national identity. Her novels can legitimately be considered as powerful studies of the Post Colonial India because of her portrayal of social, cultural, economic and political life. Anita Desai is one of the best living authors of English today. Her novels are studies of her protogonist's psychological development. In all her major works like Cry The Peacock, By The Fireside, Bye Bye Black Bird, In Custody she lays equal emphasis on the feminine characters and takes special interest in projecting the essential features that dominate these characters. Her academi award winning novel, Where Shall We Go This Summer? deals with Sita's awareness of the basic dichotomy in the urban milieu, between compassion and the odour of death and destruction, and her resultant urge to free herself from the entire civilization and

reach affirmation. Her other works *Fire On The Mountain* and *Fasting Feasting* also deals with similar existential questions tormenting the individuals.

Kamala Markandaya is another famous Indian writer. Her entire creative work of art devoted to India. She is the author of several books. The novel *Nectar in a Sieve* highlights the problem of women in colonial India. [2,3,4] Her another novel 'Silence of Desire' is a family drama. Her most ambitious novel is 'The Golden Honeycomb' a historical and how coming of Indian independence affected the native place. Kamala Markandaya's another novel 'Silence of Desire' is a family drama. The main character of the novel *Sarajini*, is a pious Hindu housewife, who sees life full of sufferings due to severe ailment, spends much of her time in day to day life in prayers and visiting temple where she listens the preaching of Swami. Shobha De is one of the most candid novelists in India. She is the most popular woman writer of India. 'Socialite Evenings' the first novel of Shobha De describes the journey of Karuna, from the middleclass girl to a self sufficient Bombay socialite. In the novel 'Starry Nights' which is a story of a film star Asha Rani deals with the theme of her exploitation, her survival, her fall and her rise. Khushwant Singh's 'Train to Pakistan' indirectly appeals the need of complete harmony between man's inner and outer self. While dealing with contemporary theme he has touched upon a number of universal issues relating to man and his surrounding. During late nineteen seventies a new breed of convent and elite class of novelist and writers emerged who forever had chalked out a plan to alter the map of post colonial Indian English literature. The theme of east west encounter has been treated by number of Indian women writers including Bharati Mukherjee, Gita Mehata, Nayantara Sahgal etc. Bharati Mukherjee too takes up for treatment the problem of adjustment that Indians living in the west have to face. In her novel 'Wife' Amit and his wife Dimple face the problem in their own ways, as Amit devotes himself to moneymaking and Dimple for whom coming to America is a dream come true, finds it difficult to walk down the streets in pants and sweaters cannot forget Durgapuja when the month of October comes and feels her own body to be 'Curiously alien to her filled with hate, malice, an insane desire to hurt. In some novels of Nayantara Sahgal expressed her opinion about the contemporary political issues and the political scenario of the country. Nayantara Sahgal's novel 'The time of Morning' brings out the confusion and turmoil which the newly acquired Independence of India brought along with it. The partition of India, election campaigns, clashes between members of the ruling political party resulting in splits and agitations over issues like the official language of a state constitute the main part of the novel. 'A Situation In New Delhi' is a novel about corruption, rampant in the country and the confusion prevailing everywhere after the death of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India. Being the novelist and activist Arundhati Roy has also written about the injustice in her non-fiction writing. She has touched the subject like social justice, human right, untouchability and international politics. In her novel 'The God Of Small Things' she performs the responsibility of writer and activist. She focuses on gender biasness and class and caste inequalities. Through this novel Roy clearly shows herself as a writer and a social activist. She challenges the traditional injustice done to women because of their gender and class discrimination. [3,4,5] Thus Indian English writers have highlighted Post Colonial issues like darkness of ignorance, illiteracy, starvation, suffering and humiliation in more specific ways. This work is significant in making society aware of people's demands and providing a medium for self expression. Thus Post Colonial Indian literature reflect the experiences of native people in colonial period through various forms either novels, poems and other forms of literature.

## II. DISCUSSION

Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is clearly an agenda for total disorder. But it cannot be accomplished by the wave of a magic wand, a natural cataclysm, or a gentleman's agreement. Decolonization, we know, is an historical process: In other words, it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self-coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance.

Decolonization is the encounter between two congenitally antagonistic forces that in fact owe their singularity to the kind of reification secreted and nurtured by the colonial situation, Their first confrontation was colored by violence and their cohabitation-or rather the exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer-continued at the point of the bayonet and under cannon fire. The colonist and the colonized are old acquaintances. And consequently, the colonist is right when he says he "knows" them. It is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject. The colonist derives his validity, i.e., his wealth, from the colonial system.

– The Wretched of the Earth, Fanon [4,5,6]

Fanon is the pioneer of postcolonial studies in the world. He is the first thinker to begin to realize the dire consequences of colonialism and again he is the first writer to register his strong opposition to various forms of colonialism. To overcome the trauma of colonialism and to challenge it, he thought, the process of decolonialization had to be initiated.





If the literature written during the hay day of imperialism to support the empire is called colonial literature, then, literature written after the empire ceased to exist to challenge the dominance of the empire on the so called colonized nations is called postcolonial literature. Postcolonialism is an umbrella term which is inclusive of all discourses that challenge the dominance of all kinds of hegemony in all walks of human life. “Postcolonial scholars have pointed out that when two cultures sharing unequal power confront each other, the weaker culture seeks different alternatives to meet the situation. If imitation and internalization of the values of the dominant culture is one of the responses, to struggle to retain its identity by turning to its roots is another”. For instance, the seeds of British imperialism can be seen in Shakespeare and Marlowe who happen to be the two most significant British renaissance writers. It is Queen Elizabeth who gave the royal consent to the British Navy to sail across the European oceans and reach the far off places for the purpose of trade and commerce which eventually led to the establishment of the British colonies creating a new chapter in the history of British Raj. Prospero in Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, for his own political reasons, comes to an island for shelter for him as well as for his only daughter. He, in the course of time, acquires control over the original inhabitants of the island, considers them as savages, uncivilized brutes who need to be taught lessons in life and treats them as inferior forgetting the fact that he himself is an outsider and has come here to get shelter. He hates the culture, language and manners of the inhabitants living on the island and thinks that he has come here to redeem them from what he considers to be an uncivilized way of life. [5,6,7] We hardly see any difference between what Prospero did on the island and what the British did when they annexed a large part of India. Similarly, we find no big difference between what the former British Imperialism did in their colonies and what the American neo-imperialism is doing now in some parts of the globe today.

One of the most exciting features of English literature today is the explosion of postcolonial literatures– literatures written in English in former colonised societies. This has given rise to a range of theoretical ideas, concepts, problems and debates, and these have been addressed in a range of articles, essays, talks and books. Here an attempt is made on to look at the postcolonial studies in Indian literature. It was a period which witnessed many changes in Indian society. The impact of Western education and industrial developments were led to radical changes in society. The writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Bankimchand Chatterjee, Sarat Chandra, Premchand, O. Chandumenon, Gulwadi Venkata Rao and many others from different parts of India wrote about the colonised India. They have addressed various developments and reforms in their works. People of that period including political leaders, nationalists, writers and the masses started to think in their own ways. However, colonialism became the centre of discussion for the people of all sections. In the early 19th century most of the writers focused more on social issues of the society. The social reformists played a significant role in changing the society. The social reformists like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanada Saraswati, K.C. Sen, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Annie Besant, Surendranth Banerjee and Jyotiba Phule have tried to give a new life to the decadent contemporary society and thought about the social problems of the society through their writings. The intellectuals of this period started spreading the message of progressive and rational ideas.

Indian society in the colonial period was very rigid and was beset with social evils like the Sati, widow-remarriage, the caste system and the social, religious as well as all kinds of hegemony. The primary aim of the writers of this period in most of the Indian vernaculars was to alert people of the consequences of these evils and also to bring awareness among them. For instance, in Malayalam, O. Chandumenon in his work *Indhulekha* (1889) takes “issue with the colonial characterization of Nair society and especially of Nair women.”<sup>2</sup> “The modern education *Indhulekha* received gives her a necessary strength to shape up her own life. She is able to use the new education to help consolidate the strength of her own community in relation to the Nambuthiris.”<sup>3</sup> In Kannada Gulvadi Venkatrao in his novel *Indirabai* (1899) presents the question of widowhood and supports widow remarriage in the transition period. M.Vedanayakam Pillai in his collection of poems *Penputtimalai* (*The Garland of Female Wisdom*) emphasises the need for women education. Ishwar Gupta in Bengali and Dalapatram in Gujarati wrote poems about widow remarriage, women education and patriotism.<sup>4</sup> The sati system, child marriage, marginalisation of women, widow-remarriage were in vogue during the period. The intellectual-reformists tried to uproot such evil practices from society and to translate their dreams into reality, they used theory writing as a tool to bring these issues to the notice of the people of their times.

In postcolonial writing a greater emphasis was put on the process of colonialization and attempt was made to record a strong resistance to the masters of the colonized societies besides insisting on contemporary realities of life. It deals with the literature written in colonized countries about the sufferings of the masses and also about the resistance of the people who were at the receiving end. Postcolonial writings can be considered as the historical marker of the period because it deals the literature which comes after decolonization. Postcolonial writers engaged themselves in opening up the possibilities of a new language and a new way of looking towards the world. Their writings can be taken as a medium of resistance to the former colonizer. Their themes focus on the issues like identity, national and cultural heritage, hybridity, partition, contemporary reality, human relationships and emotions etc.

The rise of Indian English writing in postcolonial era was a significant development in Indian English literature. In the Indian context, postcolonial writing with its new themes and techniques makes its presence felt in the English-speaking world. Subaltern study is also a major sphere of current postcolonial practice. Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, Kancha Iliah, Ranjit Guha and others have focused on the subaltern issues in their works. The literary works of the colonial nationalist period revolved around themes like marginalization, widowhood and widow remarriage. It was Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, who for the first time, sought to bring the national movement and patriotism in his novel *Anandmath* (1882). Later, it was followed by Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and others. Tagore's *Gora* (1910) is also the product of the colonial period, which ultimately questions nationalism and the reader at the end of the novel wonders whether nationalism is an illusion or a reality.

The entire history of Indian English novel can broadly be divided into two periods—pre-independence novel and post-independence novel. The pre-independence period witnessed a slow growth of Indian English novel. It begins with the publication of Bankimchandra Chatterjee's *Raj Mohan's Wife* in 1864. Most of the novelists of this period like Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Rabindranath Tagore, and Raja Rao wrote mainly under the influence of Gandhism and nationalism. They exposed social evils, customs and traditions, rites and rituals, poverty and illiteracy, bonds and bondages in their novels on the one hand and on the other, they made their writings a powerful medium to highlight the east-west encounter and thereby to spread the nationalistic ideas of the great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi among the people. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao presented the radical social and national issues in their novels. The novels produced in the pre-independence period depicted the changing socio-political scene.

But a paradigm shift took place in the post-independence novels both in terms of content and style and novelists like Mulk Raj Anand wrote novels extensively dealing with social evils such as exploitation of the untouchable, the landless peasants, tea garden workers and the problems of industrial labour. The novels like *Untouchable* (1935), [6,7,8] *Coolie* (1936) *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937) and *The Village* (1939) are milestones in Anand's journey of social reform. These novels concentrated on social reforms so much. The trend of presenting the social issues for the purpose of social reform got strengthened with the publication of G.V. Desai's *All About Hatter* and Bhavani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers*. While G.V. Desai's *All About Hatter* concentrates on the frontiers of social realism and stresses the need for social reform, Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* studies the socio-economic effects of Bengal famine of early forties. Many women novelists in postcolonial period like Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shobha De, Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, and Kiran Desai carved a niche for themselves in Indian English fiction.

### III. RESULTS

Postcolonialism is critical theoretical movement which emerged in arts and humanities and has a defining impact on the anthropological mode of understanding of indigenous people. The theory emphasized to interpret and critic the culture of colonialism and imperialism and is product of resistance to colonialism and imperialism. Postcolonial theory seeks to investigate what happens when two cultures clash and one of them considers itself as superior and assumes dominance and control over the other. The foundation of postcolonial movement have lasting impact on several disciplines like literature, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, comparative religion and regional studies etc.

Anthropology, more than any other of the Western academic disciplines, has been the target of criticism from postcolonial thinkers. This is because of overlapping trajectories of colonization and anthropological practices in the different part of the world. The theory questioned the intellectual authority of Europeans to define the native and to represent their culture.

#### 1. POSTCOLONIALISM: DEFINITION

The postcolonial can simply mean after colonialism. However, what should be called postcolonial has become a contested idea. The colonialism refers to physical occupation of one land by people associated with another place. This involves settlement of colonies and agriculture and industry building etc. The term imperialism is used to refer to removal of resources and wealth of any area without actual settlement.

Scholar have argued that there could be two way of writing postcolonialism differentiated by the use of hyphen. Post-colonialism with a hyphen refers to a temporal aftermath: that is a period of time after colonialism and postcolonialism without hyphen refers to a critical aftermath: critique of colonialism that lie beyond but remain closely influenced by colonialism. The critical aftermath which directs its attention towards understanding of contestation of colonial domination and legacies of colonialism is most important goal of postcolonial thinking.

## 2. POSTCOLONIALISM: BEGINNING

The postcolonialism can trace its beginning in the movements against colonial empires; the leaders who were the fountainhead against these movements shaped the discourse of anti-empire sentiment and language of resistance. The Algerian national Franz Fanon was most important among them and he is widely regarded as the founding stone of postcolonial thinking in west.

Franz Fanon was born in a French colony in Caribbean called Martinique. He was trained in psychiatry and medicine in France at University of Lyon. He chose to pursue his career as psychiatrist in Algeria another French Colony in Africa. There he started participating in Algerian war of independence lead by Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) and resigned from his medical position. He started writing for the FLN and editing their journal EL Moujahid. Fanon himself experienced the colonial might and resisted it throughout his life. He applied his training in psychopathology for the analysis of colonialism. He was influenced with the dialectic materialism of Marx and Hegel and used it for understanding of colonial dominants on local people.

He wrote *Black Skin White Mask* to explore the experiences of black people in French colonies; in Caribbean, in France and in conflict ridden Algeria. He examines the role of racial features in shaping of life of people in colonies. He has experienced the exploitation and suffering of black race that live with a sense of inferiority in colonies. He discusses the attempt of black native elites to internalize the colonial norms and values and failure to change the skin colour which is black. The native surrenders to the will of white masters and only way to emancipate them were to hide behind white mask as their skin cannot be white. The black elites have to wear white mask to get recognition from outside or sometimes even from themselves as peer social groups in colonies. His work brings in the dialectical and psychological dimension of making of black people as 'negro' and as 'others' and its traumatizing effects on the human psyche. He proposes for the unmasking of black men and women from white ideology and constructing their own identity— free from white norms and values as the primary way of emancipation.

His other important works like *Dying Colonialism* and *Wretched of the Earth* are call for decolonization and are situated within his moral commitment to bring equal rights and recognition to every human being. In *Dying Colonialism* he describes the Algerian revolutionary movements and tactics deployed by Algerians against the colonizers. In *Wretched of the Earth* he recommends the revolutionary path decolonizing nation must take to rid themselves of colonizers. He believes in the participation of local masses in black revolution against colonizers and use of violence in decolonization process. His agenda of violence is about throwing it back to the colonizers who have used violence for colonization.

The writings of Fanon anticipate several of ideas which are central to postcolonial thinking today. Several other scholars in academics like Aime Cesires and Albert Memmi were also writing and reflecting upon the colonizer and colonized realities of the days before the emergence of postcolonialism in academics in 1980s.

Mahatma Gandhi who was negotiating freedom from colonial regime in Indian subcontinent wrote *Hind Swaraj* (1909) which can be taken as one of the earliest critic of colonial power. It is very important declaration of self-rule and rejection of western centric notion of civilization. It emphasizes the virtue of Indian tradition and rejects the superiority of western life style. His ideas have guided the making of Indian nation and nationalism in various ways. Though there is lack on part of social thinkers in India to build upon the legacy of Gandhi for conceptualizing Indian social thoughts instead of borrowing Marx, Durkheim and Weber of Industrial West. Recently the historians in Subaltern Studies Group have highlighted the importance of Gandhian Thinking for understanding postcolonial India.

The important thinking in postcolonialism is grounded in the work of three scholars namely Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi K Bhabaha. They represent the so-called "Holy Trinity of Postcolonialism" and it is important to discuss their work to understand postcolonial theory.

### 1.1 Edward W. Said

Edward W Said was born in Jerusalem Palestinian. He attended a British school in Cairo and got higher education at Princeton and Harvard. From 1963 until his death he was a professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University in New York. He emerged as the most prominent name in postcolonial theories and considered as pioneer in the field.[7,8]

His book *Orientalism* (1978) is considered founding text and source book for the postcolonial studies. This book directs its attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and consolidation of

colonial power. Orientalism elaborates a unique understanding of imperialism /colonialism as an epistemological and cultural attitude which accompanies the curious habit of dominating and whenever possible ruling the distant territories. Orientalism is defined as the project of teaching, writing and researching the orient. The orient was represented as mystical, irrational and sensuous with ironically ambivalent fascination and disgust by Europeans. He questions the self-imposed authoritative position taken by westerners citing Marx's remark for Asians that 'they cannot represent themselves so they need to be represented'. Said problematize the binaries created by west to essentialize and reify the way of life of people in the east. As Said puts it: "Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, West, "us") and the strange (the Orient, the 'East, "them")."

Thus Said's critic was not directly engaging with system of colonial power and practices but the system of colonial knowledge and the creation of orient as unified cultural area and category of representation. He bluntly rejects the western representation and its epistemological claims. Said critic was basically founded upon his studies of own native area West Asia and North Africa and his active interest in Palestinian Cause. His later work like *The Question of Palestine*, (1979), *Covering Islam* (1981), focuses upon the Zionist imperialism as well as United States Islamophobia. In his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said examines the complex and ongoing relationships between east and west, colonizer and colonized, white and black, and metropolitan and colonial societies even after decolonization. Here, he is less confrontational in his approach and rather accepts though ambivalently the western discourse.

### 1.2 Homi K. Bhabha

Homi K. Bhabha is a cultural critic and one of the leading postcolonial theorists of the present time. He is currently professor of English at Harvard University. Bhabha was born in Mumbai, India in a Parsi Family. He received Padma Bhushan by Indian Government for his contribution in the field of literature. He developed the theoretical insights of postcolonialism and coined several neologisms like mimicry, hybridity, ambivalence and influence etc. He was inspired by Lacanin psychoanalysis, poststructuralism and postmodernism in his critic of various constructions of cultural identity.

In postcolonial studies the question of rendering natives marginalized without any agency and identity of their own and the misrepresentation of native culture and distortion of native subjects has been crucial issue. Bhabha in his essay "Of Mimicry and Man" (1985) deal with this issue with the concept of Mimicry. Mimicry is the process of imitation by indigenous colonized to the life style of colonizers. The colonizers taught and disciplined the native people to learn and ape the white man culture and become civilized "like them but not quite". He asserts the colonizers also wish to maintain certain difference so that they can rule them forever. This shows the 'ambivalence' of colonizers in their desire to reform the subjects but not a total transformation like Englishmen. This dilemma result into, what Bhabha calls mimicry. He believes that mimicry has subversive power because "disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority." Though the native who mimic the colonizers culture never realize the power of becoming reformed, recognizable other and its potential to undermine the powerful system of colonizers. Bhabha believes that mimicry can lead to mockery and subversion of colonizers by colonized.

In his most important work *The Location of Culture* (1994) Bhabha deals with negotiations of cultural identity across race, gender and cultural traditions in colonial situations. He is against all claims of purity of racial and national identity and instead believes in in-between categories and hybridity. He maintains that identity is produced in a third space which is in-between real and idealized space. This third space is the precondition for the articulation of cultural differences. The colonizers and colonized can also not be viewed as separate entities defining themselves independently without recognizing each other historically. Instead he suggests the on-going negotiation of cultural identity involves the exchange of cultural performance and production of hybridity. He believes in understanding of cultural differences which is situated not only in the analysis of colonial past but also in postcolonial present. Hybridity emphasizes the interdependence of colonizers and colonized and its continuous interactions after decolonization.

In his other very important work *Nation and Narration* (1990) Bhabha limits nationalism to a mere narrative. He critics the essentialist reading of third world national identity supposedly as innate, traditional and homogenous which renders them inferior to other nations. The idea of nation is construction emerging from contesting hybrid cultural constituencies.

Bhabha being a diasporic scholar seeks to find the location of culture in marginal spaces and share the vision of postcolonial misrepresentation. These ideas have lasting effects on understanding the cultural differences in present world. Anthropologist can take this critical agenda further for understanding the identity of indigenous people in so called nation state.



### 1.3 Gaytri Chakravarti Spivak

Gaytri C. Spivak is a radical postcolonial literary critic. She herself is a third world woman of colour, Bengali exile from India and at the same time diasporic elite, intellectual currently teaching at prestigious Columbia University. Her critics of postcolonial realities are uneasy marriage of feminism, Marxism and deconstructionism. She received Padma Bhushan from Government of India for her contributions to literary criticism and feminist literature.

The exemplar of her theory, the essay “Can the Subaltern Speak” is a masterful work first published in *Marxism and The Interpretation of Culture* (1988). In her essay, Spivak casts doubt on the categories like third world and postcolonial and label them as unstable, essentialist categories. These categories are product of violent encounter between colonial powers and natives. She terms this process of creation and continuation of knowledge of others as ‘epistemic violence’ of colonization.

She raises her concern with the postcolonial approaches that study the subaltern and claim to provide the academic voices for them. She believes that these postcolonial critics instead reinforce and co-opt the neocolonial imperatives of subjugation, exploitation, discrimination and cultural erasure. She questions the location of postcolonial writers in privileged western academic institutions and its influence in recycling of colonial system of knowledge and power. She finds serious faults with such kind of postcolonial efforts to ameliorate the subaltern from oppression and marginalization. She, for example, is apprehensive of subaltern historiography approach developed in leadership of Ranjit Guha to write alternative postcolonial history of marginalized in India.

Her major theoretical work is *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of Vanishing Present* (1999). She also translated the writings of Mahasweta Devi a Bengali Writer of Adivasi Literature to present them as parameter for postcolonial thinking.

### 3. SUBALTERN STUDIES GROUP

Subaltern Studies Collective came into being in 1980s with a purpose of attempting alternate historiography of India. The group under the leadership of historian Ranjit Guha and other founding members directed their attention to free the Indian history from the shackles of Colonial Eurocentric elitist model of historiography. They aimed at making peasants, tribals as and other marginalized group as the main subject of historical research and writing. This group over the years has created a set of scholarship with diverse interest and appeal but notion of marginality and subalternity remained central to the ideas and writing of the scholars who associated with it. The theoretical movement has inspired the Latin American Studies and African Studies and has achieved a global recognition.

The subaltern studies group has immensely contributed to the understanding of history of marginalized group and has helped in correcting the wrongs of colonial form of history writing. The projects have moved towards postcolonial understanding of Nationalism and identity issues in Indian context particularly in the work of Partha Chattarjee. This school has several convergences with postcolonial thinking in literature. Both the school together has immense potential to contribute to the anthropological fieldwork in South Asia.

### 4. ANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS COLONIAL/POSTCOLONIAL ENCOUNTER

Anthropologists were apprehensive of adopting the postcolonial thinking because it puts all classical anthropological enterprise into question. The postcolonial critic which was largely ‘coming from outside’ targeted the ethnographic practice and power relations it wield over its subject and objects of study. Many of the postcolonialists like Said have specifically questioned the anthropologist role in creation of “Other”. However, there were increased consciousnesses inside discipline about the power relations which have always existed between observers and observed. Anthropology as a discipline have always been sympathetic to the people they study and have advocated the preservation of their culture and tradition from western influences. However in process have also distorted the local realities, exoticized local culture and single handedly wrote people’s history and fate.

Anthropology has anticipated many of the concerns raised by Postcolonial critics. Saudi born anthropologist Talal Asad edited a book *Anthropology and Its Colonial Encounter* (1973) to highlight the interesting parallels between colonization and anthropology and its consequences for colonized people. All the contributors in this volume were skeptical of colonial biases in anthropological writings of past. This was the part of reflexive turn which was emerging in discipline in 70s. This work has been instrumental in raising the awareness of colonial imprints on ethnographic fieldwork and writings.



Dutch anthropologist Johannes Fabian in his *Time and Other* (1983) blended his critical argument with anthropological attempts of freezing the community in a particular time when ethnographic fieldwork was conducted. Not only the notion of bounded holistic community but also the fixing of others in a particular “ethnographic present” is problematic too. Jack Goody in her *East in the West* (1996) reassesses the Eurocentric biases present in writings of East in the western academician. She challenges the exaggerations of traditional family and labour relation as hindrance to the east societies. She questions the western rationality which seeks to modernize the west but not the east. This leads to the misconceptions about east and misunderstanding of the west.

The doubts over anthropological writings and methods started to surface from educated native community members from different corners. Vine Deloria an expert of Native American Studies, a Lakota Sioux tribe, wrote *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1970). He furiously rejected the relativism of Franz Boas which lead to the eternal exoticism of Native Americans. He was highly critical of those who tried to speak about and on behalf of native and in process stopping them to speak for themselves. Linda Tuhai Smith is a Maori indigenous Scholar from New Zealand who has called for the *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) of social science which claims to research and write about third world indigenous people. She believes that “research” is one of the dirtiest words in the vocabulary of Indigenous World. Smith in her book remarks that the “ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized peoples”. She highlights the imperialist ideology implicit in the western knowledge creation and decolonizing research can help to reclaim the indigenous way of knowing and being.

The impact of the postcolonial critics like Edward Said was so deep that it motivated James Carrier to edit the counter narrative to the *Orientalism* called *Occidentalism* (1995) in which he proposed that oriental peoples also have a biased and stereotypical view of west. The contributors to this volume outlined the need of highly reflexive writings to erase these mutual stereotypical representations. In *Threatening Anthropology* (2004) David Price shows that how anthropology has been used as a cover for spying and military work and has added to imperialistic powers till date. The use of anthropologists during Iraq war has also been confronted by Marshall Sahlins in his writing. Many of the continuing impacts of colonial power structure is inherent in western system of knowledge creation which need to be dismantled for future abuse of colonized nations. The postcolonial thinking provides a window to these endeavors.

Many of anthropologists still believe in the power of empirical scientific research of simple communities and its role in understanding and interpreting the lived reality cross culturally. Earnst Gellener have raised voice against postcolonial thinking for undermining scientific truth claims confusing ideology and analysis, and not understanding that... problem of power and culture is too important to be left to literary criticism.

Indigenous Studies as a discipline has emerged in most of the non-colonized land as a postcolonial discipline to represent the writings about native people. The emergence of indigenous movement across the world has guided the development of indigenous studies as a multidisciplinary subject. The Maori studies in New Zealand, Native studies in Canada, Aboriginal Studies in Australia and Indigenous Studies in USA is example of such efforts to correct the Eurocentric biases in research and writings about indigenous people. These studies have emphasized the use of native tongue and development of indigenous languages for the research and teaching.

Postcolonialism is critical theoretical movement which emerged in arts and humanities and has a defining impact on the anthropological mode of understanding of indigenous people. The theory emphasized to interpret and critic the culture of colonialism and imperialism and is product of resistance to colonialism and imperialism. The postcolonialism can trace its beginning in the movements against colonial empires; the leaders who were the fountainhead against these movements shaped the discourse of anti-empire sentiment and language of resistance. Franz Fanon, Mahatma Gandhi, Aime Cesires and Albert Memmi were thinkers who anticipated the present understanding of postcolonial thinking. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) is considered founding text and source book for the postcolonial studies. This book directs its attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and consolidation of colonial power. Homi K. Bhabha is a cultural critic and one of the leading postcolonial theorists who reflect upon the question of rendering natives marginalized without any agency and identity of their own and the misrepresentation of native culture and distortion of native subjects has been crucial issue. Gaytri C. Spivak is a radical postcolonial literary critic who in her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak” theorizes ‘epistemic violence’ of colonization. Anthropology has anticipated many of the concerns raised by Postcolonial critics. Saudi born anthropologist Talal Asad edited a book *Anthropology and Its Colonial Encounter* (1973) to highlight the interesting parallels between colonization and anthropology and its consequences for colonized people. The doubts over anthropological writings and methods started to surface from educated native community members from different corners. Vine Deloria and Linda Tuhai Smith are examples of such indigenous scholarships.[7]

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Postcolonial theory is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century. Postcolonial theory takes many different shapes and interventions, but all share a fundamental claim: that the world we inhabit is impossible to understand except in relationship to the history of imperialism and colonial rule. This means that it is impossible to conceive of “European philosophy,” “European literature,” or “European history” as existing in the absence of Europe’s colonial encounters and oppression around the world. It also suggests that colonized world stands at the forgotten center of global modernity. The prefix “post” of “postcolonial theory” has been rigorously debated, but it has never implied that colonialism has ended; indeed, much of postcolonial theory is concerned with the lingering forms of colonial authority after the formal end of Empire. Other forms of postcolonial theory are openly endeavoring to imagine a world after colonialism, but one which has yet to come into existence. Postcolonial theory emerged in the US and UK academies in the 1980s as part of a larger wave of new and politicized fields of humanistic inquiry, most notably feminism and critical race theory. As it is generally constituted, postcolonial theory emerges from and is deeply indebted to anticolonial thought from South Asia and Africa in the first half of the 20th century. In the US and UK academies, this has historically meant that its focus has been these regions, often at the expense of theory emerging from Latin and South America. Over the course of the past thirty years, it has remained simultaneously tethered to the fact of colonial rule in the first half of the 20th century and committed to politics and justice in the contemporary moment. This has meant that it has taken multiple forms: it has been concerned with forms of political and aesthetic representation; it has been committed to accounting for globalization and global modernity; it has been invested in reimagining politics and ethics from underneath imperial power, an effort that remains committed to those who continue to suffer its effects; and it has been interested in perpetually discovering and theorizing new forms of human injustice, from environmentalism to human rights. Postcolonial theory has influenced the way we read texts, the way we understand national and transnational histories, and the way we understand the political implications of our own knowledge as scholars. Despite frequent critiques from outside the field (as well as from within it), postcolonial theory remains one of the key forms of critical humanistic interrogation in both academia and in the world.

There are a number of good introductions to postcolonial theory. Unique to postcolonial theory, perhaps, is that while each introductory text explains the field and its interventions, alliances, and critiques, it also subtly (or not) argues for a particular variety of postcolonial criticism. Loomba 2005 gives an overall sense of the field, and the theoretical relationships between colonialism and Postcolonialism. Given that postcolonial theory has repeatedly come under attack from outside (and from within) the field, these introductions often argue for the necessity of the field, seen most vibrantly in Gandhi 1998 and Young 2003. Additionally, there have been a number of very helpful edited volumes, each of which take place at key points in the field’s history, that keep important texts in circulation where they might not otherwise be available; among these remain Williams and Chrisman 1994 and Afzal-Khan and Seshadri-Crooks 2000. Because so much postcolonial theory is built on or responds to colonial texts, Harlow and Carter 2003, a two-volume set of colonial documents, is a necessary resource to scholars at all levels. Young 2001, an understated “historical introduction” to postcolonialism, is an invaluable resource. For students interested in psychoanalytic or psychological approaches to postcolonial theory, Hook 2012 is a good resource.[8]

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