



DUALISTIC THINKING AS A FOUNDATION OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Postcolonial ideology and sketches its growth after the second World War, an era when a number of cultural European imperial power centres disassembled their empires, and new nations emerged from these formerly colonies. Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha are the three principal theorists involved in postcolonial study relevant to the present study. Said in his book Orientalism has his main contention that the East is a construction of the West through Western discourses such as journals, travel diaries, novels, educational institutions and imperial bureaucratic documents.

Key Words: *Post colonial, orientalism, construction.*

INTRODUCTION

In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Anita Loomba gives a proper survey of contemporary deliberations and tensions in postcolonial ideology and sketches its growth after the second World War, an era when a number of cultural European imperial power centres disassembled their empires, and new nations emerged from these formerly colonies. In postcolonial philosophy, current discussion interlaces amidst a plurality of perspectives. Does the “post”

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in post-colonialism imply only the material facet, marking a split between the time of a people's colonization and what happens after independence? In *The Empire Writes Back*, Tiffin, Ashcroft, and Griffiths argue that this is not the situation and interpret the term "postcolonial" as "all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (2). This accepts that the influence of methods of imperial dominance is unending and yet achieved in current generation.

Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha are the three principal theorists involved in postcolonial study relevant to the present study. Said in his book *Orientalism* has his main contention that the East is a construction of the West through Western discourses such as journals, travel diaries, novels, educational institutions and imperial bureaucratic documents. These Western imperial discourses, termed "Orientalism" by Said, symbolised an East founded by Western thoughts that do not display the spiritual or material reality of the East. Yet, such discourses acted as a medium by which, colonial countries managed power over their colonized peoples through their structures of knowledge. Thus, binary opposition strongly affects Western philosophy; creating the self and other, besides perpetuating notions of the civilized, rational Western psyche over the sensuous, curious Eastern discourse.

Homi Bhabha, another significant theorist, has revealed that such constructions are not certainly unidirectional. Both Eastern colonized and Western colonizer framed images of each other, and while the colonizer demonstrated seemingly superior knowledge and military power, the rapport between both the colonized and colonizer made mixed aspiration towards themselves as well as towards the other. But both are repelled and attracted by the similarities and differences they encountered of each other. Bhabha contends for the third space of hybridity that destabilizes the hierarchical binary framework of colonized/colonizer. There is no legitimate, original culture or race to return to since it may never have existed or it has been altered over the time. Bhabha defends that while the colonized have less power, they still have marks of resistance open to them from which agency may evolve. For instance, the colonizer often has to depend on natives for cultural translation and language, which would likely have influenced a scene of change and resistance. In his article, "Signs Taken for Wonders," Bhabha utilizes the model of the circulation of the Bible to native farmers in the colonial India. It is not an easy cultural activity, but becomes changed and modified in the process, in the local conditions. Therefore, the colonial spirit is always conflicting, discord between its appearance as authoritative and original and its articulation as difference and repetition.

In his article "Of Mimicry and Man," Bhabha describes the risk of mimicry, its double vision which in showing the uncertainty of colonial discourse also breaches its control. He is recreating Fanon's work regarding white masks/black skin whereby colonial dominance is enforced and imposed through the process of mimicry thus the colonized imitate the white colonizer, learning to dream what he has to hate his own blackness. Bhabha proposes that this

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uncertainty of being almost the same but not quite really works to weaken the power of the colonizer, whose culture cannot be aptly copied and consequently undermines the colonized and colonizer.

The theories of mimicry and hybridity of Bhabha have been confronted as generalising the colonial encounters and rapports between colonized and colonizer, when they live in reality varied from location to location. A few contend that these theories ignore the brutality and suppression controlled by the colonial forces, while also neglecting problems of class and gender within the different imperial experiences. It is significant to remind that the colonized learned to incarnate and represent themselves as the Other. What is fruitful in this context, yet, is the feeling that Bhabha communicates the relationship between colonized and colonizer and the identity of both as complex and multiple, unstable and flexible.

In the book *Colonial Desire*, Robert Young specifies that most of the postcolonial study addresses the moral dualism between colonized and colonizer, by that devoting to a promising construction of essentialist classifications of Other and Self, which it is really preferring to uproot. He contends that cultural exchange has both destructive and generative factors and that sex and language have significant points of contact between varied cultures. Both points of contact create mixed forms that absorb in the cultural confrontation. From sexual contact, miscegenated children and from language, mixed forms such as pidgin and creole evolve.

Yet, in the nineteenth century, both forms of cultural fusion or hybridity are considered as degenerative, disturbing ideas of true, genuine, original cultures and races. The term hybridity is customarily employed in a botanical or biological sense as the children of two animals or plants of varied kinds or species such as a mule which served to emphasize a racist, traditional belief that varied races are distinct species and hence not naturally identical. Such thinking assisted in circulating a prospering business in human slavery in America and Victorian England.

Kwame Anthony Appiah argues that postcolonial theory in its present moment is an output from a noble Western-educated intelligentsia that transacts in intellectual products and conceives images of Africa for the world, themselves, and Africa itself:

Postcoloniality is the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: a relatively small, Western-style, Western trained group of writers and thinkers, who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery. In the West, they are known through the Africa they offer; their compatriots know them both through the West they present to Africa and through an Africa they have invented for the world, for each other, and for Africa. (432)

He proposes that in the current fictional world postcoloniality has become an aspect of pessimism, identifying that the “post” in both postmodernism and postcoloniality contest former hegemonic narratives. He contends, yet, that postcoloniality contests these narratives through its interest for human agony and the account of its underlying effects in postcolonial ambiances. He calls it humanism, a human passion that is historically contingent instead of universal and essentialist, and regards that this is the point at which the two posts diverge, suggesting that the readers could regain within postmodernism and the humanism of postcolonial authors. Yet, it is contentious that an involvement for human agony is a human instinct, or an uninterrupted, inspiring postcolonial politics, the interests of which may shift from moment to moment relying on the context. The postmodernism is not regarded with human agony essentially. Preferably, it observes such involvements as contradictory, multiple, flexible and social constructions.

Arif Dirlik, another expert of postcolonialism, regards it a “child of postmodernism” (205) quoted by Loomba in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* that manifests yet another creation of the First World Academy. Dirlik asserts: “Postcoloniality is the condition of the intelligentsia of global capitalism” (Loomba 206). In fact, it is tough to withdraw the plea that postmodernism, post-colonialism and post-structuralism are Eurocentric ideals, implicit in their creation of Western trends of epistemological and ontological knowledge and thought. Keeping this in mind, Loomba contends that while literary texts may demonstrate hegemonic cultural and political beliefs, “literature is also an important means of appropriating, inverting or challenging dominant means of representation and colonial ideologies” (63).

In *Postmodern Literature*, Ian Gregson mentions that post-colonialism and postmodernism are distinct theoretical issues. He defends that anti-colonial or postcolonial literature predate postmodernism, and that the scepticism of postmodernism is problematic to the politics of post-colonialism. He states, yet,

Post-colonialism has made a major contribution to postmodernist undermining of traditional hierarchies, and to its deconstruction of hegemonic assumptions and multiplying of alternative perspectives. (91)

While postcolonial theory seeks to undercut conventional colonial power structures, by that enabling the definition of personal and structural force, globalization is often perceived as antithetical to this action. A few scholars such as Dirlik, yet, denounce postcolonial theory for not taking into account the ambiances of universal capital that affect postcolonial countries at the global and local context.

The opinion that theorizing about the world in terms of centre and margins is no longer essential when the present world is constructed by transnational networks, multinational capital, and the disintegration of ethnic and cultural frontiers. There has been an extensive



international movement of people, involuntary and voluntary, changing beliefs of nation, belonging and home in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

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