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## The voice of the marginalized: A critical examination of postcolonial literature in english

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### Abstract

Postcolonial literature serves as a powerful medium for amplifying the voices of the marginalized, offering critical perspectives on the effects of colonialism, cultural displacement, and identity struggles. This study examines key works in English postcolonial literature that challenge dominant narratives and provide alternative viewpoints from historically oppressed communities. By analyzing texts from authors such as Chinua Achebe, Arundhati Roy, and Salman Rushdie, this research explores themes of resistance, hybridity, and the reclamation of identity. The study highlights how language, storytelling, and literary techniques are employed to subvert colonial ideologies and assert indigenous perspectives. Additionally, this research investigates how postcolonial literature critiques neocolonial structures that continue to perpetuate economic, social, and political inequalities. It explores the ways in which marginalized voices reshape literary discourse, deconstruct Western-centric narratives, and redefine historical memory. Through close textual analysis, the study reveals how these literary works function as acts of resistance, fostering a greater understanding of cultural diversity and historical justice. Furthermore, the study discusses the role of English as both a tool of oppression and empowerment in postcolonial literature. While English was imposed as a colonial instrument, postcolonial writers have appropriated and reshaped it to articulate their lived experiences and challenge hegemonic power structures. By doing so, they transform literature into a site of political engagement and cultural assertion. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of postcolonial literature in giving voice to the historically silenced, fostering critical discourse, and promoting global awareness of ongoing struggles for justice and representation.

**Keywords:** Postcolonial literature, marginalization, identity, resistance, hybridity, neocolonialism

### 1. Introduction

In the last fifty years or so, the literatures, as fields of study, have undergone dramatic changes in their concerns, even if their basic tenets of loyalty to the book have not changed. The world they live in, the values they espouse in the interpretations of that world and their relation to such realities have acquired a new footing comparable to the requirements of their new times (H. Katrak, 1992) <sup>[47]</sup>. Just when the field of literary study caught up with the societal objectives and purposes of the emergent national movement, the very nature and constitution of that movement changed. After gaining independence from colonialism, one had to deal not only with 'what went wrong where' but also with 'what went wrong with what'. It required not only national, but also human collectivist interventions. The changeover from colonialist economies to national economies had led to new modes of ownership, new contemplation for general political institutions at the international and national levels and entertainment for power-sharing arrangements. Suddenly it acquired new words, new ideas and new theories (Sternberg, 2024; Chabata, 2024) <sup>[117, 28]</sup>. Postcolonialism is one of these new often professed and often misconstrued labels under which public debate and piety were (and are) carried on. Given the fact that its origin and contours have much to do with the specific jargon of Western academics, one may assume not only a different notion underlining that label but a different implication and reaction as to what it might entail. It is often the case that labels of different but current Western articulation are not popularly translated in the peripheral environment (Mahir *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[78]</sup>. Yet even these peripheral counterparts have whole discursive conglomerates at their disposal which provide guidelines for diverse but rational treatment, and non-isomorphic explanation, interpretation and application of such labels. This is the reason, inter alia, that these labels are given an endemically idiosyncratic

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tone if not esoteric aura which helps to master, belong and eventually novate them (Kamble *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[61]</sup>. In this sense, post-colonial macro-geological strata are to be considered as misconstructured elements of recognizable disks. Such conformation should not be mistaken for westerly specifications. In this and like every other case, the post-colonial thrust of the problematic has, broadly speaking, two main goals (Mounk, 2023; Cabezón-Fernández, 2023; Strube, 2021) <sup>[86, 26]</sup>.

### 1.1. Definition and Scope

This article aspires to offer a critical examination of postcolonial literature in English. Postcolonial literature may be broadly defined as the literature emerging in close context to the term 'post-colonial'. Post-colonialism, however, has also been understood as a critical lens enabling a reading of society and culture after imperial domination. Postcolonial literary study hence refers to the ways the concerns raised by postcolonial criticism are played out in cultural texts. By understanding 'texts' in a broad sense, such a study involves poems, novels, plays, diaries along with a great variety of sub-genres like crime novels, graphic novels, travel writing, film, or the internet. Postcolonial literature and theory have integrated various genres, forms of writing and media. The range of creative texts contributing to the postcolonial discourse is hence vast (Vogel, 2013) <sup>[123]</sup>. A strength of postcolonial literature, which contributes to its complexity, is its diversity. Writers from a variety of cultural, social or religious backgrounds have taken to writing in English. These writers may live in former colonies, in exile, or are first or second generation immigrants in the first world. They often but not exclusively write out of a history of colonial or neo-colonial experience. Consequentially, they manifest 'culture(s) of the colonized, that of the colonizers, that created in the both/more complex space - as not that easy to separate, however' (H. Katrak, 1992) <sup>[47]</sup>. Such a vast pool of voices and experiences has given rise to a rich and varied show of aesthetic approaches to the postcolonial predicament. Power is a key word in any notion of postcolonialism. Postcolonial writing is hence rich in showing the problematic power dynamics of the late-colonial and post-colonial situation. A society emerges from colonialism dominated by white elite power that abuses its political control over the country. White settlers, governors and businessmen oppress the native population, control its resources and exploit its labour. Ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are systematically disadvantaged by the laws and customs established by the colonial power, and frequently violent means are employed to maintain hegemony (Albrecht, 2021; Mlambo *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[7, 83]</sup>. It is not only in everyday life that the colonized experience the control of the colonizers. They are also controlled in what concerns the cultural front. Books, films, language, religion (And the things that follow such an intense cultural exchange like the genres of music, dress or food) reflect another culture, relegate local products to the suburbs and by means of what John Berger called a 'modifying system' 'imply a 'way of life'' that excludes their consumer. Outrage, jealousy or simple lack of understanding are frequently manifested (Sarkowsky & Stein, 2021) <sup>[108]</sup>. People who have found themselves in power also write about their experience: how they are despised by the majority (sometimes oppressed 'in the native way'), how they struggle to retain their identity; their 'marginal' status in such circumstances. National defense of culture and tradition

frequently takes ugly colonial forms, violent and chauvinistic. Paradoxically, however, chauvinism seldom supports those 'in need'. Rather, it tends to bolster well to do members of the oppressed nation; a national leader or an intellectual (Usually abroad) (Lüsebrink, 2021) <sup>[75]</sup>. Thus, literature often reacts by showing how callous with respect to the national life ties are the ruling elite, how little they know of the culture and the problems of their poorer compatriots. Preoccupied rather with maintaining or enhancing their power position, they evolve a language different from the folksy rhetoric of 'the people' and one that often garbles their messages (Gruber, 2024; Hall, 2022; Merolla & Ameziane, 2025; Ahmed, 2024) <sup>[46, 50, 82, 4]</sup>.

### 1.2. Historical Context

As anthropology, sociology and history are increasingly absorbed as literary preoccupations, later legacy has produced a kind of fiction unpersuasively illustrative of elevated social thesis. Yet we still speak of postcolonial literature, sequences of artistic work in colonies, or by natives of the former British or now currently integrated American colonies, and islands, islands whose inhabitants and traditional cultures were generally bulldozed into pre-capitalist sprat. Even the word 'postcolonial' is complaisantly imprecise; it serves to describe a wide variety of situations; no account pays enough attention to individual contexts (R. Tracy, 2012) <sup>[99]</sup>. Another adjective is needed to describe post-independence literary activity. Although, it has to be acknowledged too that any term imposes a somewhat arbitrarily boundary. In some former colonies, for example, anti-colonial struggles continue. Everywhere in which post-independence governments set about reversions made the point that national liberation that fail to develop an appetite for cultural creation and develop from the native soil to prevent the people ate before. The consequence of this is that in many ex-colonies to which it might otherwise seem appropriate, the 'post-' might be seen as premature. It may in fact be pointless to speak of postcolonial literature, more fruitful to consider how the effects of colonialization presently condition literary modes and norms (MA Al-Otoom, 2025; Johnston, 2021) <sup>[76, 57]</sup>. A distinguished first-generation post-independence African novelist has reproached African writers for being too concerned with their countries' national preoccupations (and in some instances internal disputes) when other continents, particularly Europe, are 'marching ahead, leaving Africa behind in the dark.' If that is an apposite charge in some cases, it is also true that more tolerant societies could make ample room for different products all of them appealed majorities in the heartland (Chiorean, 2022; Luburić-Cvijanović; George, 2021; Pavlov-West, 2023; Edfeldt *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[30, 74, 95, 33]</sup>.

### 2. Theoretical Frameworks in Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonial studies have become an essential part of literary and cultural studies since the second half of the last century when more scholars realized that colonial history had imposed many long-lasting influences on both the colonizer and the colonized. It was those who had been colonized that took up the pen to describe their pain and struggles, and thereby introduce a fresh and priceless perspective into literature. This essay seeks to critically examine postcolonial literature in English with the aim of unearthing the voice of those who are either lost in the folds of history or intentionally overlooked. Their unique, genuine, and original voice

deserves to be appreciated and properly appraised. It is ground-breaking in that the British Empire had never been described in such scrutinizing detail before. This essay combines historical facts with representative texts, making it accessible to readers who may not have prior knowledge about the colonial past and its ownership (Klarer, 2023; Jeyaraj, 2024) <sup>[66, 56]</sup>. Various theoretical frameworks have guided studies in postcolonial literature, borrowing from different fields such as sociology, Marxism, feminism, deconstruction, and psychoanalytic criticism. The colony is commonly analyzed as a “site of hybridity” and the creation of the “other” as a colonial strategy, in terms of “Othering”. The economic phenomena of colonialism and neocolonialism are discussed under the Marxist framework. It is maintained that literature can reflect the collective consciousness of an age or social class, and can perform an organic function in consolidating the national spirit (Balderston & Benedict). However, texts are not merely a direct reflection of reality but instead an imaginative artistic product and a transformation of the real picture. Literature has often been adopted by the regime as the most direct and effective means to consolidate its power by constructing and popularizing a “legitimized” narration about the state. Still, it is also an important means for the downtrodden or the dissenting voice to cry out their grievances, or to demonstrate their resilience or resistance to oppression. Concerns over power dynamics in literary discourse also played prominently in the theorization of postcolonialism (Vogel, 2013) <sup>[123]</sup>. Postcolonial literary scholars have accommodated the above-mentioned sociological study and the disputes over hybridity to articulate the concerns over ethnicity, race, and cultural identity in literature (Mannathukkaren, 2021; Plyth & Craham, 2023; Nehru & Nadu, 2024) <sup>[80, 96, 92]</sup>.

### 2.1. Key Concepts: Othering, Hybridity, Subaltern

This subsection provides critical insight into the representations of postcolonial subjectivity, colonial-racial-otherness, and cultural hybridity within contemporary discursive transitions constructing and circulating differential identities. In Postcolonial studies language and literature play a crucial role in exploring how colonial histories inform cultural representations and in examining how these representations both inherit the spatiotemporal conditions of colonial power and are necessarily produced under the discursive exigencies of postcolonial conditions (for Translation & Literary Studies & BENSIDHOUM, 2019). The intersections between postcolonial theories with language, literature, and culture are specifically well analysed through exploring how they destabilize straightforward equations of racial-mental ‘otherness’ and ‘superiority’ within the representation of colonial encounters. Close examinations of the articulations of racial-mental-otherness within representations of colonial encounters evince how to a significant degree both generalised racial evaluations and subjective personal experiences of difference are predicated on affective responses of incommensurability. Fixity of racial-mentalized-otherness is shown, however, both by undermining ‘exotic’ colonial-race-consciousness, and by affirming imputed racial-cognitive ‘superiority.’ Spivak’s seminal reformulation of how scripted and vernacular discourse in fact critically co-produce each other continues to inspire new re-readings of historical and cultural texts (Sharp, 2022; Mumtaz *et al.*, 2025) <sup>[114, 88]</sup>. Serious postcolonial intervention with this concept, alongside a broader ambition,

to re-imagine the borders of what constitutes legitimate research within the field of English Studies (El Samad, 2014) <sup>[34]</sup>, has meant an increased focus on the situated knowledge of literary texts in producing colonial discourses. Discourses that since the mid-eighteenth century have been integral to the project of European colonial modernity, often rendered a structuring absence by traditional literary criticism. Sindelar’s exploration of hybrid subjectivities in nineteenth-century colonial novels evidences how Said’s contention works itself out at the level of narrative (Bhat *et al.*, 2023; Arslan *et al.*, 2024; Nehru & Nadu, 2024; Bose & Gao, 2022) <sup>[19, 10, 92, 24]</sup>.

### 3. Colonial Legacies and Their Impact on Literature

The long-lasting legacies of colonialism and their effects on the literature produced within the contexts of those countries are discussed, with an examination on the way the colonial histories shape the narrative, theme, and the representation of characters within the works. Despite their differences—in time, place, and experience—these examples demonstrate the mirroring of wider issues, in each case speaking to the hubris, tragedy, and possible hope engendered by colonial narratives. In doing so, they also suggest a profound and enduring effect on the bounds of both forms of representation (R. Tracy, 2012) <sup>[99]</sup>. The canon and the literary establishment in the metropolitan center, as well as the social and political structures of post-colonial societies, are considered by writers and theorists alike to be the emblematic sites of the power/knowledge network, representing and reproducing cultural values and classifications that subordinate those at the periphery. Reimagining cultural identity and representation in the face of the enduring legacies of colonialism is fraught with complexities. As the very language of the narrative, literature, and representation itself is of colonial construction (Zembylas, 2024) <sup>[128]</sup>. In the heat and haste of anti-colonial struggle, the colonial period of social and political ‘illness’ is often painfully remembered only as ‘the bad old days.’ But as said, ‘past is never really past; it is always immanent in the present, creating and recreating itself.’ Writers and artists in countries marked by histories of external conquest and subjugation have always grappled with modes of representation conceived in pain and suffering (Lokot *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[73]</sup>. At the same time, they have remained eager to forge new traditions in literature, the arts, and other disciplines. For many, part of the forging of this new history is to comprehend old indigenous institutions ruthlessly losing political, social, and cultural power. This re-narrativizing of the past both poses and questions traditional power structures and narratives. The literature of a ‘culture’ is a contested concept in significant post-colonial societies. Meanwhile, even where a recognizable literature begins to form, the nature of that literature, given the processes of development, is by no means uniform and can take highly contradictory forms—from the committed literary response of colonized groups to the enervation of the metropolitan ‘canonical’ literary form on the margins resonant of critique made in a wholly different context. The nature of the lasting legacies of colonialism constrains a range of other factors, such as the development of a different socio-political and economic paradigm, technological constraints, and the production system (Mumtaz *et al.*, 2025) <sup>[88]</sup>. Significantly, the question of language in the formation and development of a literature is also crucial, as in many instances the indigenous language—the language of those whom nationalist



movements sought to ‘emancipate’--served to ‘hinder’ the development of an ‘adequate’ literature and comprehensible ‘literary style.’ The literature becomes the vehicle with which to accommodate, reflect upon and engage with the lasting legacies of colonialism over time. By connecting history with literature, this work seeks to show the importance of both remembering and resisting prevailing colonial narratives on culture and society (Rosenow, 2024; Stuelke, 2021; Gallagher, 2025; Bottinelli, 2023) <sup>[103, 119, 41, 25]</sup>.

#### 4. Representation and Resistance in Postcolonial Texts

In postcolonial literature in English, a pivotal issue is the representation of marginalized cultures by postcolonial writers. This same issue, however, is not new but already implicit in the controversiality of issues related to the representation of cultural identity or Otherness explored by culture critics in the West. Therefore, it can be claimed that rendering marginalized themes while reclaiming the representation of the narrated is both a center of discourse in postcolonial studies and a conflictual issue addressed through text by postcolonial writers. What makes post-independence postcolonial texts distinctive is the author’s employment of strategies which demonstrate a keen sense of ambivalence about linguistic and cultural identity issues. This ambivalence not only concerns the portrayal of the characters and setting, but is an already established semiotic feature encoded in language use and narrative technique (Bhati, 2023) <sup>[20]</sup>. Such postcolonial discourse can be analyzed with regard to ambivalence while rendering cultural identity in various novels, novellas, and short stories. Postcolonial literature re-contextualizes and subverts the former colonial discourse. In this sense, it represents alternative versions of history and matters and gives voice to the marginalized. The notion of the “English nation” in former imperialist discourse is challenging as a uniform and obliterating definition in the work of postcolonial authors, and it is explored that marginalized peoples of the former empire form an “English nation” different from what is claimed by the ex-colonial metropolis. Furthermore, various strategies are discussed that demonstrate the ambivalence of English language use in from bi and multi-lingual authors in rendering cultural identity issues and delving. This ambivalence is found encoded metonymics, stylistic devices, and themes and is narrated against the dominant norms of Indian behavior (Kurnia *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[71]</sup>. It is implied that postcolonial writing in English and the adopted strategies can both revitalize and counteract traditional imperialist discourse. In this respect, language and representation in postcolonial literature can be analyzed with regard to the intricate weaving of the selected topic within the vast web of semiotic elements encoded in the texts. Thereby, cultural narrations of the marginalized get distinguished and reclaimed. Voices of the postcolonial subject’s indigenous cultures are re-conceptualized through text. Although a specific body of writing will be used as primary material, the analysis is intended to act as a model of how such an approach can be adopted and applied to a spectrum of postcolonial texts broadly related to Language and Representation in Postcolonial Literature in English (Kawsar, 2025; Arya, 2021; Kumar) <sup>[63, 11]</sup>.

##### 4.1. Strategies of Subversion

Postcolonial writers are often seen as the representatives of the voiceless, therefore, as those who claim, with their narratives, the right to make these voices heard outside the

national or regional boundaries of their origin. They are envisaged as the outcasts, dissenters and oppositionists which through their narrative tactics unmask the lies that kept for so long the comfortably entrenched post-colonial play. All these apparently overwhelming problems are, nevertheless, to a great extent, the outcome of a manipulation, which is determined not only by a fear of the threats often accompanying the exposure of mechanisms of control, but also by that stage which is always reached by any system of discourse, and particularly by one that pretends to flatter itself with the halo of science: it becomes that natural power of suppression which stamps out torture or murder (Sageera, 2021) <sup>[104]</sup>. In order to challenge its major tenets, the colonial discourse should be read attentively, not parrot-like, simply to memorise the edifying exemplary stories within it, but focusing on the gaps, on the silences, on the ephemerality of the discursive strategies adopted within it (Ngiewih Teke, 2013) <sup>[93]</sup>. There are numerous subversive strategies on the part of those who feel their voice has been silenced by the pretentious tact of the colonial text. One of the most effective ways is the “play with the text” (Fadla & Shaheen, 2022) <sup>[37]</sup>. This text plays against what the tradition of the colonial discourse insists upon as the rigorous maintenance of its basic tenets. The postcolonial text, too, acknowledging that, for the time being at least, it is obliged to use the same type of discourse, resorts to the game, the point, the spoof, the irony that are endowed with a redoubtable effectiveness towards the aseptic and predictable set of responses the coloniser ever returns towards the colonised concerning his “analphabeticism”, his “cannibalism” or his “barbarity”. The most dramatic of these plays is the mockery that post-colonial narration makes out of the supposedly omniscient and disembodied voice “speaking” in the name of the coloniser (Dony, 2019) <sup>[32]</sup>. In this sense, the most critical of the post-colonial narratives are those that resort to the most extensive use of paraphrase, since the parrot-like repetition of the ideological discourse of the coloniser magnifies the same problems which, in quite a different manner, are also discussed by subversive gesture. Too much of a concern with the act of subverting the tenets of the colonial text might be detrimental to the power of the reappropriation of the voice by the colonised (Halima, 2020; Sageera, 2021; Stephens, 2024; Mondal, 2021; Akakpo, 2023) <sup>[49, 104, 116, 85, 5]</sup> (Saha, 2020; Bolat, 2022) <sup>[105, 22]</sup>.

#### 5. Gender and Identity in Postcolonial Literature

All themes are related to the theory of identity and theory of representation as well as the question if the own cultural roots and differences in them are spoken about (Said, 2023) <sup>[106]</sup>. In Postcolonial study it is regarded as important to notice the very close relationship between the topics identity, representation and cultural studies. Postcolonial writers often organize their books in a way that brings together authors of the countries and cultures once ruled by the British Empire. Their attitude is quite complex because the roots of many Colonies are linked together by imperial history, but their way through that history is different. This difference is based on the fact that in each Colony different languages and structures existed already before colonization, and that these structures and languages were influenced by British politics in a different way (Sharp, 2022) <sup>[114]</sup>. This difference also leads to a different cultural reaction which is visible in the way of writing. This intertextuality is very often expressively used in Postcolonial writings and was one of the reasons most

authors wished their books be printed together with literature of authors facing similar problems. In most cases these problems are linked to identity feeling and the lost cultural roots. In public, there is lots of discussion about the literary appropriation in different ways. In academic papers most of the discussion and polemic is on representation of the colonized and imperialism novels. However, the representation of the own historical and cultural roots is ignored and being avoided. It is therefore important to ask policy about this question and step in issues between different cultural roots. The idea is to discuss these questions and the facts whether writers of the Postcolonial world speak about their own cultural roots (Hauthal & Toivanen, 2021; Albertazzi, 2020; Kołodziejczyk & Huigen, 2023; Lartey, 2022) <sup>[53, 6, 67, 72]</sup>.

### 6. Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism in Postcolonial Texts

Explicit representations of English race, ethnicity, and nationalism in postcolonial texts are rare. Still, all three constitute thematic concerns of much fictional and non-fictional postcolonial writing in English, reflected in the ways in which the race or ethnicity and national identity of characters and the race-related interests of literary texts and narrators are narrated. Authors' intentions and writing strategy play an important part in shaping these texts, but these are also sites of postcolonial (re)actions to racial, ethnic, and nationalist discourses against which they define themselves. The hybrid nature of postcolonial societies ensures the complexity of such attempts (Rahman, 2024) <sup>[101]</sup>. In many authors' works, racialized identity is shown to be a problematic point of reference, as in many cases this is revealed as a mere effect of colonial/neo-colonial political, economic, and cultural forces. Equally, the physical markers of race, handed down as legacy from the colonizers, are widely interrogated as signifying haunting colonial individual or, more dramatically, collective pasts. In the racial conflict evidenced in a number of post-colonial novels, the founding violence of colonization is often mentioned as a causal element, and that violence is represented as a racial or racially motivated violence having constituted the conditions of possibility for racial distinctions long before any signifying race could be isolated (Rafapa, 2014) <sup>[100]</sup>. Usually, this founding racial violence is associated with European or Western colonialists, representing a brutal other, a white aggressor, who is first threatened (As in the fear of revolt) and thus redefines new ethnic lines protecting him/her from the colonized subalterns. In an inverted racism way, the desire to revenge may lead the colonized to perceive the colonizer as essentially evil or cruel except when he/she displays an exaggerated kindness, in which case he/she may be seen as guilty in any case, since without this he/she would not have been able to pretend to fairness or equality (Halima, 2020) <sup>[49]</sup>. Elsewhere, contingent racial oppositions or discriminations are not noticeable in contrast with social stratification and are rather inscribed in emphatic issues of "tradition", religion or culture. But postcolonial literature in English also underscores the fact that discrimination may not necessarily emerge between clearly dichotomized racial identities. Marginalized characters are often presented negotiating national and/or ethnic identity as a means of moving across and within hegemonic discourses on race, and postcolonial authors' writing is also often concerned with these issues. Post-colonial writing in English has historically attempted to highlight racial, ethnic or national forms of

discrimination, or oppositions through the representation of character experience, or of altercations between characters, and narrative discourse. Much recent post-colonial writing by English-language authors has sought to bring the intersection of ethnicity and national identity to the forefront of storytelling, denoting the blooming of new social politics in their context. Varied English postcolonial societies hitherto intermingled in a mega-narrative (Jazeel, 2024) <sup>[55]</sup>. The importance of encouraging a plural and multi-vocal reading of issues involving some of these postcolonial writers is also noted for research and for narrative writing. Of borders and bi-write national belonging, of great events and of forgetting, the subcontinent on the one hand, an apartheid nation on the other, drawing attention to different but both still marginalized socio-political contexts, yet difficult to bring together in one single reading and critical page. Many postcolonial narratives in English focus on the importance of nationhood as a unifying, and disparately also divisive, force in the shaping of common cultural narratives. Again, such post-colonial issues are often of great phenomenological interest in those societies where the nation is thought to be deeply planted in both history and local consciousness a well (Begum, 2023) <sup>[17]</sup>. Racial events and ethnic struggles seasoned during national uprisings kindly jovial stuff the nation might exchange and comprehend as having been the fruit of a discourse intercultural. Socio-political, racial and ethnic forms of discrimination though may be disguised if not instigated in the patriotic language of the nation, confounding the notion of a common and shared background, tradition and discourse shaping the perception of enemies and friends, neighbors and strangers. Such commonalities have often been found minored in the 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary rejoicing of the unison, begun in a different manner, questioning that the ways to nationhood have not been and/or are not so quite common to all nations, as opposed to the substantial discourse on culture, language, or the use of comparative historical processes as means of comparison. Reading the discrimination of race and ethnicity in English postcolonial text is meant here to complement these works, revealing how the difficult and contested processes of self-definition and identity formation play within and against the opulent meshing of nations, a nation as much polity as imagined and embodied community (Saujani, 2024) <sup>[109]</sup>. It is argued that by doing so a comprehensive understanding of the birth and haunting status of racism or ethnicism in plural, hyphenated or poly-national social contexts might be gained. Some recent forms of racial discrimination in a number of postcolonial English-speaking nations are logged as a pre-text for acquiring reading on postcolonial narratives. At the same time as it was desired that some comments be made in the broader and more present-day environment of increasing awareness of difference and exclusion, often having a strongly identified racial or ethnic component thus hopefully rendering the present reading of the post-colonial text suggestive and controversial means (Zhang *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[130]</sup>.

### 7. Language and Power Dynamics in Postcolonial Literature

Language is believed not only to reflect power dynamics but also to affect them. Postcolonial literature is an apt case to investigate the latter. In most cases, writing in a colonial language does things to both the colonised and the colonisers. Colonised populations, for instance, may be deprived of their linguistic freedom; owing to the dominant prestige of colonial

tongues, national languages of local cultures may be suppressed (Sayedayn, 2021) <sup>[110]</sup>. There is a tendency for the language and literature of the ruling powers to become religious ‘scriptures’ concerning law, history, social mores, and every species of officially sanctioned knowledge. Such literary dominance may enforce the ideological imperatives of a rigidly conservative traditional authority. To adopt the language of the (Recent) colonisers is to adopt a lot of unpleasant baggage, including the pre-cast Western models of one’s role, and one’s very self. The act of writing in a co-opted language ingeniously authenticates the imperial discourse. In a branch of World Literature usually characterized by cultural hybridity, exile and diaspora, access to a language that can break down barriers and enhance international recognition is a key advantage (Zeng *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[129]</sup>. Thus writing in English, French or Portuguese, is a highly marketable asset for authors from the periphery. Colonially endowed writers have themselves recognized the power this offers them in the current writerly climate. The ability to control a particularly powerful form of language has enabled them to demonstrate an almost intoxicating authority in marginalizing the works of others (Ngiewih Teke, 2013) <sup>[93]</sup>. The view that languages are systems marked by intrinsic qualities, some of which are pernicious to expression, forms a triumph of linguistic theory in the colonies. Another point is to set to question the difference between a ‘native’ or ancestral language and the dominant code as vital essence, producing authenticity in literature (H. Katrak, 1992) <sup>[47]</sup>. Complexity and indeed disagreement about postcolonialism itself results from a number of factors, particularly the multiplicity of discourses in the post-colonial nation and the effects of exilic and diasporic writing (Yang, 2023; Madima *et al.*, 2023; Poudel *et al.*, 2022; Haelewaters *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[127, 77, 98, 48]</sup>.

### 8. Globalization and Postcolonial Literature

Globalization has significantly reshaped the literary landscapes of postcolonial literature in English, while at the same time being reshaped by it. On one hand, it has led to a cosmopolitanization of postcolonial writing and has given authors worldwide new spaces in which to develop their writing and to spread both their own works about mobile ways. Global interconnectedness finds its reflection in these recent literary creations where the act of reading and interpreting literature is figured and represented as “between the lines.” On the other hand, globalization also brings about new challenges for writers who happen to emerge or to write in so-called peripheral, marginal or minor literatures in ungoverned languages (H. Katrak, 1992) <sup>[47]</sup>. The phenomena of globalization provoke important rearrangements: North/South crossings; diasporic and transnational identities; a multicultural and multilingual turn. Such compositional paradoxes of the global and local are at stake in the renewed or repositioned attention the relationship between literature, culture, identity and globalization or glocalization has received in postcolonial literary criticism during the last two decades (Mehmood *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[81]</sup>. The influence of other forces, in particular of multicultural and postcolonial critiques raises the issue of the writer’s or the text’s “margins” in other terms, making room (Re-siting) for now approachable readings by performing border crossings, culturally clinged to, relational or situated knowledge-makers on a many-stratified explanatory and metaphorical geography (Waghmare, 2020) <sup>[125]</sup>. The adaptation of postcolonial

literature to the new needs and norms induced by this advanced punctualization of the writing environment and its subjects is sought in an analysis of the poetic diversity of contemporary world literary and technological paraliterary “ogo”-texts and in a close reading of the contemporary “post”-fictional rewriting by André Brink, Ingrid Winterbach, Antjie Krog and Elizabeth Ndodana. Through the rewriting, the dynamics of literary strategies in an (en)gendered socio-textual map of home and abroad, language- and land-scaping are sketched, from within the geographic lingua-cultural context of contemporary Afrikaans literature in a vibrant relationship to the boundlessly deregulating forces of globalization (Bagus, 2023; Sharma, 2021; Sundke, 2024; EZEMA, 2021) <sup>[13, 113, 120, 36]</sup>.

### 9. Postcolonial Literature in Different English-Speaking Regions

Postcolonial literature is often referred to as literature in English that specifically addresses issues of colonization, decolonization, and post-independence. This omits the rich and varied postcolonial literature of other English-speaking countries. This paper seeks to address the very well-known literatures of Africa, the Caribbean, and South Asia, but then further qualify what is meant by these blanket statements. In this way, the literatures of specific regions of these countries can better be examined. There is a danger in talking about postcolonial literature as though it were the product of one kind of colonial experience that unfolded to create a single, similar postcolonial world. This world would, by necessity, be populated by one kind of colonizer, one kind of colonized, and one kind of colonizing process. The linguistic plurality and cultural variety of the third-world countries in postcolonial literature undermine such simplistic triad thinking and bring to light the chameleon-like shifting of the concept of ‘postcolonialism’ (Ndhlovu & Mhlanga, 2023) <sup>[91]</sup>. By shunning the vast variety of postcolonial narratives and selectively seeking to promote different regional voices, one is always in danger of misrepresenting the underlying complexities and the depth of the issues and their literary manifestations. By focusing on the uniqueness of the regional experiences of colonization, it becomes easier to isolate and identify thematic, stylistic, and voice-related aspects of postcolonial literatures. At the same time, it is also possible to explore how different regional traditions of writing have coexisted with or sometimes contradicted postcolonial thematic concerns (Koolwal & Iqbal, 2022; Kalyani & Jyothi, 2020) <sup>[68, 60]</sup>. Many of the critical arguments and theoretical frameworks utilized to discuss postcolonial literatures have been generalized from one context and applied to other colonial-imperial contexts outside of the British domain. While this approach undeniably reflects salient universal commonalities in colonial and postcolonial experiences, it typically neglects the complexity and sophistication of cultural and historical particularities of postcolonial regions under consideration. Such critical inconsistency and rhetorical over-reaching are particularly common in analyses of postcolonial Caribbean literature. At times, the literature written in Caribbean landscapes is deemed as quintessentially postcolonial, while other postcolonial writings of the same region are entirely deprived of postcolonial impetus (Shandil, 2020; Nayyar, 2024; Shah *et al.*, 2024; Taye, 2023; Djebaili, 2022) <sup>[112, 90, 111, 121, 31]</sup>.



### 9.1. African Literature

African Literature is the mostly widely discussed postcolonial literature in English, both in terms of its response to historical colonialism and its engagement with contemporary postcolonial challenges. The postcolonial experience of African people is often narrated in literature. Works of African Literature in English attempt to respond to the culture, history, legacy, and memory of colonization, acting as cultural representations and handling issues of language, culture, identity, and the question of narrative (Gérard, 2022) <sup>[44]</sup>. Postcolonial literature from Africa evokes questioning of nationhood's attainability. Examples of this are first novels and contemporary works that contemplate post-apartheid challenges to nationhood. African postcolonial literature also examines themes of diaspora, hybridity and cross-cultural understanding. These works address an increasingly transnational readership and represent Africa in broader contexts (Wa Thiong'o, 2023) <sup>[124]</sup>. The resilience and resourcefulness of African people in the face of harsh social and political conditions has been well documented in historical as well as fictional narratives written inside and outside of the continent. South African novels are intense social critiques that take the form of stories. Writings of African diaspora poetically represent the experiences and conditions of identity of human beings in darkest situations (Bolat, 2022; Ahmed, 2022; Alkali & Aminu, 2024) <sup>[22, 3, 8]</sup>.

### 9.2. Caribbean Literature

Caribbean literature addresses both those inherent problems in the developing nation state previously isolated by colonial legacy and those common universal dilemmas of contemporary humans between place and placelessness, between home and exile, between familiar connections and unfamiliar separations. These feelings related to exile and migration find constant, obsessive treatment in the Caribbean literary tradition. This section introduces and explores the rich tapestry, quoting from its various threads of some of the leading figures and movements in Caribbean literature (Khan *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[64]</sup>. Caribbean literature, through the implicit interrogation of the traditionally accepted norms, values, and conventions, brings to light the hitherto unquestioning perspectives of mainstream discourse. As a cultural counterforce, it serves to uncover, investigate, illustrate, highlight, and question the existence, development, and reinforcement of the power relationship between the dominating centre and the marginalised periphery, between the haves and the have-nots. Colonialism affects society in collective terms. It has left a legacy on the societal mentalite, behavioural pattern, the methodology of policymaking, the process of decision-taking and people's value system, a way of seeing the world, a way of seeing a place for country in it (Mohammadi *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[84]</sup>. Much Caribbean literature, despite its present flourishing recognition, becomes less articulated and more fragmented, as a transgressive tension of discontinuity due to the endemics of plantation slavery society was exist until remodernisation. Slavery was character-defining and habit-forming. Plantation society, in the nature of the case, was and is an impermanent place, a society of four million, which was uprooted and cost billions in today's currency. British and French colonies, and their survivors. Carolina rice fields and Brazilian canefields. For one who lived there, the material capital and content to the African-derived underclass of it, seemed eternal. As long as this world ends, society of the pre-

modernising age remained. This is a sensibility affecting the Indo-Caribbean, since both imperialism and indentureship were to those unspeakable European dispossession (Arora-Jonsson, 2023; Soler, 2021; Wolf *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[9, 115, 126]</sup>.

### 9.3. South Asian Literature

So far, the investigation has focused largely on Anglophone and Caribbean works, highlighting their engagement with dominant postcolonial themes and their contribution to a revision of literary canons. The analysis has revealed multifarious ways in which writers articulate their postcolonial (and even neocolonial) predicament, while on the other hand reframing cultural identities, and 'writing back' to the (real and imagined) center with subversion, hybridity or linguistic and narrative strategies which don't fit traditional Western novelistic or critical models. This subsection, meanwhile, will focus on a different postcolonial context, examining how South Asian writers engage with its own set of themes and identities (such as hybridity, migration, diaspora or memories of cultural displacement), albeit different from Caribbean experiences (Foster, 2021) <sup>[40]</sup>. It is only in their unique dialogic engagement with colonialism, and with the cultural aftermath of colonialism, with the 'aftermath' of empire and imperial memories that writers from diverse backgrounds and diverse regions within 'South Asia' have begun to arrive. These kinds of questions ring in the narratives in strange and singular tones, new voices: with rhythms that call attention to a particular inflection within regional or national histories of power—beyond the dominant histories of the 'Indians' and the 'Pakistanis' these writers are deemed to represent for a metropolitan literary market—and with memories of colonialism that over six decades of rising and falling postcolonial nationhood have largely left unarticulated setHidden in the dust-laden files of the colonial state, overwritten by monolithic and national liberationist narratives, memories of benign and brutal interference layered upon older memories, traditions of the Islamicate and the Veda, fractured and fashioned, forgotten and recollected, modified and re-sought in changing landscapes in a process more of spectral haunting than tangible presence or stern forgetting. For these writers who articulate these postcolonial, regional-subaltern, minority-majority, alternative-independent, postempire-imperial afterthoughts of the partition and Independence, not only have to endure the mediated life histories of emergent involvement with colonialism but also carry, even silence in the face of, these un-Voice(d) histories into the present and future (Kantor, 2022; Kim & Anatol, 2022) <sup>[62, 65]</sup>. In their written articulations, the canticles of footsteps upon earth and memory are but half-echoed; full significance and sound containments lost on the unlistening or indifferent wind or a bronze-glass cityscape. And yet, within these articulations, within these fictions and chronicles, there surface, if largely coeval with, yet other times, a corpus of writing vivid, tender, fierce and frail, that demand a listening, a rereading, beyond a metropolitan and postmodern fatigue with the postcolonial or a fundamentalist and terse defensiveness of literary, national, normal borders (Muruthi *et al.*, 2021; Balaram, 2021) <sup>[89, 14]</sup>. In both arenas and beyond, questions of hybridity, exile, diaspora be deconstructed and outplaced. In both arenas and beyond, tensions between tradition and modernity be unfixed and unbounded. In both arenas and beyond, novels and narratives convert a personal and 'ethnic' predicament into a political and cultural problem that extends

far beyond the borders of a singular nation-state (Gerlsbeck, 2022; Basu, 2022) <sup>[45, 16]</sup>.

### 10. Comparative Studies in Postcolonial Literature

An appraisal of what has been termed 'mainstream,' or simply 'Anglophone,' Postcolonial literatures in English literature will be contrasted to an examination of the manuscripts of so-called indigenous or local literatures. Mainstream Postcolonial literature critical theory, in America as also in England itself, devoted to its writers as much as academics has thus far been virtually concerned with works in British – or, at most, Irish – English, not with those in dozens of other tongues, traditional or neo-traditional, spoken and/or written, within the limits of the erstwhile Empire (Genoveffa, 2021) <sup>[42]</sup>. In intent and method, this viewpoint is farthest from post-structuralist eclecticism that cannot maintain the horizon of consecutive attention for long upon any particular Peninsular, Island, African or Asian 'culture,' but is oriented rather towards prolongation of that attention, in the elective affinity of an indefinite number of self-contained 'studies,' upon a very few canonical 'authors.' On the one hand, comparative studies in 'mainstream' Postcolonial literature are advocated that center upon a limited number of culturally different texts, and which analyze them, at least initially, from the perspective of their manifestly dissimilar cultural environments (Flannery, 2021) <sup>[38]</sup>. The point is not to demean contrastive exercises that may spring from and enrich academic appreciation; on the contrary, a salutary function here proposes they not be discontinued, but rather include the comparative – the better to perceive what is common, what divergent, in the colonial impact upon disparate, perhaps in the event highly involuntary, literary traditions (Virk, 2003) <sup>[122]</sup>. On the other hand, it is confidently assumed that the descriptive and (alleged) interpretive paradigms generally employed to account for the nativist/local literatures of 'peripheral,' neo-colonial lands are entirely inapplicable to the illustrious corpus of writing of other such lands, hence though no attempt will be made to reinvent the wheel employed in post-structuralist, neo-marxist and more 'innovative' psychoanalytic post-modern criticism. Statements that appear to condemn in toto arhat works themselves are in no wise intended, for those texts are clearly no 'little things' (Binici, 2024; Kosmalska, 2022; Polynin, 2024; Childress *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[21, 69, 97, 29]</sup>.

### 10.1. Postcolonialism and Indigenous Literatures

Postcolonial textuality is, to the metropolis, as a colony is politically. An analogous dependence informs the concern of postcolonial rhetorics to link the silence of marginalized Western regions. But postcolonial writers in sizable Anglophone islands and marginal territories are not readily housed within a metropolitan/postcolonial denominator: are writing out of postcolonial settings with no colonial past and in longstanding territories, or when navigating discourses where center-periphery settings are nonetheless not easily extant or acknowledged (Romeo, 2023) <sup>[102]</sup>. These facts are nowhere more trenchant than in island nations where postcolonial literatures variously arise polyphonically as differently-affected groups contest each other's and ex-metropolitan hegemony's readings of the past and the decolonized present. Rica and Malakas, in contrast to a corrupted Dapat, foil an ongoing palimpsest of colonially imposed movement restrictions – a metalanguage pressgandized modalities for contentious post-colonial

recognition battles. Such an understanding recasts postmodernist theories of palimpsest where textuality itself must be seen structurally. Indigenous texts in settler colonies often present post-colonial entwined interests in unique ways (Elmahdi & Elamin 2024) <sup>[35]</sup>. Such texts are produced by groups colonially displaced since 1965: survival claims of land rights and prior occupancy reverberating in reordered topographies coeval with textual mapping and struggle. Colonial control over indigenous identities typified by the tacit ethnic agri-colonizing agreement theory has, however, overcoded textual products themselves. More palpable narratives of cultural reason have been won in Postcolonial Courts through forms spun coevally between Christian and cosmological hegemonic paradigms (Carretero & Perez-Manjarrez, 2024) <sup>[27]</sup>. Would-be intercesual inscriptions, however, mostly flounder between the twinned demands of adat culturalism and the legally unrecognized status of ancestral spirituality. Such insulated reterritorializations have been registered as a process of gaining 'autonomy' through a bricolage of Emerging Indigen Abnormalities and textual production: word-story-circle-play-throughs dirgeing life narratives recently seismicised by (Novita & Dewi, 2016) <sup>[94]</sup> and nascently auditioning phantasmal ghostwrites. Post-colonial engagement requires sustained understanding of the (dis)connection and juxtaposition (nation) historicifications emergent as texts (Mamahit, 2021; Muhammad *et al.*, 2024; Samkaria, 2022) <sup>[79, 87, 107]</sup>.

### 11. Postcolonial Literature in the Digital Age

This chapter investigates the digitally mediated environment of literature in Nigeria, particularly as it pertains to the construction of literatures in English within the geo-media and economic discourse of the Global South. In so doing, it engages with the aesthetic integrity of literary production across a broad spectrum of socio-cultural and geographical demographics since the inception of this century, embracing social change within a predominantly westernized, fragmented world. With the advent of worldwide media digitization in a globalizing, digitalized world, literature, in common with other forms of art, is transforming within the framework of the traditional copy-based concept of art, toward a new model of digital and/or electronically mediated arts (Adenekan, 2021) <sup>[2]</sup>. When examining the effect of media digitization on literary production in a country such as Nigeria, at a point where both domestic and global media transformations have had time to coalesce into an organic whole with the local print tradition, it becomes apparent that contemporary literature in the country at the cusp of the first quarter is moving beyond traditional limits. Nigerian literature in this digital age belongs more to national media space or traditional print form, and over the same period there has been an aggressive transformation into an electronic form of writing and engagement with the much larger and less limited geo-media environment of the Global South or the post-digitalized world (Gérard, 2022) <sup>[44]</sup>. In its globally informed concerns, methods and speculations regarding epochal changes within world literature and media, contemporary literature in Nigeria is increasingly being recognized as world literature (Betiang & Akpan, 2018) <sup>[18]</sup>. As is common in poetics, where subjectivity tends to overtake objectivity, the line separating the empirical or social manifestations of literature from its aesthetic or strategic decisions begins to blur (Ikpor *et al.*, 2022; Abraham & Ceccato, 2022) <sup>[54, 1]</sup>.



## 12. Conclusion and Future Directions

Postcolonial literature in English is a reality and an art form and an artistic happening which implies a critical unveiling or unmasking, in whatever figuration, of the still existing structures of exploitation or domination directed by a dominant culture against the world. Several negative judgments about postcolonial literary English have been stated. But here too the negative judgments have been reviewed. Above all the language. But, as it is commented, postcolonial literature in English should be a translation which means some sort of adaptation of marginal culture into a new language. The acceptance of a continuous evolving culture of the center is usually found against the refusal of cultural identity and authenticity with the same continuity of those cultures inside the dominant societies. This is plain nonsense. Although, a little bit in a different way, there has been a contribution to explain why postcolonial literatures written in English have not only the right to exist but above all are forming one of the richest parts of modern literatures. The sum of all these remarks and commentaries points finally to the obvious nature of the literary happening. This adapting, enhancing, refusing and interchanging discursive confrontation is exactly what was not accepted of postcolonial literature in English. And which, far from being translated, is expressed or transposed, after being filtered through marginal perspective and memory. Obviously, the exercises attempted here are a continuation of a trend in comparative literature today. And it is important to exist and continue to support even only for mere methodological reason. It should absolutely be so because since its birth as a critical discipline so many years ago, comparative literature has mostly been devoted to compare more or less recognized literatures in order to reveal some general patterns or structures.

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