

POSTCOLONIALISM AND ITS IMPACT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED NOVELS OF PAUL SCOTT AND ROHINTON MISTRY

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Abstract

The aftermath of Colonialism or the effects of Imperialism on Africa, Asia, America, and other colonized countries is very disastrous. To study Postcolonialism, needs understanding of “post” in this concept. It means a reaction from the colonized and aiming at ending colonial tendencies. Postcolonialism is a dynamic field of literary study that focuses on the history of colonialism and native responses to colonial policies and life after colonialism, which brought a sharp change in the life and its conditions. The literature and culture of the former European colonies and their struggle after the end of colonialism display how Said, African writers and Asian revolutionaries put forward their ideologies to counter the above structured concept. Postcolonialism examines the philosophical, moral, and political issues surrounding alienation, displacement, gender, country of residence, race, and ethnicity. It also aims at developing the national identity in the wake of colonial rule. In 1914, three fourth of the entire world was colonized by a minority of European colonial powers. After the Second World War, almost all the colonized countries attained independence, it was possible because of this concept, which has taken birth after 1940s. Postcolonialism was actually reawakening to revolutionary ideas that pushed back the power and gave consciousness to powerless legally. The themes and aspects of this concept are in abundance in the novels of Paul Scott and Rohinton Mistry. The researcher has tried to discuss, analyze and explain this idea and its impact in the novels of Scott and Mistry.

Keywords: Colonialism Postcolonialism, Alienation, Race, Revolution.

“Post-colonialism: Broadly a study of the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies. It is concerned with both how European nations conquered and controlled "Third World" cultures and how these groups have since responded to and resisted those encroachments” (www.dbu.edu, retrieved on 28/1/23, at 11:47 pm). However, this concept can be seen in most of the literary works of present, contemporary and postmodern writers, but Shakespeare has given us a hint of this concept much earlier in his *The Tempest*, while ancient nations and cultures also have traces of this concept. All resistance literature is postcolonial in its thought and content.

Objectives

To study Postcolonialism in the selected novels of Paul Scott and Rohinton Mistry,
Explain the impact of this concept on colonized and colonizer,
Discuss how this idea led to the development of colonized nations,

Methodology

The researcher has used both primary and secondary material to solve the research problem. Descriptive, analytical, comparative and critical methods are used to aim at this research.

Review and Discussion

Paul Scott and Rohinton Mistry are phenomenal and dynamic writers who have a good sort of affinity in their writings and lives. Their lives are same to some extent as they both have suffered from Migration whether it was by will and forced. Paul Scott had faced the issue for migration when he came to India and joined the Army and having a love affair made him the victim of this concept. Mistry being a Parsi, having origin in Iran, came to India and then shifted to Canada, which is an indication of his persistent cultural uprootedness, identity crisis making him a postmodern or a postcolonial author.

“The most insular people in the world managed to establish the largest empire the world has ever seen... Insularity, like empire-building, requires superb self-confidence, a conviction of one’s moral Superiority” (*A Division of the Spoils* 115). Scott has written various books but his history of *The Raj Quartet* is famous for its style, history, politics of power, and imperial approach. The words used in the above quote point towards postcolonial thinking which demands deep study, insular meaning inward or narrow directs towards the outlook that British and Europeans had towards powerless colonized. Empire building needs self-confidence, can be ignorance of the lower in status and power and on the other side, it means the position colonized people were having in the eyes of the colonizer.

Scott’s novels are histories of last years of British Raj in India, while the last of this sequence *Staying On* means a desire of the colonizer to rest here for some more time. Day of the Scorpion can be how poisonous was the British Raj in Asia and Africa. “The development of love affair between Daphna Manners, the English girl staying in India and Hari Kumar, an Indian who has acquired English education also marks the multicultural element in the novel” (Chettri Bhaskar & Dhananjay Tripathi 5). Multiculturalism, which aims at harmony, impact of colonization, which gives way to thinking, and development of peaceful life, marginality, otherness, which in other words suggests ways for equality are some of the common issues of Scott’s novels. Novels of Scott are political in a sense that they deal with the battle for freedom of India in the last years. Hari Kumar faces otherness. “new five-storey glass and concrete hotel, the Shiraz” (*Staying On* 5). India is for Indians now, colonizers are leaving, and the original owners own property. *Staying On* suggests that the displacement of colonizer has come up with the new hope towards new life, which is a characteristic of Postcolonialism.

Like that of the earlier novelist, Mistry also deals with politics, history, alienation, gender, identity crisis, multiculturalism and so on. His characters also face gender, problems, his major roles do confront identity crisis as we see in Gustard and Dina Dalal, his Ishwar, and Om prakash have crisis and they too face the problems of the caste. Dina was not allowed to educate herself but she made her house a multicultural example. “The four main characters converge in Dina’s apartment as refugees from contracting caste, gender or social roles” (Kavitha N. and Dr. P. Selvam 385). Novelist wants a harmonious life and mixed culture; in fact, he wants India must be same which is at bay.

Mistry talks about rape, misuse of political authority on minorities, double stands as in case of Roopa who suffered a lot from Zamindars. Like a postcolonial writer, novelist believes in education. He explains identity crisis as a big dilemma, which leads to isolation and alienation. “You sent me away, you and Daddy. And then I couldn’t come back. You lost me, and I lost—everything” (*A Fine Balance* 591). This is an example of alienation. Mistry also believes in displacement of colonizers whether it is inside or outside.

Political power is now dead but colonialism as a social phenomenon is still alive. It is an ongoing process, which has entered into mind of a man now. The colonizers enslaved the colonized people not simply by political power alone, but by intellectual, ethical and cultural agencies. The primary focus of this Research Paper is to explore Postcolonialism and its unfortunate impact on one’s society and individual prosperity.

Adams, J. and Whitehead, P: As far as Rohinton Mistry's place in Canadian literature is concerned, his migrant status renders him representative of a host of relatively new literary voices who have changed the way the notional category of national literature is constructed. Lynette Hunter has described the search for a Canadian identity as one of the most consistent strands in Canadian literary criticism in recent years. This view by the writer has been the assessment of our novelist and it is an appreciation of the art that Mistry has delivered up to the present.

Impact of postcolonialism is perceived on the characters of both these writers is a good one. It believes in the displacement of colonial rule and its characteristics in every form and shape. It stresses the need of equality of gender and all human beings. It directs towards multicultural living, which in turn is a step towards peace and harmony. Colonial tendency degraded the status of humanism, while postcolonialism tried to empower man and give him the sense of integrity and self-esteem.

Conclusion

Both these writers have included postcolonial aspects in their fictional works. They have written history, mixed it with individual life and politics. Marginality, otherness, displacement, colonial rule, freedom struggle, alienation, gender, race, minority and any other postcolonial aspects are abundant in their fictional works.

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