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HISLOP COLLEGE, NAGPUR
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J. M. PATEL ARTS, COMMERCE & SCIENCE COLLEGE, BHANDARA
SMT. BINZANI MAHILA MAHAVIDYALAYA, NAGPUR

Nagpur Shikshan Mandal's

Two-day International E- Conference on

EMERGING TRENDS IN LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Organised jointly by the Departments of English

PARTICIPATION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that *Dr. Vaishali Meshram of Dr. M. K. Umathe College, Nagpur* has participated in the *Two-day International E-Conference on 'Emerging Trends in Literature and Language'* on 4 & 5 October 2021, organised jointly by the Departments of English of the collaborating institutions.

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On

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of

Hislop Education Society

HISLOP COLLEGE, NAGPUR

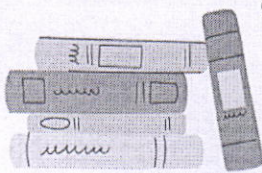
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and

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4th & 5th OCTOBER 2021



PRINCIPAL
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on

‘Emerging Trends in Literature and Language’

organised by

English Departments of Hislop College, Nagpur, J.M. Patel Arts, Commerce and Science College, Bhandara & Smt. Binzani Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur

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**COLONIAL DISCOURSE IN POST-COLONIAL INDO-ANGLIAN LITERATURE****DR. VAISHALI MESHAM**Assistant Professor,
Dr. M. K. Umathe College,
Nagpur**ABSTRACT:**

The British colonialism in India began to spread its tentacles in the seventeenth century, had the whole India in its grip by 1849 and exhibited most of the offensive qualities of colonialism. India with her age-old poverty, exploitation, superstitions, the long tyrannical British rule, caste-ridden and capitalist society, and the freedom struggle offer numerous instances of victimization that affects the individual, his family, caste and class. Indeed each and every aspect of life in India has been affected by colonialism. The present paper endeavors to study the colonial discourse portrayed in the postcolonial Indo-Anglian literature. The Indo-Anglian writers most powerfully and influentially encoded the day-to-day realities and experiences experienced by the colonized people and called it as post-colonial literature. The thoughts expressed in these works whether real or imaginary offer an astonishing insight into the lives of those whose identities and cultures have been transformed forever by the sweeping force of colonialism.

Keywords: Colonialism, Post-Colonialism, Discourse, Colonized, Post-Colonial Literature**Post-Colonialism:**

Post-Colonialism is all about revisiting, remembering and crucially interrogating the colonial past. It is reminded by recollecting the seduction of colonial power. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, postcolonial literatures emerged simultaneously with the development of national consciousness. As the colonizers continued to impose their culture upon the traditions of the natives, they began a process in which the colonized began to adopt the customs of the ruling powers. It is a course that would eventually hybridize the cultures of the colonized and the colonizer, while upholding the latter's values as the norm. However, the natives found ways in which to use their colonizer's rules to resist the weight of oppression. Those who learned the language of the colonizers turned it into a tool for revolt. Undoubtedly literature "offers one of the most important ways in which these new perception are expressed and it is in their writings, and through other arts such as painting music, sculpture and dance." (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1)

Post-colonial Literature:

The idea of 'Post-Colonial literature' was initially used to describe writing from the former British empire. It refers to writing by people from formerly colonized countries. In this literature, the British idea of India, Indians and their response to the British is described.

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This idea and response undoubtedly aroused their interest in writing. The literature of different colonized countries such as Canada, Australia, Bangladesh, Caribbean Countries, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore, South Pacific Islands, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India are all post-colonial literatures. Many scholars, however, distinguish between 'colonial discourse studies' i.e. the texts produced mainly by colonists and sometimes by colonized during the actual period of colonization and 'postcolonial studies' analysis of texts produced by the formerly colonized either after their nations gained independence. Within the body of postcolonial theory lies its heart—postcolonial literature where the stories of a colonized people are brought to life and made known to the world. Edward Said argues that colonization is a fate with unending impressions of unfair results. These oppressed people wanted to forget this painful colonial experience. They tried to forget this through remembering it. This process of recalling colonial scene discloses a relationship between opponent and their active opposition and desire between colonizers and colonized. (Said, 8)

Significance and Need of Post-Colonial literatures:

The Post-Colonial literatures have one thing in common that is beyond their special and distinctive characteristics they emerged in their present form through the experience of colonization. In these literatures the oppressed stated firmly about the tensions of the imperial power and therefore called it as post-colonial literature due to this reason only. It helps us to talk about the people of different countries as well as different temporal setting. This literature develops through several stages corresponding to the national and regional consciousness. It is a synthesis of protest and imitation blends revolt and conciliation.

Post-colonial writing is useful because it is related with the historical phenomena i.e. shifting of power and the changing relations between these cultures, communities and countries. It has to do with the past and reinterpreted towards the future. The word 'post' does not stop the historical process. Dennis Walder's book about Post-Colonial literature gives us more information about European Colonialism and its effect on the world. According to him, the impact of European colonialism on the world was always a complex process having many forms. The damage to native culture, the sufferings, and loss of life can never be counted. After colonialism the emerging anticolonial and independent states/nations are with desire to forget the colonial past. There is a need to make a new start that is to erase painful memories of colonial subordination. The psychological resistance to colonialism begins with the attack of colonialism and its aftermath is marked by contradictory cultural attitudes, moods and formations with the periods of transition and translation. Dennis Walder, in his book, '**Post-Colonial Literatures in English**' writes under the title 'The Arrival of Post-Colonial,' the use and importance of Post-colonialism and also supports the postcolonial writings. He aptly comments, "Post-colonial is useful because the question it raises is large and important. It carries with the implication that what we are talking about has to do with large scale historical phenomena, phenomena involving shifting power relationships between different parts of the world as between people within particular territories. It demands a kind of double awareness of the colonial inheritance as it continues to operate within a specific culture, community or country, and of the changing relations between these culture, communities, and countries in the modern world...more recently 'post-colonial' has come to be a thought appropriate because of the implication that the colonial experience persists despite the withdrawal of political control, as a result of the continuing strategic and economic power of

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the former colonizers.” (Walder, 2-3) The newly emerged post-colonial nations are often deceived and unsuccessful in their attempt to refuse the burden of their colonial inheritance. Albert Memmi aptly comments in this regard, “The colonial condition chained the colonizer and the colonized into an implacable dependency molded their respective characters and dictated their conduct.” (Memmi, 45)

The colonizer started to imply the educational policy for colonized Indians. They not only started civilizing process but also took over the Indian culture by their own. It was made to believe the colonized that colonialism was really a developmental project and beneficial for them. Macaulay planned the proper education policy for Indians. While taking up the civilizing process through education, they thrust their own religion upon oppressed Indians and tried to violate their culture.

Issue of the use of English as a Language of Expression:

Another issue of imitation and hybridization in Post-Colonial Indian literature is that of language. In the beginning the colonized people refused to adopt the language of colonial master and were unable to understand their policy. It was their firm belief that the colonizer could rule their body and not mind. Language became the medium through which the hierarchical power was not only propagated but the conceptions of truth, order and reality were established. The colonized were able to transform the colonial language ‘English’ into their own ‘linguistic code’ English with its own distinct flavor. With a new sense of empowerment, the natives found a voice to speak and be understood. Besides, literacy allowed them to write and propagate their ideas. Ngugi Wa Thiong’O has written many essays on the language issue most notably in *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986) in which he speaks about Indian’s denial of using the language. According to him, “The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation; Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation.” (Ngugi, 282) Ngugi further says, “Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orator and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world.” (290)

Indian literature in English still has its roots in colonial literature and the tensions between the East and the West. The following are the examples of the progression of post-Independence literature.

R.K. Narayan:

Twenty years after Independence, R.K. Narayan was still tackling issues of colonialism and explored the inevitable clash between colonial and a post-colonial encounters. His novel **The Vendor of Sweets** (1967) is about a father and son clash that depicts the tension between old and young India is the backdrop. These two generations belong to two different cultures. The protagonist Jagan, a 55 year traditional old man belongs to an old Indian family and represent tradition whereas his son Mali represents change. Jagan is a follower of Gandhi and is against Imperialism. Mali reconciles with American capitalism and embraces the modern lifestyle. Their relationship is universal and represents generation gap.

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**Ruth Praver Jhabvala:**

R.K Narayan's theme of clash between two generations is continued in Ruth Praver Jhabvala's the Booker Prize Winner novel **Heat and Dust** (1975). The book takes place within two separate timelines. In the 1920s, Olivia moves to India with her husband during the British Raj but in due course of time she feels suffocated due to the strict British society that is maintained in the colonies. Here Olivia who belongs to Britain gets exposed to the Indian culture which is alien to her. Jhabvala, throughout the novel, attempts to explore the social outlay of Anglo-Indian relations with the higher Muslim classes in a more sophisticated manner. Olivia's step-grand-daughter is confronted with India in the 1970s as she comes to India to find out more about Olivia, her grandfather's first wife.

Mulk Raj Anand:

Mulk Raj Anand certainly occupies one of the topmost positions in Indo-Anglian Literature. He is as great as R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao. His novels have won a claim not only from the critics in India but also from the critics abroad. The special feature of Anand's writing is that it is mostly about the downtrodden. That is why the critics call him the 'underdog'. He deals with social problems of postcolonial India. His novel **Untouchable** depicts the miserable life of the sweepers. Untouchability is one of the social evils that become the central theme of the novel. The fact is revealed by the example of Bakha, the hero of the novel, who is a sweeper boy. Many aspects of Untouchability, degraded and wretched plight of untouchables are dealt with by the author. Mulk Raj Anand's **Coolie** is a folk-epic. It is an epic of misery. It is built on a vast scale just like an epic. Its action moves from the South to the North and from the village to the city. It gives us an idea of India post-colonial society. The novel depicts the miserable life of Munoo, an orphan boy.

Raja Rao:

Raja Rao is one of the well-known postcolonial contemporary writers. The inwardness of the struggle for freedom is found in new ways in writers of the post-Independence period. In **Kanthapura** (1938) Raja Rao had taken as the theme of the novel the struggle of village peasant community in South India under Gandhi's leadership against British rule and capitalist exploitation. The revolutionary ideas in the novel embodied in the communist leader Moorthy deviate from Gandhi's but are given scope side by side with pure Gandhian 'Ahimsa' and Hindu conservatism both pro and anti-British. Raja Rao not only attacks the British but shows the people of India being exploited by both native and foreign exploitations. He published **The Serpent and the Rope** in 1960 under the influence of E. M. Forster and others. The novel is about the Indians and spirit of India.

Manohar Malgaonkar:

Manohar Malgaonkar, one of the best known and most successful novelists in English comes from an old Marathi speaking Brahmin family of land-owners. His novels are valuable documents in as much as they faithfully present particular phases in the national life. **The Princes** (1963) and **A Bend in the Ganges** (1964) are his most impressive achievements in fiction so far. The Princess perhaps the most ambitious work by any writer on the disintegration of old aristocratic order represented by Indian royalty, is a moving story. His

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novel *A Bend in the Ganges* is a novel on the inter-related themes of violence and non-violence. It also deals with the pre-Independence phase of Indian history.

Kamala Markandaya:

Kamala Markandaya is known for its reliable portrayal of Indian social background and the woman's position in the Indian society. *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954) establishes her as the first outstanding woman novelist from the Indian sub-continent. Markandaya's main theme in *A Silence of Desire* (1960), *Possession* (1963), *A Handful of Rice* (1966) and *The Coffer Dams* (1969) is the impact of new economic and political ideas on traditional Indian society. *The Nowhere Man* (1972) transports the clash of cultures to England where she settled in the early 1960s. *The Golden Honeycomb* (1977) is a historical book that depicts how the impending Indian Independence affected a native or princely state.

Leela Gandhi:

Leela Gandhi is a noted academician in the field of postcolonial theory. She is currently the John Hawkes Professor of Humanities and English and director of the Pembroke Centre for teaching and research on Women at Brown University. She also taught at the School of English at La Trove University, Melbourne. She has researched the cultural history of the Indo-British colonial encounter and has published extensively in this area. She is joint editor of the *Journal Postcolonial studies*. Her book *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1998) is distinctive in its concern for the specific historical, material and cultural context for postcolonial theory, and in its attempt to sketch out the ethical possibilities for postcolonial theory as a model for living with and 'knowing' cultural differences non-violently.

Bhabani Bhattacharya:

Dr. Bhabani Bhattacharya, a gifted and one of the major post-Independent novelists, winner of Sahitya Academy award dealt with the seething tensions of the teeming millions before and after and independence. His first novel *So Many Hungers!* (1947) set against the background of Quit India Movement, Bengal famine, Second World War. It also dealt with the political, social and economic exploitation of the post-colonial society. *Music for Mohini* (1952) was written and published after independence. The post-Independence scene in India is a background of the novel and represents the clash between East and West, village and town, tradition and modernity, astrology and rationalism, the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law. In *He Who Rides a Tiger* (1954), the novelist mentioned the Quit India Movement that lies in the background of the novel, but the spectrum of the famine looms large on the horizon. The novel reflects the degrading political and economic system in the caste-ridden society of the early forties and depicts unbridgeable gulf between the rich and the poor, the high and the low. *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960) gives a vivid account of the Indian village life and society of the time of independence. *Shadow from Ladakh* (1967) depicted many social realities of the post-Independence India. The need for overlooking caste-system for the betterment of the society is emphasized in the novel.

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**Salman Rushdie:**

Salman Rushdie's work has been produced in the eighties and nineties. He has removed himself from the sites of both nationality and naturalism but remained in an engagement with economic colonialism and its consequences. *Midnight's Children* (1982) analyses the post-Independence political strategies of Nehru and Indira Gandhi by using the Western postmodernist narrative technique. Rushdie's response is the necessary part of the same Western political agenda as Nehru's or Mrs. Gandhi's. These details can be found in *Independence: Building a New Nation 1947-1977*.

Conclusion:

From the above detailed study and discussion on the topic, it is clear that the Post-Colonial Indo-Anglian literature still has its roots in colonial literature. The thoughts expressed in these works indeed offer an astonishing insight into the lives of those whose identities and cultures have been transformed forever by the sweeping force of colonialism.

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