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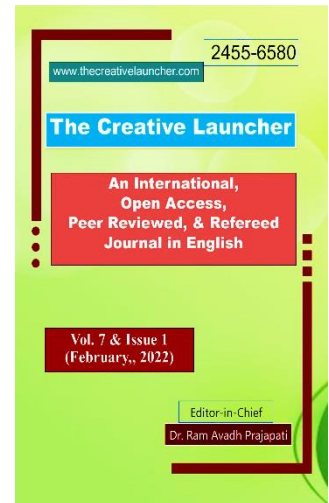
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Globalization Posing Challenges to Examine the Relevance of Postcolonial Criticism in Future

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Abstract

It has become very difficult today to assume that we are living in a world which is postcolonial just in the sense that the curse of colonialism is over. The questions of how one nation is dominating the other and how such dominating forces can be resisted have become the salient issues of the anti-colonial movements worldwide. The postcolonial studies are focusing on the contemporary neocolonial tendencies especially after when America has invaded Afghanistan and has also attacked Iraq for building a New American Empire. Globalization seems to have changed the world so radically that it has become meaningless if we try to perceive the world either from the perspectives of how the European colonizers wanted it to be or as totally decolonized from any exploitative networks. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their seminal work, *Empire* (2000) have argued that they have used the term 'Empire' to refer to the emergence of a new sovereign power in the world politics which is predominating over all the other nations in contemporary times. According to them, one can understand this present-day power structure best by comparing it with how the European powers had maintained their sovereignty and empires during the colonial period. Simon Gikandi has accurately observed that, what is very new in globalization is that it has appropriated certain identical postcolonial terms like 'hybridity' and concepts like the 'other'. All these different postcolonial terms and concepts had always been ignored by the former social scientists. This paper will be exploring why it is irrelevant to assume that this new postcolonial globalized culture, as it is reflected in some postcolonial literary images and narratives, does not seem to have any functional impact in changing the socio-cultural relationships of the people of this contemporary global world. This paper will also focus on why in the contemporary globalization the native is found to be contaminated by the west and therefore dangerously 'un-otherable' and no longer available as the pure. This paper will also address as to how globalization apart from carrying the overwhelming connotations of cosmopolitanism and evaporating the geo-political centres and margins, is intensifying the pre-existing global asymmetries and pre-empting the postcolonial critics from analyzing the operative networks of the contemporary neoimperial forces.

Keywords: Globalization, Decolonization, Postcolonialism, Hybridity, Empire, Centre/Periphery, Hegemony, Neoimperialism

Introduction

It has become very difficult today to assume that we are living in a world which is postcolonial just in the sense that the curse of colonialism is over. The questions of how one nation is dominating the other and how such dominating forces can be resisted have become the salient issues of the anti-colonial movements worldwide. The postcolonial studies are focusing on the contemporary neocolonial tendencies especially after when America has invaded Afghanistan and has also attacked Iraq for building a New American Empire. Globalization seems to have changed the world so radically that it has become meaningless if we try to perceive the world either from the perspectives of how the European colonizers wanted it to be or as totally decolonized from any systemic exploitative networks. The central concepts of postcolonial

studies like the centres and margins can no more be used to analyze globalization. In recent times the paradigm of transnational networks addresses present day economies, cultures, politics and identities in a better way. Along with this, the postcolonial critics are also well acquainted with the paradigms of how the regional forces and their international implications flow together after merging geographic boundaries as well as the cultural borders. But the paradox lies in invoking these paradigms as to have no connection either with the aspects of colonial narratives or from the anti-colonial narratives. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their seminal work, *Empire* (2000) have argued that they have used the term 'Empire' to refer to the emergence of a new sovereign power in the world politics which is predominating over all the other nations in contemporary times. According to them, one can understand this present-day power structure best by comparing it with how the European powers had maintained their sovereignty and empires during the colonial period. In *Empire* (2000) the main argument is that there is a difference between the two imperial worlds i.e. the contemporary imperial world and the imperial world of the past. In the imperial world of the past different European powers used to compete with each other whereas in the new imperial world it is marked by the domination of one sovereign power over all others. This sovereign power follows the principles of postcolonialist and postimperialist notions in delivering orders to other nations and thereby, sustains its subjugation over them in a very united and structured way. On one hand, due to globalization the transnational networks have transformed the nature of exploitations, deprivations, repressions etc. and on the other, they have facilitated resistance by the 'multitude' (Hardt and Negri 2000). According to them the new socio-economic and political networks have strengthened the forces of liberation with new possibilities as such that multiple subjects from multiple sites can challenge the hegemony of the global power and this is what they term as the 'multitude'. The neo-liberal advocates of globalization argue that earlier hierarchies have been dissolved by the global mobility of workers, goods, industry, consumers, and capital.

Literature Review & Discussion

Robert Young (2012) asserts that if postcolonial studies are to be considered as ineffective in the academia of France as well as of US then it indicates how the provocation of anxiety can retain its continuation in the West through the transformative factors of decolonization. Decolonization harbours the power to transform a political as well as an epistemological vision. This process is also studied with the dynamics of the power of renegotiation with colonial histories as well as with the power structure of the capitalist neocolonial relations. This reconstructive approach redefines the world by separating it from the perspective of the 'subjectified others' (2012). When in the context of globalization, the contours of neocolonial global world are shaped by the authoritative structures and the intransigent forms of violence of the West, the cultural aspects and the political backdrop of decolonization can also bear relevance to this context. What Ania Loomba (2005) has pointed out is that the shadow that had been cast, when US had invaded Iraq in 2003, on the twenty-first century, it had become truly absurd to locate our existence in a postcolonial world. There are structural connections between how the colonial powers used to operate in the past and how

the neocolonial forces are working at present. Such structural continuities challenge the perspectives where there is an attempt to consider postcolonial studies as no longer effective in a context predominated by the new discursive historical conjectures.

The continuation of the epistemological shift from modernity to the neocolonial global world has become a centre of socio-political, cultural as well as intellectual controversies. After the 9/11 attack the western discourses of history maintained their insistence on the fact that such an event had projected the paradigmatic shift in the narrative of the contemporary history. It had been considered as an extremely vital rupture in the discursive framework of ideas and structure of power of the western historiography. Globalization is viewed as an accumulation of socio-economic as well as political and cultural processes. It is also considered as an epistemic and ideological practice. Globalization has instigated the emergence and development of new discourses and they continue to flourish evermore in constellated structural transformations which lay the route to begin a new discourse of history. These new discourses of history have not only transformed and challenged the trajectory of the theoretical approaches and the critical studies of postcolonialism, but also have reconstructed the hermeneutic parameters of history.

This discursive shift has been most prominently articulated by Hardt and Negri in their authoritative work *“Empire”* (2000). They have postulated that a new governing system, associated with new patterns of critical conceptions and disciplinary devices, attempts to explain the new world and thereby supersedes the spheres of the critical studies of postcolonialism as an academic discipline. These new notions of the borderless global networks and the spatio-temporal power structure have excessively insisted on the displacement of the numerous critical perspectives as well as reading strategies of the postcolonial studies. The discursive formations of the western knowledge are reconstructed and redirected by the transformative dynamics of the postcolonial studies. To what extent the western cultural frameworks continue to get inflected by the critical concerns of the postcolonial studies has been demonstrated both by the notions of postnationalism and transnationalism. Such critical categories of the postcolonial studies have caused an epistemic shift which in turn has invoked a historical investigation of the journey of postcolonial studies from colonialism to the world of global neocolonialism. The new socio-economic and cultural terrains of the governments of the contemporary nation states comprise potential queries which assist in constituting the national and transnational interrelations. This is where postcolonialism seems to become operational historically and it also becomes critically active for elaborating the inner-workings of the capitalist power structure of globalization. Hardt and Negri (2000) asserted that the new authoritative structures and intransigent forms of violence have superseded the postcolonial world. But the critical categories of the postcolonial studies which include caste, race, gender, religion, nation remain consistent in triggering a tremendously striking sense of critical significance. From the historical point of view, the capitalist discursivity of globalization seeks to transpose the postcolonial epistemologies of both subversion and appropriation.

What is to be of paramount significance in postcolonial studies, is the maintenance of its critical approach towards the history of imperialism and the narrative of colonialism as well.

It also attempts to discover how the dynamics of discursivity of the neocolonial globalization continue to be shaped by the assumed ideologies, through cultural practices and prejudiced epistemologies. How the inner-framework of globalization operates to implicate different socio-economic and political and cultural contexts, gets reflected in postcolonial studies through a conscience which is historical and through a postcolonial consciousness. The fact that colonialism and globalization are structurally connected, has become an interesting area that has forced the postcolonial studies to start a critical investigation with certain new urgencies. These urgencies, being vocational in critically analyzing and describing new trajectories to deal with the colonial narratives, have paved the way for the postcolonial studies to be significantly considered as an academic discipline. Postcolonialism focuses on how the configurations of power in neocolonialism can be conceptually deconstructed and dismantled. The violence of colonialism has forced postcolonial studies to renegotiate with the transnational politics of globalization and to investigate into the means of production by reinventing new ways of interventions. This new critical approach of postcolonialism begins to envision such an epistemological project which is bound to be wide-ranging. This project attempts to probe and explore to the extent to which the critical practices of postcolonialism, hermeneutic politics and elaborative references can change, disorient and deconstruct the formations of western epistemologies about globalization.

Globalization's interconnection with the colonial and imperial violence, its authoritative structures as well as its manipulation of power, its political dominance, tendencies to appropriate and subordinate the contemporary economic domain are also the areas of interest of this new epistemological project of the present-day postcolonial studies. Due to globalization's discursive ambiguity, concerning the multi or transnational operations of power, the national capital appears to have merged to the socio-economic politics and cultural abstractions. The dissolution of national capital in the contemporary globalized world is what postcolonialism has begun to analyze critically. Globalization has become politically and theoretically mystified through the ideologies of de-territorialization. The transnational global culture and socio-economic governance have eclipsed that essential role which a nation state continues to maintain within the contemporary imperial discursivity. The western discourses of domination and violence seem to have materially impacted the postcolonial reading of globalization and they are also filled with historical imbrications. The fundamental criticisms regarding globalization's diverse discourses of economy, the expansion of its geopolitical domain and its epistemological theories should begin to reappropriate the epistemic inheritance of decolonization which is one of the most significant concerns of postcolonial studies. Such criticisms tend to critically enunciate the neocolonial narratives as being dominant over of the nations and also describe them as the central matrix, the globalized neo-imperial powers pivot around in contemporary times.

The promising criteria for critical investigations have been provided due to the structural consistency between the national framework of colonial domination and the neocolonial hegemony of the global structures. Through these critical investigations globalization can be described as a terrain continuing to sustain colonialism and therefore it

should be subjected to epistemological deconstruction and political contestations. Gayatri Spivak in the “Global War on Terror” (2004) has stated that the terrorist attack of September 11 had generated a new critical controversy where the globalization was subjected to visible violence. Globalization had rarely been a subject of significant critical discussion in postcolonialism prior to the “Global War on Terror”. Earlier postcolonial criticisms had been silent in their approaches towards globalization as they considered this phenomenon a complex of socio-political, cultural, epistemological and ideological perspectives. The transnational identity politics and the transcultural homogeneous agencies had mystified those discursive practices. According to Cooppan, there is a perspective of ‘nationlessness’ (2005) which appears to have been possessed by globalization and which the postcolonial studies repudiate. According to him the postcolonial criticism insists that there is no ‘antagonistic formations’ (2005) that the national and the global constitute rather in contemporary times they operate as ‘intercalated modalities’ (2005).

According to Sankaran Krishna (2009), the postcolonial critics are excessively critical of the issues such as ‘hybridity’ and the perspectives of globalism and ‘reterritorialization’ in the metropolis in recent times. These issues had left the westernized postcolonial intelligentsia in desperation and also made them unable to concur with the emergent hegemonic structures of power and authority that were historically structured for inflections and redirections. Spivak (1988) asserts that the aspect of ‘hybridity’ had not been able to transcend the western ‘sovereign subject’ in its cultural and socio-economic implications though it was discursively constituted as a medium of empowerment as well as transformation. The world perceived as homogeneous through epistemological representations is a discursive function of translation. The western logocentric narrative of the universe displaces cultures, multiplicities and identities as the essential signifiers of difference. Benhayoun (2005) states that the world cannot be interpreted as a homogeneous entity as the historical, geographical, scientific and imaginative accounts of humanity are replete with contradictions, diversity and conflicts and therefore it is not possible to find any single linear description of the contemporary world. The transnational capitalist flow of labour and culture has virtually corrupted and de-territorialized the human subjectivities through the universalized discourses which do not seem to have any existence in the terrain of ontological abstraction. The West with its discursive economy continues to narrativize the complex historical, socio-cultural and political agencies.

Said (1993) asserts that imperialism being a transnational agency of globalization remains persistently influential both in the general cultural domain and in particular socio-economic, ideological and political practices. The historical homogeneity is endorsed by the discursive practices of globalization. They have structurally emerged from the western imperial narratives of socio-economic power structure and from the Eurocentric hegemonic cultural perspectives and prejudiced epistemologies. This has resulted in the obliteration of all forms of multiplicities which can challenge and question the cultural and political discursive conformity as laid down by the ‘West’s imperium’ (Benhayoun 2006) centre. What is required for the de-hegemonization of globalization is a detailed critical analysis of the philosophical discourses of enlightenment and the structural discourses of Eurocentrism. The discursive

forces of globalization do not only exist as merely in the forms of economic and cultural abstractions but rather they are constituted of the complex hegemonic dynamics of power relations. They aim to celebrate and reproduce the western cultural values as the accepted paradigm. In the new context of globalization, the geographical and cultural territories as well as the local and the historical identities have provided the contesting planes of how the dominating discursive forces of globalization are to be confronted.

Hardt and Negri (2000) have described that the historical backdrop of decolonization has been structured in such a way that the nation can emerge as a sovereign entity through its anti-colonial struggles. They have also argued how decolonization works to build a postcolonial epistemological resistance against the inheritance of any colonial constriction. But the new globalized transnational world order has transformed this concept of decolonization, in which the concepts of territory in the imperial space are constantly destabilized. The imperial apparatuses with their central radical forces of flexibility, mobility and the issues of deterritorialization have been functional for the destabilization of the process of decolonization. Foucault (1972) asserts that the discursive tools such as books, customs, buildings, registers, institutions, laws etc. exist in every society, time and place, either spontaneously or through conscious organized forms. Therefore, the tendency towards a homogeneous world will cause the erasure of all forms of cultural multiplicities. Homogeneity that causes the erasure of signifiers of difference, would suggest to unthink the historical inscriptions of humanity, prevalent in the widely diverse epistemic traditions. Contemporary historical, geographical and cultural discourses are consisted of such anti-colonial concepts that aim to bring an end to the universalized hegemony of the western epistemological discourses disseminated through globalization. These universalized epistemic discourses attempt to constitute a homogenized concept of the world which is to be considered as a very well-organized institutional foundation. The critical approaches towards historical narratives, geography, politics, economy, culture as discursive practices tend to redefine the major issues of postcolonial struggle and to produce a counter-narrative to the discourses of globalization. The explosion in Afghanistan and the attacks on Iraq had led the epistemic mystification, an emergent phenomenon of globalization which was supposed to necessitate a series of new critical jargons for deconstruction, to lose its credibility in cultural politics. The emergence of a new historical discourse had been indicated by the “Global War on Terror” (2004). In this discourse the western nation-states are ‘relexicalized’ (2004) and re-narrativized as the agents of transnational corporate networks. So, from this perspective this new historical discursive shift is derived from the inefficiency to localize power within projected territorial borders and this has caused its diffusion in the domains of contradictory relationships and different paradoxical productive forces.

Simon Gikandi (*Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality*, 2001) has accurately observed that, what is very new in globalization is that it has appropriated certain identical postcolonial terms like ‘hybridity’ and concepts like the ‘other’. All these different postcolonial terms and concepts had always been ignored by the former social scientists. This paper is to explore why it is irrelevant to assume that this new postcolonial globalized culture,

as it is reflected in some postcolonial literary images and narratives, does not seem to have any functional impact in changing the socio-cultural relationships of the people of this contemporary global world. Information technology has become more widely available due to globalization, and it has offered great opportunities to certain sections of this contemporary world to become economically prosperous. Some postcolonial critics are of the opinion that the main cause behind the cultural detachment of the world populations from their socio-economic roots is the emergence of such global identities that are both ever transforming and hybrid in their origination. P. Sainath (*'And Then There Was the Market'*, 2001) argues that the mobility of capital in globalization instead of introducing any of the ideologies that can spread openness, it has contributed to incorporate more prejudiced constrictions. In the earlier period, a unified economic system had integrated the whole world through colonial globalization, and it had also divided the world into two sections - the rich and the poor. But the new empire has, on one hand, facilitated the transnational connections in a globalized world and engendered new scopes of progression, and on the other, it has established disparities and new division. Today the economy of the world instead of harbouring any increasing prosperity and integrity has become weaker and more divided. The statistics of the World Bank exhibit that in the last decades of the 20th century there had been an increase in the number of people in the world who were the victims of poverty and suffering. Hence, this paper focuses on how globalization, apart from carrying the overwhelming connotations of cosmopolitanism and evaporating the geo-political centres and margins, intensifies the pre-existing global asymmetries and pre-empt the postcolonial critics from analyzing the operative networks of the contemporary neoimperial forces.

Joseph E. Stiglitz (*'Globalization and its Discontents'*, 2003) has connected the developments of globalization to colonialism and argued that the norms of the IMF approach bear similarities with the appearance and activities of a colonial authority to the developing nations and to deal with the dominating forces of this IMF, the developing countries are compelled to ask the alarming question if there had been really any change since when colonialism ended 'officially.'

Conclusion

The advocates and policymakers of the globalized new world have supported the need for a new kind of imperialism which is to be led by America to replace the chaos and the absence of any sovereign power that the earlier wave of decolonization has left. The claim for radical exceptionalism for the new American empire has been raised by the supporters of the new American domination, who have appropriated the inheritance of the past colonial empire. Robert D. Kaplan (*'The Atlantic Monthly'*, 2003) has exemplified this strategy in his essay "*Supremacy by Stealth*" in which he says that there is no contradiction between the earlier imperial global networks and the new American hegemony. The present transnational networks incessantly work to include the local governments and nations just as the European colonialisms flourished through their partial incorporation of the local population into their material and ideological apparatuses. This paper has addressed why to approach globalization's threats, postcolonial studies need to critically analyze the histories of the pre-colonial period.

This paper has examined also why in contemporary globalization, the native is found to be contaminated by the west and therefore dangerously ‘un-otherable’ and no longer available as the pure. The multi- or transnational forms of power are what the discourse of globalization equivocates, which seem to have caused the dissolution of the national capital into a merely political, cultural, and economic abstraction. The significant role of a nation has been eclipsed by the institutional functioning of a transnational economy and a government that operates in following the discourses of contemporary neoimperialism and the mystified ‘de-territorialized’ ideologies of globalization have also contributed in that process. The historical reading of globalization in postcolonial studies asserts that the global and the national are materially and historically interwoven within the western discursive system of domination and violence. To deconstruct the discourse and dismantle the concept of globalization, postcolonial studies need to move beyond its engagement with the discourses of violence and exploitation that are the inextricable parts of the imperial operative systems of colonialism, and delve into analyzing its material base of production and dissemination.

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