

# Investigating Identity, Hybridity, And Resistance: A Critical Study Of Postcolonial Narratives

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## Abstract

*The paper examines issues of identity and culture in postcolonial literature and emphasizes how these authors undertake a severe critique and resistance to the colonial legacy. Drawing from Said's Orientalism and Bhabha's (1994) ideas on mimicry and hybridity, this paper attempts to outline one direction through which postcolonial literature reflects the complexities of identity formation within societies that have undergone colonial domination. The current research determines how the three authors—Chinua Achebe in Things Fall Apart, Salman Rushdie in Midnight's Children, and Arundhati Roy in The God of Small Things are initiated to resist colonial narratives and<sup>1</sup> reclaim cultural identity. Achebe deconstructs the descriptions provided by the colonizers for African culture, while Rushdie and Roy dive into fluid identities and hybridity in postcolonial societies. The paper argues that postcolonial literature does not simply critique colonialism's cultural and psychological effects; instead, it reshapes identity and sets up the aspects of resistance. Indeed, in any case, it is finally analytically noticed that postcolonial literature reshapes global understandings concerning identity, culture, and power in a postcolonial world, opening new ways for interpreting the continuous impacts of colonial legacies within contemporary society.*

## 1. Introduction

Post-colonial literature has evolved into a significant strand of research, representing the diverse experiences of societies and people in the post-colonial condition (Nayar, 2008). Historians first used the term "postcolonialism" and its analysis to describe the post-decolonization era following World War II. (Bag, 2024). Post-colonial literature, broadly defined, refers to the corpus of works by authors from formerly colonised countries or those works generally engaging in some critical discourse on the colonial experience. This body of literature is not just a simple recovery of the lost voices, but a powerful tool for reclaiming cultural identity and historical discourses relegated to the periphery or erased during colonialism. More than that, it becomes a tool for solid resistance and restructuring of power relations instituted under colonial rule. Post-colonial authors, by challenging assumptions, stereotypes, and hierarchies which colonial discourses had institutionalised, deconstruct dominant narratives and offer substitute styles of making sense of identity, culture, and

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resistance in a post-colonial setting, thereby reshaping global understandings (McLeod, J. (Ed.).2007).

The conquest and dominance of foreign people, territories, and goods by European powers in Asia, Africa, and the Americas beginning in the sixteenth century is known as colonialism. (Siddiqu, 2024). Colonialism presupposed not only political and economic domination of the colonised territory but also cultural, intellectual, and social frameworks aimed at erasing or suppressing indigenous identities. In these frameworks, their effects still ring into the post-colonial era about how individuals and societies think of themselves and their status in the contemporary world. Post-colonial authors deconstruct these colonial frameworks through their works and offer narratives that bring to the foreground the voices and experiences of formerly colonised people. As Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2002) stated, post-colonial literature focuses on questions of cultural identity, hybridity, and forms of resistance and texts on the knots between tradition, modernity, and the colonial legacy in the lives of individuals and societies (Hall, 2023).

This conceptual framework is set mainly against the background of some vital post-colonial concepts influenced by important works on Orientalism by Edward Said. In his foundational book, *Orientalism* (1978), Said (1978) argued that the West initiated a course of domination by inventing an East exoticised and inferior "Other". These political but intellectual constructions shaped how Western societies conceived of and represented non-Western cultures. Said's theory remains germane in the post-colonial scenario. It helps to reinvent just how stereotypes related to colonialism have been perpetuated toward shaping global power dynamics and cultural perceptions up to the present day.

The complexities of post-colonial identity intersect with Bhabha's (1994) theories on mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity. Bhabha argues that colonised subjects appropriate and enact elements of the coloniser's culture, creating hybrid identities that resist colonial power and reaffirm it. This concept of hybridity is a key aspect of Bhabha's explanation of how post-colonial subjects navigate the fluid boundaries of identity in a world shaped by both the colonial past and contemporary globalization.

Spivak's (1998) subalternity refers to the underrepresentation of some voices in colonial and post-colonial discourses, particularly women and other oppressed groups. According to Spivak (1988), historical and literary discourses generally render mute those people considered the poorest, most degraded, and most oppressed subaltern. She, therefore, portrays that post-colonial literature ought to shift towards centering those silenced voices and take back their agency by firmly rooting them within the context of a post-colonial world. The core idea of postcolonial theory is a conceptual shift towards the knowledge emerging outside of the historically dominant West. (Faiz & Asghar, 2024). Therefore, the problem of identity and culture lies at the heart of post-colonial literature. These texts often problematize matters regarding how the post-colonial subjects perceive themselves and how others perceive them in the face of legacies accountable for colonialism. Characters in post-colonial novels are usually torn between Indigenous heritage and the cultural values forced on them through the colonial powers, opening a space for cultural hybridity. As Bhabha (1994) states, this hybridity is a site of resistance and internal conflict. Through such works, characters suffer from conflicted influences between tradition and modernity, coupled with colonialism and its overall post-colonial impact on forging new identities within an almost supersonic transforming globe.

The paper, as such, attempts to investigate how, in literature, postcolonialism has managed to gain plausible engagement with the heritage of colonial experience that has come to chart the intricacies of everyday identity and culture. The research digs through the deep reading of three foci: Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, and

Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things to find a sense of Azadi. At the same time, such authors resist the colonial narrative on their way to reclaim cultural identity. The paper thus broadly held that post-colonial literature does not criticise the imposition of colonial identities only; instead, in doing so, it changes notions of self and society reflective of hybridity and fluidity, the hallmarks of the post-colonial experience. Important lessons can be learned from such works about the responses of individuals and communities while legacies, especially with cultural identity, are sought after in a globalized world.

## 2. Literature Review

Post-colonial literature has long offered abundant ground for examining ideas of identity, hybridity, and resistance in the works of authors from formerly colonised nations. The nature of these discourses has since changed. Current scholarship engages issues relating to the continued negotiation of cultural identity, the effects of globalisation, and the bequests of colonial domination. Scholars have gone back to the foundational frameworks of post-colonial theory from Edward Said's Orientalism to Homi K. Bhabha's theories on mimicry and hybridity to unpack how literature possibly serves as a mirror for the lived experiences of post-colonial subjects. This chapter surveys some of the critical contributions from 2018-2024 regarding relevance to identity formations, cultural hybridity, and resistance methods across post-colonial texts.

### 2.1 Identity Formation in Post-colonial Literature

Identity formation in post-colonial literature is usually marked by tension between indigenous identities and the cultural structure that colonial rule imposed. Much scholarship investigates how, exactly, post-colonial authors represent such negotiations of identity, particularly within those contexts where histories of colonialism have left their mark on personal and collective self-perception. One of the central themes running through these works is how to retain traditional cultural roots and assimilate with the colonial or post-colonial world, usually ending up in what Homi Bhabha calls hybridity, a juncture of the coloniser's and colonised persons' elements of culture.

Similarly, Khalifa (2024) uses Caribbean literature to investigate the concept of diasporic identity and how it becomes problematised by one's identity construction through migration and dislocation. In this respect, he has used the works of authors like Marlene Nourbese Philip to include post-colonial literature into that fragmentation of identity brought about by forced or even voluntary movement across geographical and cultural boundaries. Identity negotiates amid such diasporic contexts: the grappling between loss from native culture and acculturating into new environments. Khalifa's (2024) research focuses on how language and poetics mobilise hybridity within diasporic identity, where there had been a cultural fragmentation not simply because of colonial history but due to the continuing forces of globalisation and migration. Khalifa (2024) opens up something new through such dynamics: understanding how post-colonial literature reflects complexities in modern identity moving within a globalised world.

These scholars, among many others, underline identity's multifaceted and dynamic nature in post-colonial literature. The emphasis on hybridity and fluidity within the post-colonial text is on the continuous negotiation between the past and the present, between the indigenous and the colonial, and between local and global imperatives. As characters move through their cultural landscapes, they reveal struggles and contradictions ingrained in the fashioning of coherent senses of self in the wake of colonial disruption. This search for identity is crucial in understanding how post-colonial literature contradicts the perceived view of culture as sturdy and single and shows identity ultimately as a contrarily shifting and adaptive phenomenon.

## **2.2 Cultural Hybridity and Resistance**

Expectedly, Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity has been foundational in shaping fairs about understanding cultural identity within the post-colonial framework. The colonised subject takes on and assimilates bits of the culture belonging to the coloniser, opening up an ambivalent space that is neither fully Indigenous nor colonial, claims Bhabha in his definition of hybridity. Such hybridity, almost without exception, produces resistance and internal conflict for the negotiating subjects caught between forces from two or more cultural worlds. Recent scholarship has expanded on these ideas of Bhabha, applying them to different literary contexts to probe deeper into strategies employed by post-colonial subjects in their struggle against colonial domination while wrestling with hybrid identities.

Kerboua (2023) writes an incisive look at cultural hybridity in George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* and V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men*. Both texts reflect protagonists torn between the cultural worlds of their colonised homelands and the imperial powers that straddle them. Core to Kerboua's (2023) analysis is Bhabha's theory of mimicry, where the characters in this novel take over colonial modes of expression as a survival strategy but subtly undermine the colonial system from within. The ambivalence of mimicry thus brings forth internal conflicts in the characters since they belong to both cultural spheres, yet neither fully. That tension led to a much greater post-colonial struggle to forge an identity that could reconcile the contradictions between colonised and Indigenous influences. Hybridity would then become the site of resistance and psychological agony, the two diverse sides of post-colonial identity.

On the other hand, Esguerra represents an instance of cultural hybridity and resistance in a radically different context: Filipino drag culture, as it was represented within *Drag Race Philippines*. As can be implied from Esguerra's study, hybrid cultural forms like drag are compelling vantage points for resistance against Western neoliberal hegemonies. Drawing on Bhabha (2023), this paper illustrates how the Filipino drag performers appropriate discourses of Western drag and simultaneously realign it with local Filipino traditions while showing a hybrid cultural performance that speaks to both involvement with and resistance against Western cultural dominance. However, this hybridity is ridden with its flaws since it requires performers to negotiate the pressures of mimicry, in other words, adopting Western norms and aesthetics in a way that empowers and may undermine their very expressions of resistance. The functions Esguerra finds in the analysis of cultural hybridity as a tool for post-colonial resistance continue acknowledging participation and enactment amidst ambivalence and complexity in general, adopting and adapting forms of expression from the colonial or Western (Esguerra, 2023).

These studies, taken in concert, underscore the continued relevance of Bhabha's (2023) notion of hybridity for post-colonial scholarship today. Hybridity serves as a site where postcolonial subjects can work out resistances to domination but also connect with both psychic dissonances and cultural dissonances of living between worlds in such varied locations say, Caribbean literature from Lamming to Naipaul and contemporary Pinoy drag culture. This ambivalence lies at the heart of post-colonial resistance. It denotes mimicry, which, as a repetition practice, enables both the subversion of colonial power and internal struggles in hybrid identity. Hybridity continues to offer a rich framework for understanding the multiple and quite contradictory ways that post-colonial subjects engage with and contest the legacies of colonialism.

## **2.3 Resisting the Power: Narrative and Memory**

In post-colonial texts, memory becomes a tool for resistance. It can reclaim history and reshape identity after colonial rule. Resistance by post-colonial authors to the dominant narratives that

have sustained colonial rule over history, those silencing Indigenous voices and experiences, must begin from cultural memory. Literature becomes a space of reinterpretation, and marginalised histories come to the forefront, giving space for the reconfiguration of identity that resists forgetfulness under erasure through colonialism.

Sofi (2023) recognises Kenyan anglophone literature folklore and myth as a means of resistance toward the colonial narrative. Traditional folklore and myth in works belonging to, among others, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o are not vestiges of a pre-colonial past but energetic factors of narrative resistance. By reformulating these cultural memories into their narratives, authors recover their histories from the archive of colonialism, a system that distorted African culture and history. As Sofi argues, through cultural memory, such writers contest this imperial project that overwrote indigenous histories with its tale of empire. It is Ngũgĩ, especially, who, through his works, underscores how resolute the cultural memory of Africa is, being centric on the fight against colonial domination. It is on this premise that post-colonial literature becomes an act of defiance where the memory acts as a preservative culture and forms of resistance to its erasure or rewrite under the regime of colonialism. The women writers deploy memory as a tool of resistance in post-colonial societies to fight against colonial and patriarchal structures. Indeed, many post-colonial settings have been scene to a process of double marginalisation: first under colonisation and then under patriarchal systems within these respective societies themselves. These writers do precisely this by voicing personal and collective memories against the expressed dual suppressions of colonialism and patriarchy. The memory becomes an emancipating force for marginalised voices to resist not just colonial erasure but also patriarchal suppression.

These analyses ensure the realisation that memory within post-colonial literature cannot relate to mere passive memorisation of facts but changes into an act of resistance and reclamation. Be it through the invocation of cultural myths and folklore, such as in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, as memory becomes a tool that post-colonial authors use in their struggle against both colonial and patriarchal forces trying to gag them. It is, therefore, plus historiographical distortions, a new way of looking at identity in the light of a post-colonial world. Memory acquires the dimension where it potentially becomes a tool to reshape the present by reclaiming the past, ensuring that stories of the colonised are no longer pushed to the periphery but placed at the centre of post-colonial discourse.

The literature devoted to post-colonial identity, hybridity, and resistance does not stop evolving. Recent studies have contributed a critical number of new insights into how post-colonial texts reflect and resist colonialism's heritage. This has been central to applying Bhabha's theories of hybridity and mimicry. The gap in the Existing Literature Discussions of hybridity and identity in post-colonial literature can be found in much scholarship; and relatively little attention has been oriented toward the positioning of post-colonial identities.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

Such an analysis in post-colonial literature requires a subtle grasping of the critical theories that shaped the terrain. Three foundational post-colonial theorists: Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak, supply a set of critical lenses through which to examine selected texts. These theorist preliminaries provide

- insight into how colonialism has constructed identities,
- manipulated cultural narratives, and
- imposed hierarchies that continue to beset societies formerly colonized by Western powers.

This theoretical framework will apply the concepts of these scholars to explore how postcolonial literature navigates aspects of identity, hybridity, and resistance in the works of Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie, and Arundhati Roy.

### **3.1 Edward Said's Orientalism**

The role played by Edward Said in his post-colonial theory. Particularly concerning Orientalism, he describes how the West "Occident," as far back as it can remember, has invented the image of the East, generally referred to as the "Orient": some different, inferior, exotic "Other." For Said, these stereotypical representations of Eastern societies were hauntingly in justification of colonial domination; men had to be civilized under the intervention of the West, portraying the colonized as backward and uncivilized. The colonizers constructed oppositional images of themselves and the colonized through othering, where they are superior, rational, and advanced compared to these "Others".

Orientalism provides the theoretical framework for how colonial discourses determined not only Western notions regarding the Orient but also those concerning self-conceptualizations on the part of the colonized in post-colonial literature. In his work *Things Fall Apart*, the contestation by such writers as Chinua Achebe shows African societies as complex, sophisticated, and dynamic before European colonizers' invasion. Directly contesting the colonial narrative, Achebe works by centring African voices and experiences, thereby entering at the level of personal metanarrative to challenge reductionist and exoticized landscapes of an Africa that would otherwise be common within colonial literature.

Said's (1978) theory is highly relevant in understanding how post-colonial literature tries to redeem the identity of the "Other" and critique the present functioning of Western hegemonic representations. Deconstructing colonial stereotypes, but not eternity, post-colonial authors destroy the residual and latent presence of a colonial narrative formed within the vying ideology and work toward the assignation of fresh ways of representation for colonized people as multi-dimensional autonomous individuals.

### **3.2 Bhabha's Concepts of Mimicry, Ambivalence, and Hybridity**

Bhabha's ideas on mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity pave an aspect of the critical framework from which one situates the complexity surrounding cultural identity in post-colonial contexts. His works question how colonialism produces hybrid identities, showing those living between the interstices of the colonizer and the colonized. Hybridity is a product of the compulsory intercourse between colonial powers and indigenous cultures, producing a new form of culture that blurs binary distinctions between the same colonizer and colonized.

Bhabha's idea of mimicry underlines this interaction's ambiguity and paradox. That is, while colonized subjects imitate the cultural patterns of their colonizers, such mimicry is never perfect; it is precisely within the imperfection of the imitation that an act of resistance lies. In other words, the ambivalence of mimicry subverts this colonial authority in the sense that the colonized subject could never quite actually become like the colonizer himself and, therefore, continually destabilizes the colonial power dynamic. A perfect example is Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, where his characters represent a hybrid post-colonial India where cultural, linguistic, and identity mixing mirrors the complex colonial legacy of the nation. Here, Rushdie employs magical realism to further break through the barriers between colonizer and colonized, with hybridity being one of the critical constituents explored in the narrative post-independence exploration of Indian identity.

A theory of ambivalence by Bhabha is likewise pivotal to understanding how post-colonial literature reviews the colonial enterprise. Through the depiction of colonial subjects living in

this state of hybridity, neither here nor there, neither Western nor native authors expose these contraindications of colonialism and its attempts to delimit fixed identities. Hybridity then becomes a site of struggle, and the post-colonial subject breaks up these categories and asserts a fluid, multiple identity.

### **3.3 Spivak's Concept of Subalternity and Voice**

Gayatri Spivak's notion of subalternity, especially her famous essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), is central to how articulated voices of the marginalized, specifically women, come to be gagged in themselves and silenced both in colonial and postcolonial contexts. For Spivak, the subaltern exists at the fringes of society and is doubly marginalized by both the imperial powers and the elites of postcolonialism.

She states that in most historical and literary discourses, the subaltern is never allowed the voice, especially when their stories are being told to other people first, mediated, and then finally written. Subalternity becomes a vital theoretical concept in determining how the works of such authors as Arundhati Roy are against the danger of silence imposed on some people. In *The God of Small Things*, Roy focuses on women and members of the lower castes who were silenced throughout colonial and post-colonial India. Roy's text does more than critique these structures that bind the colonized and feminine; it traces the urgency to reclaim their voices within a post-colonial present.

Spivak's theory explains how postcolonial writers resist such structures. They present the voice of the subaltern in their writing and, above all, complicate the reductionist stories of liberty and independence that postcolonial discourse foregrounds.

### **3.4 Frantz (1952) Colonization from a Psychoanalytic Perspective**

Much of the work of Frantz (1952), especially *Black Skin, White Masks*, explores in detail the psychological dimensions of the effects of colonization. Fanon examines how colonialism damages or dismantles the psyche of the colonized due to feelings of inferiority, alienation, and internalized racism that come as a result of the violence. One visibly evident effect of such violence could be that many subjects among the colonized internalize the values and beliefs of the colonizer. This is perceived to result in fragmented identity at both the individual self and collective identity of such colonized peoples.

Fanon (1952) remains essential for understanding the psychic trauma that various characters in post-colonial literature go through. For instance, one can interpret Okonkwo's inner turmoil and eventual destruction in *Things Fall Apart* as a symbol of the psychological damage caused by colonialism in the novel. In this perspective, Fanon provides a theoretical framework from which to approach the mental reallocations of hybrid characters in *Midnight's Children* and *The God of Small Things*—works in which an identity crisis is very closely linked to questions of selfhood with legacies left by colonial rule.

## **4. Methodology**

This research methodology will, therefore, be descriptive qualitative, using selected post-colonial novels as primary data to be defined through close thematic analysis: Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. These texts are looked upon here through the prism of those very mentioned post-colonial theories that delve into the description of identity, hybridity, and resistance within the framework of colonial and post-colonial histories.

### **4.1 Thematic Analysis**

The study will use thematic analysis to identify central ideas on post-colonial identity formation, cultural hybridity, and resistance. This paper will delve into the arrival of these themes across selected texts in a fashion that seems to demonstrate just how post-colonial literature answers, or rather critiques, the colonial experience.

The qualitative approach will enable a clearer understanding of how post-colonial writers use their narratives to struggle against colonialism's heritage and recover their cultural autonomy in an increasingly globalizing world.

## **5. Analysis: Exploring Identity, Hybridity, and Resistance in Postcolonial Literature:**

Postcolonial literature is an exciting field in which the intricacies of identity, culture, and questions of resistance, a moot point emerging in postcolonial societies, can be thrashed out. Various critical theories by Said (1978), Bhabha (1994), and Spivak (1988) are considered against the backdrop of concerns these writers express over the legacies of colonialism and the effect it has had on individuals and groups' identities, which continue into the present world. The present analysis takes up the works of Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie, and Arundhati Roy to explore how these authors represent and critique the dynamics of cultural hybridity, memory, and the psychological aftermath of colonization. Each of these texts, Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Rushdie's Midnight's Children, and Roy's The God of Small Things provides in its way insight into how postcolonial subjects move in the interstices between tradition, colonial influence, and the pursuit of self-definition. This paper attempts to closely read such texts to trace how in postcolonial literature, history is reclaimed, hegemonic narratives are resisted, and fluid and often fragmentary selves of postcolonial subjects are articulated.

### **5.1 Thematic Analysis:**

#### **1. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart**

Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart is perhaps held to be one of the basic texts that launched postcolonial African literature and gives a sophisticated condemnation of colonial narratives while recapturing African history. Achebe deals with how colonial rule and Christianity destroyed Igbo society. The complexity and richness of pre-colonial African societies are displayed in the novel, thus countering stereotypical depictions of African cultures as either primitive or uncivilized, which were pretty much the norms in colonial literature.

One finds Achebe's critique of colonial narratives in his protagonist, Okonkwo, and how he gradually disintegrates, along with that of the larger Igbo community. On an individual level, one finds personified in Okonkwo the struggle of indigenous African identities against the alien cultural-religious structures brought by the colonization of Africa; that is, in his character, Okonkwo embodies a prototype precolonial African personality grounded in tradition, strength, and self-reliance. His fierce adherence to traditional customs reflects his resistance to change and his belief in the value of his culture.

This coming of the colonizers circumvents the religious and social order and changes, in totality, the structure of Igbo society. The way Christianity, in the novel, interrupts the communal life of the Igbo resembles the spread of opium in China. Achebe uses the fall of Okonkwo throughout the novel to dramatize his feeling about colonialism, which is a disastrous consequence for indigenous identities. Ultimately, the suicide that befalls Okonkwo is symbolic of defeat—not in his person alone but a way of life tearing apart under the pressures of colonial rule.

Besides, Igbo's treatment is highly underlined through the narrative's language and structure. By doing so, Achebe affirms African modes of story enactment and thought *modus operandi*



by filling the narrative with Igbo proverbs, folk stories, and idiomatic expressions. The novel is then the site of cultural resistance in that Achebe is resisting the colonial portrayal of Africa by depicting a complex society with a rich heritage which existed before the colonial intervention. Its narratives of resistance challenge the domination of Eurocentric discourses over African history and literature by depicting authentic shoots of African life and values.

Thus, Things Fall Apart is at once a condemnation of colonialism and also a beacon of African culture. In Achebe's representation of the struggle between Okonkwo bound by tradition and agents of colonialism bent on destroying his world lies a more significant struggle of postcolonial societies struggling for identity and history against neo-colonialist's siege.

## **2. Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children**

Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children is an archetypal text amidst the postcolonial corpus that intends to tackle cultural hybridity through the ambience of magical realism and in the search for representation of the post-independence Indian nation. The long-sustained concern of the novel is how India's colonial past interferes with its present postcolonial condition; it resorts to employing Saleem Sinai as a metaphor for expressing the fractured identity of the nation.

One of the central aspects of Midnight's Children is cultural hybridity. Rushdie depicts India as a site of cultural hybridity, a place where, through colonization, diverse influences, indigenous and colonial, have been thrown together in uneasy coexistence. An embodiment of this hybridity, Saleem Sinai is born at the very moment of India's independence from British rule. Therefore, Saleem's identity is intertwined with the nation's destiny; his private story parallels the greater tale of India's post-colonial struggle to find itself.

Rushdie uses magical realism as a literary genre to underscore the Surrealistic and fragmented nature of postcolonial identity. The novel's blending of magic and reality corresponds to the mixing-up of cultures that goes on in postcolonial societies. Saleem's supernatural abilities, such as his telepathic connection with other children born at the moment of independence, allegorize how postcolonial nations are linked by their shared colonization histories and collective attempts at creating new identities

The novel, however, brings out the challenges and contradictions that postcolonial hybridity contains. The life of Saleem is not identified with stability; he tries to adjust to many identities to find a place in the world and the sense of his life. That is one aspect of a broader crisis taking place among the post-colonial nations as they stand halfway between the colonial past and their long dream of independence and self-determination. The novel represents a fluid and fragmented postcolonial Indian identity shaped by these forces of nationalism, colonialism, and globalization in conflict with one another. The novel implies that post-colonial identities are by nature hybrid and by nature in a state of becoming, time and again.

This is how Midnight's Children lends itself to reflection on the complexities of identity formation in postcolonial societies. It resists any facile narratives of liberation and independence and reflects on postcolonial identity as something charted by both the past and the present, indigeneity and coloniality.

## **3. Arundhati Roy's God of Small Things**

A staunch critique of colonialism and patriarchy as they manifest caste, class, and gender in post-colonial India, Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things is preoccupied with ways in which the legacies of colonialism continuously frame and shape the social and political structures of post-colonial societies and utilize experiences of marginalized characters to bring out the solidarities across lines of caste, class, and gender oppression.

Roy's critique of colonialism lies in how the novel represents the continuity of colonial power structures within postcolonial India. The British might have left India, but the social hierarchies that began with colonial rule persist until today, mainly in the form of caste discrimination. The character of Velutha, an Untouchable, comes to embody how colonialism's legacy of divisiveness and hierarchy continues to strangle the marginalized in post-colonial societies. In this instance, the love affair between Velutha and Ammu, a woman from the higher cast, is considered a social transgression that is finally brutally punished, thereby representing the continuing reality of those colonial forms of power and domination in postcolonial India as well.

On the other hand, Roy's novel equally presents a critique of patriarchy and its structures, and hindrance to women both in the colonial and postcolonial frameworks. All the female characters of this novel, Ammu, Rahel, and Baby Kochamma are conditioned by social expectations related to gender and class. Roy pictures the lives of these female characters as a way of criticizing ways in which patriarchy intersects with colonialism to create a double layer of oppression for women in postcolonial societies. For instance, Ammu had to face the world ostracized by her family and society because she had crossed all traditional gender norms; her tragic fate reflects the state of women in the colonial and postcolonial worlds in situations of nothing but marginalization and silencing.

Roy also utilizes The God of Small Things to expound on memory and how it becomes a tool in countering colonial and patriarchal discourses. So, this novel, back and forth in time, reflects fragmented memory and ways through which personal and collective histories are forged in trauma. By foregrounding memories and experiences of marginalized characters, Roy resists hegemonic discourses or dominant narratives of history that usually silence 'such voices'. Through this act of narration, the novel becomes an act of narrative resistance to both colonialism and patriarchy, specifically seeking to define and control the identity of the marginalized.

The God of Small Things's interest in caste, class, and gender effectively critiques the systems interplaying and propping up postcolonial societies. Roy sees the character's struggles against these systems as an epitome of the bequeathing legacy of colonialism and patriarchy within the post-colonial world; simultaneously, it gives a vision through memory, storytelling, and reclaiming marginalized voices as ways to act in resistance.

## **6. Discussion:**

Synthesizing analyses of Things Fall Apart, Midnight's Children, and The God of Small Things in the context of postcolonial literature, provides fertile ground for problematizing notions of identity formation and cultural hybridity as resistance. Identity manipulation and resistance have been differently portrayed in these three texts. The difficulty is in the continuous struggle of post-colonial subjects to take back what is rightfully theirs and set aside remnants within colonialism.

Faiz and Asghar (2024), states that the core idea of postcolonial theory is a conceptual shift towards the knowledge emerging outside of the historically dominant West. Through these texts, the central themes that emerge are of resistance as narrative. Sofi (2023) recognises Kenyan anglophone literature folklore and myth as a means of resistance toward the colonial narrative. In Things Fall Apart, Achebe resists colonial narratives since he insists on an authentic representation of the African culture and its history, an adequate stereotype-ridden distortion propagated by colonial literature. Similarly, in The God of Small Things, Roy also challenges the colonial and patriarchal discourses by providing voices for the usually faceless and reclaiming the confiscated or distorted historical narratives for these silenced voices.

Hybridity forms the epicentre of postcolonial formations of identity in Rushdie's Midnight's Children in that it challenges any essentialism concerned with identity.

Cultural hybridity is also core in these texts. Hybridity, in general, finds ways of expressing the definite attribute of postcolonial identity in both Midnight's Children and The God of Small Things. Rushdie, in particular, uses hybridity to probe into the means through which postcolonial subjects have to reconcile these multiple cultural influences, both indigenous and colonial, so that new identities can be hammered out for survival in the fast-changing world. However, hybridity itself is not depicted as a positive force in view; it can also be a source of inner conflict and instability as with the character of Saleem Sinai.

A critical role is played by post-colonial literature in the reassessment of colonialism's legacies and ways of approaching identity in the contemporary post-colonial world, as revealed in the analysis of Things Fall Apart, Midnight's Children and The God of Small Things. Chinua Achebe strongly criticized colonialist narratives within Things Fall Apart, denoting the terrible effect that colonization had on indigenous cultures. However, the work also claimed African history through traditional storytelling techniques. More importantly, in Midnight's Children, Salman Rushdie sought to invent great cultural hybridity, which understands the fluid and fragmented identity in post-independence India, contesting the essential definitions of the nation. On this footing, Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things furnishes further scrutiny against colonialism.

Further, he extends the critique towards patriarchy and the caste systems that have continued to oppress historically marginalized subjects under post-colonial societies. These texts underline the importance of memory, narrative, and resistance in making post-colonial identities. These works thus offer a fertile ground for studying post-colonial experiences related to hybridity, trauma, and cultural negotiation during the continuous struggle for self-definition in the post-colonial condition.

## 7. Conclusion

It is evident from this paper that post-colonial literature, through its various authors such as Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie, and Arundhati Roy, bases the central argument on presenting critical ideas on identity, hybridity, and resistance. Post-colonial literature serves as the influential vehicle in the deconstruction of the colonial narratives that, since time immemorial, have gagged the indigenous voice and distorted the cultural realities of colonized societies. As they seek the reclamation of history and refer to the complexity of post-colonial identities, Achebe, Rushdie, and Roy focus on the fact that post-colonial cultural identity is liquid, contestable, and layered.

Through the resistance of colonial narratives and the reclaiming of small voices, these three authors have a stake in shaping the current strategies of understanding identity and culture across national and international borders. Their works remind us of the transformative power of post-colonial theory and literature, inspiring a new definition of past, present, and future in global literature.

In other words, Achebe, Rushdie, and Roy represent postcolonial literature, which creatively critiques colonial legacies while reshaping identity, culture, and power in a postcolonial world. Their works resist colonial narrations and emphasize fluidity in identity and complexity during cultural hybridity. They further shape global understandings about identity in contemporary society by reclaiming marginalized voices with new perspectives.

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