Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

After 1980 the Post-colonial theory and literature became popular among the intellectuals. Now the literary artists were not prepared to accept the existing authorities at any cost. As they studied the history of Second World War, they didn’t want the repetition of Fascism, Nazism and imperialism at any cost. The concepts of nuclear race, the Cold War, corruption in society, consumer culture etc, were disgusting and intolerable to them. As the symptoms of decay and degeneration had not fully withered away, they wanted to mould society on new lines with new ways. How long to wait for social degeneration and political uncertainty? The French philosopher Jean-Paul-Sartre had given new theory of Existentialism in *The Age of Reason*. Claude Levi-Strauss gave the theory of Structuralism. The situation changed when Edward Said gave lectures on Orientalism and asked scholars to think on new lines. Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire and Albert Memmi are regarded the founders of Post-colonialism. Post-Colonial studies became popular with the publication of Bill Ashcroft’s *The Empire Writes Back* (1989).

Now the people of the colonies were not prepared to be treated as adjuncts to the history of
the West. They were highly conscious of their personal identity. The evils of colonialism were exposed as the western myths were not acceptable anymore. Quite often the western literature was criticized by the Post-colonial authors. At time Post-modernism was related with Post-colonialism. This term became popular as the artists and spectators were talking of new visual arts, films, architecture, sculpture, photography, literature etc. Dogmas were, however, fully rejected. New movements developed in arts and literature after 1970. How could the intellectuals tolerate the 'fixed system of knowledge' and belief? Fine arts came out of the accepted scope and interpretation. Quite often the literary artists felt that they were leaving the colonial values. Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida are known as Post-structuralist thinkers as they talked of the relation between power and knowledge. Derrida is well known for his theory of deconstruction. He asked readers to leave the illusive language as the same word used at different times may give divergent meanings.

The young artists of Post-colonial era don't return to formalism of the previous decades. Actually they attach no importance to earlier art, styles, national symbols and 'street art'. With the emergence of free nations in Asia and Africa, the
European power structure breaks. After all the liberation struggle has been long. However, authors like V.S. Naipaul fail to understand as to why the citizens of these newly free nations copy the western living style? Why do they import coca-cola even now? What is the need of western furniture and European dresses now? Imperialism has withered way and there is every need of new rationality. Poets like Shiv K. Kumar, Gieve Patel, Keki N. Daruwalla etc. feel that a vigorous beginning has got to be made to escape from the shackles of colonialism. Anti-colonial poems have been written after 1980 as new culture developed in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia etc. In Issues In Twentieth-Century World History Sneh Mahajan remarks:

In the newly independent countries, Post-colonial writing saw a vigorous beginning. Literature from Africa, India and the Carribean written in English and in South America in Spanish, has become the most vibrant area of literary activity today. It is anti-colonial. It has revitalized fiction, making it find ways to speak the languages and perspectives of cultures created by Modernity. Even in Western Europe and America, the most
Distinguished writers are migrants from other countries. (317)

Quite often Shiv K. Kumar and Keki N. Daruwalla are called Commonwealth Writers. There is no denying the fact that their poems are innovative in form, tone and structure. Shiv K. Kumar, while living in America, didn’t feel that he was a displaced person. While writing Thus Buddha Spake and Voice of The Buddha: The Dhammpada, he seeks spiritual freedom. Some of his poems confirm that he makes regular efforts to get psychological freedom also. As artists these poets have no inferiority of any kind. There is an urge for transformation of the system and no feeling or complex. Frantz Fanon’s theory as given in the books Black Skins, White Masks (1952) and The Wretched of The Earth (1961) has been accepted by these anti-colonial poets. There is a serious effort to seek liberty — physical liberty, intellectual liberty, spiritual liberty, socio-political liberty etc.

During his long stay in Africa Gandhiji asked Africans to be aware of themselves. He asserted that African values have got to be protected at every cost. The freedom of Africa has got to be defended by all means. In A Passage To India E.M. Forster described the bitter fact that Indian values were
being suppressed badly by the masters. Even George Orwell exposed the tyranny of British Colonialism.

Sneh Mahajan remarks:

In the countries of the South, during the last quarter of Twentieth century, Post-colonial literature has emerged as the most vibrant area of literary activity. Use of Post-colonial has been two fold. It is used to celebrate the literature that has emerged over the century in the course of liberation in the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Secondly, it asserts the need to analyze and resist the continuing colonial attitudes. (330)

She adds:

Colonial powers made conscious efforts to suppress the voices of the colonized. Post-colonialism is a matter of finding a voice and of writing back to the metropole. Post-colonial writers show concern about the delimmas of national and cultural identity and the critiques of the forms of colonial
knowledge and power. They are trying to re-examine the cultures of the colonizing nations in the light of their colonial past. The most impressive Post-colonial writing has emerged in English and Spanish. (330)

Shiv K. Kumar, Gieve Patel and Keki N. Daruwalla gave a call for freedom in the broadest sense as they wanted to be free from the shackles of orthodox rituals and traditional authorities. To them it was the need of the time to oppose what was outdated and ugly. Defiance is the plasma of their blood. One can easily notice the influence of Frantz Fanon upon their poems. Each poem has a cause to deal with. Why should they accept any imposition of western knowledge? Their sense of resistance is admirable at times. They ask the readers to enjoy the activities of self-making and nation-building. Let them promote social reconstruction and economic regeneration. They want to transform social life and also regenerate the marginalized people. Whatever colonial literature was imposed upon people before 1980, was to be discarded to create a new atmosphere. So far only colonial subjects were protected and developed in the interest of Europeans. Now a new outlook is required for a creative life. Let people have love for their own culture,
civilization, history, ethics, literature, music and sculpture.

In India the struggle against British colonialism ended in 1947. The term Post-colonialism creates many questions in the mind of these poets such as — Is India really free in economic and political terms? What were the expectations of people from the political leaders in 1947? Is there no exploitation of labourers and farmers in the country now? What are the miseries of marginalized people today? Are the Directive Principles of State Policy followed in practice? Do the poor people get free and fair justice? Is there no gap between the Haves and Have-Nots? What has happened in the name of globalization and liberalization? Do the poor children of remote areas get food, education and medicine? Is there no prostitution in the country as advanced women are talking of feminism? Is there any harmony between the employers and the employees? Do the schools and colleges have proper and qualified teachers? Where does India stand at the time of Olympic Games and Common Wealth Games? Is there any indirect expansion of imperial powers in the name of free trade? What are the lessons learnt by Indians from colonial knowledge? Do Indian scientists cultivate their own instruments of
research? Is the term ‘imitation’ enough to interpret Indian growth and development?

Similar important questions are often asked — Was Indian culture really dead during days of British imperialism in India? Did the Indian scholars compromise with western culture? Did they stop making presentations of classical dances on the stage? Did the common people forget listening the illustrations of Pandits on The Mahabharata and The Ramayana? Who forgot the fundamentals of The Vedas, The Upanishads and The Puranas? Did the people stop going to temples every morning? Was Indian culture not preserved by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananda, R.N. Tagore, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi, Gopal Krishna Gokhale etc.? Could the Christian missionaries succeed in their mission? Was the whole Indian society converted in this period? The answer to all such questions is no.

Such questions have been raised by several critics to define Post-colonialism as the term neo-colonialism has taken origin with the changing social and cultural scenario. It has been argued by John McLeod that the Professors of Great Britain, America and a few European countries don’t illustrate this term in the way it is done in the
colonized nations. There is a gap between the victims and the victimizers and hence new phrases have been framed such as ‘Post-colonizing’ and ‘Post-colonized’. After all many European and western countries earned huge amount of money from their colonies. Shohat asserts the levels that create difference ‘both within and between nations’. The historical differences still exist between the colonizers and the colonized people. The political changes have taken place in the colonized countries after 1947 though the victimizers fail to confess the truth. Simon During has illustrated such bitter facts in the essay *Post-modernism or Post-colonialism* (1985). Simon During says:

> The former fits those communities and individuals who profit from and identify themselves as heirs to the work of colonizing. The latter fits those who have been dispossessed by that work and who identity with themselves as heirs to a more or less undone culture. (Qtd. by MCLeod, 245)

There is no denying the fact that there are political differences and tensions within such nations. Many Asians and Africans still hate the colonizers. The pressure of historical accuracy has
not yet broken. Elleke Boehmer is popular for peeping into such tensions in *Colonial and Post-colonial Literature*. Similar work has been done by Dennis Walden in *Post-colonial Literature in English*. Many national and cultural references have been made by these two scholars. Edward Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* can be put in the same category. Many intellectuals are highly conscious of anti-colonial resistance policies even today. Comparative studies are being encouraged in a few universities to make the people aware of anti-colonial policies. MCLeod remarks:

... Post-colonialism may wear a radical or oppositional face, but this only masks its complicity with the continuing oppression of people in the present (what we have been calling neo-colonialism). How can Post-colonialism be at the service of the very phenomenon, colonialism, which it seeks to contest? (246)

According MCLeod, five factors have got to be studied in details to understand both the sides of Post-colonialism. These are:
1. The debt to western theory in Post-colonialism.

2. The new ‘ghetto’ of Post-colonial literary studies.

3. The problem of ‘anti-foundationism’.

4. The issue of temporality.

5. The relationship between Post-colonialism and global capitalism.

(246)

Harish Trivedi asks the readers to be extra alert on this issue in his book *Interrogating Post-colonialism: Theory, Text and Context* (1996). According to Meenakshi Mukherjee the concepts of Post-colonialism have been discussed and framed in western universities and hence don’t satisfy the scholars of colonized countries, especially India. She fears the revival of colonialism, like other Indian intellectuals and economists and MCLeond remarks:

This leads Mukherjee to argue that countries with a history of colonialism are being colonized again, this time by western theoretical imperatives and the current focus in
western universities upon cultural difference. In terms of literary studies, the colonies provide literary texts as 'raw materials' which are imported by the West to be 'processed' using post-colonial theory, with the resulting intellectual product shipped back to the erstwhile colonies for academic consumption. (247)

For example, R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* is interpreted in a different manner in the western universities. When V.S. Naipaul visited India for the first time, he wrote *An Area of Darkness* as he felt highly disgusted here. Much earlier Max Muller asked his British students to go to India and learn Indian culture but not V.S. Naipaul. He had just uneasy conjectures about India. Rudyard Kipling was the product of western 'high' culture and an admirer of British opera, art, literature, classical music and hence John MCLeod quotes his poem *The Overland Mail* to confirm this aspect of British colonialism:

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In the Name of Empress of India, make way,
Of Lords of the jungle, wherever you roam,
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The woods are astir at the close of the day —

We exiles are waiting for letters from Home.

Let the robber retreat — let the tiger turn tail —

In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

(1-6)

And —

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim.

Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.

Does the tempest cry halt? What are tempests to him?

The services admits not a 'but' or an 'if'.

While the breath's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,

In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

(13-18)
These two stanzas of *The Overland Mail* describe western colonialism and hence criticized by Post-colonial critics. Regarding Spivak John MCLead says:

... Spivak is thinking responsibly and critically about the unequal, new-colonial relations between post-colonial texts and their western readerships. She is concerned with exactly the issues raised by opponents of Post-colonial theory. This makes the argument about the commodification of post-colonial literature by Western theory difficult to sustain. (248)

Gareth Griffiths illustrates some aspects of Post-colonial cultures in the essay *Representation and Production: Issues of Control in Post-colonial Cultures*. The author studied the issues of representation as given by British authorities to Indian landlords and sycophants in the administration. Only the rich persons could afford to send their children to England to get higher education. Who shared the means of production before 1947? There were issues of government control over several commodities. All such issues
affected the Indian political leaders and they raised their voice against British imperialism. Nobody can dare to say that British colonialism had no effect on Indian economy and civilization. Indian literature (1847-1947) can’t be studied and illustrated without a sound knowledge of British Colonialism. R.N. Tagore delivered lectures with the titles such as *Nationalism In Japan*, *Nationalism in West*, *Nationalism in India* etc. and pointed out the evils of British Raj. According to Griffiths it is difficult to draw the dividing line between colonial period and Post-colonial age. If the historicity is ignored, other problems crop up. Debates are organized in such situation. John MCLeod remarks:

On the one side those who decry Post-colonial concepts and modes of analysis as unable to deal with the particular concerns of literature that often exist outside the frame of colonialism and resistance to it. On the other side are those who argue that such anterior positions do not exist: ‘local’ concerns cannot but be influenced by the legacy of colonialism. (249)
Now the advance scholars prefer to call themselves neo-colonialists rather than Post-colonialists. Indians don’t want to be labeled as ‘western-oriented’. When lectures are delivered on Shakespeare, Renaissance, Romanticism, such problems don’t arise. On the contrary, the situation changes when particular poems of Sarojini Naidu, R.N. Tagore etc. are taught in Indian Classes. When R.K. Narayan’s *Waiting For The Mahatma* is taught, the teacher can’t ignore British colonialism. For scholars such examples and situations refer to neo-colonialism. How can one ignore the difference between two cultures? After all, the Indian readers are sensitive to cultural difference while studying History of Indian Freedom Struggle. Yet Post-colonialism is a favourite subject in many universities of Great Britain and U.S.A. As Turkey, Iran, Egypt etc. didn’t face colonial effect, situation is different there.

Arif Dirlike studied the various aspects of Post-colonialism with relation to nationality and Marxism and his essay *The Post-colonial Aura: Third World Criticism in The Age of Global Capitalism* makes the readers think of the growth and effect of capitalism too. The distinctions became clear between language and reality. Human behaviour changed due to the influence of capitalism as well as
Marxism. However, nationalism shattered in various colonized nations. John MCLeoD remarks:

In addition, all the grand theories of 'grand narratives' of knowledge which were once used to explain and critique human behaviour, such as Marxism and nationalism, have broken up, leaving us in a world of fragmented, local knowledges without any 'grand narratives' to adjudicate between them. (251)

However, many critics are hostile to such interpretation of the situation. The sense of resistance against colonialism didn’t die altogether. There was tremendous impact of Edward Said, Bhabha and Spivak on the thinking of intellectuals. The poems of Shiv K. Kumar, Gieve Patel, Keki N. Daruwalla etc. confirm this. Democratic set up made a lot of promises to the people and a lot of multicultural values cropped up in society. A lot of people thought of matters on cosmopolitan level. They even thought of World Academy. Yet these people failed to ignore ethics’ conflicts and social and economic inequalities. How could they ignore social values and the gap between classes and masses? The gender issues were also highlighted. At
times Post-colonialism created the problems of several new differences and fragmentation. World society didn’t get rid of racial conflicts. However, the intellectuals of the third world countries followed the values of Post-colonialism. Unfortunately the minor bloodshed didn’t stop outside the ivory tower. Oppression, corruption and exploitation didn’t wither away. People became conscious of the changing world and new economic structure. They felt further bewildered with the effect of liberalization and globalization.

According to John MCLeod there is a contrast between change and continuity and yet the harmony between two could be seen towards the end of 20th century. He remarks:

This returns us to the ‘Post’ in Post-colonialism and the representation of history it suggests ... Post-colonialism stresses both continuity and change by recognizing the continuing agency of colonial discourses as well as resistances to them. (252)

The defects of Post-colonialism were pointed out by Anne MCCLintock in her essay The Angel of
Progress: Pitfalls of The Term Post-colonialism (1992). On the surface the term Post-colonialism appeared to be pleasing and touching. Multinational companies established new factories in Asian and African countries. World seemed to change with several banks of big powers in other nations. Internet facilities were provided. I.T. sector opened gates of employment to technical hands. A few people started talking of change and progress. Unfortunately the growth rate fell down in local markets. The exchange value of rupee fell down speedily. Nobody could guess the departure of national money in the shape of dollars. Regarding such bitter experiences John MCLeoed says:

Different countries encounter decolonization at different times, while others have not experienced it at all. In addition, not all forms of decolonization are the same. By collapsing these different times into one temporality, the 'Post-colonial', we lose the opportunity to think about the historical differences that exist between contrasting locations. Ultimately, the 'Post' in Post-colonial is too celebratory, implying an end to all things colonial. Its celebratory
emphasis damagingly directs attention away from the continued, neo-colonial operations throughout the globe. (253)

So, the Western multinational companies have given a new shape to economy of colonized nations who pretend to be free economically and politically. Communities continue to raise their voice against them. But in vain! There are more than five thousand such companies doing trade and commerce in India now. Many more companies are expected to open their shutters soon. These multinational companies are new colonialists. America continues to be in aggressive position politically but not economically. Russian states are always shattered and hence are ignored by the buyers. Whenever the goods of any company are not sold in the local markets with large profit, the shutters are closed. The staff-members are sacked and new markets are explored in other under-developed and developing nations. This is the socio-economic scenario in this Post-colonial world today. Common citizens fail to understand the complicated power relations between China and America. Now the sun of British Empire sets as usual. Post-colonialism is more than a literary term these days.


