

Postcolonialism and Feminist Dialogics: Re-Imaging Cultural Exclusion in the Nigerian Feminist Fiction

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Abstract : A contestable polemic in postcolonialism is the Western Universalist conception of the people of a vast continent such as Africa as homogenous. Quite often, the postcolonial African woman is seen as an entity in western cultural and literary feminist theorisations. The debate between the so-called western feminist scholarship and the postcolonial/third world feminists that began in the late 1980s focuses on this universalisation of women's concerns as monolithic. This article argues that the universalising assumption that all women share similar concerns in not only Africa as a continent but even in Nigeria as a country is misleading because of cultural differences. The article is a dialogic reading of Nigerian literature arguing that there is no culturally normative perspective on Nigerian feminist fiction because of the multifaceted and multicultural concerns of women writers from the different cultural regions in the country. The article concludes that this can better be read and appreciated through the lens of M. M. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism.

Keywords : cultural exclusion, dialogics, Nigerian feminist fiction, postcolonialism

Conference Title : ICMMP 2019 : International Conference on Modernity, Modernization and Postcolonialism

Conference Location : Sydney, Australia

Conference Dates : March 28-29, 2019