The Figure of the Postcolonial Intellectual

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An Etymological Introduction to the Term

The English word 'intellectual' shares its origins with the English word 'intelligence' and is a noun and adjective based on the English noun 'intellect.' Horace G. Danner and Roger Noel, in their authoritative *A Thesaurus of Word Roots of the English Language* inform us that the word *intellect* is a combination of the prefix inter, which means 'between' or 'among' with the Latin verb *legere*, which covers the same semantic fields as the English verbs 'to read' and 'to choose.' For Danner and Noel, the Latin verb *legere* is related to Greek *legein*, which is associated with Greek *logos*. *Legere*, the Latin source of the root elements *lect*, *leg*, and *lig*, is found in English words related to the act of reading or making a choice: *lecture*, *lectern*, *intellect*, *legible*, *college*, and *diligence*. Danner and Noel believe that the word *intellect* has greater semantic proximity with the sense of *choice* found in the root element *lect* than with the sense of *reading* (380), whereas other etymologists do not distinguish between the two different semantic fields (Klein 803). A purely etymological definition of the 'intellectual' will, thus, be that an intellectual is someone who chooses between different options available. As far as the etymological definition is concerned, it is possible to posit that every human being is an intellectual because all human beings make choices and perceive the world. However, as Gramsci has remarked, "all men are intellectuals, but not all men perform the function of the intellectual" (9). By differentiating between generalised intellectual activity by human beings and the function of the intellectual, Gramsci underscores the importance of ideational intervention by the intellectual, especially in the public sphere. Therefore, the purely etymological

definition of the word 'intellectual' and the social category called the intellectual, for our purposes, operate in two separate domains: i.e., the social function of the intellectual and the etymological or definitional exercise of the faculty of intellect. It is to highlight the difference of the semantic domains that Gramsci remarks: "although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist... [because there] is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded" (9).

The Figure of the Intellectual

Intellectuals, knowledge and cultural identity are interrelated and mutually constitutive social categories. Intellectuals can be defined as subjects that operate with an agential capacity to perpetuate, modify or revise the social configuration through their production and circulation of knowledge. The ways in which a specific social configuration imagines itself is the particular domain of intervention for the intellectual. There have been several efforts to define this specific function of the intellectual by many theorists. In his book *Men of Ideas: A Sociologist's View*, Lewis A. Coser defines the intellectual through his or her engagement with the ethical and the moral: "Intellectuals exhibit in their activities a pronounced concern with the core values of a society" (viii). For Richard A. Posner, the work of the intellectual is characterised by a sustained involvement with what he describes as a generality: "A physicist who uses abstruse mathematics to illuminate the origins of the universe is an intellectual; a physicist who uses abstruse mathematics to design a computer logic board or write software code need not be" (18). The distinction between the two types of knowledge producers, in Posner's theorisation, is that the work of the mathematician who speculates about the origin of the universe has ethical, political and moral ramifications, whereas the work of the software designer does not. The distinction made by Posner may not be tenable because all knowledge production is politically and ethically engaged and has specific political and moral ramifications. A mathematician who chooses to produce new software also indirectly chooses not to intervene in the moral and political domain. Choosing not to intervene in the political and ethical sphere is also a political choice. Therefore, all knowledge production, whether it results in the dissemination of new technologies or theories of jurisprudence, has political consequences.

For this article, an intellectual is someone who consciously attempts to engage with how social configuration imagines itself. This delimitation of the intellectual is only a heuristic strategy. It does not attempt to exclude

from the domain of intellectuality the subject who invents the printing press or who theorises the effects of globalisation because both define and alter the identity or the idea of the Self of a society. The only difference between the two is the practice of writing as a means of engagement. The inventor may or may not write, but the theorist of the social contract usually employs writing to disseminate his or her ideas. This study limits itself to those intellectuals who write to disseminate their ideas. This method of selecting knowledge producers has several methodical implications that need to be clarified at the beginning. First, it erases the imagined hierarchical relationship between those who write and those who do not: this position recognises that those who bring newness to the world by inventing or constructing material objects participate differently in the circulation of knowledge. This delimitation exists after acknowledging that the bricklayer who builds the walls of a university and the academic who teaches at the university display their skills and knowledge.

According to Gramsci, the manual worker or the entrepreneur possess "a certain number of qualifications of an intellectual nature", but these qualifications do not define their function in the social configuration (8). Moreover, both of these subjects possess specialist knowledge specific to their fields of activity. Thus, the non-writing intellectual subject is neither marginalised nor valorised by our delimitation but only considered as operating in a different domain and occupying a different position in the network of social relations. Our selection of the writing subject as an intellectual also does not imply that writing is the only valid mode of intellectual engagement. It only chooses to study those intellectuals who produce knowledge through writing and, thus, have their work determined and circumscribed by the demands and supplies of the local and global networks of knowledge production. So, for this study, an intellectual is a subject who, through the medium of writing, produces, perpetuates and/or revises the dominant or socially established knowledge and, thus, participates in the construction of Self and Otherness of his or her given society.

This article concerns itself with the work of postcolonial intellectuals and the production of postcolonial theory and, as it is part of general academic knowledge, almost all postcolonial theory exists in the form of texts written for the global market:

> Postcoloniality is the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: of a relatively small, Western-style, Western-trained group of writers and thinkers who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery (Appiah 149).

From Aimé Césaire to Gauri Viswanathan, postcolonial critique of the

effects of colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism exists in the form of an extensive inventory of written texts circulated globally. Hence, the overall analytical trajectory of this study moves from the general to the specific: from the relationship of the intellectual and his or her ideas to the production of written texts and to the conditions which regulate their circulation. By tracing this trajectory, this article attempts to analyse the work of postcolonial intellectuals and, thereby, the condition of the contemporary discipline known as postcolonial theory.

After delimiting the area of our study to those subjects who participate in the circulation of knowledge through writing, it is essential to define what analytical model will be employed to examine the relationship between the intellectual and the practice of writing. This study does not concern how Jacques Derrida has theorised the act of writing. Derrida mainly concerns himself with the secondary position generally assigned to writing in the history of Western thought because of the primacy and originariness linked with logos and speech. Derrida's critique of the metaphysics of presence (the presence of logos) through a privileging of writing as performed in *Of Grammatology and Writing and Difference* does not inform the present choice of selecting the intellectual as a writing subject. A different theoretical position informs our choice of writing as a mode of intellectual engagement. This position does not posit itself as an antithesis of Derrida's position that writing is an inaugurator of non-logocentric thought (*Writing and Difference* 11) but instead chooses to look at writing as a socially embedded practice which is imbricated within an ensemble of other social institutions and developments in recent history, such as the birth of the publishing house and the advent of print-capitalism and, subsequently, the possibility of writing becoming a source of livable income — i.e., the professionalisation of writing. Though human beings have been writing for thousands of years, it was only after the middle of the eighteenth century in England that people could be described as professional authors: "the emergence of professional writers, that is, of men earning their livelihood from writing, depended on a relatively wide reading public—and such a public was not available until the eighteenth century" (Coser 37).

Al-Masudi, a historian and geographer, wrote about Europe and its inhabitants in 956 AD as follows:

[T]he power of the sun is weakened among them, because of its distance from them; cold and damp prevail in the regions, and snow and ice follow one another in endless succession. The warm humor is lacking among them; their bodies are large, their natures gross, their manners harsh, their

understanding dull, and their tongues heavy. Their colour is so excessively white that they look blue; their skin is fine and their flesh coarse. Their eyes, too, are blue, matching their coloring; their hair is lank and reddish because of the damp mists. Their religious beliefs lack solidity, and this is because of the nature of the cold and the lack of warmth. The further they are to the north more stupid, gross, and brutish they are…Those who dwell in the sixty odd miles beyond this latitude are Gog and Magog. They are in the sixth climate and are reckoned among the beasts (qtd. in Lewis 139).

As the sentences of Al-Masudi indicate, the intellectual, as a producer of knowledge, creates representations of the Self and the Other in a given social configuration. Some intellectuals may re-affirm the constructions of the social Self and the Other, while others may critique, revise, challenge or alter them. The relationship between the intellectual and the existing social configuration remains a site of contestation between two analytical tools: ideology and critique. Whether social and material dominance results in intellectual dominance or it is possible for the intellectual to produce a critique of the existing social relations is an issue that gained its importance with the arrival of Marxism on the horizon of Western thought. Though it is difficult to ascertain whether the social and material conditions produce the subjectivity of an intellectual or whether the intellectual has an agency that enables the production of critique or revisionary discourses, Marxism has often set the terms of the debate on the relationship of the intellectual with his or her social and material environment. According to the Marxist model, as presented in *The German Ideology*, intellect and intellectuality, the state in which intellect engages with the social, are determined by material relations:

The phantoms formed in the brains of men are, also necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process. Morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology as well as the forms of consciousness corresponding to these, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their actual world, also their thinking and the products of their thinking. It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness (Marx and Engels 42).

If material relations configure the subjectivity of the intellectual, the possibility of the production of critique becomes a theoretical impossibility, for the production of critical intellectuality can, then, only succeed, not precede, a radical reorganisation of existing social and material relations. If we follow the argument propounded by Marx and Engels, the figure of the critical intellectual cannot be produced by the existing material relations. Marx and Engels themselves

become anomalies in their theories because both did not live in a socialist or communist society. However, capitalist material relations did not configure their subjectivity. In the history of Marxist thought, the idea of the materially determined subjectivity of the proletariat and the project of producing critical intellectuality to radicalise the proletariat has produced considerable aporia because of the difficulty of reconciling the intellectual components of Marxist theory with the proletariat modes of engagement with theory.

In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels write that the "ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of the society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force" (67). If the ruling class's ideas were always the ruling ideas, then it would be difficult for intellectuals to make what David McLellan describes as an "objective assessment" (180). If intellectual production, namely the production of ideas, were saturated with class-based ideology, then an "objective" critique would be almost impossible. However, according to McLellan, Marx believed that some intellectuals could assess "certain aspects of society" in an "objective" way regardless of their class origin. However, McLellan does not elaborate on how Marx arrived at this position (180). Texts written by Marx do not engage directly with the question of whether an intellectual can arrive at an "objective assessment", though there is a passage in *The German Ideology: Including Theses on Feuerbach and Introduction to The Critique of Political Economy* where Marx and Engels display their ambivalence towards this issue:

> The question whether objective truth can be attained by human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question…The dispute over the reality or unreality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question (144).

At the risk of producing an ad hominem argument, it is possible to posit that Marx, himself an intellectual, had difficulties reconciling his ideas of the dominance of material relations with his own "objective assessment" of these relations: as David McLellan informs us, a group that "Marx found difficult to classify was the one he himself belonged to—the intelligentsia" (180). On the other hand, though he himself belonged to the intellectual class or stratum, he also referred to them as "'the ideological representative and the spokesmen' of the bourgeoisie" (McLellan 180).

Although Marx attempted to declare the proletariat as the subject of history, he identified himself with the intellectual stratum of society instead of the proletariat class. In 1868, Marx refused to become the International Working Men's Association president because he considered himself unsuitable to lead the

proletariat on the pretext that "he was a head worker and not a hand worker" (qtd. in Avineri 269). On the other hand, Marx and Engels occasionally displayed anxiety and disdain at the inability of the proletariat to intellectually decipher the complex operations of material and social relations: "The Marx and Engels correspondence abounds in numerous allusions to the workers' intellectual limitations, stupidity, and narrow-mindedness" (Avineri 275). According to Avineri, the schism between Marx and Engels and the proletariat revolutionaries resulted from the differences in the way both theorised the means to achieve revolution and a classless society (278).

Moreover, Alvin Gouldner, in his book *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*, quotes this sentence from Marx to substantiate this line of argument: "When the (First) International was formed, we expressly formulated the battle cry: the emancipation of the working class must be conquered by the working class themselves" (75). Gouldner intervenes with the question: "Who was the we who formulated the battle cry?" (75). Gouldner declares Marxism as a theory of radicalised cultural bourgeoisie and, therefore, a false consciousness. The Marxist programme of the emancipation of the proletariat, according to Gouldner, was "an act of theory made by the theoretical elite and therefore embodies a profound false consciousness" (76). According to Gouldner, when Lenin created the Vanguard Organisation, "one of its central objectives was to protect the purity of the *teoretiki from the working class*." Lenin "unblinkingly understood that Marxism was the creation of the educated intellectuals" (76).

Therefore, since the inception of their distinct stratum or class, the intellectuals have been a source of aporia for Marxist theory because of their indeterminate relationship with the means of production. This indeterminate relationship of the intellectuals with the means of production is generally considered a result of the modernisation of Western society: "They [intellectuals] are a modern phenomenon, and they come into their own with the beginning of modern [Western] history" (Coser x–xi). Before the rise of modernity in the West, intellectuals existed mainly as interpreters of the divine will (Beloff 419) or what Gramsci described as monopolisers of "religious ideology, [which was] the philosophy and the science of that age" (7). For Gramsci, the ecclesiastics were dependent on the aristocracy and, with certain limitations, participated in the exercise of landownership, thus forming what Gramsci calls the *noblesse de robe* (7). In the feudal social formation, intellectuals had options of either supporting the views held by the Church or becoming heretics (Coser xi). After the invention of the printing press and the subsequent commercialisation

of writing and commodification of books, intellectuals became free from the constraints of being a scribe to the clergy or feudal patron and could sell their books to sustain themselves. It was only after the breakdown of the feudal forms of social organisation, the emergence of new classes on the horizon, and the fragmentation of the unified world-view of the Church that intellectuals could think of themselves as a distinct social stratum (Coser xi).

From the above discussion, it becomes evident that intellectuals as a social stratum attain a problematising characteristic soon after modernity, with its new urban social classes having challenged the system of ecclesiastical/feudal patronage of intellectuals. In their new social formation, intellectuals could relate to the means of production differently from the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. Because of their aporetic relationship with the means of production and the proletariat, intellectuals as a social stratum posed problems for Marx's theory of class division.

The implications of the Marxist theorisation of the intellectual are quite relevant for postcolonial theory. If the Marxist model of intellect being structured by material relations was valid, the effects of the coloniser's dominance on the subjectivity of the colonised would have produced nothing but dominated subjects.[1] It is important to note here that the colonised subject cannot be represented as a homogenous category because there were several different categories of the colonised subject in India, such as the princes who ruled their potentates, tea-plantation labourers and mill owners and mill workers.

After experimenting with the idea of educating the colonised in indigenous languages from 1813 to 1835, the colonial administration decided to change the medium of instruction to English (Viswanathan 23–41). In 1835, in his famous or notorious minute on Indian education, Thomas Babington Macaulay argued in favour of English by declaring the languages and literature of India as inferior: "I have no knowledge of either Sanscrit [sic.] or Arabic. — But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value…a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (241). Macaulay advocated the production of a specific kind of educated subject in India: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern: a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, in intellect" (249). The reconfiguration of the intellect of the colonised subject, as Gauri Viswanathan has argued in her

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[1] For a detailed study of various classes and categories of the colonised see Kiernan, *Marxism and Imperialism*, esp. ch. 7, where the problems of the British Labour Party in formulating a consistent view of the proletariat in colonial India are discussed.

book *The Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*, is the necessary preliminary step that consolidates material and social control (2). In other words, material domination alone cannot produce subjugated subjects. The subjectivity of the dominated people has to be reconfigured so that it internalises the faith in the benignancy of colonialism. Viswanathan's analysis of colonial educational policy posits that the colonising subject constructed a field of domination whose function was mainly to mask the material expropriation and exploitation while engaging in a benevolent enterprise— educating the colonised (20–21). She argues against the position that some of the intellectuals who demanded the independence of India were the unintentional consequences of the liberal values imparted through Western education because this position assumes that the colonisers were innocently trapped by the content of their educational program (Viswanathan 17). She argues against granting this innocence to the colonial system even when it produced unintended consequences. At this point, her reading of the colonial educational policy becomes as totalising as the Marxist position that subjectivity is determined by the ideas of the dominant class, i.e., ideology.

The coloniser's education system, the technology of the colonised's intellectual (re)configuration, often turned upon itself. The colonial education system attempted to produce a complicit intellectuality but did not always succeed in producing its ideal subject, educated but complicit with colonialism. The birth of Indian nationalism was inspired mainly by the intellectuals educated in academic institutions established by the British. These intellectuals demanded self-government for India, often in the coloniser's language and used the Western education system as a medium for producing resistive discourses. In 1905, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a graduate of Elphinstone College, expressed the demand for self-government for India before the New Reform Club in London. Gokhale's argument employed the spread of Western education as a reason for greater participation of the Indian subjects in governmental structures and ultimate self-government for India:

> It was perhaps inevitable that in the early years of your rule, when an administrative machinery of the Western type had to be introduced into India, all powers should be placed in the hands of English officials, who alone then understood Western standards of government. But now that the schools and colleges and universities have been doing their work for half a century and more, and a large class of educated men have grown up—men qualified to take a part in the government of the country, and desirous of taking such a part—there is no excuse whatever for maintaining monopoly (62).

Macaulay's program of 1835 that viewed education as a technology for configuring the colonised's intellect is turned upon by an intellectual for oppositional purposes because the intellect of the colonised Other can be capable of voicing itself in the language of the colonising Self. This reading of the colonised subject and the unauthorised uses he or she makes of the colonial policies is informed by Michel Foucault's theorisation of ideology. For Foucault, the concept of ideology is problematic because it assumes the existence of a non-ideological space and, thus, ideology is posited as the opposite of truth (*Power/Knowledge* 118). If what is truth, the imagined binary opposite of ideology, is also an effect of power, then the whole idea of ideology becomes inadequate; hence, the relevance of the idea of discourse. The idea of discourse does not exist in opposition to truth but instead acknowledges the process through which statements acquire the effect of truth. Imagining that the dominant faction configures the subjectivity of the colonised or the proletariat is an effect that dominance desires but does not entirely possess. For Foucault, the dominant ideas are one type of codification and they are open to recodification and that is how the concept of revolution becomes possible (*Power/Knowledge* 122–123).

Analytical Tools: Class versus Culture

The term "native intellectual," popularised by Frantz Fanon, describes all intellectuals from non-Western societies and, despite the problematic nature of the word 'native', the term enjoys considerable currency because alternative terms, such as 'postcolonial intellectual,' 'non-Western intellectual' or 'Third World intellectual,' are equally or more problematic. Fanon sought to analyse, in his incisive and passionate style, the anxiety that the native intellectual displays while interacting with the civilisation of the colonising subject. Fanon argued that colonialism does not limit itself to merely "holding a people in its grip" but "by a kind of perverted logic" also "distorts, disfigures, and destroys" the past of the people in order to "convince the natives that colonialism arrived to lighten their darkness" (210).

In his analysis of the native intellectual, Fanon identifies three stages that the native intellectual goes through after the colonial occupation: firstly, the stage of assimilation where even "inspiration is European;" secondly, after realising that she/he is losing touch with her/his people, the native intellectual is nostalgic about the pre-colonial past and "decides to remember who he is" (222) and, thirdly, comes the fighting phase when the native intellectual attempts to shake the people. According to Fanon, it is in the third phase that most of the

anti-colonial revolutionary literature is produced (223–223). However, Fanon argues that the native intellectual soon realises that "he is using techniques and language borrowed from the stranger in his country" (223). While attempting to indigenise the techniques of the coloniser, Fanon points out that the native intellectual exoticises her/his own culture. For him, this exoticisation of the pre-colonial national past by the native intellectual is as Othering as the distorting lies of the coloniser (Fanon 225). Fanon urges the native intellectual to create a national consciousness without subscribing to a mythical/fabricated nationalism (247).

Though Fanon's theorisation of the role of the native intellectual is mainly concerned with the pre-independence stages of anti-colonial struggles, he also forewarns the native intellectual – after independence has been achieved from territorial forms of colonialism –about the comprador bourgeoisie:

> In under-developed countries, the bourgeoisie should not be allowed to find the conditions necessary for its existence and growth. In other words, combined efforts of the masses led by a party and of intellectuals who are highly conscious and armed with revolutionary principles ought to bar the way for this useless and harmful middle class (174–175).

By declaring the national or comprador bourgeoisie as a distinct class in the colony, Fanon combines anti-colonialism with Marxism and assigns a revolutionary role to the native intellectual. It means that, for Fanon, the revolutionary native intellectual cannot be part of the national bourgeoisie. It is possible to problematise this position by pointing out that in some Third World countries, the native intellectual belonged to the national bourgeoisie class and had access to the education of the colonising country and then started an anti-colonial struggle based on cultural or religious identity rather than class identity. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who belonged to the merchant class of colonial India, provides us with one example.

Furthermore, it is difficult to point out how Fanon identifies and describes the colonial project: whether colonialism is a project of a different race, culture, or civilisation. While identifying the colonial mission, sometimes Fanon employs expressions like "white values," a marker of race, and at others "Western values," a marker of social organisation (43). This problem persists in most anti-colonial and postcolonial literature[2] and creates an axis of class versus race and culture. The concept of class as a tool of critique, for Fanon, seems to be more applicable to problems within the national culture, hence his contention that

[2] The term ''anti-colonial literature' in this article denotes the literature produced specifically to challenge the territorial forms of colonialism and achieve national liberation. On the other hand, Postcolonial literature denotes the body of writing produced to challenge colonialism's effects on various cultures even after national liberation has been achieved.

"the bourgeoisie should not be allowed to find the conditions necessary for its existence and growth [in ex-colonised societies]" (174–175). When it comes to interracial issues, Fanon privileges race or culture over class. For example, when discussing the attitude of the working classes of Europe towards the working classes in colonised societies, Fanon revisits and revises the Marxist claim that the working class of the world will unite in a global struggle against the bourgeoisie of the world. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels declare the proletariat of the world to be united in their solidarity against the bourgeoisie regardless of the cultural and civilisational barriers:

> The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got…National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production…The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat (61).

Fanon's position on inter-racial or inter-civilisational solidarity of the proletariat pre-figures the position of Edward Said in *Orientalism: Western Representations of the Orient*. According to Edward Said, the Marxist idea of history is implicated in Orientalism. It was because of his Eurocentric theorisation of world history that Marx endorsed British colonialism in India (Said, *Orientalism* 153-154). Fanon, in a manner not very different from Edward Said's position on Marx in *Orientalism*, argues that the working classes of Europe do not display solidarity with the working classes from colonised societies because the subjectivities of the European working classes are informed and conditioned by a sense of racial and civilisational superiority: "in general the workers of Europe…believe…that they are part of the prodigious adventure of the European spirit" (313). After levelling the charge of racism and Eurocentrism against the Western proletariat, Fanon moves on to excoriate other Western emancipatory philosophies. Towards the end of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon suggests that the people from ex-colonised societies need to move beyond the Eurocentric visions of history and emancipation: "if we want humanity to advance further, if we want to bring it up to a different level than that which Europe has shown it, then we must invent and we must make discoveries" (315).

The ex-colonised societies have made discoveries to perpetuate unfreedom after the departure of territorial forms of colonialism. Moreover, the terms of the debate have changed, and the "native intellectual" of Fanon has become the "Third World intellectual" or the "postcolonial intellectual." The problem of the applicability of the concept of class in comparison with that

of culture, which appeared in Frantz Fanon's work, continues to be debated in contemporary postcolonial theory. With Edward Said's *Orientalism*, the "reference point for postcolonial theory," the relationship between Western power and Western knowledge and the inferiorisation of the non-Western world became the new interpretive paradigm. It resulted in the marginalisation of "the economic paradigms of Marxist thought" (Gandhi 25). After Said's critique of Eurocentrism and Orientalism and the ways in which he found Marx invested in the grand narrative of the West, "culture" acquired greater importance as a term in the knowledge production by and about the non-West. Said, instead of focusing on the material dominance of the West and its economic consequences for postcolonial societies, involved imaginative literature, such as the plays of Aeschylus and the poetry of Kipling, in the process of Western dominance over the non-West (Said, *Orientlism* 56–57; 226–227). Literature, philosophy, art and anthropology were part of the Western civilisational enterprise to conquer the Orient. Therefore, culture, as demonstrated by Said, had enormous political consequences. According to Arif Dirlik, before the arrival of postcolonial theory in contemporary academia, the word "culture" occupied a different type of importance in knowledge production about and from the Third World. As Dirlik has traced the history of the term, "culture" was linked with the various Third World national liberation movements of the 1960s (Dirlik, "How the Grinch Hijacked Radicalism: Further Thoughts on the Postcolonial"). However, after the arrival of postcolonial theory, it appeared as an alternative to "class" as a term of analysis (Dirlik, "How the Grinch Hijacked Radicalism: Further Thoughts on the Postcolonial" 150–152). However, as Raymond Williams has elaborated in his book *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, the word 'culture' has also been employed to denote the totality of material production of society as well as signifying and symbolic systems (91). Edward Said's use of the word "culture" denotes the symbolic systems of various social formations and reflects the way in which Clifford Geertz defined culture in his book *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Culture, according to Geertz, is a "historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitude toward life" (89). For Edward Said, Orientalism runs through all the cultural production of the West, from Aeschylus to Kissinger, whenever it imagines the Orient as the Other: Orientalism is "the common possession of all [the Western subjects] who have thought about the Orient" (Said, *Orientalism* 69).

In this way, "culture" mainly has come to signify, in postcolonial theory, the complex ensemble of interrelated symbolic practices within a specific social formation and is usually employed to abbreviate other paradigms of social interpretation, especially the ones which assign primacy to economics. Arif Dirlik, and other Marxist intellectuals, such as Aijaz Ahmad and Terry Eagleton, are critical of what has been termed "the cultural turn" in the humanities, though, as Fanon had forewarned, the globalisation of solidarity among the proletariat across the borders of culture has not transpired as imagined by Marxist teleology. Instead of solidarity and cultural difference as a source of racism, discrimination of the Western proletariat against the non-Western proletariat is the new hunting ground for the postcolonial intellectual.

Nevertheless, the concept of "class" has not receded to oblivion in contemporary knowledge production. Despite their Eurocentrism, the spectre of Marxist concepts continues to haunt postcolonial knowledge production. Marxist intellectuals have declared postcolonial theory to be a product of a specific class of intellectuals — a class that has enough capital to access the metropolitan academy. Both Arif Dirlik, in *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism*, and Aijaz Ahmad, in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* have declared postcolonial theory to be a product of Third World intellectuals in First World academia. This criticism seeks to demonstrate that, as a field of study, postcolonial theory reflects the ideological interests of certain migrant intellectuals in metropolitan academia and, therefore, is not a radical or emancipatory field of critical inquiry *tout court*. The objective behind this criticism of postcolonial theory seems to be that, by declaring postcolonial theory a product of a specific class of third-world intellectuals, especially elite intellectuals who are located in Anglo-American academia, it would be possible to show that postcolonial theory itself is a form of ideology rather than critique.

There are two assumptions at work in this type of accusations against postcolonial theory by non-Western Marxist intellectuals: (a) that ideology and critique are class-limited or class-specific entities and the ideologies of each class are mutually exclusive; (b) if an intellectual's economic condition changes from that of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, that intellectual does not remain loyal to her/his proletariat constituency. According to Bart Moore-Gilbert, such arguments conflate the process of 'embourgeoisement' of Third World/minority intellectuals with the political co-option of these intellectuals into the dominant culture (154). For non-Western Marxist intellectuals, class-based solidarity is more important than racial or cultural forms of solidarity. For culturalist

postcolonial intellectuals, Marxism itself is complicit with Eurocentrism, as Edward Said has attempted to demonstrate. Both the culturalist and the classist intellectuals have been unable to turn away from the West. Culturalist postcolonial theory attempts to critique and dislodge the dominance of Western cultural texts and products and, thus, requires the West as its epistemological centre. For classist criticism, the production of the postcolonial theory itself is a specific conjuncture in the history of capital (Ahmad 42). Therefore, it is reasonable to posit that global knowledge production, whether classist or culturalist, has been permanently cast in the terms set by Western dominance. There is no getting away from Eurocentricity after colonialism.

Thus, at the risk of being simplistic and binaristic, one can posit that contemporary postcolonial intellectuals are divided into two broad formations: the culturalist and the classist. Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak attempt to critique the relationship between Western dominance and Western Culture and knowledge, whereas Aijaz Ahmad and Arif Dirlik are more concerned with the asymmetrical distribution of capital at a global scale and how the West controls the flow of intellectual as well as material capital. The criticism of Marxist postcolonial intellectuals seeks to prove that postcolonial theory is an ideological formation affiliated with the Western humanist and postmodernist schools of thought. For Aijaz Ahmad, Edward Said's *Orientalism* is a problematic book because it uncritically purchases the Western construction of the grand narrative of Western civilisation that extends from ancient Greek stage plays to Western modernity. Ahmad argues that this construction of the grand narrative of the West was "fabricated in post-Renaissance Europe" (168). Ahmad argues that Marx cannot be charged with being imbricated in Eurocentrism without positing that the West has been a homogenised civilisation from antiquity to the present day. In other words, to criticise the West, one must believe that the way the West imagines itself is a valid imagining. This criticism also seeks to absolve Marx of the charges of complicity with Orientalism levelled by Edward Said in *Orientalism*.

The problem with Aijaz Ahmad's argument is that it considers Marx's theorisation of world history valid even though it is modelled after the Western experience of history. Marx's endorsement of British colonialism in India, as discussed by Edward Said, is premised upon the idea that the way in which history has unfolded in the West, from feudalism to the rise of machine production and its attendant arrival of the urban proletariat, is the only valid order of world events (Said, *Orientalism* 153–154). In other words, it is logical inflation of

specific history to the level of world history. If Orientalism constructs the West as a superior civilisation, Marxism universalises the events of the same civilisation and, therefore, Marxist epistemology and teleology become Eurocentric projects.

When the Western proletariat is not equal to the non-Western proletariat at innumerable sites, the problem of cultural and civilisational identity of the subject becomes more important, hence the theoretical shift to culture. The idea that culture is a marker of identity is so prevalent that even Marxist intellectuals, who claim to be universal historical agents of revolutionary change, cannot dodge it and are included in bibliographies of postcolonial studies. Marxist postcolonial intellectuals are assigned a disciplinary unity with culturalist postcolonial intellectuals because of their non-Western *cultural* origin. Thus, it can be argued that intellectuals are assigned disciplinary unities because of their culture of origin despite their choice of conceptual tools and different ideological affiliations.

Fanon theorised the figure of the non-Western intellectual as the native intellectual deployed against the indigenous bourgeoisie and Western Culture. The figure of the intellectual as the postcolonial intellectual is theorised by classist and culturalist theorists. The classist theorists use the category of the intellectual as a marker of class against the culturalist postcolonial theorists. For Dirlik, culturalist postcolonial intellectuals are the sources of the postcolonial as a discursive category: "postcolonial intellectuals are clearly the producers of a postcolonial discourse" (*Postcolonial Aura* 55). Dirlik propounds that there was a postcolonial consciousness before the invention of postcolonial discourse. However, it was mainly situated in the Third World. However, because the location of the postcolonial intellectual has changed from the Third World to the metropolitan academy, the term postcolonial becomes a more convenient label "to regroup intellectuals of uncertain location" (*Postcolonial Aura* 55). The postcolonial, Dirlik further argues, is a "discourse that seeks to constitute the world in the self-image of intellectuals who view themselves (or have come to view themselves) as postcolonial intellectuals" (*Postcolonial Aura* 62). The preoccupation of these intellectuals with postcoloniality is "an expression of not so much of agony over identity, as it often appears, but of new found power" (*Postcolonial Aura* 62). From this analysis of the preoccupations of postcolonial intellectuals, Dirlik seems to have assumed that the intellectuals who employ Marxist analysis, as Dirlik himself does, remain uncontaminated from the power structures of First World academia or that Marxist intellectuals do not participate in any power structures. One response to this objection can be that although Third World intellectuals enjoy a culturally powerful position in metropolitan

academia, this powerful position is usually an exception rather than the rule. Moreover, such objections also homogenise the variegated strands and trends in metropolitan academia regarding the inclusion of courses on postcolonial theory, minority literature or race and gender studies. Postcolonial theory is often a secondary or optional field of study in many universities in the metropolis.

The criticism of Aijaz Ahmad, a classist postcolonial theorist, against postcolonial intellectuals and their affiliations zeroes in on how, because of their location, postcolonial intellectuals repress issues of class and foreground issues of race. According to Aijaz Ahmad, because they usually belong to the elite classes of ex-colonised societies, postcolonial intellectuals relocating to the metropolis do not find class a very useful concept. Ahmad attributes the prominence of culture over class as an analytical tool to the arrival of the indigenous elite in the metropolitan academy. For postcolonial intellectuals, Aijaz Ahmad argues, books "that connected oppression with class were not very useful, because they [postcolonial intellectuals] neither came from the working class nor were intending to join that class in their new country" (196). Ahmad also explains the popularity of Foucault and Derrida among postcolonial intellectuals through their class affiliations. Ahmad believes that it is to reduce the importance of class as a tool of critique that postcolonial intellectuals find their favourite analytical apparatuses in the theories of Foucault, Derrida and Lacan: "Said's denunciation of the *whole* of Western civilisation is as extreme and uncompromising as Foucault's denunciations of the Western episteme or Derrida's denunciations of the transhistorical Logos" (195). Ahmad finds the similarities between the analytical categories employed by Said and Foucault as evidence that class is not a favourite tool for critique with postcolonial intellectuals. Ahmad also points out that, in Anglo-American academia, the rise to dominance of poststructuralist models of critique was due to or a result of the conservative Thatcher-Reagan era (178). For him, this historical conjuncture *ipso facto* proves that poststructuralist models of critique are complicit with conservative politics and postcolonial theory, because of its affinity with poststructuralism, is also not a sufficiently radical model of critique. The arguments put forward by Ahmad assume that Marxism provides the only valid and radical critique of the global dominance of Western capital.

It is not difficult to trace the ideological assumptions in the above argument. Aijaz Ahmad's criticism of poststructuralism's complicity with the conservatism of the Thatcher-Reagan era is based on the premise that if one model of critique gains currency in a particular era, it is necessarily complicit with the dominant trends or characteristics of that era. This fallacy can be summed thus: if x gains

currency while y is taking place, x is supporting y, and y is supporting x, and both x and y are complicit with each other. If this line of argument were tenable, it would be impossible to be critical at all because to be critical or subversive, one has to be critical or subversive *of* a social structure. Moreover, if that critique or subversion were always complicit with the existing structure, it was a critique or subversion *of* it would hardly be a critique.

To complicate things further, let us replace poststructuralism with Marxism for a while. If it had been a Marxist model of critique that gained dominance in First World academia in a particularly conservative era, would Ahmad posit the same argument? This question is problematic. It seems that, for Aijaz Ahmad, it is not the dominance of poststructuralism that is the issue *per se* but the importance that poststructuralism seems to have acquired. Following this, it becomes possible to posit that because Ahmad privileges the Marxist concept of class as an analytical apparatus, he (ab)uses the historical "fact" of the Thatcher-Reagan era and the *concomitant* but not *resultant* popularity of poststructuralism to construct the complicity argument. That is to say that poststructuralism is complicit with Thatcherite politics because it gained more currency in the Thatcher era. Poststructuralism was not the only phenomenon to gain prominence during the Thatcher era. Racism and racist violence were also on the rise. If racism and poststructuralism gained dominance in an era of conservative politics, should one accuse poststructuralism of complicity with racism too? The logic of contamination through synchronicity that Ahmad employs to discredit poststructuralism and postcolonialism does not work here because Derrida was a vociferous critic of apartheid and other racist ideas, beliefs and practices (Derrida, "Racism's Last Word").

Still, one cannot deny the critical importance of the concept of class, though one cannot privilege it so much as to neglect issues of culture and racial stereotypes altogether. When Aijaz Ahmad criticises postcolonial intellectuals in Western academia as an elitist enterprise, he is simplistically faithful to the Marxism of *The Communist Manifesto*, where all human history is declared to be a history of class struggle. However, the concepts of class and class struggle *alone* cannot help interpret everything in this world. For example, in Great Britain only, there are 30,000 incidents of racially motivated violence annually (Kelman 16). Class struggle does not explain all these incidents of violence. Therefore, when postcolonial intellectuals, especially Edward Said, foreground issues of knowledge, power and cultural hegemony, one cannot dismiss their contribution solely on the premise that they occupy a privileged position. At the level of their

participation and position in cultural capital, both Marxist and liberal humanist intellectuals can be elite intellectuals, as Aijaz Ahmad, Arif Dirlik, Edward Said and Homi Bhabha can be considered. However, the fact that these intellectuals are considered "postcolonial" intellectuals and the unity assigned to their work in books on "postcolonial theory" still seems to be derived from negativity: they are all non-white, non-Western intellectuals. That is where postcolonial theory itself in Western academia can be shown to function as an Orientalist construct.

Furthermore, the mere fact that it is possible to construct and sustain this argument pays homage to the profundity of the argument put forward by Edward Said in *Orientalism*. The fact that so many books on postcolonial theory focus on Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha also shows how insidious and persistent Orientalism remains even in the construction of a *discipline* of study such as postcolonial theory. In its present formation, postcolonial theory appears to be a *discipline* in which only migrant intellectuals of colour participate, especially after they have migrated to the First World. Alternatively, in the Foucauldian sense, postcolonial theory disciplines the knowledge production of postcolonial intellectuals because it is precisely in the formation of postcolonial theory as a discipline that one notices the exclusionary politics of the regimes of Western knowledge. Other intellectuals have also written against Western imperialism, against the dominance of the Western episteme and the processes which make the Western episteme globally dominant. The whole deconstructive acumen of Derrida is deployed against the imperialism of Western *logos*; Robert Young has criticised the concept of history along with many other white mythologies; Chomsky often speaks against neo-colonialism and American interference in the affairs of other nations — but somehow, it becomes the 'uniquely punishing destiny' of Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Aijaz Ahmad and Arif Dirlik to be associated with postcolonial theory. In contemporary configurations of knowledge production, intellectuals are assigned affiliations and solidarities according to the culture of their origin and the constituencies of which they are considered representatives.

Based on the ways in which disciplines are constructed in Western academia, postcolonial intellectuals, *because of their cultural affiliations*, become the subjects of postcolonial theory, its initiators, its harbingers, its driving force, its upholders and, in some of their work, its objects of analysis too. Most of the introductory books on postcolonial theory concentrate on these intellectuals and *their* contribution to postcolonial theory instead of some autotelic construct called a postcolonial theory. It is not to say that postcolonial intellectuals do not analyse the asymmetrical relationship between the Western and the non-West,

but rather that postcolonial intellectuals are agential subjects in constructing postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory can be defined as a branch of knowledge in contemporary cultural practices produced by postcolonial intellectuals who are considered a group because of their non-Western cultural origins. Focusing on postcolonial intellectuals and how they represent their constituencies can also help us explore the nature of their agency. Moreover, such a focus can also help foreground postcolonial theory as a *discourse* or *narrative* constructed by postcolonial intellectuals.

It is safe to posit that intellectuals exist in all social configurations, as the examples of Peter the Venerable and Al-Masudi above demonstrate. However, with Western colonialism and the hubris of Western knowledge, the complex and dynamic forms of non-Western intellectuality become objects of study and archival sites for anthropology and ethnophilosophy. With changed power relations, it becomes possible for Lucien Lévy-Bruhl to argue that non-Western forms of intellectuality belong to a pre-logical stage in the history of human knowledge. Non-Western knowledge systems, in his evolutionist order of things, do not satisfy the Western standards of scientificity and objectivity and, therefore, are mystical forms of intellectuality:

> India has known forms of intellectual activity more akin to our own. She has had her grammarians, mathematicians, logicians and metaphysicians. Why, however, has she produced nothing resembling our natural sciences? Undoubtedly, among other reasons, because there [in India], too, concepts as a rule have retained a very considerable proportion of the mystic elements of the collective representation (Lévy-Bruhl 381).

Colonial dominance constructs a field of (in)validation, making it possible for Western intellectuals to ascertain which manifestations of intellectuality in non-Western societies constitute legitimate knowledge. The power that the West has accumulated through colonialism enables Western thinkers to control what Foucault, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, has described as the process of epistemologisation — the process through which statements are formalised as knowledge (190). The logic of 'different, therefore mystical and pre-logical' that finds its expression in Lévy-Bruhl's work on non-Western forms of intellectuality is later challenged by the logic of 'different but still similar, therefore valid' in Paul Radin's *Primitive Man as Philosopher*. The focus of analysis here is not that Lévy-Bruhl marginalises and invalidates non-Western intellectual activity and Paul Radin's values and valorises, but the way in which, because of reconfigured power relations, the conditions for producing and (in)validating knowledge about intellectuality become Eurocentric.

One of the effects of this process of (in)validation is that Western knowledge production becomes normative: "Philosophy and literature are European philosophy and literature. The best that is thought and written is assumed to have been written and thought by Europeans" (Shohat and Stam 1). As a consequence of this Eurocentring of intellectuality and knowledge, intellectual traditions of non-Western cultures have been either marginalised by or subsumed under the master narrative of Western history that has made Western forms of intellectuality global: "the intellectual traditions once unbroken and alive in Sanskrit or Persian or Arabic are now only matters of historical research for most — perhaps all — modern social scientists" (Chakrabarty 6). Modernity, Dipesh Chakrabarty argues, has radically reconfigured and westernised the modes of intellectuality and knowledge production in non-Western societies (6). A logical result of this reconfiguration is that the operative forms of intellectuality draw upon the history of Western knowledge production: "past European thinkers and their categories are never quite dead for us [in South Asia] … South Asian(ist) social scientists would argue passionately with a Marx or a Weber without feeling any need to historicise them or place them in their European intellectual context" (Chakrabarty 6). The fact that Chakrabarty accepts this as a given situation by pronouncing "Sad though it is" (5) is indicative that Western intellectuality and the concepts and categories it entails have become impossible to ignore for the non-Western intellectual.

Because colonialism has Westernised the knowledge production of the non-Western world, the work of Edward Said has become the "ur-text" of postcolonial studies. For it is the work of Edward Said that most effectively foregrounds the cultural politics of Western knowledge of the Orient and shows it to be always complicit with Western power over the Orient. Moreover, it is also in Edward Said's work that we find the most sustained theorisation of the role of the intellectual, especially the intellectual that challenges the cultural hegemony of the West.

Edward Said, with his book *Orientalism*, has become the most prominent intellectual associated with the emergence of postcolonial theory as a field of study. Although the contradistinctive interaction between the Orient and the Occident has been discussed at innumerable sites of knowledge production since both of these geographical, cultural, historical and social locations have existed, it is with the "seminal" (Moore-Gilbert 34) work of Edward Said that the matrix of power and knowledge in this interaction came to the verandahs (the place where one comes out, from the Persian word *bar-amdah*) of theoretical

discourses in the humanities. Said's *Orientalism* was such an epiphany that there was complete silence for about five years before any problems arising from his work could be debated (Moore-Gilbert 40). According to Robert Young, it is with the pioneering work of Edward Said that, for the first time, the complicity of Western knowledge with Eurocentrism comes under such a systematic and methodological attack (126). Said has intimately linked cultural hegemony with knowledge production; therefore, his theorisation of the role of the intellectual is based on the relationship between power and knowledge.

According to Edward Said, Western knowledge of the Orient mainly exists as a "field of learned study", which has its formal origin in the decision by the Church Council of Vienne in 1312 to establish centres for studying Arabic, Hebrew, Syriac and Greek in different European cities (*Orientalism* 49-50). From this point onwards, Said's book is a persistent critique of Western perceptions and constructions, both learned and popular, of the Orient and the Oriental as, among countless other things, the barbaric, historyless, primitive, sensuous, effeminate, fickle and duplicitous Other of the Western Self. Said's *Orientalism* maps the whole terrain of Western constructions of the Orient as the Other from Aeschylus's play *The Persians*, written in 472 BC, and Dante's *Inferno* to French media commentaries on the effects of the civil war in Beirut, Lebanon in 1975-76. Western knowledge of the Orient, Said argues, produces an "Orientalist vision, a vision by no means confined to the professional scholar, but the common possession of all who have thought about the Orient" (*Orientalism* 69).

This Saidian insistence on "all who have thought about the Orient" in the West as Orientalists or complicit with Orientalism lends Said's work a critical force. In her book *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, Leela Gandhi uses the phrase "the Said phenomenon" (68) to describe the influence of Said's work while Spivak considers *Orientalism* as the "source book" (56) of postcolonial studies. Though it is possible to argue that Said's construction of the Orient as an object of an inferiorising Western analytical/scholarly gaze ignores the role of the native informant and the nationalist elite as well as the agency of the resistant native gaze, what Said has achieved is the foregrounding of the global power of Western Orientalism in the present world, which has been reconfigured in the image of the West after its various colonial enterprises.

With Edward Said's work, the civilisational superiority of the West and its knowledge of its civilisational Other has become a problematic, illegitimate and contested phenomenon. In this respect, Said's *Orientalism* was a "visionary" (Moore-Gilbert 35) attempt to reclaim and reconfigure some of the nexuses

of power occupied by Western knowledge production since its countless manifestations attained a planetary dominance through colonialism. Said himself declares *Orientalism* to be a "critique of power using knowledge to advance itself" (*Orientalism* 336). Because of colonialism and its corollary global hegemony of the West, the reach of Western forms of political, cultural, governmental, economic and civilisational power has been globalised. As Foucault has argued, power has a "circular relation" with the production of a "regime of truth" ("Truth and Power" 74). It is this Western "regime of truth" about the Orient and its planetary circulation, which is sustained by the globalised power of the West, that forms the target of Said's critique of Western knowledge production.

In the face of the circular relation between power and the regimes of truth, according to Foucault, it becomes the task of the intellectual to ascertain "the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth" ("Truth and Power" 74). This "new politics of truth," Foucault proposes, should not merely attempt to change people's consciousness but "the political, economic and institutional regime of the production of truth" ("Truth and Power" 74). The knowledge, or the regimes of truth, that the West has produced and still produces about the Orient, circulates the globe, occupies the most powerful of institutional sites, is visible in media representations of the non-West and is readily available in the marketplace. Said's *Orientalism* becomes, in this way, a strategy to challenge and change the Western regimes of truth about the Orient. Said's intervention in the Western regimes of truth about the Orient informs and reflects his theorisation of the intellectual. After Said's work, the figure of the intellectual that traverses the epistemic and cultural boundaries between the Orient and the Occident becomes a pivotal figure in a culturalist mode of challenging Eurocentrism.

Said's book *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* is evidence of the fact that Said attaches great importance to the figure of the intellectual and the politics of the intellectual: the "role and impact of intellectuals in society is a theme that underlies virtually all of Edward Said's cultural analysis and criticism" (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 131). The figure of the liminal intellectual, an intellectual that exists in the interstices of home and location, tradition and modernity, representation and performance, and nostalgia for an (ir)recoverable past and desire for critical intervention, can easily be declared the protagonist of Said's work. Said's intellectual enterprise exemplifies the role of the postcolonial intellectual. For many postcolonial intellectuals, it is after Said's *Orientalism* that culture takes precedence over excessive economism of class-based critiques. Since Said's *Orientalism*, the axis of class and culture of the postcolonial intellectual has

become the most critical line of convergence and divergence among postcolonial intellectuals.

Said's vision of the intellectual can be an enabling way of looking at any particular discourse because only by examining the specific ways in which Third World intellectuals participate in the public arena and represent their constituencies can one ascertain whether intellectuals are producing hegemony or contesting it. Moreover, as most of the discussions of postcolonial theory concentrate on postcolonial theorists and *their* discourses, for instance, Robert Young's *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* and Moore-Gilbert's *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics*, it becomes even more important to look at the figure of the intellectual and the politics of location and the formation of the subjectivity of the intellectual as a producer of postcolonial discourse.

The privileging of the liminal intellectual in Edward Said's work raises other issues that have not been addressed. Is the liminal intellectual representative of a national or diasporic population? How does a liminal intellectual relate to a diasporic population, mainly if he or she is located in a privileged academic institution? How does the language of theory that the liminal intellectual employs to communicate with an academic audience determine how the liminal intellectual participates in the host country's public sphere and the diaspora? Is the liminal space that a postcolonial intellectual occupies available to other members of a diasporic population? Why do Muslim intellectuals from Pakistan, whether they live in the West or Pakistan, not engage with postcolonial theory as such? From a Muslim postcolonial point of view, can the Saidian secular intellectual be regarded as ideologically complicit with Western Enlightenment and modernity? Is freedom from any ideological complicity with the West even a tenable ideal?

The fact that *Representations of the Intellectual* is not discussed in many books on postcolonial theory also makes such an enterprise worthwhile. Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory* does not reference this book, nor does Moore-Gilbert discuss Said's vision of the intellectual in his *Postcolonial Theory*. This omission of this aspect of Said's work and his views on the formation of an intellectual in the books that aim at surveying the field of postcolonial studies itself is a reason for studying this part of Said's work and for trying to see whether it can be an enabling way of looking at the present configurations of postcolonial studies in academia.

At this point, it is important to note that among the theorists or intellectuals associated with postcolonial theory, only Edward Said has authored a complete monograph on the role of intellectuals. For Said, the intellectual

exile is perhaps the most important person because she/he cannot afford an "uncritical gregariousness" in connection with the cultures of home and location. A closer look at Edward Said's book *Representations of the Intellectual* will perhaps help us tease out the issues involved in the configuration of the postcolonial intellectual. The Saidian intellectual is, first of all, a secular person that speaks truth to power (*Representations* 63-75). Since *Orientalism*, it is clear that Edward Said finds Foucault's theorisation of power useful for his critique of how Western modes of power use knowledge to advance themselves. For Foucault, power does not belong to any particular class or institutional structure within a society but "runs through the whole social body" ("Truth and Power" 61). This Foucauldian conceptualisation of power helps Said implicate Marx in Eurocentrism and Orientalism. For Said, the power of Orientalism helps the West define itself against the Orient. In *Orientalism*, Said's adaptation of this Foucauldian notion of power produces countless possibilities for analysing how Western power and knowledge deploy themselves against the Orient to define it, contain it, represent it, manage it, and exoticise, and to inferiorise it. However, in *Representations of the Intellectual*, Said's notion of power does not remain as Foucauldian as it was in *Orientalism*. The Saidian intellectual speaks truth to power, but neither "truth" nor "power" are clearly defined. In this sense, power seems to primarily serve the propaganda purposes of governments, especially Euro-American governments, when they want to hide their brutal interventions in the Middle East. It is the task of the liminal and secular intellectual to speak truth to this power. For Said, an intellectual is an individual "whose *raison d'être* is to represent all those people and issues who are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug" (*Representations* 9). The Saidian intellectual performs this representative role based on "universal" values that "all human beings are entitled to expect decent standards of behaviour concerning freedom and justice from worldly powers and nations" (*Representations* 9).

Edward Said demands this critical stance towards the dominant ideologies of postcolonial intellectuals. Said's pronouncement that an intellectual "cannot go back to some earlier and perhaps more stable condition of being at home" (*Representations* 39) urges intellectuals to be wary of the seduction of an easy retreat to an uncritically authentic moment (*Representations* 30). The quintessential intellectual for Said is, thus, Adorno because he hates "all systems, whether on our side or theirs, with equal distaste" (*Representations* 41). To illustrate his ideal of the unco-opted intellectual, Said employs the examples of Adorno, Swift, Fanon and Shari'ati, among others. The ideal Saidian thinker is a liminal or exilic being who

refuses to be co-opted by the power structures of home and location, maintaining a distance from easy formulations and uncritical affiliations and solidarities.

Though Said's model of critique is based on the idea of "universal" values and freedom, it would be inappropriate to attribute these ideas' inspiration to the Enlightenment's legacy. For these ideals of freedom and justice in Said's formulation, Ashcroft and Ahluwalia argue, are situated on the "cultural terrain" where hybridity and cultural syncretism produce a critical stance towards the West and the East (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 143). Said urges non-Western intellectuals to cultivate a critical appreciation of cultural and locational specificities. Culture, for Said, is a source of critique and a vindicating concept upholding "universal" values and human freedom (*Representations* 30).

Another critical issue raised by the concept of the liminal intellectual is the issue of the politics of location. How does the expediency of location constitute an intellectual's subjectivity? Is it possible to posit a binary difference between the liminal intellectual and the intellectual in an ex-colonised nation? The importance of location for any intellectual enterprise has been demonstrated. In an interview with Spivak, the interviewers direct similar objections at her: "Perhaps the relationship of distance and proximity between you and us is that what we write and teach has political and other actual consequences for us that are in a sense different from the consequences, or lack of consequences for you" (Spivak and Harasym 68). Does not the lack of consequences avail the liminal intellectual with a lifestyle similar to many members of the elite class in the West: "Postcolonial intellectuals, in their First World institutional locations, are ensconced in positions of power not only vis-à-vis the "native" intellectuals back at home but also vis-à-vis their First World neighbours here" (Dirlik, *Postcolonial Aura* 65).

Considering all of these issues and other problems related to the function, location and politics of the postcolonial intellectual, as well as the questions of interventions and the capability to generate critical discourses, it is important that one begins the study of postcolonial knowledge production with an analysis of the figure of the postcolonial intellectual.

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