

Literary Theory: Postcolonialism

- Examines global impact of European colonialism: Describes mechanisms of power, excluded “voices,” and theorizes about individual and national identity.
- Imperialism involves claiming and exploiting lands beyond a country’s border for prestige, raw materials, and markets for its goods. Colonialism involves transforming those lands—their social structure, culture, government, and economy (From the Norton website).
- Shows how the West constructs the third world as an “Other,” a binary that defines the West against the third world: stereotypes and power
- Examines how Western institutions and even literature reinforce imperialist and colonial ideologies. (However, some Western texts also critique these ideologies.)
- Looks at the third world literature to explore how colonial subjects view themselves and their societies: double consciousness, pre- and postcolonial culture