

FROM COMMONWEALTH  
LITERATURE TO  
POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES



**Postcolonial Literatures**

Prof. José Santiago Fdez. Vázquez

# EVOLUTION OF THE “ENGLISH STUDIES” CURRICULUM

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- ❑ English literature becomes an object of study in itself during the 19th century.
- ❑ American literature is incorporated into the “English Studies” curriculum.

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- ❑ American literature is incorporated into the “English Studies” curriculum.
- ❑ Emergence of Commonwealth Literature during the 1960s.

# COMMONWEALTH LITERATURE

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- Commonwealth literature highlights the similarities that exist among different literatures in English.

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- Inclusion of national literatures of those countries which do not belong to the Commonwealth.
- Exclusion of British literature ⇒  
Reproduction of a Eurocentric view of English studies, based on the distinction between the centre and the periphery.

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- It does not take into account the affinity that exists among different non-Western literatures, regardless of linguistic differences.
- It lacks a specific critical apparatus.



# ALTERNATIVE TERMS

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- Postcolonial literature

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMONWEALTH LITERATURE AND POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

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- ❑ Presence of a substantive body of criticism.
- ❑ Postcolonial literature is concerned both with Western and non-Western texts.

# POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

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- Intersection of Commonwealth literature and critical theory.
  
- The agenda for this course:
  - We will study some basic notions of postcolonial theory.
  
  - We will analyse intertextual relationships between British master texts and postcolonial texts, but not British canonical works on their own.