

Critical Hermeneutics and New Horizons in Postcolonial Literature: Interpreting the Zizekian 'Extimacy' in Naipaul

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Though Naipaul's geo-spatial dislocation from the postcolonial world to the London metropolitan generates an optical distance that helps observing the postcolonial reality objectively, he, at the same time, becomes attached to the reality he left behind. Naipaul's fictional reality seems 'ex-timated when the inner is intimately ex-centred with the outer. The sense of extimacy emerges from his dislocation, does not indicate a decisive ontological detachment from the postcolonial reality that he is alienated with. His de-territorialization has been unable to fully embrace the new metropolitan reality and forget the former completely, as shown in the fictional characters like Salim (*A Bend in the River*) and Ralph Singh (*The Mimic Men*). Hence, Naipaul with different disguises keeps on revisiting, reproducing and depending on the same postcolonial world over and over during his entire literary career. His Eurocentric gaze has been able to re-project the objective reality within the failures of decolonization but a hermeneutic analysis of his fictions suggests that Naipaul's extimated situation confines him, like all the other contemporaries such as Salman Rushdie or Hanif Kureishi, to the familiar postcolonial dialogue rather than generating a new Master's discourse. Though Naipaul has been critical about identity politics, his failure to avoid screening the postcolonial reality to the Western gaze leaves his fictions within the deadlock of 'de-personalized objective narrations' and 'situational consciousness' of Third World Literature (Jameson 1986). On the basis of the above *extimated alienation* and the ideological entrapment in the Western gaze, Naipaul becomes another alienated victim who could not detach himself from the chaos of old world and overcome its identity politics. Hence, based on fictional evidence by V.S. Naipaul, this review suggests that to develop critical hermeneutic approach (Gadamer 1975, 1976; Habermas 1972) further to interpret and to re-contextualize postcolonial literature with universal motives, Slavoj Zizek's idea of extimacy (2011) is of substantial significance.

Key words: *Extimacy; Slavoj Zizek; Critical Hermeneutics; Postcolonial Literature.*