Abstract:

This study investigates how female characters have been created in selected works of V.S. Naipaul. It identifies female characters as being negatively or unfairly represented in the works. The work starts from the premises that female characters are treated as peripherals in the works; that they are denied an enabling environment, which is a prerequisite for self-actualization. These considerations are followed by an interrogation of the literature which reveals that works of art are not always fair representations. This links the problem to previous research and provides a rationale for the conduct of the study. Feminist, post-colonial and psychoanalytic literary theories are advanced as the suitable frameworks for the prosecution of the study. The theories provide a methodological rationale for a thorough scrutiny of the texts for textual evidence. Although the focus is on the works of fiction of Naipaul, the findings have wider ramifications on gender studies and the fight for rights in societies. Having examined the representations of both male and female characters, the study concludes that there is a consistently negative representation of the latter. It identifies cultural beliefs, and colonial legacies as the prime factors for such representations.