

ABSTRACT

LA COLONIALIDAD DEL CONSUMO AND THE BOOKER PRIZE: LITERARY PRIZES AND NEOCOLONIALISM

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Marquette University, 2025

This dissertation proposes a fourth type of colonality following up on the works of Anibal Quijano and Maria Lugones as observed in the functioning of literary prizes and the market of cultural artifacts. By focusing on the Booker Prize, exploring the history of the award and a selection of prize-winning novels, my work demonstrates how literary awards function as actors in the field of cultural artifact production – anglophone fiction novels, in this case – and consumption. Understanding how anglophone fiction novels pushed by the Booker other actors in the field affect both production and options available to consumer can help understand the way in which the Global North continues to exercise a form of soft power over the Global South. This form of soft power is understandable by how novels serve as both forms of insight into different cultures and as re-enforcers of Euro-centered, white supremacist perception of other, non-white peoples and spaces. The dissertation will look at 3 keystone award years: 1981, 2016, and 2019. Each of these award-winning works show how the Booker Prize creates a cannon that feeds a larger machine of economic and cultural oppression while highlighting aspects of the features that enable literary awards to perpetuate their own relevance. Ultimately, literary prizes serve as exclusionary tools that function through the interaction between various actors who benefit socially, culturally, and financially. Circling back to la *colonialidad del consumo*, the Global North uses its power of controlling the production and sale of cultural artifacts in the Global South, which is then used to perpetuate a white-centered conception of cultural production and also to reproduce depictions of Global South people and spaces that highlight precarious and marginalized experiences that have the negative effect of distorting the perception of both the consumers in the Global South and those in the Global North.