



The Identity Politics of Postcolonial Feminism

Strategies of Essentialism

By Mridula Nath Chakraborty

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An original analysis of the conceptual categories of essentialisms and the politics of location

The rise of identity politics in post-Civil Rights Anglo-North America was marked by intense debate in the university and public space about the valency of competing identities in the new America that was taking shape due to changing migration policies. The historically unresolved tension between Black and White constituencies was complicated further due to the entry of bodies from the newly independent, decolonized third world nations who did not share the same racial and cultural lineage. At the same time, feminism permeated every sphere of intellectual and social life, giving rise to second-wave questions around who constituted the true subject of feminism. Postcolonial feminists interrogated the idea of an essentialised 'Woman' who was implicated in the twin strands of race and nation that identified mainstream feminisms. *The Identity Politics of Postcolonial Feminism* traces the evolution of postcolonial feminism from its situated, located, 'third world' avatar to its current free-floating reincarnation as transnational feminism in the age of mobility and identity.

Key selling points

- Provides a historical overview of essentialism as a strategy for identity politics
- Provides a rationale for why strategic essentialism continues to be relevant
- Provides a ready textbook for cultural, feminist and postcolonial studies
- Provides explanations of South Asian postcolonial contributions to public sphere

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Mridula Nath Chakraborty is a literary critic, postcolonial feminist theorist and cultural studies scholar.

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