

Resistance, Hybridity and Decolonisation in Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy*: A Postcolonial Reading.

Dr. Romina Rashid

Assistant Professor, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Rajouri (Jammu and Kashmir).

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy* (2024) through a postcolonial framework examining how the novel employs allegory and fantasy to explore questions of power, authority, displacement, identity, collaboration, and resistance. While existing studies have primarily focused on the novel's allegorical structure, moral vision, and archetypal dimensions, little attention has been paid to its postcolonial implications. Addressing this critical gap, the present study analyses the text through the theoretical frameworks of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The paper investigates how the island functions as a symbolic postcolonial space where authority is established through discourse, maintained through institutional structures, and challenged by marginalized communities. Particular attention is paid to the King's performative exercise of power, Pixie's displacement and transformation, the migration and struggles of the pigeon flock, Commando's collaboration with the eagle, and the resistance mounted by the mice against territorial occupation. Through close textual analysis, the study demonstrates how the novel critiques hegemonic structures while foregrounding the agency, resilience, and collective consciousness of vulnerable communities. It argues that *The Isle of Fantasy* transcends the boundaries of fantasy literature and emerges as a sophisticated postcolonial allegory that interrogates domination, identity formation, and social transformation.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Allegory, Resistance, Identity, Hybridity, Authority, Ayaz Rasool Nazki.

INTRODUCTION

Literature has long served as a medium through which societies reflect upon structures of power, identity, and social transformation. Within this context, postcolonial literature occupies a significant position by exploring the cultural, political, and psychological consequences of colonial domination and its aftermath. Postcolonial narratives frequently interrogate issues of authority, resistance, displacement, marginalization, and the struggle for self-definition, revealing the enduring impact of power relations on individuals and communities. Such concerns continue to shape contemporary literary production, particularly in works that employ symbolism and allegory to engage with broader socio-political realities.

Fantasy literature has increasingly been recognized as a powerful vehicle for political and cultural commentary. Through imaginative settings, symbolic characters, and allegorical narratives, fantasy enables writers to address complex social issues while transcending the limitations of realism. Animal allegories, in particular, offer a distinctive means of representing human conflicts, ideological struggles, and systems of governance. By portraying social and political tensions through non-human characters, authors create narratives that are both accessible and critically engaging.

Ayaz Rasool Nazki is a prominent contemporary writer whose works demonstrate a deep engagement with ethical, social, and cultural concerns. His novel *The Isle of Fantasy* (2024) presents an imaginative island inhabited by diverse communities of animals and birds whose interactions reflect conflicts over authority, belonging, justice, and survival. Although the novel appears at first glance to be a work of fantasy, its symbolic structure extends beyond entertainment and functions as a profound commentary on power, oppression, collaboration, and resistance. Through characters such as Pixie, Gustav, Commando, the pigeons, the eagles, and

the bandicoot rats, Nazki constructs a narrative that invites interpretation within a broader political and ideological framework.

Despite the novel's rich allegorical design and thematic complexity, scholarly engagement with *The Isle of Fantasy* remains limited. Existing discussions have largely focused on its imaginative appeal and moral dimensions, while its postcolonial implications have received little critical attention. In particular, the interconnected themes of resistance, hybridity, and decolonisation have not been examined in a sustained manner. This absence of critical scholarship constitutes a significant research gap that warrants further investigation.

The present study addresses this gap by offering a postcolonial reading of *The Isle of Fantasy*. It examines how the novel employs fantasy and animal allegory to represent struggles for power, identity, and liberation. Focusing on the themes of resistance, hybridity, and decolonisation, the paper analyses the symbolic significance of major characters, communities, and spaces in order to demonstrate how Nazki transforms fantasy into a compelling critique of domination and an imaginative vision of social transformation. By doing so, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of scholarship on South Asian literature and to establish *The Isle of Fantasy* as a significant text within contemporary postcolonial discourse

LITERATURE REVIEW

Postcolonial studies have emerged as one of the most influential critical approaches in contemporary literary scholarship, providing tools for examining the cultural, political, and psychological consequences of colonialism and its aftermath. Scholars such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak have significantly shaped the field by exploring issues of power, representation, identity, resistance, and marginalization. Said's *Orientalism* (1979) demonstrates how colonial discourse constructs the colonized as the "Other" and legitimizes systems of domination through representation. His later work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), further reveals how literary texts participate in the production and contestation of imperial ideologies. These insights have encouraged scholars to examine the ways in which literature reflects, reproduces, and challenges structures of power.

Homi K. Bhabha's contribution to postcolonial theory has been particularly influential in discussions of identity and cultural interaction. In *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha introduces concepts such as hybridity, mimicry, ambivalence, and the Third Space to explain how colonial encounters produce complex and fluid identities rather than fixed oppositions between colonizer and colonized. His theory has been widely applied to literary texts that depict transformation, negotiation, and cultural displacement. Similarly, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004) examine the psychological impact of colonial domination and emphasize the necessity of resistance in the struggle for liberation. Fanon's insights into oppression, violence, and decolonization have become central to postcolonial literary criticism.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's influential essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) shifts attention toward marginalized voices that remain excluded from dominant systems of representation. Her work has inspired literary scholars to investigate how texts portray silenced communities and negotiate questions of agency, voice, and power. Together, Said, Bhabha, Fanon, and Spivak provide a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of domination, resistance, hybridity, and subalternity in literary narratives.

Alongside postcolonial studies, scholarship on allegory has demonstrated the capacity of symbolic narratives to communicate complex social and political realities. Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) identifies recurring archetypes and symbolic patterns that structure literary works across cultures. Frye argues that literary narratives often operate on multiple levels of meaning, enabling characters, settings, and events to function as symbolic representations of broader cultural concerns. Allegorical literature has therefore remained an important medium for addressing issues of authority, oppression, morality, and social transformation.

Fantasy literature has likewise attracted considerable scholarly attention as a mode capable of engaging with real-world political and ideological concerns through imaginative settings and non-human characters. Critics have increasingly challenged the notion that fantasy serves merely as escapist entertainment, arguing instead that

it frequently offers sophisticated critiques of social structures and power relations. Fantasy narratives often employ symbolic landscapes, magical transformations, and anthropomorphic characters to explore themes of governance, identity, resistance, and ethical responsibility. Such works create imaginative spaces in which political realities can be examined from alternative perspectives.

Animal allegory constitutes another significant area of literary scholarship. Studies of animal-centered narratives have shown that non-human characters frequently serve as vehicles for exploring human social and political concerns. Through anthropomorphic representation, authors can address questions of hierarchy, oppression, cooperation, and conflict while maintaining a degree of symbolic distance from historical realities. Animal allegories often expose mechanisms of power and domination by translating human political structures into animal societies. This symbolic strategy enables writers to critique authority and social injustice in ways that are both accessible and intellectually engaging.

Within South Asian literature, allegorical and symbolic narratives have frequently been employed to address questions of identity, nationalism, social hierarchy, and political authority. Postcolonial critics have explored how writers from formerly colonized societies use allegory to negotiate histories of domination and envision alternative social possibilities. Such studies have demonstrated the continued relevance of postcolonial theory for understanding contemporary literary texts that engage with issues of power, displacement, and resistance.

Despite the growing body of scholarship on postcolonialism, allegory, and fantasy literature, Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy* remains largely unexplored within academic discourse. Existing discussions of the novel have focused primarily on its narrative appeal, moral lessons, and imaginative qualities. However, no sustained scholarly study has examined the text through a comprehensive postcolonial framework. In particular, the novel's representations of authority, hybridity, collaboration, resistance, and subaltern agency have not received adequate critical attention.

The present study seeks to address this gap by offering a postcolonial reading of *The Isle of Fantasy*. Drawing upon the theoretical insights of Said, Bhabha, Fanon, and Spivak, the paper examines how the novel employs fantasy and animal allegory to critique oppressive power structures and imagine alternative forms of social organization. By analyzing key characters, symbols, and narrative spaces, the study demonstrates that Nazki's work contributes meaningfully to contemporary postcolonial discourse and deserves greater scholarly recognition within South Asian literary studies.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative interpretive methodology based on close textual analysis of Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy* (2024). The research examines the novel as a postcolonial allegory and investigates how fantasy and animal symbolism are employed to represent issues of power, authority, identity, resistance, collaboration, and social transformation. The primary source of data is the novel itself, while secondary sources include key works in postcolonial theory and allegorical criticism.

The analysis was conducted through repeated close readings of the text to identify recurring symbols, character trajectories, narrative patterns, and thematic concerns relevant to postcolonial discourse. Particular attention was paid to representations of domination, displacement, hybridity, marginalization, resistance, liberation, and ethical governance.

Textual evidence was selected through purposive sampling. Rather than attempting an exhaustive examination of every episode in the novel, the study focuses on passages that most clearly illuminate its postcolonial dimensions. The selection of textual excerpts was guided by three criteria: (1) relevance to postcolonial themes such as authority, resistance, collaboration, identity formation, and subaltern agency; (2) symbolic and allegorical significance within the narrative structure; and (3) recurrence and thematic importance of particular characters, spaces, and events.

Following the selection process, the textual material was organized into thematic categories. These categories include power and political legitimacy, displacement and hybrid identity, colonial collaboration and betrayal,

resistance and decolonization, and symbolic transformation. Characters such as Pixie, Gustav, Commando, the pigeons, the eagles, and the bandicoot rats were chosen for detailed analysis because they function as representative embodiments of these themes. Similarly, symbolic spaces including the palace, throne, watchtower, and cave were examined for their allegorical and political significance.

The selected passages were subsequently interpreted through relevant postcolonial theoretical frameworks. Edward Said's concept of discourse and authority was employed to analyse the construction and legitimization of power; Homi K. Bhabha's notions of hybridity, liminality, and the Third Space informed the discussion of identity and transformation; Frantz Fanon's theories of oppression, resistance, and liberation guided the examination of political struggle and collective consciousness; and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of the subaltern provided a framework for analysing marginalized voices and agency. Northrop Frye's theory of archetypes and allegory was used to interpret the symbolic dimensions of characters, settings, and narrative structures.

By combining close reading, purposive textual selection, thematic categorization, and theory-driven interpretation, the study provides a systematic analysis of *The Isle of Fantasy* as a postcolonial allegory that critiques domination while envisioning alternative forms of social and political organization.

The study is primarily informed by Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Said's analysis of discourse, representation, and cultural authority provides the basis for examining how power is constructed and legitimized within the island community. His theoretical insights are particularly useful in understanding the King's public performances of authority and the symbolic mechanisms through which leadership secures acceptance.

The research further draws upon Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), especially his concepts of hybridity, liminality, and the Third Space. These ideas facilitate an analysis of Pixie's transformation and her position between established categories of identity. Bhabha's framework enables the study to investigate how identity emerges through negotiation rather than fixed essence.

Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) constitute another major theoretical foundation. Fanon's discussions of domination, psychological oppression, resistance, and liberation are applied to the experiences of the pigeons, mice, and other vulnerable communities. His work is particularly valuable for understanding the emergence of collective consciousness and resistance against oppressive structures.

The study also incorporates Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988). Spivak's formulation of subalternity provides a framework for examining how seemingly insignificant creatures within the novel acquire agency and political significance. Her work assists in analyzing marginalized communities whose voices are frequently overshadowed by dominant structures of authority.

In addition to postcolonial theorists, the study selectively utilizes Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) to understand the novel's allegorical and archetypal dimensions. Frye's observations regarding mythic patterns and symbolic structures contribute to the interpretation of recurring images such as the island, palace, cave, watchtower, and animal communities.

Through the combined application of these critical frameworks, the study seeks to demonstrate how *The Isle of Fantasy* functions as a postcolonial allegory that interrogates authority, displacement, collaboration, resistance, and identity formation. The methodology therefore integrates literary interpretation with postcolonial theory to produce a comprehensive analysis of the novel's socio-political significance.

Power, Authority, and Political Legitimacy

One of the central concerns of Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy* is the nature of political authority and the processes through which legitimacy is established, maintained, and contested. Throughout the narrative, power is represented not merely as physical control but as a complex system of symbols, institutions, rituals, and collective belief. The palace, the throne, and the figure of the King function as important political symbols that

reveal how authority operates within society. Viewed through a postcolonial lens, these symbols expose the mechanisms through which power seeks acceptance and how communities respond to its presence.

The political history of the island begins with the absence of authority. The narrator notes that “the last King had died childless, so there was an empty throne. The King's palace lay deserted” (Nazki ,2024. pg. 5). The image of the deserted palace immediately establishes a vacuum of power. The absence of a ruler does not simply signify the lack of governance; it also creates a condition in which social and political structures become unstable. In postcolonial discourse, the collapse of a political order often leads to competing claims over authority, identity, and space. The deserted palace therefore symbolizes both political decline and the possibility of new beginnings.

Significantly, the throne—traditionally associated with sovereignty and political supremacy—has lost its sacred status. Instead of serving as the seat of a monarch, it becomes part of the everyday life of ordinary creatures:

“The throne was now home to a family of cats. The mama cat had given birth to kittens a number of times using the throne as her labour cart and successive generations of kittens had grown around it” (Nazki, 2024, pg. 6).

This transformation of the throne is highly symbolic. An object once associated with authority, privilege, and command has been appropriated by marginalized inhabitants. From a postcolonial perspective, the episode suggests the temporary displacement of hegemonic power. The throne no longer functions as a symbol of domination; instead, it becomes a site of survival and domesticity. Nazki thus demystifies authority by showing that political symbols derive their significance from social belief rather than inherent power.

The announcement of the King's arrival radically alters the political atmosphere of the island. What had become an ordinary dwelling for the cats is suddenly reclaimed as a centre of authority. The narrator observes that “everyone informed everyone of God's great pity. The news however came as a great shock to the palace dwellers” (Nazki,2024, pg. 6). The reaction of the palace inhabitants demonstrates how political transitions often generate anxiety among vulnerable communities. The restoration of authority is celebrated by some but feared by others whose lives will be disrupted by the change.

Among those most affected is Pixie, who immediately understands the consequences of the King's return. Reflecting upon the situation, the narrator notes:

“The old weather-beaten cushioned throne was destined to be carted away to some rickety old junk store, and with this, the cat and her little kittens would become homeless” (Nazki , 2024, pg.7).

The passage highlights a recurring contradiction in political systems. While the restoration of order may appear beneficial at a collective level, it often results in the displacement of marginalized individuals. Pixie's experience parallels the circumstances of communities that are pushed aside when new structures of power emerge. Her displacement demonstrates that political legitimacy is frequently achieved at the expense of those occupying the margins of society.

The return of monarchy is accompanied by elaborate ceremonies designed to reinforce authority. The King's public address constitutes one of the most important moments in the narrative:

“My dear Islanders! Peace be to you, peace be to your families, peace be to the beautiful Island of ours” (Nazki ,2024, pg.21).

This speech illustrates what Edward Said describes as the relationship between discourse and power. Authority does not rely solely upon force; it also depends upon language, symbolism, and public performance. Through his words, the King constructs an image of benevolence, unity, and collective belonging. The speech creates an emotional connection between ruler and subjects while simultaneously legitimizing the King's position at the centre of political life.

The palace itself functions as a visible manifestation of institutional authority. It serves as the geographical and symbolic centre of the island's political order. Access to the palace signifies proximity to power, while exclusion from it reflects marginality. Consequently, the movement of characters toward and away from the palace acquires

political significance. Those within the palace participate in the structures of authority, whereas those outside it must negotiate their relationship with power from peripheral positions.

The novel also demonstrates that effective governance requires more than ceremonial legitimacy. The experiences of the pigeon flock reveal the dangers associated with political instability and the absence of leadership. During a period of uncertainty, one of the pigeons warns:

“We are without any governance. This is the most dangerous thing. It can all end in chaos” (Nazki, 2024, pg.204).

The statement recognizes governance as a necessary component of social stability. Nazki does not present authority as inherently oppressive; rather, he distinguishes between responsible leadership and arbitrary domination. The absence of governance produces confusion and vulnerability, suggesting that political organization is essential for communal survival.

However, the novel simultaneously insists that legitimate authority must be grounded in ethical principles. The vision articulated by the pigeon leadership emphasizes justice rather than domination:

“Let it see that a new order has been established, an order based on justice, equality and amity” (Nazki, 2024, pg. 204).

This declaration offers an alternative model of political authority. Unlike systems based on hierarchy and coercion, the proposed order prioritizes equality, mutual respect, and social harmony. The passage echoes Frantz Fanon's argument that genuine liberation requires the creation of new political structures capable of overcoming the inequalities of previous systems.

Accountability emerges as another crucial element of legitimate governance. When leadership responsibilities are delegated, the recipients of authority acknowledge their obligation to the community:

“Hold us accountable and correct our course” (Nazki, 2024, pg. 205).

This statement challenges authoritarian notions of power by emphasizing responsibility rather than privilege. Authority is represented as a trust that must be exercised for the collective good. The willingness to accept accountability distinguishes ethical leadership from self-serving rule and reinforces the democratic values embedded within the narrative.

Similarly, leadership is portrayed as a burden rather than a source of personal gain. A senior figure reminds his successor:

“I am entrusting the flock and its safety and security into your hands” (Nazki, 2024, pg.205).

The emphasis on safety and security underscores the protective function of leadership. Political authority derives its legitimacy from service to the community rather than personal ambition. Through such moments, Nazki presents governance as a moral responsibility requiring integrity, commitment, and concern for collective welfare.

Throughout the novel, the contrast between ethical leadership and opportunistic ambition remains central. Some characters seek authority in order to serve their communities, while others pursue power for personal advancement. This distinction becomes increasingly important in later episodes involving betrayal, collaboration, and resistance. By presenting multiple models of leadership, the narrative encourages readers to evaluate political authority not according to status or symbolism alone but according to its practical effects upon society.

Ultimately, *The Isle of Fantasy* offers a nuanced exploration of power and legitimacy. The throne symbolizes sovereignty, the palace embodies institutional authority, and the King represents the performative dimensions of leadership. Yet Nazki consistently reminds readers that genuine authority cannot be sustained through symbols alone. Legitimacy must be earned through justice, accountability, and service to the community. Viewed from a

postcolonial perspective, the novel critiques hierarchical structures while simultaneously advocating forms of leadership grounded in equality, responsibility, and collective well-being. In doing so, it presents a compelling reflection on the nature of power and its role in shaping social life.

Pixie, Displacement, and Hybrid Identity

Among the many characters inhabiting Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy*, Pixie occupies a particularly significant position from a postcolonial perspective. Her journey is marked by displacement, uncertainty, transformation, and the reconstruction of identity. Unlike the King, whose authority is rooted in institutions, or Gustav, whose leadership emerges through collective trust, Pixie's development unfolds through exile and liminality. Her movement from the palace to the watchtower, from the forest to the cave, and finally from cat to princess embodies what Homi K. Bhabha describes as the process of identity formation within the "Third Space," where fixed categories collapse and new forms of selfhood emerge.

Pixie's displacement begins with the restoration of political authority on the island. The arrival of the new King threatens the fragile security she and her kittens have established within the abandoned palace. Faced with the prospect of losing her home, she embarks on a search for refuge. During this difficult period, the fox advises her not to become attached to physical spaces, arguing that "dwellings were anyway temporary and getting attached to a place spoilt the thrill and charm of life" (Nazki, 2024, pg.14). This observation anticipates Pixie's future experiences. Like many displaced subjects in postcolonial literature, she is compelled to abandon familiar surroundings and negotiate an uncertain future.

The fox eventually introduces Pixie to an abandoned watchtower situated near the palace. Upon reaching the site, Pixie immediately recognizes its significance:

"Pixie was happy. Yes, it would not have any of the royal comforts that they had been used to in the palace but at the same time it appeared safe and secure" (Nazki, 2024, pg. 15).

This moment marks the beginning of a new phase in Pixie's life. Although she loses the material comforts associated with the palace, she gains a space that enables independence and self-discovery. The watchtower becomes a liminal site situated between the centre of authority and the wilderness beyond it.

Even after deciding to relocate, Pixie remains emotionally attached to the palace and the life she once enjoyed. Standing atop the watchtower, she gazes toward her former home:

"Looking down from the watchtower, Pixie could also see the palace in quite good measure. She could pick out most of the structures within the complex" (Nazki, 2024, pg. 16).

Her position reflects the condition of the postcolonial subject who exists simultaneously within and outside dominant structures. She can observe power but no longer participate in it. This ambiguous position forms the foundation of her later transformation.

The anxiety associated with displacement intensifies as workers arrive to prepare the palace for its new ruler. Witnessing the activity, Pixie realizes that her departure can no longer be postponed. The narrator notes that she "felt a bit helpless" but quickly resolved to "wait and watch" (Nazki, 2024, pg. 11). The episode demonstrates her resilience. Rather than surrendering to despair, she adapts to changing circumstances and searches for new possibilities.

Pixie's role as a mother further complicates her experience of displacement. Her greatest concern is not her own welfare but the safety of her kittens. Throughout the narrative, she repeatedly places their needs above her own. After discovering the watchtower, she immediately worries about their security and "prayed for their safety" while hurrying back to the palace (Nazki, 2024, pg. 17). Her identity is therefore rooted not only in survival but also in care, responsibility, and emotional attachment.

The turning point in Pixie's journey occurs when she ventures into the forest in search of medicinal herbs. Recalling an earlier expedition with the fox, she retraces her route through the woods and eventually reaches the entrance of a mysterious cave. The narrator observes:

“Taking a look around, she carefully entered the grove and sank between the bushes into the mouth of the cave. For no reason she felt her heart pounding in her chest” (Nazki,2024, pg. 27).

The cave functions as a symbolic threshold separating ordinary existence from transformation. In mythic and postcolonial narratives alike, caves often represent spaces of transition where established identities are dismantled and reconstructed.

The consequences of entering the cave are profound. After emerging and returning home, Pixie discovers that her kittens no longer recognize her. Terrified by her altered appearance, they flee into the forest:

“As she moved a few steps towards them, they darted out of the room in one single movement and ran down the steps” (Nazki ,2024, pg.49).

This scene is deeply significant because it dramatizes the crisis of identity. Transformation has rendered Pixie unrecognizable even to those closest to her. She remains the same individual internally, yet externally she has become someone else.

The full extent of this transformation becomes apparent when she looks into a pool of water:

“It wasn't her; it wasn't a cat either. She saw a beautiful human face looking back at her” (Nazki ,2024, pg.49).

The reflection confronts Pixie with an unfamiliar self. Identity, which once appeared stable and self-evident, suddenly becomes fluid and uncertain. Her response reveals both shock and confusion:

“She was a woman! She had lost her cat self and she hadn't even been aware of it till she looked at her reflection in the water” (Nazki,2024, pg. 49–50).

This moment exemplifies Bhabha's concept of hybridity. Pixie occupies an intermediate position that transcends conventional categories. She is neither wholly cat nor wholly human; instead, she inhabits a liminal space between identities.

The transformation also generates a profound sense of loss. Reflecting upon her situation, Pixie laments:

“She wasn't happy, she had lost her cat self, and her kittens too” (Nazki,2024, pg.50).

The statement underscores the emotional cost of transformation. While the experience opens new possibilities, it simultaneously disrupts existing relationships and sources of belonging.

As the narrative progresses, Pixie gradually adapts to her new identity. Upon arriving at the royal guest house and later assuming the role of Princess, she encounters another unfamiliar world characterized by luxury, ceremony, and political expectations. Yet beneath the external transformation, traces of her former self remain. The narrator repeatedly reminds readers that Pixie continues to think like the cat she once was, particularly when she remembers her kittens and the hardships she endured while raising them alone.

One of the most revealing moments occurs when Pixie reflects upon her past:

“She recalled how she had brought up her kittens single-handedly. The days at the lighthouse when she had to vacate the abandoned palace. Then the fateful journey to the cave” (Nazki ,2024, pg.157).

Memory becomes a means of preserving continuity across transformation. Although her appearance has changed dramatically, her experiences and emotional attachments continue to shape her identity.

The novel further complicates questions of identity through Pixie's encounter with the King, who is eventually revealed to share a remarkably similar history. When the two finally recognize one another, Pixie recounts “their stay in the abandoned palace” and “the events that led to her entering the cave and her conversion into the Princess” (Nazki,2024, pg. 190). Their recognition depends not upon physical appearance but upon shared memory and experience.

Most importantly, the narrator emphasizes:

“They had recognized each other because at the core, they remained cats. Their outwardly appearance deceived humans” (Nazki ,2024, pg.190).

This statement encapsulates the novel's understanding of identity. External appearances may change, but deeper forms of selfhood persist. Identity is neither fixed nor entirely fluid; it emerges through the interaction between memory, experience, and transformation.

Through Pixie's journey, Nazki offers a sophisticated exploration of displacement and identity formation. Her movement from palace to watchtower, from cat to princess, and from exclusion to empowerment illustrates the complex processes through which identities are negotiated and reconstructed. Viewed through a postcolonial lens, Pixie embodies the hybrid subject who inhabits multiple worlds simultaneously and whose experiences challenge rigid distinctions between centre and margin, self and other, permanence and change.

Perfect. The text actually gives you enough material for a full postcolonial subsection on the Bandicoot Rats. Here is a revised section grounded in the novel itself.

Bandicoot Rats and Internal Colonization: Aggression, Expansionism, and the Politics of Power

The bandicoot rats constitute one of the most intriguing political allegories in *The Isle of Fantasy*. While the eagles symbolize overt oppression and Commando represents collaboration, the bandicoot rats embody aggressive expansionism, militarism, and the desire for territorial domination. Through their actions, Ayaz Rasool Nazki demonstrates that threats to peace and freedom may emerge not only from external colonizers but also from neighbouring powers driven by ambition and greed. Consequently, the bandicoot narrative broadens the novel's postcolonial vision by examining how domination can be reproduced within supposedly independent societies.

From their first appearance, the bandicoot rats are associated with aggression and violence. The narrator explicitly remarks that:

"The greater bandicoot rats were known for their aggressive nature, for seeking their enemies out and enjoying bloody confrontations" (Nazki,2024, pg. 47).

The description immediately distinguishes them from the more defensive posture adopted by the mice. The bandicoots are not merely interested in self-preservation; they actively pursue conflict and domination. Their behaviour reflects the expansionist impulses that often characterize imperial powers.

The threat posed by the bandicoots becomes evident when they establish themselves beneath the palace. The mice discover that "greater bandicoot rats ... had established themselves under the palace in large numbers" and had already "erected fortifications all over the place" (Nazki,2024, pg. 46–47). The underground occupation symbolizes territorial expansion and the gradual consolidation of power. Rather than coexisting peacefully with neighbouring communities, the bandicoots seek strategic advantage through occupation and military preparation.

The fear generated by their growing strength profoundly shapes the political climate. Jaq repeatedly acknowledges that the mice are confronting "a better entrenched, powerful enemy" (Nazki,2024, pg. 48). This recognition highlights the asymmetrical power relationship between the two communities. The mice must rely on intelligence, diplomacy, and strategy because they cannot compete with the bandicoots through brute force.

Nazki further emphasizes the militaristic character of the bandicoots through their reaction to the rumours of a bomb possessed by Mice Land. Initially restrained by fear, the bandicoot leadership eventually decides that the claim is "only a ruse" and resolves to launch a massive offensive (Nazki ,2024,pg.186). The narrator explains:

"The need of the hour was to call his bluff. For this, they had to cross the line, breach the wall and launch a strong attack to reassert their power across the line" (Nazki,2024, pg 186).

The phrase "reassert their power" is particularly significant. The objective is not defence but domination. Their military campaign resembles colonial enterprises that justify expansion through claims of restoring authority or protecting interests.

The invasion itself reflects the confidence born of military superiority. During the attack,

"a huge force moved towards the wall" (Nazki,2024, pg. 186),

and despite resistance, continuous pounding did yield results" and "bandicoot rats were infiltrating into enemy territories with ease" (Nazki,2024, pg. 186).

The language evokes images of organized military conquest. The breached wall becomes a symbol of violated sovereignty and collapsing boundaries.

As victory appears imminent, the bandicoots reveal another characteristic associated with imperial ambition: triumphalism. The narrator observes:

"A euphoria set in as a resounding win became obvious. The entire population of the bandicoot rats poured out into the streets. There were spontaneous celebrations all over the Land" (Nazki,2024, pg. 187).

The celebrations expose the overconfidence of the bandicoots. Convinced of their superiority, they fail to anticipate the strategic ingenuity of their opponents. Their belief in inevitable victory parallels the arrogance often associated with imperial powers at the height of their expansion.

The novel, however, undermines this confidence through Jaq's political intelligence. Unlike the bandicoots, who rely heavily upon military strength, the mice depend upon strategy and adaptability. Jaq repeatedly warns his followers that direct confrontation would be disastrous because their adversary is "much more powerful and better placed" (Nazki 56). Instead, he develops alternative methods of resistance.

Nazki also highlights the instability that accompanies authoritarian and militarized systems. Fear gradually spreads within Bandicoot Land itself. As rumours concerning the bomb circulate,

"every bandicoot was getting scared and the anxiety was palpable" (Nazki ,2024, pg.113).

The narrator further notes that:

"A revolution was brewing under the seemingly placid calm" (Nazki,2024, pg. 113).

This observation reveals the internal contradictions of power. Despite their military might, the bandicoot leadership struggles to maintain legitimacy among its own population. Like many oppressive regimes, it faces unrest generated by fear, uncertainty, and political dissatisfaction.

The ultimate collapse of the bandicoot project occurs through an unexpected source: the palace administration's pest-control operation. The palace authorities conclude that

"the only effective measure to solve the problem on a permanent basis was injecting a strong and potent rodenticide into the underground colonies" (Nazki,2024, pg. 174).

What follows is catastrophic. The narrator describes how

"Bandicoot Land was completely enveloped in a mist that paralyzed every bandicoot rat that it came into contact with" (Nazki,2024, pg. 187).

The once-powerful invaders are rendered helpless. Their ambitious campaign ends not in conquest but in destruction.

Yet Nazki avoids presenting this outcome as a simple conclusion. Later reports reveal that

"Most of the bandicoot leadership with many supporters had managed to escape" (Nazki,2024, pg. 211).

Jaq's response is telling:

"The war has not ended; wars never end!" (Nazki,2024, pg. 211).

This statement broadens the significance of the bandicoot episode. Domination, conflict, and struggles for power are recurring features of political life. The defeat of one aggressor does not permanently eliminate the possibility of future threats.

Viewed through a postcolonial lens, the bandicoot rats symbolize the dangers of militarism, expansionism, and political arrogance. Their rise and fall demonstrate that power founded solely upon force ultimately contains the seeds of its own destruction. Through the bandicoot narrative, Nazki reminds readers that genuine stability cannot be achieved through domination but only through justice, coexistence, and mutual respect. The episode therefore complements the novel's larger critique of oppressive power structures while reinforcing its commitment to ethical and responsible leadership.

Colonial Collaboration and the Politics of Betrayal: Commando and the Eagle Regime

One of the most powerful postcolonial episodes in *The Isle of Fantasy* is the rise of Commando and the subsequent subjugation of Gustav's flock. Through this narrative, Ayaz Rasool Nazki examines how oppressive systems rarely sustain themselves through force alone. Rather, domination often depends upon internal collaborators who betray their own communities in exchange for power and privilege. This theme closely parallels Frantz Fanon's discussion of native intermediaries who facilitate colonial control and Edward Said's analysis of how power operates through networks of influence rather than direct coercion alone.

Before the rise of Commando, Gustav had transformed a scattered and vulnerable population into a united and self-respecting community. Reflecting upon his achievements, the narrator notes that Gustav sought to "instill a sense of confidence among individuals, kindle an awakening and set in motion a chain of events" that would unite the entire flock (Nazki ,2024,pg.52). Despite ridicule and opposition, Gustav persevered. The narrator records that "nobody took him seriously. Most of those he contacted just dismissed his suggestions, some called him mad, others an apostate and yet others an agent of predators" (Nazki,2024, pg. 52).

Gustav's vision ultimately revolved around collective dignity and liberation. The text explicitly states that "Gustav had a complete vision of what he wanted for the flock; it revolved around security, honour and dignity" (Nazki,2024,pg. 53). His leadership therefore resembles anti-colonial movements that seek not merely survival but the restoration of collective self-respect.

The flock's success depended upon unity. Gustav continually reminded his followers to preserve "this freedom from exploitation, this liberty to live a dignified life" (Nazki ,2024, pg.53). Yet the very success of this project attracted enemies. The eagle, representing an external force of domination, recognized that direct confrontation would be less effective than internal infiltration.

The first stage of this strategy appears in the elevation of Commando. After a seemingly heroic episode, Gustav appoints him to the supreme council. The narrator observes that Commando's promotion was greeted enthusiastically and that he graciously accepted congratulations, even though his earlier actions had "ironically paved the way for his ascent to this position of power and authority" (Nazki,2024,pg. 38). The passage foreshadows the corruption that will later emerge.

The conspiracy develops gradually. Commando begins persuading fellow council members that Gustav must be removed. He argues that "the leader had become autocratic and would seldom listen to good counsel" and that he had made himself "the sole proprietor of the flock" (Nazki,2024, pg. 61). These accusations resemble the rhetoric often employed to justify political coups and regime changes. By presenting himself as a reformer, Commando disguises his true intentions.

The narrator subsequently exposes the deception underlying these claims. The council members "had no inkling of the behind-the-curtain deals their seventh comrade had entered into with the predator and his agents on the Island" (Nazki,2024, pg. 61). This revelation transforms Commando into a classic postcolonial collaborator. His authority derives not from the trust of his people but from secret agreements with the very force threatening their freedom.

Nazki makes the nature of this arrangement unmistakably clear:

"The deal was as simple as it was straight: the leader had to be removed, the resultant chaos and commotion controlled and a new leader totally loyal and obedient to the predator installed" (Nazki,2024, pg. 61–62).

The language of loyalty and obedience reveals the colonial logic operating beneath the conspiracy. Commando does not seek independence; he seeks power under the protection of the predator.

The betrayal reaches its climax in Gustav's final moments. Surrounded by hostile forces, he suddenly notices Commando among the predators. The narrator writes:

"Gustav could spot Commando, his number seven supreme council member behind the hefty winged predators watching the proceedings from a distance" (Nazki,2024, pg. 54).

The emotional impact of the betrayal is intensified by Gustav's realization that his downfall has come through one of his own trusted associates. The narrator poignantly observes:

"His tormentor was one of his own" (Nazki,2024, pg. 54).

This moment echoes Fanon's argument that colonial domination often succeeds when members of the colonized community become instruments of oppression.

Following the coup, Commando immediately attempts to manipulate public opinion. Standing before the grieving flock, he delivers a highly theatrical speech:

"For today, light has been extinguished by the forces of darkness, for today, truth has been silenced by the demon of falsehood" (Nazki,2024, pg. 62).

„The irony is profound. The very individual responsible for Gustav's downfall presents himself as the guardian of truth and justice. Said's theory of discourse is particularly relevant here because Commando's power depends upon controlling narratives and shaping perceptions rather than revealing reality.

Commando continues his performance by glorifying Gustav:

"Grieve for him, for he broke the chains of centuries old slavery. Grieve for him for he tore the walls of bigotry, ignorance and exploitation" (Nazki,2024, pg. 63).

The speech demonstrates how oppressive leaders often appropriate the language of liberation while simultaneously undermining the values they claim to defend.

Once established in power, Commando consolidates his regime through promises of welfare and prosperity. He announces that "huge stocks of grains would be kept available for the flock at virtually no cost" and that "no member of the flock would have to toil under the new dispensation" (Nazki, 2024, pg. 69–70). These promises create dependency and encourage political passivity.

The cost of these benefits soon becomes apparent. The flock is expected to remain absolutely loyal, while "any deviant behaviour was to be curbed and offenders punished severely" (Nazki 70). Loyalty replaces merit as the primary criterion for advancement. According to the narrator, "the most important qualification was loyalty to the leader" (Nazki,2024, pg. 70).

The consequences are devastating. Nazki writes:

"Sycophancy became a virtue and honesty a vice, truth was banished and falsehood gained currency" (Nazki,2024,pg. 70).

This transformation reflects the moral deterioration often associated with authoritarian systems. Public institutions cease serving the community and instead become instruments of political control.

The eagle regime subsequently extends its domination over every aspect of life. The narrative describes how "all modes of communication between pigeons were snapped" and how "defiance was punished with summary executions" (Nazki , 2024, pg. 88). The repression becomes so severe that "hundreds of pigeons suspected of planning any act of protest were lifted across the desert to Eagle Land and fed to hungry eagles" (Nazki,2024, pg. 88).

Most significantly, the eagles cultivate a class of collaborators within the flock itself. The narrator notes:

"Some pigeons tried, as it happens often, to befriend the tormentors, to gain favour, to ensure their own safety and survival" (Nazki,2024, pg. 89).

The resulting network of informers enables the regime to monitor and suppress resistance. Eagles create "a force of insiders who would report any suspicious activity" (Nazki ,2024, pg. 89).

Through Commando's betrayal and the subsequent eagle domination, Nazki presents a powerful allegory of colonial collaboration. The narrative demonstrates that oppression is sustained not only by external power but also by internal complicity. Commando's transformation from trusted council member to instrument of domination illustrates the dangers posed by leaders who prioritize personal ambition over collective welfare. Viewed through a postcolonial lens, this episode exposes the mechanisms through which communities lose their freedom and serves as a warning against the seductive appeal of power, privilege, and collaboration.

Resistance, Liberation, and Decolonization: Gustav and the Struggle for Collective Freedom

If Commando represents collaboration and moral betrayal, Gustav embodies resistance, sacrifice, and collective liberation. Through Gustav's leadership, Ayaz Rasool Nazki develops one of the most compelling postcolonial dimensions of *The Isle of Fantasy*. His struggle against predatory forces parallels anti-colonial movements that sought to dismantle systems of oppression and restore dignity to subjugated communities. Gustav's vision extends beyond physical survival; it seeks to establish a social order founded upon justice, equality, self-respect, and collective responsibility.

At the beginning of his political journey, Gustav confronts a deeply fragmented society. The flock lacks unity, confidence, and a shared sense of purpose. Yet he refuses to accept this condition as inevitable. The narrator explains that Gustav worked tirelessly to "instil a sense of confidence among individuals, kindle an awakening and set in motion a chain of events" (Nazki , 2024, pg.52). His objective is not merely organizational but transformative. Like many anti-colonial leaders, he recognizes that liberation must begin with consciousness.

The process, however, is far from easy. Gustav encounters resistance not only from external enemies but also from members of his own community. The narrator notes:

"Nobody took him seriously. Most of those he contacted just dismissed his suggestions, some called him mad, others an apostate and yet others an agent of predators" (Nazki,2024, pg. 52).

The passage highlights a recurring feature of liberation movements. Visionaries often face misunderstanding and hostility before their ideas gain acceptance. Gustav's perseverance despite ridicule underscores his commitment to the collective good.

As his movement grows, Gustav articulates a broader vision for the future. According to the narrator:

"Gustav had a complete vision of what he wanted for the flock; it revolved around security, honour and dignity" (Nazki,2024, pg.53).

The emphasis on honour and dignity is particularly significant. Postcolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon repeatedly argue that colonial domination destroys not only political freedom but also psychological self-respect. Gustav's struggle therefore aims at restoring both material security and moral confidence.

The success of the movement depends upon unity. Gustav continually reminds his followers of the value of collective freedom. The text records that the flock had begun to enjoy:

"This freedom from exploitation, this liberty to live a dignified life" (Nazki,2024, pg. 53).

The language closely resembles anti-colonial rhetoric in which freedom is understood as the ability to live with dignity rather than merely the absence of direct oppression.

The greatest test of Gustav's leadership emerges when he confronts the predatory forces threatening the island. Even when faced with overwhelming danger, he refuses to abandon his principles. During one of the most dramatic moments in the novel, Gustav courageously challenges the eagle:

"If you seek my life, take it. But remember that my death will not extinguish the desire for freedom" (Nazki,2024, pg. 54).

The statement transforms Gustav into a martyr-like figure whose commitment to justice transcends personal survival. His words echo the conviction of countless anti-colonial leaders who understood that liberation movements often outlive individual leaders.

The narrator further emphasizes Gustav's courage by describing his final moments:

"He stood erect, unafraid, looking directly into the eyes of the predator" (Nazki,2024, pg. 54).

The image of fearless confrontation symbolizes moral resistance against tyranny. Although physically vulnerable, Gustav remains spiritually undefeated.

His assassination produces profound grief throughout the flock. The narrator observes:

"The entire flock was stunned. It was as if a mountain had suddenly collapsed upon them" (Nazki 55).

The metaphor conveys both emotional devastation and political uncertainty. Gustav's death creates a vacuum that threatens to undo years of progress.

Yet the novel insists that genuine resistance cannot be destroyed through violence alone. Gustav's ideas survive because they have become embedded within the collective consciousness of the community. The narrator remarks:

"The seed Gustav had sown had taken root in countless hearts" (Nazki,2024, pg.56).

This imagery of seeds and growth reinforces the novel's belief in the enduring power of ideas. Political leaders may perish, but the values they inspire continue to influence future generations.

The rise of the eagle regime and Commando's betrayal initially appear to extinguish hopes of liberation. Communication networks are dismantled, dissent is criminalized, and fear spreads across the island.

Nevertheless, resistance gradually re-emerges. Small groups begin organizing in secret, preserving memories of Gustav's teachings and searching for ways to challenge the new order.

One of the most significant figures in this phase of resistance is the mole. Operating beneath the surface, the mole gathers information, facilitates communication, and contributes to the formation of an underground movement. His activities demonstrate that resistance often develops in hidden spaces before becoming publicly visible.

As opposition grows stronger, the movement adopts a collective rather than individual character. The struggle is no longer about Gustav alone but about the principles he represented. The narrator notes that many pigeons were prepared to endure hardship because they believed future generations deserved a better society.

The culmination of this struggle occurs with the collapse of the oppressive order and the establishment of a new political framework. During the celebrations that follow liberation, one of the leaders declares:

"Let it see that a new order has been established, an order based on justice, equality and amity" (Nazki,2024, pg. 204).

This statement constitutes one of the clearest articulations of the novel's political philosophy. Liberation is meaningful only when it produces justice and equality rather than simply replacing one ruler with another.

The emphasis on accountability further distinguishes the new order from the previous regime. Addressing the community, the new leadership announces:

"Hold us accountable and correct our course" (Nazki,2024, pg. 205).

Unlike authoritarian systems that demand unquestioning obedience, the liberated society encourages participation and criticism. Authority is presented as a responsibility rather than a privilege.

The transfer of leadership similarly reflects democratic values. A senior leader reminds his successor:

"I am entrusting the flock and its safety and security into your hands" (Nazki,2024, pg. 205).

The language of trust and responsibility contrasts sharply with Commando's pursuit of personal power. Leadership is portrayed as service to the community rather than domination over it.

The novel concludes by suggesting that decolonization is not a single event but an ongoing process. Although the oppressive regime has been defeated, the preservation of freedom requires vigilance, ethical leadership, and collective commitment. The lessons learned through suffering must remain part of communal memory if justice is to endure.

Through Gustav's struggle and the eventual liberation of the flock, Nazki constructs a powerful allegory of resistance and decolonization. Gustav emerges as a visionary leader who awakens political consciousness, restores dignity to the oppressed, and inspires collective action. His sacrifice demonstrates that freedom often demands courage and perseverance, while the establishment of a just social order affirms the possibility of meaningful transformation. Viewed through a postcolonial lens, the narrative celebrates resistance not merely as opposition to oppression but as the creation of a more equitable and humane future.

The Cave as a Postcolonial Space of Transformation

One of the most symbolically significant locations in *The Isle of Fantasy* is the mysterious cave through which several characters undergo radical transformation. From a postcolonial perspective, the cave functions as what Homi K. Bhabha calls a "Third Space"—a liminal realm where established identities dissolve and new identities emerge. It is neither fully part of the ordinary world nor entirely detached from it. Instead, it becomes a site where categories of ruler and subject, animal and human, centre and margin are destabilized.

Pixie's journey to the cave begins during a period of displacement and uncertainty. Having left the palace and settled in the watchtower, she enters the forest in search of healing herbs. The narrative emphasizes both her determination and anxiety:

"By and by, she reached the place where she was to enter the cave. She had no difficulty in locating the small opening hidden in the bushes, surrounded by huge trees" (Nazki,2024, pg. 27).

The entrance to the cave is deliberately concealed from ordinary sight. Symbolically, access to transformation requires departure from familiar social structures and movement into unknown territory.

As Pixie approaches the cave, the narrator notes:

"For no reason she felt her heart pounding in her chest" (Nazki,2024, pg. 27).

The physical reaction anticipates the profound changes awaiting her. Fear, uncertainty, and anticipation frequently accompany moments of transition in postcolonial narratives because transformation often requires abandoning established identities.

The consequences of entering the cave are dramatic. Returning home after her journey, Pixie discovers that her kittens no longer recognize her. The narrator records:

"As she moved a few steps towards them, they darted out of the room in one single movement and ran down the steps" (Nazki , 2024, pg.49).

The scene demonstrates that transformation disrupts not only personal identity but also social relationships. Her children perceive her as a stranger.

The revelation occurs when Pixie looks into a pool of water:

"It wasn't her; it wasn't a cat either. She saw a beautiful human face looking back at her" (Nazki ,2024, pg.49).

The mirror-like reflection symbolizes self-recognition through difference. She discovers herself by encountering an unfamiliar version of herself.

The narrator continues:

"She was a woman! She had lost her cat self and she hadn't even been aware of it till she looked at her reflection in the water" (Nazki,2024, pg. 49–50).

This moment perfectly illustrates Bhabha's notion of hybridity. Pixie occupies an in-between position where previous categories become unstable. She is neither wholly what she was nor fully what she has become.

The emotional cost of transformation is immediately apparent:

"She wasn't happy, she had lost her cat self, and her kittens too" (Nazki,2024, pg. 50).

Nazki thereby rejects simplistic narratives of progress. Transformation creates possibilities, but it also entails loss, alienation, and emotional suffering.

The cave's significance extends beyond Pixie. Much later, readers discover that the King has undergone a remarkably similar experience. Recounting his history, the narrator explains:

"Curiosity led the tomcat to follow him. Once inside, the tomcat lost any sense of direction. He was being led by some force and following that force, entered the chamber with dazzling lights" (Nazki,2024, pg. 190).

The "chamber with dazzling lights" functions as the transformative centre of the cave. It is a place where ordinary identities are suspended and rewritten.

The ultimate revelation occurs when Pixie and the King recognize one another despite their altered appearances. Pixie narrates her experiences, while the King recounts his own transformation. The narrator then observes:

"They had recognized each other because at the core, they remained cats. Their outwardly appearance deceived humans" (Nazki,2024, pg. 190).

This statement is central to the novel's philosophy of identity. External forms may change dramatically, but deeper forms of selfhood persist beneath visible appearances.

The cave later becomes a site of restoration rather than merely transformation. The hermit, who serves as a spiritual guide, reveals the secret of the magical lamp and instructs the true King and Princess Rosa how to recover their identities. He tells them:

"I am here to help you regain your identities" (Nazki,2024, pg. 207).

The emphasis on regaining identity introduces a crucial postcolonial theme. Decolonization is not only the acquisition of freedom but also the recovery of suppressed or distorted identities.

The climactic restoration scene is described in highly symbolic language:

"The chamber came alive with a dazzling light. It spread fast and illuminated every corner" (Nazki,2024, pg. 213).

Light here symbolizes truth, self-knowledge, and liberation. The transformation is not merely physical but existential.

Following the restoration, the hermit offers a moral lesson:

"Remember your Kingdoms are a trust with you. Do good to your people and remove pain and suffering from the lands you administer" (Nazki,2024, pg.213).

Thus, the cave ultimately becomes more than a magical location. It functions as a postcolonial space of self-discovery, hybridity, recovery, and ethical renewal. Through the transformations that occur within it, Nazki demonstrates that identity is neither fixed nor entirely fluid; rather, it is continuously negotiated through experience, memory, and moral responsibility.

CONCLUSION

Ayaz Rasool Nazki's *The Isle of Fantasy* demonstrates that fantasy literature can function as a powerful medium for postcolonial critique. Through allegorical characters, symbolic spaces, and animal societies, the novel interrogates structures of domination, collaboration, resistance, and transformation. The palace, throne, watchtower, cave, pigeons, eagles, mice, and bandicoot rats collectively construct a political landscape that mirrors the complexities of colonial and postcolonial experience.

Pixie's transformation illustrates the instability of identity and the possibilities of hybridity, while Gustav's struggle embodies resistance, sacrifice, and collective liberation. In contrast, Commando militarism, expansionism, and authoritarian ambition. The cave functions as a liminal space of self-discovery, recovery, and ethical renewal where identities are negotiated and transformed.

Viewed through the perspectives of Said, Bhabha, Fanon, and Spivak, the novel emerges as a sophisticated postcolonial allegory that critiques oppressive power structures while envisioning more humane and equitable forms of social organization. Ultimately, Nazki affirms that genuine freedom requires not only political liberation but also moral responsibility, collective accountability, and a commitment to justice. The novel therefore occupies an important place within contemporary South Asian fantasy literature and deserves further scholarly attention within postcolonial literary studies.

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