

POSTCOLONIALISM IN THE WORKS OF AMA ATA AIDOO

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Abstract

The quest for identity is a very prominent theme in post-colonial study and literature. The exploration of tide in post-colonial context, specifically in term of Ghanaian culture, identities and of their people reveal the hybrid culture of the post-colonial society. She, herself tackles the influence of decolonization, hybridity, language and displacement movement on post-colonial Diaspora. Her attempt is to reconstruct identity or to reinvent a new one. The topic leaves an impact of post- colonialism and its relation to identity. It is related to post-colonial literature.

Keyword: Quest, Prominent, Post-Colonial, Ghanaian Culture, Decolonization, Hybridity.

Her association with post-colonial literature has been very wide but controversial. It is controversial not only to the core subject that it deals with, but also reigns its value of the term 'post-colonial' in itself. So to understand post-colonial literary context one has to understand first the background of that literature that had been a fertile ground for debates and criticism. So, in this chapter we are going with theoretical background concerning the field of post-colonialism. The field to be dealt with, is the very definition of the term post- colonial in itself. This has been very controversial in meaning, whether it denotes a mete context or deeper than that. We are going to see how different scholars pen notion in different ways and try to find out a common ground between them.

The field of post colonialism has led to the emergence of the post-colonial which has a main goal to examine. The relation of the colonizer and the colonized to define the various ways, the colonizer had affected the colonized. We have got the kind of texts it deals with and the kind of subject matter it evokes.

After dealing with the key notion of post-colonialism, we have to determine what is meant by post-colonial literature as, since the background it came out of as controversial, and holds a variety of connotations. It surely is a controversial issue by itself. So to understand the main issue of 'identity' in post-colonial literature, we have to understand in the first place what is meant by post-colonial literature in itself, and which category of writers is considered post-colonial.

INTERPRETATION OF POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

According to Depika Bahri, Associate Professor in the department of English at Emory University, in her article introduction to Post-colonial Studies (1996), it is known that post colonialism is a reaction against colonialism which exercises power on natives to abuse their wealth. However, many say that post colonialism is about the social and cultural changes which take place after colonialism, especially after the publication of Edward Saids Orien- talism in 1978.

The culture and society of colonized countries before colonization help us to understand more the colonial mechanisms and the new culture and society of the post colony. Thus, the term post-colonial may also include colonized countries or minorities belonging to the First World Countries. However, the term commonwealth literature presupposes that only literature written in English or belonging to the "Empire" has got an importance.

In Post colonialism Introduction, Marie Rose Napierkowski says that post colonialism refers to the representation of culture, race, ethnicity, and identity in the modern world where many countries became

independent. While many critics refer to it as the: “culture and cultural products influenced by imperialism from the moment of colonization until today” (*Napicrkowski 1998, Literary Movements for Students*).

Imperial power under the excuse of uncivilized, exported their literatures and powers to the colonies and tried to eliminate indigenous cultures. But, after the World War II the situation changed, the colonizers became weaker and independence movements spread all over the world. However, the dismantling of the empire with all the political changes which accompany it did not instantly affect the imperial, cultural control, but we cannot deny the fact that the intellectual awakening sprang in the post- colonial world.

Imperialism occurred through different ways and procedures which depended on certain situations, a thing that led to the unexpected. The colonizers tried to take control over, not only the land and the wealth of the colonized, but also the culture of these people.

But with the emergence of the process of decolonization, these people regained not only their lands but they also got rid of the imperial cultural control. In addition, the newly decolonized people used their culture and language to reach to challenge and replace the colonizer’s culture. So, post- colonialism began within the beginning of colonialism, “it is tire discourse of positionality which colonialism brings into being” (*Ashcroft et al 1995: 117*). Nevertheless, this ongoing interest in post colonialism grew up with the emergence of post-modernism a fact that made people confuse between the two concepts.

Kwame. A. Appiah in his essay *The Post-colonial and the Postmodern* says that: Post- coloniality is the condition of what we ungenerously call a comparator intelligentsia: of a relatively small, western-style, western-trained, group. Of writers and thinkers, who mediate the Trade in culture commodities of world capitalism of the periphery. In the west they are known through entire Africa they offer; their compatriots know them both through the west they present to Africa and through Africa they have invented for the world, for each other man of Africa. (*Ashcroft et al 1995: 119*)

In the introduction of *Colonialism-Post-colonialism*, the writer Ania Loomba proclaims that the term post colonialism is so heterogeneous and it is almost impossible to define and describe it in a satisfactory way. Due to, the interdisciplinary nature of post colonialism. Meanwhile. the term post colonialism has certainly some drawbacks, for that, Loomba has classified these problems as follows: The first one lies in the fact that in English department it is accepted to discuss cultural differences but it is not allowed to talk about economic exploitation. A second problem that presents itself is that the post-colonial is presented as footnotes in the syllabi. A third problem seems to correlate what she calls “The race for theory”, this wide range of theories and theorists may confuse students in terms of understanding the term itself.

When we consider the world history, we notice that the children of the formerly colonized countries live in different parts of the world which may insinuate that “the whole world is post-colonial”. (*Loomba 1998: 7*). According to Loomba this term has two implications: a temporal implication which denotes history (after colonialism), and an ideological implication which is the most likely to be studied by critics. But if we take for example the temporal implication, and if we admit that post colonialism began with the process of de- colonization which has taken three centuries: the eighteenth, the nineteenth, till the 1970’s, so we might ask ourselves the same question as Ella Shohat : “When exactly, then, does the “post-colonial” begin?” (*Cited by Loomba 1998: 08*). Furthermore, if the post- colonial societies did not begin the process of decolonization at the same time, so they are of different backgrounds and of different conditions, then, can we call them all post- colonial? The writer of this book also proclaims that anti-colonialism does not represent the different kinds of people who live in their countries.

To fully understand the post-colonial, though, one has to understand first the process of decolonization and thus, colonialism itself. Loomba says that: “Most Marxist thinkers tended to regard colonialism [...] as an exploitative yet necessary phase of human social development” (*Loomba:21*). They argue with what Marx said: “England [...] in causing a social revolution in Hill dust [...] was stupid in her manner of enforcing them [...] whatever may have been the crimes of England site as the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution”. (*Loomba 1998: 21*), so Marx here thinks that the colonizer is the triggering tool for the liberation of these countries.

The colonizer studied the colonized to put him under control, exploring the idea of knowing the natives, as Joanne Sharp slates in *Geographies of Post-colonialism*. So, the colonizers wanted to establish native elite to control the lower and middle level Governance of their country. By doing this, the colonizer needed to build new values, new cultures and to introduce some notions to these elites such as civil services, education, and unified language for the country. This fact never led the pre-colonial culture to completely disappear; it could have been ignored or underestimated, but not totally destroyed.

However the colonized society could not prevent itself from being affected or somehow changed by the

colonizer's ideologies. But this led them to think of a substitutive rule. And this "alterative" was, as Joanne sharp insisted a post-colonial national identity. So, as the editors of *The Empire Writes Hack*, think Post-colonial are in no way continuing or adapting "European models". Indeed, "decolonization has involved a radical dismantling of European codes and a post-colonial subversion and appropriation of the dominant European discourses" (*Ashcroft et al 2002: 220*)

Aidoo has negotiated and articulated that he has to inhabit an alternative world, a third world: a world of their imagination, their memory, their nostalgia. There is a blending of indigenous and western discourses resulting in another code, a third code, which is hybrid in nature, a code metises which is neither completely detached from its African nor its European sources. The Process of decolonizing English gives birth to hybridity emerging out of resistance.

CONCLUSION

The present study is very much relevant to the present day problem and there is necessity of knowledge of post-colonialism and post-colonial context. Each individual should be aware of his native status regarding culture, politics and economic background. Since, post-colonial aspect more specifically the colonizer and colonized relationship is a vital and inevitable phenomenon of the world class literature, each one should know the African more specifically, the Ghanaian context of generic ethnology. Because of globalization, an individual goes to abroad for different reasons and whenever he feels uncomfortable, he migrates to a new land in search of new experience and enrichment. But immigrants face the different kinds of trouble in alien atmosphere like acculturation at different levels. The study also aims to focus on Diasporic literature. The idea of Diaspora has been celebrated as expressing notions of hybridity, heterogeneity, identity, fragmentation and reconstruction, double consciousness, fractures of memory, ambivalence, roots and routes, discrepant cosmopolitanism multi locational and so forth. The Diaspora is not only used to categorize the population but it includes the social categories. Diaspora is the term used in different categories, like History Literature, Sociology and women studies, Religion, Dance, Music, Film and Theatre.

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