

38

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POSTCOLONIALISM

AND CULTURE

POSCOLONIALISMO Y CULTURA

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ABSTRACT

The political phenomenon of postcolonialism emerged in the history of world politics in recent times and remains relevant today. As its name suggests, postcolonialism is the continuation of world colonialism, or rather, one of its forms of expression at a new stage. As is known, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the classical colonial system that already existed in the world began to experience a crisis, rapidly collapsed, and its existence in its original form was terminated. In the middle of the 20th century, it can be said that classical colonialism had become history. But the development of subsequent historical events showed that, in fact, traditional colonialism simply changed its form, and the bourgeois-imperialist colonialism that emerged in a new form was replaced by postcolonial politics. Postcolonialism, on the one hand, refers to the period after the end of foreign imperialist rule and the resulting formations at the cultural, social, and political levels. On the other hand, it is understood as an intellectual movement of postmodernists interested in the history of (European) colonialism and drawing on various impulses from the study of sociology, linguistics, literature, culture, history, and politics. Thus, in this article, it is examined the influence of colonial literature and its relationship with culture highlighting the idea that culture and identity of nations or population groups formed in the context of colonialism have to question the permanence of imperialist structures in various spheres of life.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Neocolonialism, Culture, Literature, Ideology, National identity.

RESUMEN

El fenómeno político del poscolonialismo surgió en la historia de la política mundial en tiempos recientes y sigue siendo relevante en la actualidad. Como sugiere su nombre, el poscolonialismo es la continuación del colonialismo mundial, o, mejor dicho, una de sus formas de expresión en una nueva etapa. Como se sabe, a finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, el sistema colonial clásico que ya existía en el mundo comenzó a experimentar una crisis, colapsó rápidamente y su existencia en su forma original terminó. A mediados del siglo XX se puede decir que el colonialismo clásico había pasado a la historia. Pero el desarrollo de acontecimientos históricos posteriores demostró que, de hecho, el colonialismo tradicional simplemente cambió de forma, y el colonialismo burgués-imperialista que surgió en una nueva forma fue reemplazado por la política poscolonial. El poscolonialismo, por un lado, se refiere al período posterior al fin del dominio imperialista extranjero y las formaciones resultantes a nivel cultural, social y político. Por otro lado, se entiende como un movimiento intelectual de posmodernistas interesados en la historia del colonialismo (europeo) y que aprovechan diversos impulsos del estudio de la sociología, la lingüística, la literatura, la cultura, la historia y la política. Así, en este artículo se examina la influencia de la literatura colonial y su relación con la cultura destacando la idea de que la cultura y la identidad de las naciones o grupos poblacionales formados en el contexto del colonialismo tienen que cuestionar la permanencia de las estructuras imperialistas en diversas esferas de la vida.

Palabras clave: Poscolonialismo, Neocolonialismo, Cultura, Literatura, Ideología, Identidad nacional.

INTRODUCTION

Postcolonial theory is an intellectual approach that focuses on the political, social, economic, and cultural consequences of colonialism and decolonization. It aims to understand and analyze the power dynamics and relationships between colonizers and the colonized, as well as how these relationships continue to influence postcolonial societies and cultures (Young, 2016). This theory posits that colonialism was not only a form of political and economic domination but also an imposition of a dominant worldview and culture on colonized societies. This cultural imposition and the subordination of local cultures have had a lasting impact on the identity, collective memory, and social structures of affected countries and communities (Jazeel, 2019). Postcolonial theory also examines how colonized societies have resisted and responded to colonialism, both during the colonial period and in the post-independence era. It looks at liberation struggles, cultural identity recovery, and the creation of new forms of resistance and empowerment. It's important to note that postcolonial theory is not a monolithic approach but encompasses a wide range of perspectives and theoretical frameworks (Rattansi, 1997). Key topics and concepts explored within postcolonial theory include representation, identity, race, gender, globalization, diaspora, and intersectionality.

Culture encompasses the collective knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, traditions, artistic expressions, and ways of life that define a group of people. It forms the core of a society's identity, transmitted across generations (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2012). During colonization, the indigenous cultures of colonized populations were often forcibly suppressed and subordinated to the colonizers' dominant culture. This resulted in the erosion of native languages, traditions, cultural practices, and ancestral wisdom. The imposition of colonial culture established a hierarchy that elevated Western norms while demeaning and marginalizing indigenous cultures (Fuller, 2016). Colonialism also introduced foreign cultural elements, including languages, religions, legal frameworks, and educational systems, which continue to influence how postcolonial societies perceive themselves and interact with the world (Lester, 2023). In response to this cultural domination, postcolonial societies have initiated movements to reclaim and revive their indigenous and local cultures. These communities are actively working to restore their languages, cultural practices, and traditional knowledge as a means of reaffirming their identity (Chan, 2022) and challenging the lingering effects of cultural imperialism.

Historically, in the middle of the 20th century, especially from the end of the 1940s, the flow of migrants to Western

European countries and America (USA) began. At that time, new ethno-cultural and ethno-religious communities were formed in those countries, which in turn created syndromes of unemployment, racial discrimination, and the search for the cultural identity of the nations themselves. During this period, the classical colonial policy in Europe began to decline rapidly. The hegemonic colonial countries of Europe (West) did their best to keep the strategically important regions under their influence. It was at this time that a new, more active phase of classical colonialism, which was receding into the background in Western Europe, began - the postcolonial era. The decolonization movement intensified, and the first signs of neocolonialism appeared. During this period, the postcolonial and neocolonial movement, which was forming in the world, began to develop its own economic, social, political and cultural system, and a special theory - postcolonial theory (Subaltern Studies).

The founders and main representatives of this theory (Said, Spivak, Bhabha, etc.) initially "tried to form a new narrative of the history of India and South Asia." In the 1980s, the Subaltern Studies Group gained scholarly recognition and attempted to shape a new narrative of Indian and South Asian history. The study was inspired by the ideas of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1931). Moreover, the term "subordinate" itself derives from his philosophical work on cultural hegemony and refers to a person or group of people who are in a subordinate position due to racial, ethnic, religious, class, gender, or sexual discrimination (Kravinskaya, 2015).

Later, this theory was applied to almost all postcolonial areas of the world, since the postcolonial-neocolonial movement covers almost all areas of the world and has more transnational characteristics. Due to its relevance that reaches even to our days, the objective of this work is to analyze the influence of colonial literature and its relationship with culture.

DEVELOPMENT

What is colonial literature?

The phenomenon of transnationalism has been mainly related to migration. Bondarenko writes about this:

Transnationalization of the state is greatly helped by the fundamental phenomenon of the modern world such as migration. It also requires a significant change in the understanding of the nation compared to the period before the last third of the 20th century. Migration has always existed, of course, but only after World War II did the

extensive decolonization of the Global South lead to hundreds of millions of people becoming residents of countries other than those of their birth or roots. At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, a new wave of migration as a result of decolonization intensified the process of crisis and collapse of the Eastern Bloc. (Bondarenko, 2022).

There is also an approach that postcolonial theory was created on the basis of postcolonial culture and literature (artistic), and then this theory spread to the political and social spheres. It is no coincidence that some of the founders of the theory of postcolonialism were philologists and writers (e.g., Said, Rushdie, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe, Raja Rao, Rei Chow, Arundhati Roy, etc.). The important role of modernist and postmodernist philosophy, literature, and linguistics in the creation of postcolonial theory should be specially noted (e.g., Foucault, JSartre, etc.). Edward Said's "Orientalism" (Said, 2016) began the theoretical system of postcolonialism with his monumental work. It was developed a little later mainly by prominent representatives of English-language Indian literature and thinkers (Rushdie, Spivak, Bhabha, Chakrabarty, etc.). Of course, it is important to mention the contribution of Frantz Fanon from the Antilles in this field.

Said has another very valuable work on postcolonial discourse. This work is called "Culture and Imperialism" (Edward W. Said. Culture and Imperialism) (Said, 2012). This large-scale work is dedicated to postcolonial culture. The postcolonial cultural trend was also connected with the colonial fiction movement (mainly in the field of novels), which was closely related to the policy of colonialism, more precisely, it was a follower of colonial literature (Kipling, Conrad, etc.). Said, who is a professional writer (professor in the field of comparative literature), both in "Orientalism" and in "Culture and Imperialism", uses more examples of fiction to more clearly explain the discourse of postcolonialism, which is closely related to imperialism. Analyzing the relationship between colonialist and post-colonialist discourse and culture, this thinker writes:

What new materials were used? These are the works of European authors, primarily dedicated to Africa, India, partly to the Far East, Australia and the Caribbean region. These African and Indian discourses, as I sometimes call them, are seen as part of European attempts to control distant lands and peoples, and thus relate not only to the relationship between Orientalism and the Islamic world, but also to European ways of representing the Caribbean in particular. This discourse draws attention to rhetorical figures depicting the "mysterious Orient," as well as stereotypes of the "African [Indian, Jamaican, or Chinese] mind," the idea that Europeans had reduced civilization to

a primitive state, barbarian peoples whom "they" misbehaved or considered revolting. The need for corporal punishment, the death penalty or long prison terms in some cases is a disturbingly familiar idea, because 'they' often only understand force or violence. 'They' are not like 'us' and therefore deserve to be ruled by us. (Said, 2012).

A number of prominent postmodernist writers of modern world literature (Coetzee, Nabokov, Rushdie, Hussein, Isagoro, etc.) wrote works with postcolonial characteristics. As is known, one of the most popular genres of postmodernism, which is the leading literary direction of the last decades, is the postcolonial novel genre. These writers are prominent representatives of that genre.

The postcolonial novel genre, which is one of the important branches of postmodernist literature, is multi-layered and universal in its internal idea-content, structural features, and semantic nuances. One of the points that attract attention in this genre is that the modern writer turns to classical literary examples and writes new types of works on post-colonial themes based on the motifs of those works. It is true that this literary trend was also present in classical world literature in the past (ancient mythology and Ancient literature, Biblical themes and Western literature, Koranic themes, "One Thousand and One Nights", other examples of folklore and written literature, Boccaccio, Cervantes, Rabelais, Tasso, Shakespeare, etc.). Postmodernist writers continued this classic literary trend and presented it in a completely new, modern aspect. Among such postmodernist writers, we can name Jean Rhys (Great Britain), Coetzee (South African literature) and Peter Carey (Australia). The theme of Jean Rhys's novel "Wide Sargasso Sea" ("Antoinette") is from the motifs of Brontë's novel "Jane Eyre", the theme of Coetzee's novel "Foe" is from the motifs of Defoe's novel "Robinson Crusoe", and finally, the theme of Peter Carey's novel "Jack Maggs" is taken from the motifs of the novel "Great Expectations" by Dickens. These postmodernist novels are extensively explored in the dissertation of Roshanak Zakariyya Naseri Sus .

The postcolonial discourse currently has an ambiguous meaning and is occasionally contested. One of the widespread literatures that continue the postcolonial trend is African-American literature. Although this literature began to emerge in the first decades of the 19th century, it was further developed in the first decades of the 20th and 21st centuries and gained special importance in the spread of postcolonial ideas. Among them are two Nobel laureates (Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou) and a number of popular writers of modern world literature. Among them, the names of Derek Walcott, Henry Louis Gates, Langston Hughes, Alex Haley, Rita Dove, and James Baldwin can

be mentioned. Despite the fact that postcolonial studies have been carried out by a number of prominent thinkers and postcolonial theorists in the last 40-50 years, there are still some obscure points in this field that are not completely clear.

Postcolonial literature as a part of postcolonial culture.

Starting from the 16th century, colonial policy began to appear in the works of some European writers. This trend developed more in the 17th - 18th centuries, especially during the Enlightenment movement (Defoe, Rousseau). In the 19th century, this literary direction became stronger (Lord Byron, Dickens, Thackeray, etc.). At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, first Kipling, then Conrad often referred to this topic. Born in India (Bombay), Nobel laureate Rudyard Kipling was a mouthpiece of imperialism and British colonialism in general.

There are different and even contradictory approaches, ideas, and attitudes in postcolonial theory about the concept (discourse) of postcolonialism. The interpretation of postcolonial theory in the context of time and space (chronotope) reflects the different meanings of the concepts of colonialism and postcolonialism.

It is known that the colonial system and the postcolonial discourse, which is also considered its successor, are not homogeneous. One type of colonialism is the classical type. In fact, it can be said that the colonies that have existed in the world and continue to exist today are continuations and new variants of the classic type. This type of powerful state (empire) conquers (occupies) another state (economically, politically weaker state) and dominates it. The main point here is that the metropolis is thousands of kilometers away from its colonial country and controls it (For example, the British Empire - The example of India; there are plenty of examples of this type of metropolis and colony).

Another type is the existence of colonialism and postcolonialism in countries within a single system. Although colonial policy is at the core of both of these systems, there are certain differences in form and, of course, content (Ireland in Great Britain, Catalonia in Spain, etc.). This type, of course, also includes examples of the former USSR, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia.

It is clear that the colonial system of the first type and the colonial system of the second type have administrative (infrastructural) peculiarities. At the same time, it should be specially noted that in both types of colonial systems, the metropolis implements multi-layered, multi-faceted plans to keep its colony in hand.

Both in the period of classical colonialism and in the later postcolonial (neocolonial) period, the means of the metropolis to keep its colony in hand are, of course, primarily based on economic, political, and social factors. There is a need for auxiliary means to give vitality to these factors and to prolong their life: these means are culture, ethnopsychology, customs, different ways of thinking, ways of approaching life, and these factors should be able to come to a common denominator between the colonial countries and the metropolis. Otherwise, sooner or later, a conflict between the colony and the metropolis will inevitably arise.

It is true that colonial countries are dependent on the metropolis from a military, political, and economic point of view, and this dependence sometimes forces them to turn a blind eye to certain issues. But over time, as a result of the process of national self-awareness, even the poorest, economically and militarily weak colony rises up to fight for its national statehood, its national-ethnic identity, and tries to escape from the colonial shackles, and finally succeeds in this. Any metropolitan state understands this end, this final outcome very well and tries to find a solution for it. Perhaps the only solution is the cultural factor.

Colonial policy is unequivocally the policy of imperialism. Colonies are derivatives of imperialism. Undoubtedly, all colonies were created and shaped by existing empires. The classical empires (Great Britain and France, and a little later the United States) created their colonies from the beginning and held and ruled them until the end. There are several main reasons for the day-by-day development and prosperity of imperialism: first of all, having economic and political power, acting with a well-thought-out ideology, the basis of which is primarily the identification of the cultural factor. Imperialism creates and shapes its own (consumer) ideology and the culture that serves this ideology.

Postcolonial discourse is primarily about classical imperialism and its new, modern cultural means. However, it is necessary to understand that the core of classical imperialism has not changed much, but the classical colonialism (in its original form) that it once formed has almost disappeared today. At present, that classical colonialism exists in the form of postcolonialism (neocolonialism), which is its new variant. Thus, the colonial empires continue to maintain their presence in their former colonies through the special ideology and culture they have created.

It may seem strange that culture serves colonialism and postcolonialism. But there is nothing strange here. First of all, it should be taken into account that culture, as a universal narrative, brings different people, communities,

tribes, races, ethnic groups, peoples, and nations together. Culture is definitely a bridge between people. Of course, colonialism, exploitation, racial discrimination, etc. are reactionary events. In colonialism, there is an exploiting colonizer and an exploited group, which are fundamentally antagonistic and irreconcilable in principle. This is well known. But there is also a discourse of relativism here. According to this position, the colonizer exploits, but also helps the economically, politically, and culturally backward, underdeveloped colonial people, and creates certain conditions for their development. This factor cannot be denied.

Almost all empires are more advanced societies, and their colonies, on the contrary, are more backward societies. No matter how much profit the colonialists made in a certain period of history, in return, they created an opportunity for the development of the cultural, economic, and political fields of the colonies, at least partially. Imperial culture (advanced metropolis) and culturally backward colonial culture are not the same (of course, the ancient culture of colonial peoples cannot be denied in any way). The empire learns the culture of the population of the territory it occupies, maybe it even resembles them (slightly), and the colonized people try to protect and preserve their culture (identity). Thus, two cultures coexist in one area (cultural dualism). In some areas, not two, but more different cultures exist at the same time (multiculturalism, multicultural discourse). Any colonial nation tries to protect its national identity, preserving its identity. Issues of national-ethnicity and identity seem to be more relevant, especially in the field of culture. Multiculturalism, bilingualism, especially postcolonial language (pidgin language) are the main attributes of postcolonial culture.

Culture formation, development, transfer, etc. The function and importance of language can be easily seen from different prisms. The richer and more active a nation's language is, the more alive and dynamic its culture is. The fact that linguists define language as a "social institution" shows that it is an important tool that reflects the culture and lifestyle of society. What makes a nation a nation is its language and culture. Nations can maintain their existence only thanks to their language and culture. It is an undeniable fact that peoples who cannot preserve their language and culture will not be able to stay in the world arena for a long time. Thus, protecting the language of a people means protecting its culture. Not to be alien to the people's culture is to live its characteristic life manifestations and not to forget the unique. Peoples who possess this quality are peoples who have the chance to continue their existence without being exposed to the winds of assimilation. Peoples who have lost their culture and entered

the culture circle of other peoples have been erased from the scene of history. The nations that existed thousands of years ago, such as the Sumerians, Assyrians, Hittites, and Phoenicians, who built the strongest military, political, and even economic states of their time, remain today only in history books. If today there is no nation that is a continuation of these peoples, it can be explained not by the fact that they were killed by others to the last individual, but by the fact that they lost their culture and entered another cultural circle. In short, the existence of a nation depends on keeping its language and culture alive.

The concept of unity and integrity that should exist between individuals in society can be kept alive by the dynamism of language and culture. Language and culture cannot be separated from each other. These two elements are so closely related that they almost complement each other. Language is the carrier of culture; culture is also an important resource that is the source of language. The functions of language are the two dynamic elements: the culture consisting of the material and spiritual values that create a nation, and the preservation, recording and transmission of these values to the future, which carry that nation from eternity to eternity. Just as human existence is possible through language, the existence of societies is possible only through language. Without language, there is no society. Language is the cultural identity of a society (Unalan, 2005). "The society's literature, art, philosophy, technique and all culture, thought, traditions are related to language. Customs and traditions can be transmitted from generation to generation only through language and communication. Only language can achieve this" (Kramsch, 2014).

When a society loses its language, it loses its culture, identity, and quality of being a society. Soviet Russia first manipulated the language of the Turkic societies it occupied; that is why throughout history it played with language first to assimilate a society. Societies under this yoke have lost their values by developing in the direction of the culture of the occupying society. For these reasons, language is the identity, memory and culture of a nation. In short, the core of being a nation is actually hidden in language. When we protect our language, we protect our nation, our sovereignty.

It is known that military colonization is only the first step in establishing the hegemony of the colonizer. It is also an expensive method and does not benefit the colonizer very much in the long run. For this reason, many other strategies have been put forward to get the colonized to accept their situation and remain loyal to the colonizers. One of these ways is the establishment of language dominance and the active implementation of language policy. For the

colonizer, replacing the language of the occupied country with his own language provides important benefits in his expansionism and consolidation of his place. Historically, the colonial policy of countries such as France, England, Portugal and Spain spread over a large part of the world. These empires did not end by seizing the material wealth of the countries they colonized, but also exerted pressure on their cultures. The local languages of the colonized states gave way to languages such as English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. Today in India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Malaysia, Philippines and almost many Asian countries there are two or more official state languages, which is the result of the policy of colonialism. In many of the newly independent states, there are realities that place the factor of "second language of communication" in the status of the state language. This is mostly observed in Central Asian and African countries.

This phenomenon also applies to some post-Soviet republics in a certain sense. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz language is the state language; however, Russian also has the status of an official language. Changing the language of a country means removing it from its mother tongue and making it adopt another foreign language; it means replacing the existence of the people of that country with its own existence. For Edmund Spenser, language means identity and loyalty to country; thus, it may be possible to change the identity of the conquered by forcing them to learn the conqueror's language.

In addition to Fanon's anti-colonial writings, Palestinian writer Edward Said's seminal work *Orientalism* (1978), considered a foundational text of post-colonial approaches, was an innovative work in the formation of post-colonial theory. The main thesis here is the presence of subtle, persistent Eurocentric prejudices against the Arab-Islamic world and culture.

Literary education is also very functional in this regard. Literary education is primarily language education. Thomas Babington Macaulay, the architect of English education in India, wrote in his famous 1835 "Education Report" about the function of English education. He describes it as the color of blood and skin, and defines the main purpose of education in English as making Indian people British in taste, thought, morals, and intelligence (Loomba, 2015). Creole is a new language that is a mixture of English and the language of the indigenous people. It is a cultural and literary language, a hybrid language. One of the characteristics of colonial literature is that it is written in this hybrid language.

Post-colonialism is considered to be one of the main directions of 21st-century literature. There are two definitions of

postcolonial literature. The first (narrower) is any text written by a person from a former colony that deals with the colonial experience. The second (broader) is any text that explores colonialism and metropolitan-colonial relations in their various manifestations. The novel that combines these two concepts is "Americanah" by the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. It tells the story of a Nigerian girl who goes to study in the United States and seems to be stuck between two worlds: her homeland and America. The author also reveals the hidden racism that exists in American society and talks about the problems of Nigeria.

A classic (in the narrow sense) of the postcolonial novel is the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe's book "Things Fall Apart," about the arrival of the white man. If we talk about other regions, we can mention the important authors of India - Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy. In a broad sense, postcolonial novels can be found in the works of Kazuo Ishiguro and Zadie Smith. They are not written from the point of view of representatives of the former colonies and do not always talk about the colonial past, but explore the human self and the interaction of cultures. For example, in Ishiguro's novel "The Remains of the Day," the colonial worldview and the relationship between the subjugator and the subjugated are carefully analyzed. Smith, on the other hand, details political correctness and implicit racism in her writings.

CONCLUSIONS

Colonial literature encompasses works produced in colonized territories during the colonial era, primarily by authors from colonizing nations. This literary genre reflects a complex interplay of colonial language, existence, and culture, often serving as a tool to reinforce colonial dominance. It influenced societal beliefs and behaviors by portraying colonizers as superior and the colonized as inferior, thus perpetuating cultural and racial hierarchies. Colonial literature emerged from the imposed language and culture, with education serving as a key method for assimilating colonial values among indigenous peoples. That's why typically colonial powers impose their education systems, language, and/or rules in order to promote their values and cosmopolitanism. However, over years colonial literature faced increasingly resistance and struggle within colonized populations. Understanding these issues requires acknowledging its multifaceted nature and the varied voices it represents, including both dominance and resistance narratives.

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