

The Effect of Colonial Symbolism in Selected Works by Afro-Caribbean Writers

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Abstract

This study aims at interpreting the symbolical implications of colonialism in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Mongo Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, Marlon James's *The Book of Night Women* and Caryl Phillips's *Cambridge*. The study will follow a close reading of the selected novels' plot and discourse. The fictional discourse is conveyed by the author in a symbolical manner in order to achieve certain effect on the reading audience. The study is going to approach the discourse elements regarding the masters and slaves depicted in the novel. For this reason, the fictional characters will be interpreted for the sake of securitizing colonialism and its sequences. These sequences identify the sense of change brought about hegemonic colonialism in the selected novels. Moreover, the fictional characters will be interpreted in the light of the colonial atmosphere dominating the fictional plots. Such plots represent the authorial critique of colonialism and its negative influence upon the colonized people.

Keywords: Colonialism, Discourse, Hegemony, Symbolism

1. Introduction

Colonialism is always connected with colonialism. Colonial discourses argue the circumstances that lead to colonialism and its influence on the enslaved nations. The implicit peculiarities of colonialism have proper; and apparent impact upon the culture of the colonized people (Warren 82). The furthest sense of colonialism comprises the possibility of abolishing the imperial regulations that might destruct the ethnical identity of the occupied lands. The issue of power, moreover, is often discussed in terms of the colonial capacities to subjugate the colonized lands. In "The Fall of National Identity in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*," Abdalhadi Abu Jweid (2015) argues that the oppressive colonizers exert power over the oppressed people in such colonized lands (p.531). There is a significant factor that is considered the first premise of colonialism. This premise involves colonialism. In this manner, colonialism brings about new national sense of belonging (Bales, 2016, p.34). Yet, the colonizer's economic aspirations put an end to such sense or, as Laura Chrisman puts it simply; the sense of belonging is restricted by "problematic treatment of colonialism is part of a generally problematic presentation of economic processes" (p.67).

The economic implications of colonialism marginalize the position of the colonized people. They are not treated as human being on the ethical criterion. They are degraded by the colonizer's ability to harness them for wealth (Simek, 2016, p.19). But this harsh treatment forces the colonized to react in a different way. They begin to resist the colonizers. This is the initial beginning of resistance. Colonialism, however, have extreme means to subjugate resistance. Consequently, new resistance methods emerge out. This is because resistance could not be conducted through bloody rebellions or direct fights. It could be achieved either through rejecting the colonizers' colonialism or maintain the original cultural traditions (Manning, 2004, p.71). The latter relates to the colonized nation's ability to use its cultural beliefs to oppose the colonizers. The process does not have bloody encounters. It has strong national beliefs in inherited traditions (p.72).

Colonialism is an ethnical phenomenon in the human history. It developed through different stages according to the nations' need for slaves and domestic issues. Slave master tried to bring slaves from several world regions to satisfy their needs and to build a well-organized society which they aspire to achieve. In this case, the masters and their slaves gain relations on the ground of racial matters (Parekh, 1998, p.36). They appreciate and judge each other on the basis of power and control. The slaves, on the one hand, feel that they are subjugated and exploited by their powerful masters. On the other hand, the masters feel that they have absolute control over their slaves. In the mid of this relation, a new colonial sense springs out. The sense is the mutual reciprocation between the masters and the slaves. This reciprocation is a scrutiny of the masters as "controlling power" and the slaves as the "controlled" minority (McLeod, 2007, p.104).

Consequently, colonialism resulted in many socio-cultural changes. One of these changes is identity change. The slaves feel that they are completely colonized and controlled by their masters (Laitin, 1986, p.82). They do not have any choice to abandon their masters since they do not have the minimum requirements of life to return back to their homelands. Therefore, they find themselves obliged to cope with their master's cultural traditions. They change according to their colonial surroundings. The colonial milieu around them do not offer them any chance to be free of colonialism (Huggan, 2008, p.69).

Identity change carries out other changes. Cultural change is one vital change caused by identity change.

The masters do not experience any change in order to adapt to their slaves' culture. Instead, they are free of identity's change "chains" which are implicitly imposed over their slaves. Accordingly, the slaves find themselves culturally changes in the course of their life with colonial masters. This change is a sort of subjugation. However, some slaves resist their masters, and the result is that they are persecuted more than ever. The panoramic view of this colonial resistance is violence scenes as the slaves and their masters combat with each other (Forbes, 2005, p.107). The purpose of this essay, therefore, will be an examination of colonial symbolism and its depiction of identity in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Mongo Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, Marlon James's *The Book of Night Women* and Caryl Phillips's *Cambridge*.

2. Disgrace

Coetzee's *Disgrace* focuses on an intellectual personality, David Lurie, who is a professor of English. He fails to save his daughter because he also lost all his personal attributes, like good academic reputation and aesthetic potentials. He becomes psychically turbulent. He teaches at the technical university in the city of Cape Town. He gets disappointed with his career as a lecturer on the Romantic Literature. Furthermore, he is more disappointed when he divorces his wives two times in the course of the novels' plot. The time of the novel seems to be in the post-apartheid, South Africa. David Lurie undergoes several psychic complications in the course of the plot since he lives in an utterly colonial atmosphere.

Coetzee is mostly recognized for his symbolic realistic techniques. As such, I will introduce his writing techniques to have a comprehensive understanding of his writing manners. Realism is a common writing mode during the last phases of colonialism. Donald Hall (2001) argues that Coetzee utilizes literary symbolic devices within expressionism in "realistic techniques" because he had been influenced by contemporary colonial realistic novelists. Hall adds that the novelists who wrote in the form of colonialism had not any concern with the state of individuals. They depended on colonialism to condemn complicated contemporary issues regarding industrialism and capitalism as products of "systems" not individuals (p.2). Being a realistic novelist, similarly, Coetzee uses symbolic realistic verse and conversations in some of his novels (p.2).

Coetzee uses symbolic colonial novels to expose the complexities of his age. Joel Pfister (2016) says that these complexities are underscored in terms of colonial structures (p.41). People who suffer from social and economic dilemmas are restricted severely (p.42). They develop psychic problems as they lead their habitual live. There are various problems, including economic crises that leave their apparent impact upon people's behavioural attitudes (pp.42-54). One aspect of these behaviours is psychic alienation. Here, the psychic complexities, together with realism, are another obvious style of Coetzee's writing. As a matter of fact, the psychic problems emanate from the most common encounters through which people meet or face dilemmas that make them psychically disordered. Both harsh life and psychic disorders lead to alienation in different ways. In *Disgrace*, this symbolism carries out David Lurie's changing identity that is influenced by his psychic states: "It happens every day, every hour, every minute, he tells himself, in every quarter of the country" (p.98).

In this way, Coetzee's depiction has a profound sense of individuality. He treats the lives of people within the limits of family and kinship (Pfister, 2016, p.98). The bulk of his novels, consequently, parade a wide variety of the everyday life of the African people on the verge of colonialism. Hence, the idea of colonialism had become of the most ideational tokens of his fiction. It is commonly connected with Coetzee since there is a link between his fiction and the African people. More precisely, these people are often described as "individuals" who represent the family portion of South African nationhood (p.89).

Coetzee mixes the reality of people with the essence of his symbolic fictional plots. That is, there is a conspicuous affinity between the reality of African life and his novelistic characters (Pfister, 2016, p.103). People from different social backgrounds are depicted in terms of psychological manners. Coetzee delves into the deep-seated traits of African individuals' psychic qualities (p.12). The majority of his characters in *Disgrace* undergo psychic complexities that make them alienated. Therefore, the psychological features are so common in Coetzee's writing style. He always refers to some psychological elements in her novels. That is, his novels reflect his psychic states, especially when she treats things related to his family life. There is a conspicuous psychological token in his fiction that refers directly to his life with family. In so doing, she exposes the colonial issues in relations to his national milieus. A number of critics claim that she uses some themes to tackle nationhood in his fiction. He is deeply concerned with the position of people in his society. But colonialism is approached form a symbolical perspective. He uses symbolical statements to tackle colonial complications of the time (p.12). In *Disgrace*, Coetzee conveys this fictional peculiarity in the following quotation: "Count yourself lucky to have escaped with your life. Count yourself lucky not to be a prisoner in the car at this moment, speeding away, or at the bottom of a donga with a bullet in your head. Count Lucy lucky too. Above all Lucy" (p.98). Here, the lives of David and Lucy undergo psychic complexities that are depicted in a symbolic way.

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee delves into the psyches of the fictional persons to tell us about their inner reactions. He portrays his real people in his fiction. Yet, symbolism is the most vital vehicle used in his fiction to convey these psychic messages (Pfister, 2016, p.13). Furthermore, Coetzee appropriates the African individuality within

the context of colonial conceptualization of hegemony. Here, he puts forward the colonial premise for the African individuality and how it changed in the course scientific boom. Colonialism had rapidly improved which results in new, and unprecedented, the kind of interaction among people. The advent of colonialism offered different interlocutory situations that govern the interaction of people with other people from different regions (p.111). Another discernible aspect of Coetzee's fiction is the diversity of regional backgrounds that expose the poetic actions in several places (p.102). Most importantly, this setting is a supreme example of Coetzee's appropriation of the sense of place. The sense place is initially needed for refuge. It is depicted as a home for the personas (p.116). Yet, the symbol of this region changes because the personas make it a place for comfort and solace of mind.

The sense of place, thereupon, changes in Coetzee's novels. The change takes place according to the extent to which it is significant for the personas. The sense of place has literary implications. One of these implications is the issue of globalization. The fictional text might parade many cultural dimensions that simulate the real existence of culture within a certain society (Pearce, 1987, p.8). This society plays an integral role in discerning the spread of colonialism with its poetic demarcations. The place has different citizens of different and various civilizations that come together and mingle in one united location. These civilizations are characterized by their cultural and social backgrounds (Pfister, 2016, p.40). They are inherently different from each other. But they mix and intermingle within one society. Therefore, they share a common ground in the new inhabited place (p.61). Their new community is the all-inclusive site of their cultural diversity. This diversity relates to the common living among people in *Disgrace*: "Too many people, too few things" (p.98).

Colonialism, therefore, comes to be known and defined as the comprehensive conceptualization of different cultures and traditions which is a symbolic feature of Coetzee's fiction. The most conspicuous token of this cultural diversity is the ability of different civilizations to comprehend and appreciate each other on the ground of common understandings and respect (Pfister, 2016, p.70). That is, one cultural manner might not be accepted by certain cultures, but is regarded as normal in the host culture. In this context, the host culture provides a facilitative unification of different culture in one place (p.70). This place pertains to the host culture. However, this place undergoes radical changes because it loses its national and inherited significance to some extent. The original place undergoes inherent changes since it receives different cultural diversities (p.92). The new arrived people are completely different from the host socio-cultural places. As such, colonialism includes both the original host culture and the foreign cultures (p.232). In *Disgrace*, Coetzee projects the colonial insights regarding the characters' changing identify: "Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity" (p.205). In this quotation, Lucy describes her changing personality after the advent of colonialism. Yet, she talks about it after the South African society became influenced by colonialism.

3. The Poor Christ of Bomba

The Poor Christ of Bomba tells the story of a French catholic missionary. The story's events take place in several small villages in a thick forest set in the region of Tala. These villages are visited by Father Drumont with his assistants Denis who is Drumont's "boy"; and the story's narrator. They are accompanied by the cook Zacharia. Bomba is one of the most distinctive village in the forest. The village is a stereotype of colonialism in Africa in particular; and in Cameroon in general. The plot is filled with various themes that correspond to the general framework of colonialism. Chief among these themes are: allusion, dishonesty, desecration and ethical corruption.

Colonial symbolism is also found in Mongo Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*. Colonial symbolism encompasses a different representation of literary forms. These forms can be exhibited in multiple ways of textual devices. Indeed, apart from the written aspect of literary texts, fictional forms can find their path within the confines of avant-garde experimentation. Within the limits of reception experimental poetry is the appropriation of self-consciousness, or as widely accredited "reflexivity." This textual device allows a space for authors to comment on their works. It breaks the traditional fictional structure and alludes to the authorial voice in the novel. In Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, the change of identity begins with the religious invasion of the village of Bomba: "Surely it isn't any blasphemy... oh no! it even fills me with joy to think that perhaps it was Providence, the Holy Ghost himself, who whispered this advice in the father's ear, 'Tell them that Jesus Christ and the Reverend Father are all one.' Especially when our village children, looking at the picture of Christ surrounded by boys, were astonished at his likeness to our Father" (p.3). This invasion puts forth the start of colonialism. It is also a fictional depiction of how colonialism dominated the Cameroonian lands.

In essence, the symbolic repudiation with colonial literary forms results in experimental peculiarity within reception literary techniques which exhibit the "avant-garde" fictional forms as opposed to pre-colonial ones. The conspicuous reception feature is the artistic experimentation with the techniques of literary works. Such technical experimentation is dubbed as the reception literary avant-gardism. In *The Act of Reading: A Theory of*

Aesthetic Response, Wolfgang Iser (1997) says that poetry symbolic avant-gardism is obtained by metonymy within colonial contexts (p.42). In Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, colonial symbolism is similarly constructed: "Same beard, same soutane, same cord around the waist. And they cried out, 'But Jesus Christ is just like the Father!' And the Father assured them that Christ and himself were all one. And since then all the boys of my village call the Father 'Jesus Christ'" (p.3). The village is gradually being adapted to the Christian colonial presence.

Second, colonial fiction is the central elements of colonial motives. The symbolic factor is studied in reader-response theory as the "telling voice" in the poetic events. It is a part of the "subversive" poetic techniques in poetic texts which are analyzed in terms of the poetic stance in the fictional contexts. In the general sense of the focalization factor, the poetic function is recounted through "the vision" by which the poem is told. Patrick O'Neill (1994) defines the symbolic factor as "the inherent dividedness of the poetic voice" (p.83). The symbolic factor, therefore, is the potential poetic voice. The fictional voice, however, is the persons who could be the fictional personas or the authorial voice (Iser, 1997, p.44). In *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, Beti appropriates this symbolism with the Christian Father's superiority of the people of Bomba: "Whereas the Father Superior, heavens above! I'm sure he'll blow up again tomorrow, at our very first stop, over his old subject of unmarried mothers" (p.8).

Colonial symbolism is a matter of the crucial distinction between the fictional perspective and the fictional events. More importantly, colonial symbolism is credited the function of how the poem is told in; as Mieke Bal (1985) expounds poetic "the insight that the agent that sees must be given a status other than that of the agent that narrates" (p.101). Being so, Colonial symbolism becomes a vehicle or "mediation" between the fictional events and the perspective which perceives those events. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983) construes metonymy in terms of "mediation"; whereby "the novel is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism, 'perspective, 'angle of vision,' verbalized by the persona though not necessarily his" (p.71). Consequently, Colonial symbolism ranges between the fictional voice and vision. Beti, in like manner, is concerned with this issue: "That business will really drive him mad one day, poor Father Drumont! Sometimes I really feel sorry for him. He's tried everything to arouse our bewildered villagers to a sense of the situation of the unmarried mother" (p.8).

Politics is another fictional aspect of colonial symbolism. In his novel, Beti deals with politics in a serious tone. Politics, especially during colonial eras, was a crucial factor in shaping the contemporary status of the world. It had influenced, and still influencing, the status quo of previously colonized countries all over the world. As such, it is a thematic appropriation of the reality of war and its destructive sequences upon the lives of people not only in Africa but also in Europe and the other world countries. It inherently features the authorial discontent with the political practices during the war. Furthermore, the most proper manifestation of politics in poetry could be expressed through reception colonial fiction. Accordingly, politics is the authors' tool to criticize destructive politics by the use of colonial fiction in symbolic style.

There has been a common reception assent on the relative nature of colonial reality. Insisting on the discursive ambivalence and emphasizing the deconstructive potential at the expense of radical ontological differences between "signs" and reality, O'Neill (1994) arouses a question of substituting the signs of the real (p.2). As a mode of generic transgression simultaneously foregrounding realist fiction and elements of colonialism, for example, fictional realism is particularly apt to articulate ideological and cultural dissent; and many reception writers have relied on its defamiliarizing mechanisms to affect "real reflections" of the dominant power system (p.5). As such, colonial symbolism is supporting anti-colonial "grand fiction." Beti seems to emphasize the issue of colonialism in reception patterns. Consequently, he exemplifies colonialism's realism grand fiction manipulated by symbolism interest in colonial fiction to a great extent; this is carried out in *The Poor Christ of Bomba* when the identity change begins with the Christian new education: "There is a little school here which teaches children up to the second preparatory year, after which they come to us at Bomba" (p.63).

Additionally, the colonial symbolic poetic novelty throughout poetic works consistently highlights the intrinsic relationship between texts and reality in colonial symbolism. Beti advocates this symbolic novelty in his novel. The characters' peculiarities make much sense of that. The plot and other literary elements undergo real representation within experimental novelty. In this way, they commonly create a fictional depiction which is different from colonial depiction of reality (p.81). Iser (1997) simply discusses an alternative but equally univocal 'truth' onto textual events. He employs the concept of "present time" model both to exemplify and question his anti-colonial position, whilst producing an interrogatory and plural account of modern illusion (p.15). This anti-colonial concept works to critique colonial reality as the origin of truth, bringing "unreal" discourse into dialogue with other voices drawn from contemporary literature. This promiscuity serves to intimate a profound fictional vision of Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*. This is true to the missionary's support of new education in order to harness the black for the colonial benefits: "The place is run by two monitors who were trained at the Bomba mission. they had done their best to ensure that the Mass will be sung tomorrow and I'm sure they prepared a good welcome for the Father, but I didn't see it because I arrived long after" (p.63). In

this context, Beti provides anti-colonial critique in the novel. She uses characters that resemble real persons who suffered from colonialism and whose identities were changed by such colonial power.

4. The Book of Night Women

James's *The Book of Night Women* is abundant with colonial frank allusions. The novel is certainly about the oppressed blacks and the way they are treated in colonial atmospheres. The novel's fictional general setting is Montpelier Estate which is a sugar plantation in contemporary Jamaica. The slaves' population exceeds the whites' presence in the region. It is a bloody recount of the slaves' position in their colonial societies. The bloody scenes involve burning the slave alive, brutal whippings, cutting feet and so forth. The slaves know well that they are worthless because when their owners want to get rid of them, they are just sold in the slave market in the capital city, Kingston.

The novel's protagonist is Lilith, the daughter of Jack Wilkins. Lilith's mother's while delivering her in a bloody scene which works as a bad omen for the novel's brutal scenes. A number of women, namely, Gorgon, Pallas, Hippolyta, Iphigenia, and Callisto are assert that the bloody scenes of Lilith's birth are a sight for demonic spiritual powers. Homer is an African-born slave and she is the most powerful slave in the colonial plantation. She is mutilated by harsh whipping at the hands of the colonial owners after giving birth to two children who were sold to slave traders. Later on, she tries to avenge her children as a symbol of resistance.

Colonialism symbolism creates allegorical variations in colonial texts. These variations bring the reader relentlessly back to the poetic textuality; whereby eschewing any pretence at the sense of realism. In addition, James uses several instances of textual usage of real fictional expressions to provide a "replacement," there is a "communal" and the final "non-presence" initiated by the author and revealing his/her control over the work's textual construction (Tracy, 1994, p.11). This is revealed by the changes that occur in literary developments. As a text exemplifies certain social or linguistic distinctive reality in reception literary texts, its sense of identity likewise gradually changes and disappears away (p.17). In *The Book of Night Women*, this textuality could be perceived by the phrase "The ratio of whites to negroes here in the same as Saint-Domingue, Humphrey, Robert Quinn say" (p.139) as an indication of James's symbolic artifice.

These colonial symbolic ideas about reality have been played out in reception text, and they reflect shifting fictional concerns towards colonial fictional genres. However, in symbolism, traditional literary techniques and styles were characteristic of reality in fictional texts. However, symbolism celebrates literary departure towards technical experimentation. Iser (1997) discusses the experimental strategies utilized by reception authors to break away with the conventional construction of literary texts (p.127). Thus, symbolic literary modes are challenged in reception poetry. This reception poetic experimentation results in avant-garde genres, such as reception science poetry. In so doing, similarly, James conveys the disappearance of literary realism perpetuates the artistic quality of experimental poetic in reception style. This experimentation is touted as the reception avant-garde. The author (James) can enter the fictional world of his novel through reception fictional experimentation. James, in like manner, enters his fictional lines through symbolism. In *The Book of Night Women*, the impossible imagery is a representative example of that symbolism. The impossible imagery occurs when the characters suffer from colonialism. The characters' identity is changed by slavery brought by the white colonizers: "see how the white womens goin' look and hear how white womens laugh in the colonies. She think of white flesh and black flesh, that really be brown flesh by blood and the two flesh melt into one flesh that don't know colour. Then Lilith wonder if she dreaming because dreaming is one thing God never allow negro to do" (p.74).

James's fictional symbolism is conspicuous in his fictional lines. In symbolism, furthermore, reality is often reflected through fictional discourse. James relates to this kind of reality. In many recent reception theories, there has been a shift of emphasis towards fictional discourse. The conventions of discourse play an important role in the construction and representation of fiction in reception texts. Much has been written on the complex relationships between discourse and fiction (Iser, 1997, p.15). In James's *The Book of Night Women*, the symbol of changing the characters' identity yields to the white hegemony: "It soon come to pass when red no different from white or blue or black or nothing. Two black legs spread wide and mother mouth screaming. A black baby wiggling in blood on the floor with skin darker than midnight but the greenest eyes anybody ever done seen. I goin' call her Lilith. You can call her what they call her" (p.70).

James depicts reality in fragmented colonial symbolism in his fiction. This is because he writes about the phase of colonial eras that witnessed the appearance of colonial hegemony. Furthermore, Iser (1997) approaches the stylistic nature of symbolic discourse. Symbolism involves the authorial voice in the text. This voice could be indirectly expressed by the author's fictional insights in the text. On the other hand, it can be directly expressed in the fictional works through the characters' discourse. Here, the core implementation of the authoritative fictional voice is uttered by the literary characters who actually execute the symbolic discourse. By the same token, James authorial voice is uttered by his fictional characters.

Iser (1997) contends that symbolism, furthermore, is a matter of the crucial distinction between the fictional

perspective and the literary events. More importantly, symbolism is credited the function of how the novel is told in (p.101). These characters tell the novels' events and are not interrupted by other characters in the course of the plots. The events are produced by the personas in the novel and the reader perceives them through understanding the novel's fictional world. These fictional events are told by the characters that sheds light on one of the novel's main themes. Similarly, the author's (James) reality is projected through his fictional novelty that imitates the reality of slaves in *The Book of Night Women*. Through the novel, James symbolically describes the position of slaves who suffer a lot. The slaves, accordingly, are mainly used as the vehicle of describing such sufferings to the reader. In the course of the novel, Lilith is deeply affected by colonialism. She is mulatto. That is, she is a breed of two discrepant ethnicities: "She not black, she mulatto. Mulatto, mulatto, mulatto. Maybe she be family to both and to hurt white man just as bad as hurting black man. Maybe if she start to think that she not black or white, then she won't have to care about neither man's affairs" (p.42). This mulatto ethnicity is a fictional sign of James's depiction of colonialism and its powerful influence to change the characters' identity.

5. Cambridge

Phillip's *Cambridge* is a historical recount of colonialism in the Caribbean Islands. The most prominent characters are Emily Cartwright and Cambridge. These characters are figurative exemplifications of the Caribbean individuality. The novel implicitly addresses the themes of the economical crisis in colonial atmospheres. Another theme is the exchange of experience. That is experience is transmitted from one person to another one in the same socio-cultural places. Furthermore, the resistance of colonial hegemony is a conspicuous theme in the novel.

The novel highlights colonialism in its extreme sense. Colonialism is, therefore, a significant factor in changing the perception of colonized people to their life. Phillips depicts them as they become thinking of their ability to compensate the lack of their needs. In this way, Phillips writes in the mode of reception symbolic fiction. His poems represent the phases of symbolical fiction. He approaches the fictional qualities in his novel intentionally. Phillips is aware of the symbolic appropriation of colonialism within colonial hegemony. In *Cambridge* Stella exemplifies the influence of colonialism upon the colonized nation. This is because she is the daughter of a slave woman: "Stella is yet another who seems extraordinarily well qualified for the role of dutiful and patient attendant to the infirm. Of her pedigree there appears to be nothing that one might term unusual. Her mother was born a slave in these parts, but of her father she claims to know little, believing him to have been sold off to another estate" (p.49). Here, it is conspicuous that colonialism left its apparent impact upon Stella's parental identity.

In this way, Phillips becomes a distinguished Caribbean novelist. His novel tackles diverse literary topics. Consequently, her contribution to the Caribbean fiction is enormous. He is one of the first novelists who introduced realism technique within the context of the Caribbean fiction (Pearce, 1987, p.90). He is universally acknowledged to a unique practitioner of the colonial realist technique in fictional structure. The fictional devices in his novel exhibit the identical personalities of Caribbean communities of the time. He also proposes solutions to Caribbean problems during the colonial periods (p.90). His novel is considered fictional miniatures of Caribbean reality reproduced in fictional atmospheres. On the grounds of this claim, Phillips novel delivers subtle breathtaking archetypes of Caribbean individuality at turbulent ages (p.125). Correspondingly, he grasps the reality of the Caribbean people and transposes them in his fictional plots. Most interestingly, Phillips portrays describes as the main cause of identity change because it is brought by British colonizers in *Cambridge*. The narrator tells us of this fact in course of the plot: "If I were to be asked if I should enter life anew as an English labourer or a West Indian slave should have no hesitation in opting for the latter. It seem to me manifestly worth abandoning the propriety an civility of English life for the pleasant clime of this island the joyous spirit which abounds upon it" (p.59). In this way, the British colonialism is responsible for the colonized people's plight. Such plight takes place, to some degree, in the Caribbean islands: "The fear was of insurrection, and discipline became the chief and governing principle on every estate. Unfortunately, these *deficiency* laws proved difficult to regulate, for Caribbean emigration was equally difficult to promote" (p.84). Thus, the Caribbean diasporic emigration resulted in colonialism which gradually leads to identity change i.e., the colonized become controlled by the colonizers. Consequently, the colonized Caribbean people are indirectly forced to be influenced by their colonizers.

6. Conclusion

This essay has studied the symbolical attributes of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, James's *The Book of Night Women* and Phillips's *Cambridge*. The study has focused on the authorial devices to write in symbolical techniques. The poem has several symbolic peculiarities. It deals with symbolic, colonial, and military issues within fictional compositions. Therefore, the study has utilized colonial symbolism theory in order to explore the hidden symbolic layers of the selected works and how they contribute to the authors' fictional potentials as experienced colonial novelists. This is because the novels celebrate diverse issues. The

novels' suggest implicit contemporary events and the experiences undergone by the novelists themselves or by their compatriots. There is an indirect allusion to the political and colonial affairs in the novels that are used by the novelists to give us a vivid picture of how colonialism was there.

Coetzee, Beti, James and Phillips are, above all, novelists of symbolic fashion. They use allegorical and symbolic expressions to convey specific messages about their contemporary life. Their novelistic insights are expressed through meticulous colonial expressions and statements that could be rendered as classic of the African and Caribbean fiction. Being so, they are practitioners of colonial symbolism in all its aspects. They utilize live words in an artistic diction; whereby they could tell the reader of the purpose of their novels at large extents. Accordingly, their novels might be perceived as a symbolic call for decoding the implicit façade of their outlooks on colonialism and the events taking place. Other than the colonial attributes of the selected novels, Coetzee, Beti, James and Phillips project some hidden meanings left for the reader's judgment. Therefore, this study has concentrated on the fictional motives and thematic elements inserted in *Disgrace*, *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, *The Book of Night Women* and *Cambridge* as utterly symbolic novels.

The theory used for the analysis has been largely argued by using colonial symbolism. As matter of fact, colonial symbolism as sometimes called reception theory. The reason behind describing it as reception lies in its emphasis on the reader's reception of literary works within the broad scope of historical and cultural backgrounds regarding colonialism and its pertinent issues. Consequently, this study has used the theory in order to scrutinize Coetzee's, Beti's, James's and Phillips's contemporary colonial and cultural concerns. For this reason, the analysis has used Iser's concept of symbolism to explore the symbolic nuances in the course of the fictional dictions in Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Beti's *The Poor Christ of Bomba*, James's *The Book of Night Women* and Phillips's *Cambridge*. This concept has contiguous affinity with colonial critical arguments. It is used to explore the symbolical senses of literary works within colonial contexts. The significance of applying such concept is to give the selected works a comprehensive analysis from a colonial symbolic perspective. Thus, the selected novels could be interpreted as a fine example of Coetzee's, Beti's, James's and Phillips's colonial symbolism in universal contexts.

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