



Comparative Survey of Colonialism in Achebe and Pinter's Works

Saeid Rahimipour,

*Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics and Literature,
Farhangian University, Ilam, Iran.*

Email: sdrahimipour@yahoo.com

Abstract

Colonialism has been practiced by many countries in the last centuries or so. The kind of relationship between the colonizers and the colonized has had mutual effects on the culture, identity, and many more aspects of the two countries. This paper deals with the concept of colonialism from both inner and outer views regarding Harold Pinter's *Caretaker* and Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* with some references to Bhabhi's ideas, respectively. Basing its method on content and text analysis, it reveals that the kind of colonialism going on regarding human attitudes, identity, and individual independence between Nigeria and England which is indicated by Achebe, on the one hand, as an example of outer colonialism, may be the inspiration for a paragon of inner colonialism in England portrayed in Pinter's work, on the other hand. The novelty of the paper's illustration of the theme would be promising for further analysis and search.

Keywords: Achebe, Pinter, Colonialism, Bhabhi, Identity

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: Friday, October 26, 2018

Accepted: Monday, April 29, 2019

Published: Thursday, May 23, 2019

Available Online: Thursday, May 9, 2019

DOI: 10.22049/jalda.2019.26359.1094

Online ISSN: 2383-2460; Print ISSN: 2383-591x; 2019 © Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University Press

Introduction

Literature has been interpreted differently for diverse purposes by the critics and the readers respectively. As it has been asserted,

We must also recognize that literature does not exist and is not created in a vacuum. At times it becomes wise and even necessary to examine the political and cultural forces that led to the genesis of a piece of fiction, and even seep into its form, content, and overall ethos. (Easto, 1996, P. 2)

Hence, this study is going to reveal the whole impact of the theme in the works and the society as the context of the two writers and their works.

The phenomenon of colonialism may have had mutual economic, social, political, cultural, and individual impacts on the colonizer and the colonized countries' norms, respectively. The analysis of the effects and side effects of this phenomenon, for sure, would be promising on the line of revealing and solving many features of the two countries. Although this is high time an end has been put to colonialism directly, many indirect practices of this phenomenon is being practiced across the globe either in its invisible existence or in the form of dominance of technology and power, etc., Colonialism may implicitly bear some positive or negative impacts on many norms of the societies in both the colorizer and the colonized ones. The objectives of this paper are twofold: the analysis of colonialism in Nigeria as well as Bhabhi's (1994) concepts analyzed in Achebe's (1960) work; the micro level kind of colonialism in Pinter's (1991) *Caretaker* staged in the behavior of the characters and the theme running in the play. The paper tries to develop this idea that one intellectual through narrative style and the other via the dramatic features want to reveal the human identity and existential obsessions of the people of their time hoping that it would leave and create a sort of curing impact on the authorities involved in such a phenomenon.

Authors and Works

Chinua Achebe and *No longer at Ease*

Albert Chinualumogu Achebe (1930-2013), generally known as Chinua Achebe, was born in Ibo village of Ogidi in southeastern Nigeria. Although Achebe's parents-Isaiah Achebe and Janet Anaechi Iloegbunam converted to Christianity, they also admired their traditions. Therefore, his childhood was regarded by rich ambivalence of heritage. When Achebe was a child, he was interested in African traditional culture through the stories which were told by his mother and his sister. These folktales, which included wisdom and moral teaching, had a lasting influence on Achebe's career as a novelist.

Nigeria's colonization by British power during Achebe's childhood and the interaction between traditional culture of Ibo and modern European culture had an important influence on Achebe's writings. This interaction became a main theme of

his novels. Although he chose English language for his novels, his writings and novels were influenced by Ibo oral tradition. He used proverbs, folktales, and other elements of Ibo culture. The writer's wishes and ideals are expressed through the mouth of the protagonist Obi. He is bewildered upon his return from England not knowing the fact that the Nigeria he returned to was in many ways different from the picture he had carried in his mind during those four years. Achebe's (1960) *No Longer at Ease* takes its title from one of the poems of T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), "Journey of the Magi" (1927), which creates a sense of alienation. The idea of being both traditional and new in this novel shows the unpleasant situation of the central character. From the title, the reader can guess the situation of modern Nigeria in which there is no clear cultural framework.

Harold Pinter

Harold Pinter (1930-2008) grew up in Hackney, a working-class area in the East of London. His parents were Jewish, his father a tailor and air-raid warden during the war. He studied briefly at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and in 1949 became a repertory actor under the name of David Baron. As a young actor, Pinter read novels, wrote poetry and prose pieces, and was an early admirer of Samuel Beckett. The great British playwright Harold Pinter's plays have been highly appreciated for his distinctive dramatic style, and his delicate concern for the revelation of human predicament in this theatre. His plays are embedded with feelings of uneasiness, restlessness, evasiveness, disintegration, instability, and domination as manifested both in his language and themes. The power struggle both within an individual, between individuals and a powerful system or exploitative person runs through his major works indicating a sort of colonialism running at an individual and civil level.

Pinter's *The Caretaker* (1960) takes place in an old cluttered house. There are three characters. Aston, who has suffered a mental disease and has undergone electric shock in the hospital, rescues Davies in a battle in the restaurant and takes him home. Davies is a social vagrant who seemingly has left all his documents in Sid cup fifteen years ago and lives under an assumed name. Mick, a builder and Sadistic type of person, owns the house and cannot get along with this intrusion; therefore, virtually and physically tries to terrorize Davies. Davies is offered a position as the Caretaker by the two brothers. In the end, he is rejected by the two and ends up in the streets as before.

This research basing its approach on content analysis method tries to show the inner and the outer colonialism developed by Pinter (1959) and his work *The Caretaker* and Achebe (1960) and *No Longer at Ease*, respectively.

Analysis

As an opening remark, one can refer to Pinter's great Noble-Prize lecture (2008) addressing the American authorities on their colonial-like diplomacy on other

countries which can stand as an indirect warning to the British governors accompanying them. These inspirations are voiced by the intellectuals across the globe like Achebe and Bhabhi's ideas.

For this, many examples are taken from the novel to show the constant interaction between English and Nigerian culture and identity. This dialectical relationship between the two cultures makes it impossible for both the colonizers and the colonized to return to pre-colonial purity which can be both an imminent threat and an opportunity for both countries. For certain, the two writers have tried to show the negative possible threats on the way of their communities.

Achebe, as a novelist, has tried to preserve African rites and customs and to give the reader a pleasant picture of Ibo culture and society. Achebe's insistence on the need to preserve old customs as a way to prevent the destructive effects of colonialism to revive the Africans' self-esteem is shown. Also, it is depicted that the black characters make a constant effort to resist "inferiority complex" and to revive their cultural strength. This is accompanied by the analysis and extracts of *The Caretaker* to show that roughly similar problems occur in this play to help us understand the reality of the same colonial phenomenon going on in the play staged to project the mind the macro level illustration of the phenomenon in England and in the world.

Identity

According to Bhabhi (1994, p.116), the process of colonialism involves the change in the culture of both the colonizers and the colonized in a way that neither side is "independent" of the other. The result is that there is no "unified self," whether claimed by colonialists or nationalists. In this situation "the symmetry and duality of Self/Other, inside/outside" are broken (ibid). This is what makes the aim of a nationalist to regain a pre-colonial purity impractical because the culture of colonial nations is certainly an ambiguous phenomenon involving a relationship between the European cultural systems and other natives. This may be great for Nigeria but for Britain it would be viewed as a negative threat whose implications can be seen as The Great Britain's States' tendency for independence and territorial deployment of the resources, wealth, and power, which is best reflected in its great impact on the cultural identity concept.

Cultural identity and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized have considerable significance in such politically and socially oriented works whose best exemplification for the sake of cross comparison would be the selected works. Such cultural contact and interaction lead to 'cultural mixed-ness,' and 'ambivalence'. Where Pinter bravely reflects the social conditions of his time after world wars through his theatre of menace and absurd in his major works, Achebe hinges the mode of presentation upon Bhabhi's (1994) definition of 'hybridity' stressing the "interaction between the colonizer and the colonized and the

interdependence and mutual construction of their subjectivities” (Ashcroft et al., 1998, p. 118). Bhabhi (1994, p. 38) maintains that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls the “Third Space of Enunciation [...] that may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture based on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity”. Upon closer inference, one can see that what is at the deepest part of Pinter’s message in *The Caretaker* is the imminent threat of some intrusive forces to shape the social norms affected by political motives as the obsession of modern man in his country and across the globe. The transcultural interaction between the colonizer and the colonized opens a ‘third space’ whereby uncertain and unstable identities are created. In another sense, there may be the threat of an indirect formation of a dormant type of identity which is not pure and not clear in nature. Pinter, too, in his works like *The Birthday Party* (1957) has targeted the question of identity and has consummated it in *The Caretaker* revealing the identity suppression paving the way for the condition for any kind of colonialism.

Violated and Forged Identity

In *No Longer at Ease*, there are plethoras of hesitations referring to identity which can also be detected in Pinter’s works whose origins can also be attributed to the question of colonialism. With this regard, Achebe explores

The political, social, cultural, and human dimensions of the colonial phenomenon and portrays the transformation of popular life in the wake of these rapid and radical changes. In brief, the material and moral disturbance of popular life caused by colonization becomes the central task of his artistic portrayal. (Lakshmi, 2016, P. 75)

Its best crystallization can be detected in the ever vagrant, identity less as well as homeless life of Davies, the protagonist of *The Caretaker*, who is being exploited by Mick and Aston in the course of the play. Such exploitation can be taken as a kind of colonialism performed against an individual not a nation which can also signify its nation attribution too.

Aston who has already been mentally operated and his identity and his mind has been forged by unknown system like doctors at the hospital or so tries to assign Davies his expected and exploitative identity and character. Aston’s efforts to bring back identity and self-respect to Davies through offering him a job as a caretaker also culminate in no practical fruits.

-Aston: You could be ... caretaker here, if you liked.

-Davies: What?

-Aston: You could ... look after the place, if you liked. You know, the stairs and the landing, the front steps, keep an eye on it. Polish the bells. [...]

-Aston: You see, what we could do, we could ... I could fit a bell at the bottom, outside the front door, with "caretaker" on it. And you could answer any queries. (*The Caretaker*, p. 41)

This is what exactly happens in Nigeria by the British colonizers there. Although Obi disrespects his clan, the clansmen continue to support him with his problem:

We paid eight hundred pounds to train him in England,' said one of them. 'But instead of being grateful he insults us because of a useless girl. [...] the President pointed out, a kinsman in trouble had to be saved, not blamed; anger against a brother was felt in the flesh, not in the bone. And so the Union decided to pay for the services of a lawyer from their funds. (NLE, p. 5)

Obi wants to marry the girl she loves but his father hinging upon religious background tries to force him of following what he thinks not knowing the fact that Obi is obsessed with the idea of the nation's release from colonialism.

As Davies realizes that through having a job he can win the expected relationship with Aston or Mick, he ruins this chance by lying to be a decorator too.

Mick: Well, you say you're an interior decorator; you'd better be a good one.

Davies: A what?

Mick: What do you mean, a what? A decorator. An interior decorator.

Davies: Me? What do you mean? I never touched that. I never been that. (*The Caretaker*, p. 70)

Mick is always on the move as he has his own van. His scope of his journey is confined by London transport routes. Thus, he is looking for his identity within a limited area. Does he really have any identity? Or is he something like a newspaper figure? His identity is under question. As the youngest character, his self has been more afflicted with the devastating characteristics of modern age crystallizing the idea of a consumer figure, exploit or be exploited, and susceptibility to or readiness for succumbing to whatever values or moral principles offered by the circumstances of time and place because the character is made through discourse, and is turned to a social construction, giving rise to the emergence of identities rather than just one view of self and identity. He is at the mercy of these alluring features of modern life and is lagging far behind the social, economic, and psychological demands of the modern life as a symbol of power of colonialism. This cannot be achieved if they cannot pave the way for their yearnings both in case of Davies in *The Caretaker* and the African intellectuals. As cried out

We would not proclaim Africanity, if it had not been denied or degraded; and we would not insist on Afrocentrism, if it had not been for Eurocentric negations [...]. Of necessity, under the determinate global condition an African renaissance must entail a rebellion—a conscious rejection of past transgressions, a determined negation of negations. (Mafeje, 2011, pp. 31-34)

In other words, as a result of the cultural interaction between the colonizers and the colonized, neither the colonized nor the colonizer can hold intact to their pure pre-colonial self and identity. In *The Caretaker*, all the characters are British but even Mick is exploiting his insane brother and they both try to treat Davies as slave, social outcast, and drive him even to the threshold of an animal life.

The “inevitable inter relation between the events happening in the play and socio-political events of the modern world” (Bakhshizade & Grandhi, 2010, p. 110), the vagueness and ambiguity of characters’ selves and identities as well as the menace of different types emerge in these works which may, no doubt, have some underlying socio-political origins, too. If we want to restore humanity his true self and identity, for example, as just one among the many causes of human identity and self-crisis “the social violence of our time must be eradicated from the psyche of the individuals” (Hollis, 1970, p. 129).

In postcolonial era, a person is no longer at ease with himself, his home country, and his cultural identity. Achebe shows this fact with a symbolic play on the words Obi and Ibo, which are anagrams. Obi is a man from the Ibo tribe and his mother tongue is Ibo. However, as his name displays, he is an altered form of his true and pre-colonial self. In other words, Obi is an Ibo, but not without a radical transformation of the original. Aston in *The Caretaker* has gone through a mental surgery whose logic and reason is not clear. Maybe, he just like the prime time of Pinter himself who saw people went to brain test hospitals being wired by the brain researchers for a few shillings, has tried this for gaining money and now spending the rest of his life insane, being deprived of the very requirements of a normal human life. His brother, Mick travels a lot, enjoys his leisure time but Aston suspicious of any body is spending his life at home sleepless and restless both in psyche and manner. The hierarchy of colonialism can be detected in their behavior from Aston to Davies, From Mick to Davies and From Mick to both of them.

Mick: Every word you speak is open to a number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. You’re violent, you’re erratic, and you’re just completely unpredictable (*The Caretaker*, p. 71).

That is why many people like the endless efforts of Davies try to keep themselves in touch with the rest of the society to maintain their identity and security. When rejected by Aston, Davies helplessly tries to preserve the relation and the situation and says:

You mean you’re throwing me out? You can’t do that. Listen man, Listen man, I don’t mind, you see, I don’t mind, I’ll stay, I don’t mind, I’ll tell you what, if you don’t want to change beds, we’ll keep it as it is, I’ll stay in the same bed, maybe if I can get a stronger piece of sacking, like, to go over the window, keep out of the draught, that’ll do it, what do you say, we’ll keep it as it is? Pause.

Aston: No. (*The Caretaker*, p. 75)

It clearly occurs to the mind that violating a person presupposes a person has rights which should be robbed off for no good reasons.

This can also be applied to other works of Pinter for example, the *Birthday Party* (1957) in which like his other works the same theme is dominant. Quoted and adapted from Nadernia (2015), the sense of dominance and subservience is being taken place among two sides. One side is a shattered man with no living alarms who is mentally and physically powerless, and the other side with two villains who are full of lust and passion for ultimate power: all these are about power and powerlessness ... the New World Order ... does embody a lot of concerns, in the sense that “the image of one man sitting blindfold and two men about to torture him, possessing absolute power, the man blindfolded possessing no power whatsoever, sums all that up” (Gussow, 1994, p. 102) which best correlates with the situation of Davies in *the Caretaker*.

Obi, the protagonist, makes a conscious effort to fight for the rights of the blacks against the whites. Obi believes that the new generation of educated Nigerian uproots the corruption. He is also shocked when he sees the bribe-taking of policemen. He wants to fight against corruption in Nigeria, however, he fails to achieve his goal since cultural values in Ibo, send him to the bottom of corruption. He commits exactly what he wants to fight against. Alienation from his people and society stands up for missing his way. Hardly ever can old values last for a long time and new values circulate during colonization since it features moments of chaos and confusion.

In other words, Obi’s identity has been shaped by African and the European culture. Accordingly, he is representative of a violated identity and cannot claim to be a pure African. Achebe embodies this reality in various spots of the novel. For example, young Obi’s love of Nigerian folktale is against his father’s Christian teachings. Nigerian folktales are symbolic of Nigeria’s true cultural identity and Obi’s love of these folktales is a fight against his father’s Christianity and European faith.

Hannah, the mother figure, stopped telling her children folk-stories. She was loyal to her husband and to her new faith. Her mother had joined the Church with her children after her husband’s death. Hannah had already grown up when they ceased to be ‘people of nothing’ and joined the ‘people of the Church’. (NLE, p. 58)

The cultural, social, economic, or political conditions of England in and out of the territories have transformed the norms. That is why Davies turns to whatever refuge possible to lead his life. He continues to tell lies, tries to play the brothers against each other.

Mick: Well, I could see before, when you take out that knife, that you wouldn’t let anyone mess you about.

Davies: No one messes me about, man.

Mick: I mean, you've been in the services, haven't you?

Davies: The what?

Mick: You been in the services. You can tell by your stance.

Davies: Oh ... yes. Spent half my life there, man. Overseas ... like ... serving ... I was. (*The Caretaker*, p. 48)

It seems that they treat him as an immigrant and from their view point, "The immigrant are placed and displaced. They may get used to the culture, living standard and everything; they may get used to nothing at all" (Lo, 2013, p. 19). When his lies are unraveled, he finds himself more susceptible to violation of his self and identity.

Mick: Every word you speak is open to a number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. You're violent, you're erratic, and you're just completely unpredictable. (*The Caretaker*, p. 71)

He is again turned down by the society as Mick says, "I'm compelled to pay you off for your caretaking work. Here's half a dollar" (*The Caretaker*, p. 72). Mick's detachment from any other source of help assigns him suffering and alienation. This is what is staged in modern drama in which

the patriarchal relationship between God and the individual soul has been replaced by the adversarial relationship between man and his own psychology, his will to comprehend himself, even as the patriarchal relationship between ruler and subject has been replaced by the adversarial relationship between man and society, in the form of society's drive to marginalize all those that it cannot or will not homogenize. (Cardullo, 2008, p. 5)

This kind of attitude harmonizes with that of Foucault's idea of power and its treatment in the past whose manifestation can be seen differently. The surgery Aston received may have been on this line of purgation. Seemingly, Davies has been realized and is rejected everywhere as unfit and is treated as the doomed member of the society or better to call it the power system. This power qualification as mentioned can be attributed to body and its features, required knowledge for specific purposes, or even behavior of certain status and style. Those who do not fulfil the expectations are automatically driven to the corner like many a modern people who are lagging far behind the social criteria. One justification may be quoting what Esslin (1977) asserts with this regard that underlying the very private world of these plays and in the innermost feelings of yearnings of the characters, "there also lurk what are, after all, the basic political problems: the use and abuse of power, the fight for living-space, cruelty, and terror" (p. 32).

Davies (slowly): All right then ... you do that ... you do it if that's what you want ...

Mick: That's What I What! He hurls the Buddha against the gas stove. It breaks. (Passionately) Anyone would think this house was all I got to worry about. I got plenty of other things. I've got plenty of other interests (*The Caretaker*, p. 72)

For sure, Mick himself is at the mercy of lots of other obsessions knowing the fact that they must have origins upon them whatever social, psychological, and political ones are attributable. What is clear is that these factors have turned the universe and his existence absurd and meaningless. He has a strong tendency to surpass the map routes, but he cannot. He wants to turn the house into a penthouse, but it is impossible for him. All that he has learned is the idea that the society is to defend his territory, his personal belongings from the intrusion of the others. Such a view has supported much his animal-like aspect of his being and this does not accompany his real human being nature. Davies in one sense and Mick in another way are both suffering with different intensities, but their commonality is that they feel everything as absurd dominated because they are differently being exploited and colonized by others or some vicious system. In his works, Pinter vividly has expressed his ideas of "Anti-Imperialism that act viciously to dominate the weaker nations or individuals" (Nadernia, 2015, p. 95).

Achebe wants to show that pure national identity is rotten at the core because cultural identity during post colonialism has been shattered. What is being conveyed here is the question of meaning which is differently interpreted because as Kracht (2011) has highlighted "meaning cannot directly be observed" (p. 115) regarding the intentions and relationships between the people.

When Obi returns to Umuofia to attend his graduation ceremony, he hears the songs of the traders on the wagon. Obi has heard this song many times in his life before his departure for England. As a graduate of English literature, obi translates these songs to English in his mind. Suddenly he realizes that the English translation of these songs help him to understand them for the first time. Achebe uses this occasion to confirm that Obi, as a man in postcolonial era, requires the language of the colonizer to understand himself, his identity as well as his culture, even though the song is a mixture of English and Nigerian language.

The traders burst into song again, this time there was nothing bawdy about it. Obi knew the refrain, he tried to translate it into English, and for the first time its real meaning dawned on him [...] On the face of it there was no kind of logic or meaning in the song. But as Obi turned it round and round in his mind, he was struck by the wealth of association that even such a mediocre song could have. (NLE, p. 46)

Achebe has shown the dual nature of the postcolonial situation not only in the character of Obi but in other characters and in the fabric of the Nigerian society as a whole. When they adapt the norms of British culture do they learn the description of places and ways of life in Lagos, Umuofia, and other places in Nigeria showing the intermingling of British and Nigerian culture and their mutual impact on each other in clear ways? For example, Achebe shows that the UPU members take pride and pleasure in speaking full and formal English, though their English is in many ways different from the one that Obi finds in London. This English will never attain its pure pre-colonial form.

Upon his return from England, Obi finds out that Nigeria is not the Nigeria of his memories and his nostalgic poems. It was “in many ways different from the picture he had carried in his mind during those four years” (NLE, p. 13). He finds Lagos a “strange city,” and crowded city:

Obi was away in England for a little under four years. He sometimes found it difficult to believe that it was as short as that. It seemed more like a decade than four years, what with the miseries of winter when his longing to return home took on the sharpness of physical pain. It was in England that Nigeria first became more than just a name to him. That was the first great thing that England did for him. But the Nigeria he returned to was in many ways different from the picture he had carried in his mind during those four years. (NLE, p. 131)

Nigeria has no similarity with Obi’s romantic and idyllic image as an African nation. Through Obi’s eyes, Achebe tries to show the extent to which colonialism has changed the face and the soul of Africa. African people, the colonized people, themselves cannot see the transformations and they are unaware of them.

The novel is cycled, it ends where it began. Obi stands in a court room with a Western legal system. The novel starts to answer the judge question; “I cannot comprehend how a young man of your education and brilliant promise could have done this” (NLE, p. 2), and ends without answer:

Everybody wondered why. The learned judge, as we have seen, could not comprehend how an educated young man and so on and so forth. The British Council man, even the men of Umuofia, did not know. And we must presume that, in spite of his certitude, Mr. Green did not know either. (NLE, p. 170)

What the two authors are in pursuit of is “the need to interrogate the colonial experience is linked to the author’s desire to imagine a future beyond colonialism, a desire that necessitates the production of a literature which, among other things, is self-conscious about its counter-hegemonic function” (Gikandi, 1991, p. 32)

Colonialism Identity of Society

Achebe takes the reader to a variety of places where the combination of African and European cultures is created by the synthesis of the two groups. Among these places is the suburb of Ikoyi where Europeans and Nigerians with “European posts” live (NLE, p. 18).

In one scene of the novel, Achebe takes the reader, with Obi and Joseph, to a restaurant owned by an old British woman in Lagos. The readers learn that this restaurant is a dining place for British colonialists and educated Africans who occupy high positions. The place itself is a symbol of the postcolonial world in which no cultural purity is found. The foods and the way they are served reveal an indication of the colonial nature of the place. The narrator mentions:

The second generation of educated Nigerians had gone back to eating pounded yams or garri with their fingers for the good reason that it tasted better that way. Also for the better reason that they were not as scared as the first generation of being called uncivilized. (NLE, p. 21)

This second generation of educated Nigerians is not a passive receiver of English culture. They use English education, English language, and English culture in their own way. Maybe the colonialism view of Britain has indirectly projected in the people’s mind to exploit life and wealth at any cost. Pinter’s writing style exposes the brutality of life through a tragi-comic approach in order to make it bearable for the audience to absorb the ideas illustrated through the portrayal of the two brothers and the tramp (Ghazi, 2014, p. 53). The behavior of the characters of the Caretaker may be taken as a macro level manifestation of the colonialism views of British authorities in their inner and outer diplomacy. Harold Pinter in his humanitarian literary endeavor through his “political plays employ a linguistic geography that refers to a universal social repression in the contemporary world” (Inan, 2005, p. 41) has tried to project such policies and the freedom of expression of the policy of England may have made it possible for intellectuals of any circle to predict and reveal whatever they feel on the line of their literary commitment. This description is an example of Bhabhi’s (1994) argument to clarify the dialectical relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. The colonized people’s struggle for cultural purity is neither possible nor desirable, since the culture of the colonizers is not received passively, but actively; it changes the colonized culture, but the culture itself is changed mutually. Indeed, after colonialism no culture, no policy, and no norms of any aspect can be at ease and the phrase “no longer at ease” applies to both the English colonizers and the Nigerians. On the whole, it can be concluded that as Gikandi (1991) has indicated:

Achebe has been a strong advocate of the use of European languages in the production of African literature, his quest for a post-colonial esthetic is driven by uncertainty and anxiety about African writers’ relationship to the “European identity” which their works seek to negate. (p. 34)

Such a mode of presentation can also be predicted in other intellectuals' endeavours. This may lead us to the idea to agree with intellectuals like Rekha Kalia Bhardwaj & Hans Raj Mahila Maha Vidyalaya (2017, p. 534) who indicate that to capture the threats predicted by the literary intellectuals' obsessions:

Not only local artists like Chinua Achebe in his novel *Things Fall Apart* or Wole Soyinka in his play *Lion and the Jewel* but also white writers like Joseph Conrad in his novella *Heart of Darkness* reflected their strong unhappiness towards Imperial government's hypocrisy. Many British writers believed that it is the responsibility of ruling government to look after the people being ruled.

Colonialism or other existential phenomena of human being reflected in literary intellectuals' works strikes the mind the idea that "a work of literature is a piece of language in which a writer tries to visualize a given social reality, at a given period of time, and in a given place of the world" (Khalifa, 2017, p. 16) done on the line of artistic and pedantic purpose of literature, literary works, and literary intellectuals like Achebe and Pinter.

Conclusion

The article presented the micro level view of colonialism and identity crisis in Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* and a macro level one in Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, which includes many examples of the instability of identity and examples of colonialism. This instability of identity is the necessary result of colonialism. The side effects of this duality are emerged in different aspects of the community and are applied to both the colonizers and the colonized in Achebe's novel. The analysis of Obi and other characters in the novel showed that there is a constant cultural interaction between the colonizers and the colonized. The analysis of the characters of *The Caretaker* reveals some sort of colonialism going on in *The Caretaker* alongside a sort of cultural identity crisis.

Achebe indicates the hybrid nature of Nigeria and its religious implications in the character of Obi, other characters as well as in the Nigerian society in general. His descriptions of Lagos, Umuofia and other places in Nigeria show the interaction and mixture of British and African culture. In such literary works, elements of both cultures come together and create a newly emerged identity and attitude. What is staged in *The Caretaker* by Pinter is the innermost feelings of so many intellectuals of the west regarding the norms of their societies and the threats arising out of them as the outcome and side effects of the practice of phenomena like colonialism or so.

References

Achebe, C. (2010). *An image of Africa: And, the trouble with Nigeria*. New York: Penguin.

- Achebe, C. (1960). *No longer at ease*. London: Heineman.
- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (1998). *Key concept in post-colonial studies*. London: Routledge.
- Bakhshizadeh, Y., & Gandhi, L. (2010). Critiquing power dynamics: A reading Harold Pinter's the Hothouse. *Colledge Sadhana- Journal for Bloomers of Research*, 3(1), 110-120.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.
- Bhardwaj, R. K., & Vidyalaya, H. R. M. M. (2017). Emerging trends in English literature of 20th And 21st century. International Interdisciplinary Conference on Science Technology Engineering Management Pharmacy and Humanities, Singapore, 22nd – 23rd April.
- Cardullo, B. (2008). *Brecht, Pinter, and the Avant-Garde: Three Essays on Modernist Drama*. London: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Easto, J. M. (1996). The Function of Custom and Tradition in Establishing Cultural Identity in Chinua Achebe's Fiction. Unpublished MA Thesis, Texas Tech University.
- Esslin, M. (1977). *Pinter: A Study of His Plays*. London: Methuen.
- Ghazi, A. (2014). World War II and After – Responses of Three British Dramatists – Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter and John Osborne. Unpublished Thesis, the Department of English and Humanities of BRAC University.
- Gikandi, S. (1991). Chinua Achebe and the Post-colonial Esthetic: Writing, Identity, and National Formation. *Studies in 20th Century Literature*, 15(1), 29-41.
- Gussow, M. (1994). *Conversations with Pinter*. London: Grow Press.
- Hollis, J. R. (1970). *Harold Pinter: The poetic of silence*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois.
- Inan, D. (2005). Public Consciousness Beyond Theatrical Space: Harold Pinter Interrogates Borders and Boundaries. *Nebula*, 2(2), 33-57.
- Khalifa, T. B. (2017). Structuring Racist Ideologies in Stephen Crane's "A Dark Brown Dog": A Critical Discourse Analysis. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics and Applied Literature: Dynamics and Advances*, 5(2), 15-46.
- Kracht, M. (2011). *Interpreted languages and compositionality*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Lakshmi, S. G. (2016). Multidimensional impact of colonialism on Igbos: A study of Chinua Achebe's things fall apart and arrow of God. *Language in India*, 16(2), 67-82.

- Lo, Y. J. S. (2013). One of the twenty-four: A postcolonial study of Harold Pinter and his plays. *The Journal of Arts and Philosophy*, 1(1), 17-23.
- Mafeje, A. (2011). 'Africanity: A Combative Ontology. In R. Devisch & F. B. Nyamnjoh (Eds.), *The postcolonial turn: Re-Imagining anthropology and Africa*. Bamenda & Leiden: Langaa and African Studies Centre, pp. 31-44
- Nadernia, V. (2015). Harold Pinter: The New World Order Anti-Imperialistic Attitudes. Conference Paper. April 2015. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303287119>
- Pinter, H. (1991). *The caretaker*. UK: Gardners Books Ltd.
- Pinter, H. (1959). *Birthday party*. London: Encore Publishing.

Author Biography



Saeid Rahimpour was born in 1973. He is an Assistant Professor in Farhangian University. He holds a PhD in English Language and literature. He has been offering courses on Applied Linguistics and Literature for 10 years. Acting as a Dean of university for two years and the coordinator of the English Department for two more years in Farhangian University is part of his management experience. He has written five books mainly on literature and its genres and also has published more than fifty articles in journals and conferences. He is interested in interdisciplinary researches. His specialty lies in English dramatic literature.
