

POST-COLONIAL AFRICAN LITERATURE: A QUERY OF THE RACIAL LEXICON AND PROPOSITION FOR THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ALTERNATIVE

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Abstract

The paper interrogates the rationality of the continued description of the literature of the former colonies, especially African literature, as *post-colonial*. This paper questions the relevance of post-colonial theory to contemporary African literary scholarship. The hegemonic practice that formed the basis for post-colonialism, that is, colonialism, ceased to exist at the independence of the countries of the former empire. Using Jacques Derrida's Deconstructionist theory as a tool, the paper maintains that the literary convention of designating African literature as post-colonial in the age of globalization and universalism is erroneous and a misfit. The terms "Post-colonialism", "Post-colonial Theory", and "Post-colonial Literature" should cease to exist in African literary scholarship and, indeed, in the literature from the entire former empire. Continued reference to these terms runs counter to the social realities in the former empire, which are captured in their literatures. Again, "post-colonialism" massages the ego of the imperialist as the former empire nations are still psychologically tied to the atrocious hegemony. In the same vein, the sense of self-worth enshrined in the sovereignties of the colonized nations is ruptured in the term "post-colonialism". Similarly, antecedent reveals that great countries that experienced dominion rule such as the United States did not persist in perpetual lamentation through such a nomenclature as "post-colonialism." In the spirits of dignity and universalism and the social advancement of the former colonies, this work therefore argues that "Independence Literature", "Independence Theory", and "Independence Writings" are edifying phrases which appropriately substitute colonialism-oriented terminologies in use today.

Keywords: Post-colonialism, African literature, Independence literature, Globalization, Deconstructionist theory

Introduction

“Postcolonial Literature” is a term that designates the literature emanating from the former empire. This paper emphasizes the application of the term in the African literary circle. Therefore, post-colonialism encapsulates the literary writings by African writers resident in Africa, by Africans in Diaspora, by non-Africans resident in Nigeria, as well as non-Africans resident in their respective countries, on African affairs after colonialism in Africa which is evident in the volumes of creative works that scholars have written in their bid to address various socio-political, socio-cultural and socio-economic issues that have emanated from the different regions of Africa, after colonial rules, lamenting the inimical effects of the hegemony on the continent.

Postcolonial literature has nuances of variation in the different communities and milieux that make up the ultimate African society. Each region of the Continent produces literature that reflects local social ills, and it is the concatenation of the varied social circumstances that constitute postcolonial literature in Africa. For example, in West Africa, Wole Soyinka bemoans despotism in African political leadership in the play *A Play of Giants* and condemns religious hypocrisy and commercialization in another play, *The Trials of Brother Jero*. In *Our Sister Kill Joy*, Amata Aidoo expresses concerns over the black man’s experiences as a result of his encounter with the white man’s civilization, including the disingenuous disposition as seen in the corruption perpetrated by the political elites and civil gentry in Africa. In the same vein, Athol Fugard, in *My Children! My Africa!* laments the false assumption of superiority by the white South Africans over the black South Africans as perpetrated during the apartheid regime in South Africa. He also laments the loss of mutual trust among South Africans, which is symbolized in the killing of Mr. M by fellow black South Africans. Similarly, Nawal el Saadawi x-rays the deplorable fate of the African woman in the allegedly exploitative patriarchal African society. The depressing conditions of Firdaus in the novel *Woman at Point Zero* is the metaphor for her condemnation of the objectification of women in North Africa. The same issue of the fate of the African woman as could be deduced in the deplorable social status of the East African woman is lamented in *Nomad* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali. *Nomad* is a text in which Ali repudiates sustained ties with the bloodline.

All these socio-cultural ills, including the literary works that made up, in general, the Black is Beautiful movement, specifically in the literary works of South Africa’s Steve Biko, constituted post-colonial literature in part. The term also is employed to designate literature that evaluates the socio-political and cultural circumstances in the contemporary African society; that is, the age of Globalization and Millennialism. In the light of this, the works of Ngozi Chimmamanda Adichie, such as *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) and *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2007) and those published since the advent of the millennial year up till date are categorized as post-colonial. By extension, also constituting post-colonial literature are new Nigerian narratives such as *Freshwater* by Akwaeke Emezi and *My Mind is no Longer Here* by Sylva Nzelufo. In South Africa, *A Beautiful Place to Die* by Malla Numm and *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane are post-colonial texts. It could be deduced from the foregoing that texts (literary) written immediately after independence in Africa, including those produced in the current socio-cultural dispensation as seen in the running decades, are categorized in Africa and world literary circle as post-colonial literature. This goes a long way to conclude that the

contemporary socio-cultural issues, events, and happenings in Africa as a Third World continent are post-colonial, by the conclusions in the contemporary literary intelligentsia in Africa. However, this categorization is a misnomer. Post-colonialism needs have its life expectancy. There should be an end to an ideology of trauma and trepidation which post-colonialism signifies specifically in Africa.

Measuring the Idealistic Stretch of *Post* in *Post-colonialism*

“Post” in the context of this discourse shall be seen as a prefix affixation. That is, a morphological unit of a word added to another word at the initial of the word. Usually, when a prefix is added to a word, the primary meaning of the root-word (the word in focus) is modified. This means that prefixation has a semantic implication (Asiyanbola, 2008:53). To this extent, the word “post-colonial,” which is a combination of “post” and “colonialism,” has a semantic implication worth critical interrogation and explanation. To the extent that the morphology of “post-colonialism” is such that “post” combines with “colonialism”, we see “colonialism” as semantically stable and stagnant. However, “post” re-colors the meaning(s) of “colonialism”, which hosts “post” in “post-colonialism”. Such re-coloration is seen in the word “beyond,” which is the meaning of “post”. “Post-colonialism” therefore means “beyond colonialism” or “after colonialism”. This refers to the circumstances, events, occurrences, situations, orientations, and consciousness in the African countries after colonialism.

Specifically in literary arts, “post-colonialism” signifies the writings or literature that addresses the events in Africa or Third World nations after colonialism. By this, a reference is made to the political, economic, or cultural manifestations that arise after the Third World nations (with Africa in emphasis) gained independence from the colonizers when these Third World nations began to govern themselves. Such social manifestations are noted in corruption, migration to the West, cultural spiritualism and filiopietistics, racial segregation, etc. These are the thematic concerns respectively in AyiKwei Amah’s *The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born*, Wole Soyinka’s *The Trials of Brother Jero*, ChammanmadeNgoziAdichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*, Mariam Ba’s *So Long a Letter* (including Nawal el Saadawi’s *Women at Point Zero*), Sylva Nzelfedigbo’s *My Mind is no Longer Here*, Ahmed Yerima’s *Abobaku*, and *Saturday Night at the Palace* by Paul Slabolepszy. These socio-political circumstances are always linked to the involvement of the colonizers in the affairs of the former colonies. This is because post-colonialism manifests in works of literature from Africa, the Middle East and the Indian Sub-Continent where characters who are metaphors for real-life individuals struggle with their identities as a result of colonial experience (Rugulus, 2018). Rugulus illustrates this pontification, citing the Indian example where characters in Indian narratives necessarily have to encounter economic, emotional, and political implications as a result of the infiltration of the British in Indian political governance. Rugulus asserts that such is true for literature emanating from the colonized nations as post-colonialism in literature is an investigation theoretically into the colonizer-colonized experience as Edward Said postulates in his deconstruction of British and French claims to Oriental knowledge through Oriental literatures (Mtairi, 2019). If, as could be deduced from the foregoing, the core conceptual principle of post-colonialism is the rumination and reevaluation of the aftermath of colonialism in the former colonies and their citizens, then it is curious and subsequently worrisome that post-colonialism still reckons in African literary scholarship in the 21st century. We are talking of the age of globalization and millennial

consciousness more than six decades after independence, using the instance of Ghana, which gained her independence from Britain in 1957. For how long will the Africans lament the alleged colonial injustice? How long will the colonizer-colonized discord persist? How long will post-colonialism live? What is the stretch and limit of “post” in “post-colonialism”?

Colonialism and Independence in the Oriental Africa

For the peculiar context of this paper, colonialism is explained as the government by a foreign power over a people who occupy a given geographical space, especially as practiced among European countries such as Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, and Spain. To this extent, colonialism was a hegemony. It is a system of government aimed at advancing political and economic powers (Nowell et al., 2018) as it benefitted the colonizers. In the process of fulfilling this agenda, these European colonizers- Britain, Portugal, France, Spain, and Germany decimated the local capabilities of the colonies and took control of the administration of the conquered territories for exploitation in all ramifications. This hegemonic interference (and the eventual rupture) in the administrations of the colonies has left a defining heritage behind, and the heritage is palpable even after the independence of the former colonies. The colonial administration, as a result of the heritage, handed down a political system, an economic model, and a common language, which today serves as the lingua franca in most of the empire. There was also an interference in and modification of the cultures and traditions of the colonized Third World nations, mainly African nations. Ultimately, “the legacies of colonial rule in many respects remain an integral part of the state today” (Oyebade, 16). In fact, it could be asserted that the colonial legacies have not left the colonized regions of the world, and globalization has entrenched the Western cultural features more indelibly in the sociocultural spheres in the former colonies in the present day.

From the foregoing, it could be deduced that colonial administrations inflicted some excruciating pains on the communities/societies and the people they colonized. Such pains, to start with, were psychological, as seen in the instance that the colonized communities were being governed by powers from across the oceans. Such pains were more devastating in the Francophone colonial African nations such as Senegal, where the French colonial government introduced the assimilation policy, whose goal was French acculturation in the colonies. This was seen as a denigration of the African ways of life in the French colonies. However, the Indirect Rule policy, as introduced and practiced by the British in the colonized territories, was not any better in any case. The situation was that the colonialists exhibited race supremacy, and the conquest of the colonies was an objectification of the people colonized. In addition to this, the fiddling with the local culture by the Whites, which modified (or in some instances, obliterated) the local cultures inflicted pains to the locals. This could be traced to the claim that the local communities were simple in their lifestyle and socio-political administration before the arrival of the European colonizers (Falola, Mahadi, Uhomoibhi and Anyanwu, 2014: 178). But then, the colonial administrators eventually considered it appropriate to grant colonized nations freedom. This might be a decisive response of the colonial superpowers to the agitation for self-rule that the educated citizens in the colonies spearheaded. It might equally be an observance of the United Nations’ respect for the fundamental human rights of global citizens as contained in the United Nations’ Charter, which they were (are) signatories to.

As a result of the resolve of the European colonialists to observe the enlightened local views in the colonized territories as well as the observance of the fundamental human rights in the United Nations Charter, African countries formerly under colonial administration have gained independence. For example, Egypt gained independence in 1922; Ghana in 1957; Guinea in 1958; Libya in 1951; Morocco in 1956; Nigeria in 1960; Lesotho in 1966; Kenya in 1963; Tanzania in 1964; Togo in 1960; Tunisia in 1956; Mauritania in 1968; and Madagascar in 1960 (www.japaafricanet.com/directory.presidnets/africanindependence, 2007).

At this juncture, it needs to be stressed that the citizens have made claims of the new independent nations (former colonies) that the reverse effect of the hegemonic rules persists after the independence of the former colonies. This unfavorable experience has been lamented in the literary narratives and other artistic expressions emanating from the new independent nations, particularly from the African countries. Such literature is laden with wrath over the alleged injustice meted to the former colonies by the Western imperialists. Such anger is manifest in the title *The Empire Writes Back*, a book in which Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin examine the literature and writing theories written and propounded by the citizens of the independent nations formerly under the imperial powers of Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, as well as France and Germany. The empire writes back to convey their lamentations of the parlous state of cultures in the former colonies at independence. The state of the locals' cultures was parlous because the trails of the colonial administration in economy, politics, religion, and language collided with the extant native practices. It is observed that the title of this book is problematic in that it sets the goal of promoting colonialism further in the Third World. The book was published in 2002, many decades into the independence of the Third World and self-rule in those countries. Therefore, continuing to designate the former colonies as *the empire* they were before independence is a mockery, to say the least, of the independence of the countries. The book creates a contradiction in terms- a situational irony of a sort. This is because it showcases the lamentation of the gory experience of the people in the new independent nations. At the same time, it still refers to them as *empire*, meaning that they are still under imperial bondage.

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin opine that there is sustenance through continuity of imperialism throughout the process of history, which was initiated by the imperialists in Europe. They argue that European imperial domination had effects on contemporary world literature. As a result of this situation, they pontificate that: "...the literature of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries and Sri Lanka are all post-colonial literatures" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2002: 2)

In all ramifications and respect of the nature of African literature(s), for example, the comment foregone is a generalization. It does not, therefore, represent the omnibus nature of African literature. In the first instance, African literature addresses themes on the continent other than the conflict of interest between the imperialists (former) and the citizens of their former colonies. Nativist literature as portrayed in Ahmed Yerima's *Abobaku* or Eunice Nwadianna's *King Okaka*; literature of retrospection and evaluative introspection as seen in

AnyiKweiAma's *The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born* or literature of patriarchal repression as Nawal el Saadawi echoes in *Woman at Point Zero* and which Mariama Ba laments in *So Long a Letter* are constant models of African literature. Yet these themes are not connected to (at least not incontrovertibly) colonial controversies. This goes a long way to assert indubitably that not all the models of literature coming out of the former colonies are downright post-colonial. Though some models and traditions of literature in Africa as a substantially former continental colony could be linked to, hence derived from, the imperial days in Africa, yet the percentage of the substantiality is not overwhelming as to corroborate the conclusion on the description of the literatures of the former colonies as post-colonial.

Deconstruction of the Neo-colonialist Facet on Post-colonialism

A possible justification link to the argument on the post-colonial nature of the works of literature from the former colonies, with African literature in emphasis, is the neo-colonialist indictment. To some individuals who may be academics, social thinkers or opinion molders, the European imperialists have not loosened the shackles on the colonies. In fact, to this school of thought, the imperialists have adopted a new strategy for colonialism. To this end, neo-colonialism is sustained colonialism in the modern time such that economic and diplomatic pressures are employed to control former colonies now independent nations. However, it needs to be echoed emphatically that "neo-colonialism" is a lexicon of the African cultural rhetoric. This is because the coinage of the term could be traced to Kwame Nkrumah, who thus observes:

In the neo-colonialist territories, since the former colonial power has in theory relinquished political control, if the social conditions occasioned by neo-colonialism causes a revolt, the local neo-colonial government can be sacrificed and another equally subservient one subtitled in its place (Nkrumah, 1965)

And by this, it is incontrovertible that the coinage of the term "neo-colonialism" and its principles are instruments of the rhetoric of the empire. It is an attempt to describe the alleged unfavorable oversight of the imperial Lords. If "neo-colonialism" is a coinage and a lexico-semantic construction, then the idea that the word expresses is subjective. It promotes the sentiments of the empire's rhetoricians. The subjectivity surrounding the coinage and advocacy of neo-colonialism, in the process of justifying the categorization of African literature (and the literatures of the former empire) as post-colonial literature, is a contradiction. This is because, in the neocolonialist conception, there is an extant continuum of colonialism. And since there is such continuum of colonialism in this pontification, then, there is no "after colonialism" which "post" signifies in "post-colonialism". The school of the neo-colonial link argues that the literature coming out of the former empire is a lamentation of the exploitative nature of the current economic policies and diplomatic regulations as presided over by the West, who were once the colonial lords. This, however, is when neo-colonialism is seen as Cold-colonialism in the model of the Cold War with emphasis on its abstractness and intangibility.

To a great extent, abstractness is not tangible. It is, therefore, unsubstantial, subjective, sentimental and hollow. It is not as legally bound and practical as colonialism, which was physical and institutional. As a result of this, neo-colonialism and post-colonialism are antipodal and antagonistic. After all, the aftermath of something cannot occur when the

phenomenon still occurs. Therefore, since neocolonialism is a sentimental, rhetorical, and subjective concept, it could not be asserted convincingly that the former empire nations are still under colonial rule.

What Future Distance Does *Post* Cover in the African Literary Consciousness?

It has been explained that “post” in “post-colonialism” means “after” or “beyond”. This signifies that “post-colonialism” codifies the social phenomena as consequences of colonialism, which are represented artistically as all these occur after colonialism, in Africa, in the context of this paper. However, how long after should colonialism continue to be enmeshed in the national consciousness of the former empire? How long will the consequences of imperialism be at the centre stage of the national life in each of the former colonies in Africa? When should be the appropriate end to references to imperialism or colonialism in the former occupied colonial territories? When will the former empire halt the glorification of imperialism by constantly putting imperialism to reckoning? It is, indeed, high time the former colonies, especially the former African colonies, did so. Using the Egyptian instance as a yardstick, it is approximately a century since the independence of the North Africa Arab nation. It may not be the representation of the realities of events in that country if they are still referred to as offshoots of colonialism. This is particularly so because scarcely did anyone in this generation in Egypt witness imperial administration in Egypt. Why are the current generation made or compelled to bear the deplorable brunt of the oppressive accident in their country’s nationhood?

Imperialism, as executed by the West, was not indigenous to the people of the former empire. To this end, it was not cultural to them. It was a circumstance which was oppressive in mode and exploitative in goal. Because of this, colonialism could not be described as a source of pride and identity to the peoples of the former colonies. The dogmatic attachment to colonialism through the reference to it in “post-colonialism”, which academic intellectuals have occasioned, has made colonialism a cultural phenomenon in Africa, for example. And since colonialism is not cultural to the former colonies, a recall of it in the annals of the former colonies brings a memory of anguish and loss of heritage. Though colonialism has been argued to leave behind legacies which are of great benefit to the peoples of African descent, Nigeria, for example, this may not be the absolute reality. The English language, for example, though of great benefit to the peoples of Nigeria, unifying the different ethnic groups, yet trade/commerce and religion brought the language before colonialism. This indicates that without colonialism, English could still have reached the Third World nations, and as a result, colonialism could not have English as its scorecard in Africa. Why, then, is colonialism being constructed as a cultural phenomenon inherent in the former colonies?

Great civilizations have always overrun weaker ones in the history of the world. Countries have ruled countries in the hegemonic model. Britain was a notable victim of hegemonic administration just as it was a guilty perpetrator of such brutish atrocity. The Romans took control of Britain in AD 43, and the Normans invaded England in 1066 (Johnson, 2018). By reversal, however, Britain ruled over the United States of America, which secured its independence in 1776, marked by the abandonment of Boston by the British Army in the same year (Cogliano, 2000). Britain also maintained dominion over Canada and granted the latter independence through a process of evolution in 1867 (Elis, 2014). These countries have long

eliminated such consciousness of being under dominion in their national lives. They have ended the rhetorical lamentation of the evils that their invaders perpetrated against them. The end to the lamentation did not just occur; it was a concerted national effort that ended it. Contributing to the end of the teeth-gritting of foreign dominion in those countries, in the end, was the conscious effort of the countries targeted at development. The eventual progress they made in political administration, arts, diplomacy, as well as science and technology, enabled them to stand shoulder to shoulder with their former colonial lords today. Such a feat would not have been attained if they had not put their past behind them or if their former colonial captors still demoralized them by still referring to them as empire or by referring to the social circumstances in those countries after their independence as post-colonial or post-imperialist as the case might have been.

As a result of this antecedent, the colonial experience of a country may not spell eternal doom for the victim-nations. What is significant, first of all, is the disposition of the colonized nations to the hegemonic rule they have suffered, as well as the disposition of the colonizers to the independent nations after the emancipation of the latter from the manacles of the former. In addition to the sense of emancipation that a former empire nation should institute in itself, coupled with the diplomatic and sovereign regard that former imperialists would have for the new independent nation, it behooves the former colony to work in earnest towards attaining national advancement. Such earnestness could reflect in disciplined polity and democratic politicking, avoidance of corruption in public offices, provision of infrastructural facilities, elimination of illicit transactions, building an enlightened citizenry, and upholding fundamental human rights. It is, however, observed that reversal of the above is the case in most of the former colonized countries, specifically in Africa. Most of these countries still lack infrastructural adequacies. Nigeria, for example, is still fiddling with nanotechnology as a solution to its gross energy deficiencies (Sadik, 2015). Again, in North Africa, it was the Arab Spring that helped in ousting despots such as Ben Ali of Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in 2011. Civil wars broke out in Rwanda and Somalia to the magnitude of unprecedented genocide. Former Ivorian leader Laurent Gbagbo was arrested and tried at the International Criminal Court in the Hague for war crimes. Tongues wagged on corruption against former Presidents Jacob Zuma, Segun Obasanjo and Daniel Arap Moi of South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, respectively. In fact, the perpetration of corruption and abuse of power in Africa was so huge that it could be likened to an explosion. But then, by the ethos of the West as the model of social development, all these ills are indignities which have led to the objectification of the former empire in the comity of nations.

Implication of the Sustenance of Post-colonial Literary Culture

Continued sustenance of the post-colonial culture, as marked in the continued use of the term to designate the literature of the former colonies, has despicable consequences for the countries of the world affected. First of all, it needs be asserted that the term “post-colonialism” is a reflection of the racial agenda of the colonizers as executed by the intellectuals of the Western extraction. The term has been coined to betray the impression of the West that colonialism stood (stands) for all the internal affairs within the former colonies. To this end, colonialism to the West encapsulates the culture, economy, administration and civil society within the former empire. This may be seen as the displeasure of the Western intellectuals to

the emancipation of the regions once under the Western colonial dominion. If the opposite were the case, then the opposite of *colonialism*, that is, *independence*, should have been employed in designating a landmark circumstance, such as independence, in the histories of these nations. Therefore, post-colonialism or post-imperialism should not have been coined and employed in reflecting on the social, political, economic as well as cultural circumstances emanating from within the new independent nations. In the context of the comity of nations, which of “colonialism” and “independence” aligns? “Independence” does, indeed. It portends hopes, cordiality, respect and camaraderie. “Colonialism” or its modified variant is, therefore, an anathema in contemporary society. This is achieved by expunging these terms in the global literary lexicons. *Post-colonial literature* is best substituted with *Post-independence literature*. As it is currently, post-colonialism boosts the ego of the imperialists but dampens the spirit of and so objectifies the former colonies. When memories are made of this phenomenon of colonialism by the pair, the colonialists relish the exercise of dominion over territories abroad, while the colonized regions recall brutalities, bruised personalities and an eroded way of life. Why should the former colonies still batter their images through the continued attachment to colonialism through *post-colonialism*? *Post-independence* frees them, gives them a sense of worth and calls Africans to action in sustaining their national identities in the comity of nations. Africa needs to be free from agony-laden memories of colonialism and relish the pride in the attainment of independence. This needs to begin with the substitution of *Post-colonialism* with *Post-independence*.

The insinuation about the colonial incident standing for all that the former colonies live for is imprecise. There have been many socio-cultural, political, economic, as well as civil happenings in the former colonies which do not arise from colonialism. Instances include, military interregnum, religion hypocrisy, terrorist insurgency, technology transfer, quest for indigenous technology, patriarchy, filiopietistics, tribal agitation, epidemic outbreak, affirmative action or positive discrimination, sit-tight syndrome among African leaders, millennial consciousness, globalization, Sustainable Development Goals, drug abuse and addiction, human trafficking, , high incidence of money rituals, prostitution, migration, xenophobia, public property vandalism, kidnapping, and corruption in government. All of these are local to the former empire, which the social peculiarities within the former colonies have occasioned. A few instances from the list may be connected to the West, but definitely not to colonialism because Western cultural sensibilities did not get to the overseas territories only through colonialism. In fact, globalization does so more efficiently today as it spreads cultural elements across the world with an indefatigable focus and an intensifying process (Rigg, 2007). However, if there is eventually a link between certain peculiar socio-cultural phenomena in the former colonies and colonialism after deliberate course diversions and re-direction, it would be so faint that it would be unremarkable. Where it is subjectively considered substantial, it is pertinent to ask for how long the former colonies would condone an attachment to an inglorious past colonialism?

It is high time Africa (as a region of past colonies) and the rest of the empire got out of the shadow of an ignoble colonial past. It is high time the empire rewrote the colonial narratives. It is time they cast a new identity for themselves. It is time the empire re-coined the lexicons designating the colonial transaction with the West. It is time they substituted “Post-colonial

Literature” with “Independence Literature” because the former is a Western lexical selection which massages the colonial ego. However, in the process, it ruptures the psyches of the peoples in the former colonies and stymies the progress of the region of the world. This is so because “post-colonialism” attaches the former empire to the servitude, subservience, and exploitation which the imperial government perpetrated during the days of the hegemonic dominion. The substitution of “post-colonialism” with : independence” (cross-check the underlined) has a therapeutic outcome as there will be a subsequent purgation of all pent-up anger and irritation borne out of the repression of the African cultural identity by the hegemonic powers. As a result of the emancipation from the colonial lords, the future of Africa and Africans will begin to evolve anew, and the interface between the phenomenon of future and freedom, possibility and will (Jonvenel, 2001) will begin to manifest. There will be an end to the anguish that “colonialism” reminds them of, and also to the bruise of ego that imperialism inflicted on the Continent and its indigenous citizens during the atrocious reign of the power ideology.

Conclusion

Post-colonialism has overstayed its welcome in the lexicons of African literary scholarship when Africans are considered as a bloc of former colonies. This is in line with the situation that it is a reflection of the misconception of the West and their African apologists that all social circumstances in African countries as former colonies are post-colonial. The basic justification for the relevance of the term is the claim that there is the conceptual phenomenon of neo-colonialism in Africa. However, neo-colonialism does not equate to conventional imperialism in conception and execution. In the first instance, neo-colonialism is abstract, while conventional colonialism was physical and legally binding. Again, “neo-colonialism” is just a coinage in the African protest rhetoric. In the same vein, the contradiction in the neo-colonialist proposition nullifies the semantic signification of “post” as it signifies the end of a phenomenon, in this context, colonialism, which has ended. Therefore, designating both “post-colonialism” and “neo-colonialism” as semantically synonymous is erroneous and un-academic.

In the circumstance that a number of social happenings in Africa are remotely traced to colonialism, it still needs to be asked if such link is relevant in today’s social realities in the former colonies nearly a century after the independence of Egypt, for instance. How long, therefore, should the former empire, especially African colonies, lament the gory colonial past? “Post-colonialism” was designed and intended through its semantic signification to massage the ego of the colonial West. The same word, however, damages and consequently erodes the African, for example, pride and essence. Therefore, the West tends to benefit from the sustenance of the phrase “Post-colonialism literature” rather than “Independence Literature”; the former sickens and weakens the psyche of the former colonies while the latter boosts their ego. This is because “independence” portrays the gallantry of the colonies. Therefore, describing the literature of the former colonies should not be called “Post-colonial Literature”; rather, it should be “Independence Literature”.

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