

Colonization and cultural identity crisis in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*

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Abstrak

Kajian ini menganalisa krisis kolonisasi dan krisis identitas budaya alam novel *No Longer at Ease* karya Chinua Achebe. Novel kedua karya Chinua Achebe ini merupakan novel sekuel yang memiliki latar poskolonial sebagai tema utama. Obi sebagai karakter utama dalam novel ini yang mendapatkan beasiswa untuk belajar ke luar negeri, berjuang setelah nigeria mendapatkan kemerdekaan dan mendapatkan kesulitan untuk mencari identitas dirinya diantara dua budaya, budaya asal an budaya barat. Analisis ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan penjajahan dalam novel tersebut dan mencari penyebab kenapa nigeria kehilangan identitas mereka pasca penjajahan. Untuk mendapat data, studi ini menggunakan pendekatan dan teori poskolonial, dan teori krisis identitas. Untuk analisa, studi ini menggunakan interpretasi kritis dalam analisa data. Kesimpulannya, identitas obi hilang karena penjajahan dan mendapatkan pengaruh dari budaya inggris. Kajian ini mendukung teori Foucault tentang multicultural dalam sosial.

Kata kunci: poskolonialisme, krisis identitas budaya

Abstract

This study analyzes the colonization and cultural identity crisis in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*. This novel as the second novel by Chinua achebe is a sequel novel has a post-colonial background as a main theme. Obi as the main character in this novel get scholarship to study abroad, struggle after nigeria get its independence and get difficulties looking for his identity between two culture, the origin and western culture. This analysez aim to potrayed the colonization in the novel and to find the cause why the nigerian lost their identity because of the colonization. To get the probability data, this study is using the post-colonial approach and theory, and identity crisis theories. To analyze, this study uses a critical interpretation of data analysis. In conclusion, Obi's identity is lost because of the colonization and he get influence from british culture. This study support Foucault's persepective of multicultural society.

Keywords : *colonization, culture identity crisis*

INTRODUCTION

In the early twentieth century many countries began to be colonized by European countries. many countries carried out colonization because they wanted to change the politic, economy and culture of the colonized countries and also wanted to dominate the colony. From the colonization, new cultures and local cultures are mixed in one region to cause cultural differences between surrounding communities and the colonizers, then the influence of new cultures that are stronger could eliminate the existing indigenous cultures. Hegel believes that a person's identity is not only formed from themselves but also formed from interactions with one another.

During the European occupation in Africa especially in Nigeria, Europe continued to introduce new cultures. Side by side cultural diversity arising

from plural societies raises problems for nigeria who are colonized. As Nigerian lost their identity, their culture was slowly being replaced by European cultural influences. European brought culture during colonized nigerian. European put culture and religion into the education, it could be smoothly easy to the colonized people be influence by the colony people. (Taylor, 1994: p.26)

The reason behind the loss of Nigerian cultural identity is because of colonization. Where the British brought their culture into the territory of Nigeria and affect the people around with their culture. Initially the occupation occurred only to expand power by making one Nigerian a leader under the British rule so that the British people would easily influence or incorporate elements of their culture. (Specht, 2006: p.42)

Some examples of cultural changes brought by Europe through Christianity and West Education. European teaches Western education to the surrounding population and Christianizes them. Christianity that will bring changes to their culture and West Education which changes the rules on the learning system of the local population. this is a way to influence the culture of the surrounding population and could simply explore the territory. they are aware that Christianity will slowly change their traditional culture and beliefs while West Education will change the language and education systems that have been applied before so that it will form a new culture and identity for Nigeria. (Falola & Heaton, 2008: p.126)

The author will guide in the analysis of colonization which caused a crisis in cultural identity in Nigeria during the colonial period. Chinua Achebe is a writer from Nigeria who wrote African novels in English, he is one of the witnesses of the history of colonialism in Nigeria and his work is an expression of his rebellion during the occupation he poured in a novel. he introduced how the state of Nigeria, the life of Nigeria, the culture of Nigeria during the colonial period and after the colonial period. Describing the life of Nigeria to the world what happened during the colonization that many wrong opinions of people about Nigeria. And the unknown statement that impact Nigerian in the eyes to the world. (Jaggi, 2000: p.26)

Things Fall Apart novel which is the first novel tells the situation of Nigeria during colonialism. the second novel is *No Longer At Ease* which is a continuation of the story of the first novel. It become the complementary novel which in this second novel further explains the identity and two moral systems, the old and the new. The second novel explain how the impact of western education or westernization on Nigerian people. Westernization which has a big influence on Nigerian life, especially in terms of changing culture, Nigeria has lost its own cultural identity and prefers British culture. It describes how the young generation gained a new identity due to the impact of culture that has been influenced, then cultural changes on the younger generation during the colonial period in Nigeria. (Rhoads, 1993: p.61)

The significance of this study to give an explanation and show some colonization and cultural identity crisis that happened in no longer at ease. This study would be explain how colonization depicted in this novel and how people survive to maintain their culture identity in order to avoid a crisis of identity. In addition, this study would show colonization lead to the cultural identity crisis. In *No Longer At Ease* have some issues which is related with the research that the writer want to discuss in this article. How is colonization depicted in *No Longer At Ease* novel and how does the colonization can lead to cultural identity crisis?. In

addition, the aim of this study are to potrayed the colonization in the novel and to find the cause why the Nigerian lost their identity because of the colonization. The limitation of the study are the writer can explain about colonization and cultural identity crisis in no longer at ease. On the other hand, the writer will describe how colonization potrayed and culture could be crisis in no longer at ease.

METHOD

It should be a data in every thesis study, instead the literary work. This thesis is a qualitative study. Qualitative study is the method that the data is not contains of numeric data. Qualitative data are interesting, because it contains of deep and clearly explanation and description. The data be collected by reading the novel closely and take some quotations. This thesis is going to expose the colonization and cultural identity crisis for an Igbo culture who forbid to marry other woman except from same race. The next step is going to explain about the issue using theory, the theory is taken from Foucault theory.

The data source is taken from the novel title *No Longer at Ease* by Chinua Achebe which the sequel novel from the first novel, publish in 1960 consist 128 pages. This novel is a postcolonialism novel which written by Chinua Achebe who are Nigerian-American and written in English language after world war and after Nigeria get its independence, so the novel relate with the issues during colonial and post colonial era.

This article is organized into three chapters. The first chapter is about the explanation of the background of the study, statement of the study, limitation of the study, research methodology and also the organizational of the research. The second chapter is about the review related in literature which contain the theories and concepts that are used in the analysis and will help to reveal the statement of the problem and will be explained in the details to reveal cultural identity crisis in main character and the influence of the social identity. The last chapter is the analysis of the research and detail explanation about colonization and identity crisis caused by the colonization and the reason the characters in the novel lost their identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Colonization

Colonialism was formed because of a country that wanted to rule over another country or region. the reason for the occupation was that other people wanted

to dominate the economy, politics and religion. the colonizer wants to take over the territory or even destroy the colony. As Fanon said, "Colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body with endowed with reason. It is naked violence". (Fanon, 1974: p.80)

in general the stronger impact of colonialism is culture. the culture carried by the colonizer looks more powerful and higher than the culture that was colonized or indigenous. local people will be influenced by foreign culture due to the mastery of the colony. While Memmi noted, "The colonizer justified his/ her situation by asserting that the colonizers brought enlightenment, technical as well as religious, to the indigenous people living in the heart of the darkness. On the colonizer's scale there was a trade-off balance, a straight deal that ignore the morality". (Memmi, 1974: p.35)

Achebe who is the author of the novel *Things for Apart* and *No Longer At Ease* which shows the cultural consequences faced by Nigeria between African traditional culture and British culture as a result of colonization. Achebe explained what happened during the colonialism in the novel *Things for Apart*, then *No Longer at Ease* as a sequel to his first novel further explained the understanding of the influence of western culture or westernisation and its impact on subsequent generations. Colonizer influence over culture, identity and society to the colonized people. (Barry, 1995: p.192)

Colonialism is the transfer of wealth from the colonized to the colonizer and inhibits the success of economic growth in the colonies. The ruling state will drain wealth owned by a colony. Colonies will find it difficult to develop the economy in their country because the wealth of the state will be controlled by the invaders, the people will also be limited in their space to develop the country. The politics carried out regarding a colony that part of the empire. In common colonial state, the colonial will have representatives to lead its colony in accordance with the provisions of the colonial state. Usually the traditional leaders or the people who fight against the colonies will be conquered in various ways. Like using a system of influencing local rulers to side with the colony by giving rewards. If they have conquered the rulers, the colonies will easily be in control of the region. Therefore, colonization is the interchange connect between the colonizer and the colonized. As Memmi described, "the colonized means little to the colonizer... The colonized is not this, is not that. According to the colonizer the colonized is nobody and rejected their humanity". (Memmi, 2003: p.29)

Strength policies and practices in expanding control over weak communities in other countries is the characteristic that colonizer have. In this sense it can be concluded that the colonial state would look for a colony destination that had many resources in it and

many of its people were still lay in terms of education or the economy. This will make it easier to conduct colonization of the destination country, after the community has been influenced by the persuasion of colonial invaders will begin various colonial policies. The colonizer can easily make a new system to control the colonized people. Two type o human will be raised in the consequences of colonization. One who regard that have right to do anything in all aspect and dealing with the human being cause the consideration colonizers right. The other one who life under control of colonial system and has no strength to ask their own rights. (Sartre, 2003: p.24)

Colonialism is an implication of human encounters in the form of conquest and domination. This means that the colonial state will bring troops from his country to participate in regulating the order in the colony. In addition to draining the wealth of the colonies, the colonizers usually treated the indigenous people arbitrarily colonialism occurred because of a country that wanted to control the land or government territory that existed in another country that would become a target of the colony. Europe colonized Nigeria by integrating the Nigerian government system by incorporating elements of the European system by suppressing them. Colonization can also be said of someone who wants to take advantage in a colony or a group that wants to dominate an area to control its human resources. (Taylor, 1994: p.66)

Colonialism is the conquest of a territory by the country which has strong power. A group commits crimes by exploiting and enslaving indigenous people. The colonists disregard the rights possessed native colonized people by continuing to make them slaves regardless of their lives. The colonists continue to make evil in order to suppress the rebellion of colonized people. The colonists pressed the native people to make them obedient. They use their military power to take their otority and control the native military system. It can take the government system control easily, because the lack of the political, military especially the native people as slave. (Fanon, 1952: p.251)

The life during colonialism which was regulated by invaders was very detrimental to the colonized people. the invaders did not care about the rights of those who were colonized and considered that colonized people were not human because they did not have rights and protection. colonialists who govern all systems of government while those who are colonized only as workers who nonchalantly serve a government that only lives in the watchful eye of the ruler. The colonists considered that the teritory and the native people in that area are their own. (Ohadike, 2009: p.253)

The colonial process began with the colonizers who migrated to the colony with the initial purpose because they wanted to expand the territory and wanted to seize power in the colony. not only that it turns out that the main motive of colonialism was trying to exploit what was owned by the colonial state. this is what drives Europe to colonize Nigeria because it wants to develop wealth and wants to bring down the traditional aboriginal system. Memmi affirms that, "for colonists the economic aspect of colonization is fundamental". (Memmi, 2003: p.42)

2. Cultural Identity Crisis

Identity is a process of finding who one is in group and society. Identity shape one characteristic that can be an introduction of him or her. Everyone have a unique identity and character to identify one another in their environment. Their behavior, thoughts, and feeling or emotions are influenced by their characteristic or identity. It shows that identity is the main point how their identities tie them in a large society. How identity can distinguish one person with others. Society and individual are two side who are linked each other like in the same coin in the concept of identity. Society is formed because of individual interactions that show each other identity and dependence of the individual in which he or she lives. Society can impact the character of the individual and individual behavior. (Stryker, 1980: p.91)

In the theory of identity, the individual or person have many identities or multiple identities. Based on the individual interact with others in society, they claimed can have many identities. The position in social group as they occupy positions and play roles to have some interactions and networks to input each interactions into individual identity. The theory is concerning the differential in each person cause of the interaction and influence in every aspect in social structure and social organization. Social and interaction both are linked to give influence in personal behavior to role underlying the identity. (Stryker and Serpe, 1994: p.88)

The diversity in the environment can cause a lot culture which are very varied. In a multicultural society, people must be understand and respect each other to reduce conflict and the differences. Everybody have to be aware of the differences and every person bring their own different identity in that society in a social group to avoid social identity conflict. Foucault asserts that power exists everywhere, especially concerning the relationship between power and discourse of knowledge. Here, for him, the will to truth is the expression of the will to power. It is impossible for the knowledge to be neutral and pure. Therefore, there will be always a correlation between the two matters, i.e. the knowledge contains power, just like the power contains

knowledge. This means that power is one dimension of the relation. Where there is a relationship, there is a power. (Foucault, 1999: p.33)

The cause why individual or group loose their identity is dominant and non-dominant in one situation. The dominant members will more attractive than non-dominant so they can express what they felt to others, then non-dominant members prefer to stay quite or hide their emotion. The majority of the dominant members would thought that the minority are different and hate the members of non-dominant, it becomes the problem in their society and the minority felt threatened because they could not show their feeling and will be possible of losing their own dominant status in that environment. (Thomson and Kehily, 2008: p.98)

However, the concept of person identity as a social being in a multiple position with divergent environment and multiple statuses will give a multiple identities in that society. The theoretical of identity is the possibilities inherit in that conceptualization and the internalization which are required of relations of role expectations and their ordering in a salience hierarchy.

ANALYZES

1. Colonization

No Longer at Ease is the second novel by Chinua Achebe written in 1960, coincide the same year with Nigeria declared its independence from England. It is a postcolonial novel which still exists. This novel tells about how the main character Obi Okonkwo struggle his life to fix up his country after getting its independence from British. Achebe's novel is a series story about during and after colonization. *No Longer at Ease* is the sequel and also the compliment of the first novel *Things Fall Apart*. It's about young generation in Nigeria who have to repair the situation in Nigeria cause of many trouble in language, education, religion, and culture during and after colonization period. Obi Okonkwo, who is the protagonist in the novel, experienced many difficulties. Obi was born in eastern Nigeria in 1930 and his father was a priest. He grew up in a Christian family environment. He is a young generation that is expected by society to change the fate and life of his homeland to be better after the colonial period or after his country gained its independence. Obi got a scholarship to study abroad in England and he got a scholarship to study law, but after one year he studied he changed majors to English. (Killam, 1971: p.531)

African people demand independence from British during the years 1940-1960 because British has mastered Africa, especially Nigeria. The occupation continued even though Nigeria was independent by still

appointing indigenous leaders and still bribery and corruption in the Nigerian government. The spread of Christianity continued when Christianity had a profound influence on life in Nigeria. Westernization is still carried out with the intention of invading covertly. If they continue to learn in the western system they will indirectly study western education and traditional science will be abandoned. By sending obi to study in English is a form of colonialism through education. Awarded a scholarship to study law in England. Then the return of obi to Nigeria which is expected to help the government to be more transparent to the public and as a hope of the Nigeria community to improve the government system in fact did not have any impact on the government and instead obi also committed bribery and corruption violations like white people do. Obi thought that his western education can help him to repair his government system cause some of people in that government do bribe and corruption so "The African is corrupt through and through". (Achebe, 1960: p.5)

In the past, if we want to get freedom or want some country get independent they should war and to prove that their country win they have to bring home human heads. But it is different with nowadays. We just send young man to study abroad to get knowledge and bring back to the homeland. Young man learn their culture, their language, their everything to get new knowledge. Obi Okonkwo get scholarship to study abroad hope that he can bring change to his town and his country. He become the prospect for others. Nigerian need alteration after the country get independent. The fact that he went to England to study and has returned puts him a peculiar position, one in which he will have to face the issues of a man torn between his own country and what he has learned in the hands of those who have colonized his country. The education he holds dear is also one for which he has felt guilt and one which has often made him a stranger in his own Nigeria. "Umuofia would have required of you to fight in her wars and bring home human heads. But those were days of darkness from which we have been delivered by the blood of the Lamb of God. Today we send you to bring knowledge. Remember that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. I have heard of young men from other towns who went to the white man's country, but instead of facing their studies they went after the sweet things of the flesh". (Achebe, 1960, p.10)

2. Cultural Identity Crisis

Any differences between we live in our homeland than abroad, as African who want to study in England obi study abroad, as a student from Africa obi unjustly embarrassed, students from outside Europe must stay in Ikoyi where the place is very quiet and far from residential population while students from the Europe live in the apartment, this shows that the

colonization of students from Africa because of the gap in the residence.

For all its luxurious bungalows and flats and its extensive greenery, Ikoyi was like a graveyard. It had no corporate life-at any rate for those Africans who lived there. They had not always lived there, of course. It was once a European reserve. But things had changed, and some Africans in 'European posts' had been given houses in Ikoyi. Obi Okonkwo, for example lived there, and as he drove from Lagos to his flat he was struck again by these two cities in one. (Achebe, 1960: p.15)

Although African have been getting the independence from British they still get different treatment from European cause African have been colonized by European and people assume that African has no power. Despite they could do anything side by side and together but European thought that they were on different level. "It always reminded him of twin kernels separated by a thin wall in a palm-nut shell. Sometimes one kernel was shiny-black and alive, the other powdery-white and dead". (Achebe, 1960, p.15)

The common struggle of educated Africans, who stand confounded between acceptance and rejection. He feels 'terrible' after accepting his first bribe. But he was not able to fight the 'practice'. He could not find for himself a balanced scale of values with the help of which he would have retained his integrity.

In that department there are white men and black men. And if you think the white men who have more power and have more wealth do not eat bribe, you are wrong. They eat more than black men. In their department held by white men although black men is the homeland. "You think white men don't eat bribe? Come to our department. They eat more than black men nowadays". It is true that African have been getting its independence but in fact British or white man still continue their colonization through the environment and hold the power of the government. They employed the African people in order to cover their bribe and thought that black men or African people who have done that. (Achebe, 1960, p. 27)

After obi returned from his education he wanted to take place in the government of Nigeria how to decrease the corruption. Nigerian believe that young men could give better impact in solve the problem about corruption, specially bribery. In this novel, Obi against the corruption and he became the pioneer in Nigeria who end the corruption and change the government to be better. Although the problem of corruption has spread throughout the state, obi thought that he could get rid of the corruption by entering the government. He believes if he hold a high position in Nigerian government so that

he could achieve his goals to end the corruption. Government system will change better if it is replaced by young men or new generation, especially those who are educated people like Obi.

Obi's theory that the public service of Nigeria would remain corrupt until the old Africans at the top were replaced by young men from the universities was first formulated in a paper read to the Nigerian Students' Union in London. But unlike most theories formed by students in London, this one survived the first impact of homecoming. In fact, within a month of his return Obi came across two classic examples of his old African. (Achebe, 1960, p. 31)

Nigerian people in Obi's homeland is a great people who did not know what they have and what they can do. So they just being laboured by people who have a power. After learning in England Obi aware that we have to work hard to get satisfactory results and after getting it we must try to defend it because of the association there that our elite should put ourselves as best as possible to be accepted among them. The super-lavish association there puts them to get along and get used to the words of those who sometimes use slang.

Every person has the right to speak in any language they understand, in this case as an educated we should be able to speak well. Christopher can put the language he uses in the portion and according to the existing situation. Although he speaks in an English language that is or not but can put in a certain position, but on the eve of the week Christopher stands out for more great looks because he speaks English so he speaks in a language that is too high and difficult to understand. It means that sometimes he speaks too high that people did not understand and actually he should speak more understandable language so people can understand what he said and appreciate his existence. In this situation, Christopher wants to show his ability in speaking but he use the high standard who people did not understand what he wanted to convey.

Like other countries, every people in a small town always leave their hometown to get a better life or to get job in a big town because they feel that easy to get money in a big city than in his small town. The Umufians did same things like others. They leave their hometown to get more money in other town in Nigeria. After they get some money they ask their relations to find them a wife or they use their money to build luxury house to their family, it is like they want to prove others that they has been success in their leaving a hometown. But after white man came to their town everything was different, the white man hold the power in that town and dominated, they assume that everybody is same and they generalize everything. It means that Umufians feel that what they want was restricted by white man.

Four years in England had filled Obi with a longing to be back in Umufia. This feeling was sometimes so strong that he found himself feeling ashamed of studying English for his degree. He spoke Ibo whenever he had the least opportunity of doing so. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to find another Ibo-speaking student in a London bus. But when he had to speak in English with a Nigerian student from another tribe he lowered his voice. It was humiliating to have to speak to one's countryman in a foreign language, especially in the presence of the proud owners of that language. They would naturally assume that one had no language of one's own. He wished they were here to-day to see. Let them come to Umufia now and listen to the talk of men who made a great art of conversation. Let them come and see men and women and children who knew how to live, whose joy of life had not yet been killed by those who claimed to teach other nations how to live. (Achebe, 1960, pp 38-39)

Obi experienced abroad, so he would like to change many of his customs. The European experience alienated him from his own culture. Obi and Christopher have the same position, but they are different in making decision because Christopher stopped him to marry Clara as a result of her outcast identity (Frank, 2011; 1097).

Hence, the central connotation of identity was when the men of Umufia discussed about those Africans who went to England and married white women. They were happy as Obi didn't do it that and maintained his cultural heritage. He is also proud of his being a black man and his remaining black. Therefore, the Umufian men gave him an identity and they congratulated him, they suppose that he is another Okonkwo who has returned back for them as they said:

We have our faults, but we are not empty men who become white when they see white, and black when they see black." Obi's heart glowed with pride within him. "He is the grandson of Ogbuefi Okonkwo who faced the white man single-handed and died in the fight. Remark him," said Odogwu. "He is Ogbuefi Okonkwo come back. He is Okonkwo kpom-kwem, exact, perfect (Achebe, 1960, p. 43).

Obi's boss is a white man who want to be a headmaster with the way slap his headmaster but no one can do it. It is a dream of a white man who want to hold the power and white men feel that they have a power and able to slap a headmaster. In this situation Obi's boss was a white man who want to hold the power. "That was twenty years ago. Today few white men would dream of slapping a headmaster in his school and none at all

would actually do it. Which is the tragedy of men like William Green, Obi's boss". (Achebe, 1960, p. 49)

CONCLUSION

No Longer at Ease is the second novel from Chinua Achebe which tells about a young educated man who struggle in his homeland. As the next ne generation, obi should face the two different cultures, old tradition and new modern culture. After nigeria get its independence from colonies, Obi has to struggle for his identity between old culture and western culture. New system for his government, his education and belief proof that its the challenge for Obi as a young educated man who are expected by nigerian nigerian people can make a better future to their country. Obi tried his best to unity the collision of two cultures, he adopted the new system but balance the traditional. Because of the colonization, nigerian lost their identity and the culture being replaced with the new one because of the impact of colonization. The colony colonized the country by brought their culture, education and belief. They entered the education by teaching a western concept to the student so the system slowly moved to the new western education or they do westerization to nigerian people. On the other hand, the colony change the origin culture by the colony culture or western culture and it makes the igbo lost their culture.

Colonization get bad impact fo the country whose being colonized. The country should get the independence then should struggle by the culture which the colony brought to the colonized country, because the main reason of colonization is to wide the territory and wanted the country follow their culture, language and belief. Nigeria was colonized by British. After nigeria get independence, they should struggle to get their identity cause the effect of colonization they lost their own identity. British brought his culture to change nigeria origin culture, then educated the nigerian with western education, so nigerian lost their culture and own identity. British wanted to dominate the government and hold the rule through their policy and educated young generation with western education. British system bring the confusion to the origin about the cultural collision between the African and British culture.

As a main character in this novel, Obi not only faced his lost identity but also the new system which some corruption issues and bribery. As young educated man and new generation obi should end the corruption in his country. Even though nigeria has got its independence they are still colonized by corruption and bribery who committed by white man. In addition, Obi wanted to reach his goals to end the corruption but he trapped in bribery. Obi should get position in the government to take his action to get rid of the corruption. Obi struggle

to replace the old system with the new one and replaced the westernization into the origin. Obi hopes would be able to change the government and build nigeria for a better future, but he failed, he falls into a financial crisis which required him to take the bribes.

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