The Identity of Metropolitan Imperialism as Paradigmatic Stereotypes of Ideology, Racial Ethnicity, and Otherness in the Postcolonial Novel

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Abstract

This paper examines the dichotomy between humanism and the ideological construction of Englishness in the light of post-colonialism. The study mainly relies on imperialism as the hegemonic "center," which inherently affects the "margin." That is, the dominant Western imperial hegemony imposes its culture and identity upon the colonized nations. Therefore, it will unravel Western domination as the "center" and the colonized nations as the "margin." In this sense, it will highlight this dichotomy by applying Edward Said's concept of the self-other relationship, whereby the Western hegemony will be identified as the dominant "self," which leaves its apparent social and cultural impact upon the identity of the colonized "other" nations. As such, the study's methodology follows a textual analysis of some literary works that depict the dichotomy between humanism and the ideological construction of Englishness. It will demonstrate how the imperial "self" drastically projects its cultural influence upon the colonized "other," which is the recipient of Englishness per se.

Keywords: identity, ideology, liberalism, metropolitan imperialism, post-colonialism, self-other relationship

1. Introduction

The concept of liberalism broadly includes the disappearance of limits among cultural norms and traditions. It comprises the process of dislocation, which implies cultural displacement affecting the inherited social residuals (Qutami, 2022). Being so, liberalism provides people of different ethnic backgrounds with a resilient adaptation to other cultures, which demands "a change in the culture in order for it to be apprehended" (Albertazzi et al. 2018, p. 90). To clarify, it involves cultural assimilation among various races and how they could co-exist with each other on the grounds of mutual recognition. Liberalism, in this sense, encompasses several cultural concepts (Abd-Rabbo, 2019). Yet, it primarily gives priority to four interrelated concepts, namely, ideology, otherness, self-other relationships, and racial ethnicity. First, ideology involves how certain people think or behave to be distinctive or different from other nations because "the complexity and contradictions in *colonial* language policies derive in large measure from the competing demands and interests of the colonizers and the colonized" (Ricento, 2000, p. 6). Furthermore, it includes how these people set forth the integral principles of their property and progression for the sake of emulating other nations. In this sense, ideology appears as a crucial path to superiority, and, in turn, it empowers these people's predilection to make decisions self-autonomous, or, as Lisandro E. Claudio (2017) puts it: "liberalism does not die because it is never completely born. If liberalism is to reinvent itself, it must seek inspiration in unlikely places" (p. 2).

Second, the concept of otherness is another definitive feature of liberalism. As it suggests, otherness refers to the particular social customs and traditions relative to a specific nation and its identity since "national identity is constrained by colonial Eurocentrism" (Abu Jweid, 2016, p. 530). It inherently differentiates one culture from another within the wide scope of social discrepancies. For this reason, otherness incarnates the possible ways of bridging the gap among nations and their related ethnicities to make them more assimilated, and ideological constructions of *"colonial otherness* are represented through their differences from each other. The borderline, the moment of difference, is also the moment necessary to the production of knowledge" (Ashcroft, 2013, p. 191). Third, the concept of liberalism has a close affinity with the self-other relationship. In essence, the self-other relationship is commonly assessed under the implicative notions of post-colonialism; whereby the colonizers and the colonized interact with each other (Hamidish and Arewat, 2021). Hence, liberalism gives self-other relationships a free space to include and appreciate each other, paving the way for a comprehensive and inclusive post-colonial atmosphere. The concept of liberalism, in this sense, has a multifarious conceptual perception of ideology through a postcolonial lens; Duncan Ivison (2002) writes: "postcolonial liberalism has an explicit commitment to equality, and thus interprets the demands for recognition as another way of talking about equality and freedom" (p. 89).

Fourth, the concept of racial ethnicity represents an essential cultural token of liberalism. It indicates the genuine and native ethnic roots of the colonized people who are subjects of colonial imperialism "in light of the engagement over another, especially reasoned or deliberative argument above everything else" (Ivison, 2002, p.92). Therefore, the imperial hegemony leaves its apparent impact on the native people, who undergo radical cultural changes to be able to cope with the imperial ideology. As such, racial ethnicity denies the oppressive imperial blueprint, yet it reinforces the ideological burgeoning between metropolitan culture and its colonized counterpart. Consequently, the metropolitan culture spreads its hegemonic presence in the colonized territories in order to find suitable adaptation because "liberalism from a progressive political position committed to specific reforms to an aesthetic ideology" (Rowe, 2011, p.7). In this sense, the concept of liberalism intersects politics and how political attitudes affect the core meaning of cultural ideology concerning the emergence of new ways of bringing world nations together.

Postcolonial literary analysis offers the potential to, significantly, redefine our understanding of literature itself. A current postcolonial analysis of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* dismantles the seemingly naturalized assumptions of European imperialism embedded within the narrative. This deconstruction reveals prevailing ideologies concerning race, identity, and the construction of "otherness." Furthermore, such an analysis opens avenues for exploring the broader themes of postcolonialism. This critical lens can fundamentally reshape our understanding of postcolonial literature, allowing us to re-evaluate novels like *Robinson Crusoe* and unearth the underlying imperialist structures that informed their creation. Through a focus on race, gender, ethnicity, and culture, postcolonial theory delves into the complexities of identity in the aftermath of colonialism, a theme prominently explored in postcolonial literature through narratives of identity crises and diasporas because "postcolonial theory is a critical framework that emerged in response to the historical and cultural legacies" (Sani, 2024, p.97).

The purpose of this essay is to examine the concept of liberal humanism connected to the ideological construction of Englishness and to imperialist ideology, self-other relationship, Englishness, racial ethnicity, and otherness and their impact of postcolonial contexts on the recent developments in English studies as postulated in various postcolonial texts dealing with the appearance of liberalism as a concept involving many ethnicities within assimilated cultural trends. This study investigates the concept of liberalism through the lens of humanism and its implications for postcolonial notions of otherness, ideology, self-other relationships, and racial ethnicity. It refers to some critical theorists, such as Homi Bhabha and Edward Said, to drive home the idea of liberal humanism.

2. Research Methodology

This research employs a multifaceted textual analysis approach, utilizing narrative voice, character analysis, and discourse analysis to deconstruct the identity of metropolitan imperialism in the postcolonial novel.

3. Discussion

The concept of liberalism is considered as an integral part of postcolonial studies. Scholars follow relentless efforts to appropriate it within the notion of national identity. Therefore, Bhabha (1994), in *The Location of Culture*, looks into the concept of liberal humanism as being approached by the concept of hybridity due to the integral relationship between the cultural amalgamation between the metropolitan culture and the native nations: "as literary creatures and political animals we ought to concern ourselves with the understanding of human action and the social world as a moment when something is beyond control, but it is not beyond accommodation" (p.13). Consequently, liberal humanism entails radical differences among world nations because it strongly relates to racial ethnicity and its decisive role in shaping the social contrasts among the colonized nations. Bhabha's (1994) discussion of hybridity includes the essential ideas of liberal humanism and how it leaves its apparent impact on the development of the original native identity.

Consequently, the concept of native identity has a concomitant affinity with the gradual and mature development of native customs and traditions of the natives which are "carried out by means of the authorial intersection of the worldview of the novel as a universal text" (Al-Khamisi and Abu Jweid, 2024, p.497). The distinctive Englishness, for example, represents the ideational attributes of the English culture and society; whereby many discrepant cultures meet each other in the light of "the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement. It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness" (Loomba, 2007, p.148). That is, they interact with each other on the grounds of the English metropolitan ideology which profoundly shapes the colonized natives' cultures. For this reason, the study of Englishness in postcolonial contexts yields the understanding of native identity's hybrid transformation according to the newly adopted socio-cultural norms: "Through this painterly distance a vivid strangeness emerges; a partial or double 'self' is framed in a climactic political moment that is also a contingent historical event - 'some chosen experience" (Bhabha, 1994, p.14). In Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), for example, Englishness appears through the imperial mission led by Kurtz who attempts to subjugate the native colonizers for his metropolitan mentality. He greatly exemplifies the cultural hegemony which suppresses the natives of Congo who could not easily adapt to the imperial blueprints; this is true to Kurkz's famous phrase: "Exterminate all the brutes!" (p.82).

Kurtz's difficult transformation into the imperial mentality is brought by the political hegemony planned by the British presence in Congo. Consequently, the concept of hybridity could not be effective in this context because the Congolese did not accept the imperial dominance in their homeland. To use Said's (1979) words, the Congolese "other" could not be in good accord with the imperial "self" which inflicts cultural restrictions upon the natives through "the vacillation between the familiar and the alien" (p.72). The reason behind that imitation lies in the possibility of creating cultural equilibrium between the colonized subjects and their colonizers; Bhabha (1991) writes: "the Englishness of mimicry is constructed around liberal humanism" (p.126). Kurtz's personality, here, is a definitive stereotype of the imperial

hegemony in other lands. For this reason, the concept of self-other relationship goes along with the impossibility of the hybrid connection between the British and the Congolese on the grounds of postcolonial circumferences because "colonial authority" is "equipped to restrain … savage instincts and thus exert a civilizing influence" (Carens, 2005, p.20). In the first place, the relationship between the British and the Congolese is constructed on the premise of Englishness. Such Englishness is the core of the duality wavering between margin and center. Therefore, the ideological construction of Englishness, to some extent, resembles mockery. Yet, Bhabha (1991), they have discrepant views of colonial Englishness. However, both disturb the domination of colonial Englishness. Bhabha's (1991) conceptualization of the margin and the center relates to Said's (1979) argumentation of the self-other relationship through which the imperial colonizers consider themselves as the hegemonic "self" that subjugates the colonized "other" through the "validity of the division of races into advanced and backward" (p.206). Conrad, here, perceives Kurtz's imperial mission as the exemplification of the "self" that exploits the "other" in order to impose its dominant imperial effectiveness in Congo. For this reason, the relationship between the British and the Congolese is deemed to have authentically represented the genuine sense of cultural assimilation between two different nations. The narrator meticulously recounts self-other relationship in the following lines: "I made a speech in English with gestures, not one of which was lost to the sixty pairs of eyes before me, and the next morning I started the hammock off in front all right. An hour afterwards I came upon the whole concern wrecked in a bush—man, hammock, groans, blankets, horrors" (p.31).

However, liberal humanism is not present in the cultural and ethnic dichotomy between British imperialism and the Congolese nativity depicted in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Though the concept of self-other relationships is evident in the course of the imperial interaction between them, it is not similarly obvious in the concept of cultural hybridity because "they were going to run an over-sea empire and make no end of coin by trade" (p.13). To explain, the native Congolese do not accept foreign intervention in their homeland, and, as a sequence, they do not develop cultural hybridity; or as Bhabha (1990) argues, hybridity "abjures the rationalism of universals, while maintaining the practicality, and political strategy, of dealing professionally with local situations that are themselves defined as liminal and borderline" (p.6). This is because the imperial "center" inflicts severe colonial hegemony upon the colonized "margin" which is Congo per se. being so, Bhabha's conceptions of the margin and the center serves as an equal parallel to Said's concept of self-other relationship. To put it another way, the imperial "self" confronts the colonized "other"; and the colonized "other" embodies the "margin" that is greatly affected by the dominant British hegemony.

The concept of self-other relationship is a contrapuntal parallel to the concepts of the margin and the center because it "has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort. And, sadder still, there always is a chorus of willing intellectuals to say calming words about benign or altruistic empires" (Said, 1979, p.25). In this way, Conrad posits that British imperialism, and the Congolese ethnicity inherently contradict the genuine ideas of liberal humanism. This means that the colonized Congolese ethnicity denies cultural assimilation with the British hegemony. This leads to the hindrance of the development of liberal humanism which might mitigate the colonial tension between them. Furthermore, the concept of liberal humanism is connected with the ethnic confrontation between native and foreign cultures on the premise of national identity. As a rule of thumb, the concept of national identity refers to the ideal inherited customs, norms, and traditions. Yet, it is drastically affected by the advent of imperial hegemony since "the dominant power of the imperial regimes positions the colonial to see himself as an 'other'. This 'otherness' is inscribed in the colonial by the colonial discourse" (Zhou, 2015, p.34). Therefore, native identity gets new ways of life concerning customs, norms, and traditions; and it amalgamates them within the specific postcolonial context in order to find ethnic equilibrium between the metropolitan identity and the native culture that "has really been lost is a sense of the density and interdependence of human life, which can neither be reduced to a formula nor be brushed aside as irrelevant" (Said, 19779, p.30).

In this regard, Chinua Achebe's seminal novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is an obtrusive example of how the metropolitan culture imposes its identity, and culture upon the colonized nation by inserting its genuine culture into the other culture. For example, the novel hinges primarily on the Igboland which is the original place of the Nigerian ethnicity. The spatial setting holds implicit connotations about the original identity of the Nigerian ethnicity before its gets affected by the British metropolitan culture. As a sequence, both the native Igbo culture and the British imperialism confront each other on the grounds of colonial and cultural encounters. As the story unfolds, it appears that the natives begin to adopt the British culture though they previously did not accept it easily. For this reason, the protagonist, Okonkwo, does not find any escape or outlet for this reality. He has strongly hated weakness since his childhood, and he considers the adoption of the foreigners' culture a kind of weakness, which leads him to commit suicide in the long run. The elders, on the other hand exemplify the notion of being "other" that attempts to preserve national identity: "the elders of the clan had decided that Ikemefuna should be in Okonkwo's care for a while. But no one thought it would be as long as three years. They seemed to forget all about him as soon as they had taken the decision (p.8)"

Achebe, consequently, projects his insights regarding the postcolonial sequences in Igboland which exemplifies Nigeria herself. By the same token, he perceives the British metropolitan culture as the exact opposite of the native Nigerian culture. The native Nigerian national identity, accordingly, partially copes with the British identity, especially when some natives accept and welcome the missionaries. The concept of liberal humanism matches the close affinity between the natives that accepted the metropolitan identity to live peacefully with the foreign culture which "becomes a statement on the political responsibility of the critic. For the critic must attempt to fully realize, and take responsibility for, the unspoken, unrepresented pasts that haunt the historical present" (Bhabha, 1994, p.12). In doing so, Achebe provides the reader with a vivid picture of how identity might be affected by foreign interference in the national socio-cultural norms. He perceives the British interference as a crucial factor of transforming and changing the native Igboland's identity. Notwithstanding, he partially shows

how some Nigerian ethnicities do not change and remain close to their native identity by portraying the sacrifice of Okonkwo who never shows any willingness to adopt any other identity because the concept of otherness "highlights the lasting racial tension that exists even in the post-colonial reality" (Singh, 2024, p.207). This is true to Okonkwo's strict sense of belonging to his native homeland: "Okonkwo's return to his native land was not as memorable as he had wished" (p.59).

Okonkwo, therefore, does not find any track for liberal humanism in the long rally between him and the foreign identity arriving in his homeland. By the same token, J. M. Coetzee reiterates the notion of hegemonic imperialism in *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980). The novel has multifarious postcolonial nuances about the concept of "the empire." The magistrate, the central character in the plot, embodies the imperial domination in the territorial frontier of the fictional empire. He incarnates the essence of metropolitan culture which attempts to find a peaceful existence. It tries to establish a social order amidst chaotic colonial disorder affecting both the imperial metropolitan culture and its dependent native minorities. In his literary works, Coetzee employs the narrator as a tool to illustrate the potential for imperial ideology to foster a seemingly stable coexistence between the dominant imperial identity and the subjugated ethnicity. This coexistence, however, remains susceptible to destabilization by the introduction of new socio-cultural norms from the metropolis.

For example, the relationship between the barbarian girl and the Magistrate embodies the cultural affinity between the native ethnicity and the metropolitan culture: "we sit in the best room of the inn with a flask between us and a bowl of nuts. We do not discuss the reason for his being here. He is here under the emergency powers, that is enough. Instead, we talk about hunting" (p.4).

The novel abounds with the formation of new concepts and paths in defining the nature of colonialism constructed by imperialism. The magistrate represents the perfect picture of colonial hegemony. On the one hand, he exemplifies the colonial dominance in the imperial territories. On the other hand, the barbarian girl exemplifies the dependent territories that are controlled and directed by the imperial metropolitan culture. The concept of liberal humanism, here, gets along with the mutual contain policy followed by the magistrate in his treatment of the barbarians. In *A Passage to India* (1924), E. M. Forster projects a similar view of the self-other relationship between the East and the West. He accentuates the reciprocal nature of the Indian people and their capacity to accept the presence of the British ethnicity in their homeland. Forster uses Dr. Aziz's personality to offer an archetypal image of the traditional relationship between the East and the West, or as Said (1979) simply describes it, the relationship between the Orient and the Occident through which "the obduracy of self and identity, which had been polarized into a community of embattled believers facing barbarian hordes" (p.120). Forster perceives such ethnic insights are projected via the Indians and their English counterparts: "were there worlds beyond which they could never touch, or did all that is possible enter their consciousness? They could not tell . . . Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle. . . Perhaps the hundred Indians which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one. They had not the apparatus for judging" (p.331).

Forster portrays a comprehensive view of the traditional schism between the British metropolitan culture and the Indian culture "Colonial ideology is a real way to respond to the colonial frame and its concomitant force to the extent that she focuses not on the improvement of a situation 'over there,' itself a move according to a colonial trajectory" (Daigle and Sophie, 2020, p.137). Therefore, the amalgamation of the two cultures is hard due to the aversive nature between them since "race is confused with the nation and a sovereignty analogous to that of really existing peoples is attributed to ethnographic, or rather linguistic groups" (Bhabha, 1990, p.8). The concept of ideology, in this respect, does not relate to identity and its pertinent transformation due to the fact that "colonial institutions may involve the adoption of an ideological grid on language and about language as well" (Blommaert, 2014, p.66). It essentially relates to the mixture of the two cultures within one regional milieu. i.e., India. British attempted to impose new traditions in the Indian society, but the Indians had their ways of life, that contradicted the Western view of life. Consequently, the concept of liberal humanism could be present in the novel because there is some acceptance of foreign culture. To illustrate, the Indians accept and co-exist with the British culture at the end of the novel, which means that they could liberally live together on the grounds of peaceful acceptance and mutual appreciation of each other. In essence, the novel does not display any hybrid identity. It blatantly depicts the self-other relationship in terms of Dr. Aziz's acceptance of the British presence in India, and he appears greatly moved by their culture.

Dr. Aziz's mentality embodies his influence by the British domination in India. To some extent, he shows the massive effect of the British on his personality, and Forster uses him as a medium of the self-other relationship created by British imperialism. Moreover, this relationship gets more benign as it includes both the British "self" culture in contrast with the Indian "other" culture. In the long run, they become closer to each other by virtue of self-other relationship and the boundaries between the "margin" and the "center" dissolve as long as the British and the Indians keep their close socio-cultural interlocutions which "dismantle the reductive formulae and the abstract but potent kind of thought that leads the mind away from concrete human history and experience and into the realms of ideological fiction, metaphysical confrontation and collective passion" (Said, 1979, p.34). The concept of liberal humanism appears on a large scale of the social circumferences that include both of them via the "ideology of matrilineal kinship which portrays a system of clans and lineages dating back to the fourteenth century. This ideology, today, is a product of complex historical processes" (Afshar, 1987, p.96). The central British and Indian characters are liberated from the colonial, and even the pre-colonial, residuals. They do not have any tense view of others. At the same time, their original identity did not completely change, yet it slightly changed in order to give the British and the Indians free space to co-exist. Hence, the novel serves as a cultural vehicle to link the Indians with their British counterparts through the relationship between Dr. Aziz and western foreigners, like Fielding: "Fielding did not even want to [correct Aziz]; he had dulled his craving for verbal truth and cared chiefly for truth of mood. As for Miss Quested, she accepted everything Aziz said as true verbally. In her ignorance, she regarded him as 'India,' and never surmised that his outlook was limited and his method inaccurate, and that no one is India (p.221).

Forster, therefore, views liberal humanism via the benign self-other relationship between the British metropolitan culture and the Indian nativity. In contrast, Tayeb Salih, in *Season of Migration to the North* (1966), does not look at liberal humanism from a benign perspective. He employs the protagonist, Mustafa Sa'eed, as the paradigmatic stereotype of the African "other." The novel is widely acclaimed as the counter-narrative of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) since it looks into the British "self" as the place of intellectuality and schooling. When the protagonist travels to England, meets many British characters that are different from his own culture. As a result, he is affected by their culture, identity, and language. The novel is abundant with postcolonial descriptions of self-other relationships. The protagonist arrives in British culture which exemplifies the metropolitan horizon in his eyes. Though he does not have any idea about the new culture, he can cope with it gradually due to the challenges he meets in the foreign civilization. The novel's narrative stance begins in "medias res"; which means that it opens with Mustafa Sa'eed's arrival from England. He begins to narrate his British experience by relying on flashbacks and, to some extent, a stream of consciousness. Mustafa Sa'eed's recounts this experience in the following lines:

> I heard the cooing of the turtle-dove, and I looked through the window at the palm tree standing in the courtyard of our house and I knew that all was still well with life. I looked at its strong straight trunk, at its roots that strike down into the ground, at the green branches hanging down loosely over its top, and I experienced a feeling of assurance. I felt not like a storm-swept feather but like that palm tree, a being with a background, with roots, with a purpose. (p.2)

Mustafa Sa'eed, in this sense, is a stereotype of Said's (1979) argumentation of the "other" that amalgamates with the British "self" because it "resolves itself into a boring cliché, and every discipline or type of knowledge changes from hope and power into disorder, ruin, and sorrow" (p.113). When his journey begins, he arrives in Cairo where he meets some people who love him very much because he has a great mastery of the English language and matchless intelligence. One of the English ladies admires him, and she takes care of him as a son prodigy. As time passes, he reaches where he meets many girlfriends. He had accompanied them for a long time. Strikingly, he gets affected by their Englishness. He feels that his racial ethnicity dissolves in the British demarcation as go along with them. He acquires the British identity and culture as he immerses himself deeply into the social layers of England. He becomes closely attached to the English people's culture. However, the English culture, or Englishness, contradicts sharply his inherited customs and traditions depicted via "literary structure at the expense of the subjective priorities, including the theme, subject matter and other technical elements" (Kaur et al., 2023, p.1948). As a result, he could not easily adapt to his Sudanese native identity since he had been profoundly involved in the Englishness of British society. His Sudanese compatriots notice this cultural schism as he lives as a detached person from them; and the concept of self-other relationship "implies imperialism's social norms brought to the colonized nations' native society" (Abu Jweid, 2023, p.17).

The concept of liberal humanism, in Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1966), is strongly associated with the self-other relationship created in the British imperial culture. Such a relationship widens and becomes more comprehensive once the story of the protagonist's previous life in England unfolds to his compatriots. They recognize and understand the genuine cause of his cultural transformation. This is because he used to live alone with limited interaction with his compatriots. Being so, they explored the reason behind the initial preservation of his Sudanese racial ethnicity. Ideology, furthermore, plays a significant role. Being an archetypal symbol of the colonized "other," Mustafa Sa'eed gets along with the British metropolitan ideology since he thinks that he could defeat it. To clarify, he believes that he could emulate and oppose the British metropolitan hegemony by killing his girlfriends. In this sense, he could overcome the imperial obstacles created by the previous British ideological dominance in his homeland, Sudan, and they represent the cultural dichotomy between the East and West describe by Mustafa Sa'eed at the beginning of the novel:

> I told them [the villagers] that Europeans were, with minor differences, exactly like them, marrying and bringing up their children in accordance with principles and traditions, that they had good morals and were in general good people…just like us they are born and die, and in the journey from the cradle to the grave they dream dreams some of which come true and some of which are frustrated; that they fear the unknown, search for love and seek contentment in wife and child; that some are strong and some are weak… (p. 3)

Salih, therefore, conveys the Sudanese imperial experience to the reader through the whimsical events and the incidents undergone by the Mustafa Sa'eed who embodies the radical transformation of the native identity into the imperial culture. In the same way, Wilbur Smith, in *When the Lion Feeds* (1964), highlights the ideological self-other relationship in South Africa. The novel centers on the twin brothers Garrick and Sean who descend from a native South African racial ethnicity. They undergo bitter experiences as they receive their education at local schools because there have been many attempts to separate them. After a short time span, they are hired by Mr. Waite to participate in a war waged against Zulus. The war fiercely breaks out in the vicinity of their social circumferences; and they like to "play the game without mercy, play to win" (p.12). This means that they aspire to be autonomous of any foreign or "other" cultural norms. It fatally led to the death of many people including Mr. Waite. Garrick becomes a reverent hero since he leads to a decisive victory over the Zulus. He is acclaimed as a great warrior once he drives the Zulus out of some critical regions, like the hospital. The victory marks his racial stride as a superior man playing a great role in protecting his people from the Zulus because self-other relationship is constructed mainly by the "colonial ideology of civilization" (Rud, 2017, p.36).

Garrick's influential role is significant to the understanding of the ideological construction of his own native identity because the ideological attributes of national identity are used "to show how historical agency is transformed through the signifying process; how the historical event is represented in a discourse that is somehow beyond control" (p.12). In other words, Garrick empowers his own native identity when he could almost get rid of the Zulus. In this sense, Zulus' racial ethnicity epitomizes the native resistance to foreign interference with their national states of affairs. Garrick and Sean, on the other hand, exemplify the imperial aspects of the novel though they are South African

natives. Nevertheless, they embody metropolitan superiority which attempts to impose its ideological concerns in the Zulus' native lands. Consequently, Smith projects his authorial insights regarding the self-other relationship in the main course of the novel to offer an in-depth conceptualization of the nature of the relationship between the metropolitan culture and Zulus after the end of colonialism. In this sense, *When the Lion Feeds* (1964) incarnates the authentic African wilderness symbolically depicted in by means of the racial encounter between the Zulus and the foreigners. As a result of this encounter, a severe antagonist emerges out of the novel's meticulous depiction of the Zulus' culture which reneges any form of imperial influences upon the native identity which is conveyed through the spatial regions described through homeland's terrains:

> Out here there was more of those two treasures than a man could use in a dozen lifetimes. Space to move, to ride or to fire a rifle; space spread with sunlight and wind, grass and trees, but not filled with them. There was also time. This was where time began: it was a quiet river, moving but not changed by movement; draw on it as much as you would and still it was always full. (p.72)

Smith's perception of the self-other relationship between the Zulus and other ethnicities is a mere manifestation of the construction of metropolitan ideology in the colonized nations "whose victories included failed revolutions, wars, oppression, and an unteachable appetite for putting grand, bookish ideas quixotically to work immediately" (Said, 1979, p.116). Liberal humanism is evident in the racial interlocution between the Zulus and the war led by Garrick and Sean. As previously argued, the concept of liberal humanism refers to the disappearance of demarcations between the "self" and the "other" because they begin to accept each other on the grounds of mutual understating and sincere appreciation which "no longer requires application to reality" (Said, 1979, p.116). For this reason, Smith does not insert the notions of liberal humanism during the plot since the racial encounter between the "self" and the "other" is devoid of any liberal sense. The Zulus people do not seem to be liberated from their colonial confines. Accordingly, they embark on a serious journey to search for their devastated identity. They also lost any pertinent matters related to their identity including their native culture and ethnicity. At this point, the imperial metropolitan culture exerts its hegemonic presence in Zulus' homeland. Consequently, they could not adopt any form of cultural assimilation from their superior imperialists represented by Garrick and Sean during their military encounters involving both.

Smith juxtaposes the cultural discrepancies between the Zulus and their metropolitan interlocutors by unraveling the cultural gap between them. In essence, this gap is the main impetus of the absence of liberal humanism in this encounter because "nations, in this sense of the term, are something fairly new in history" (Bhabha, 1990, p.9). Zulus could not find any outlets for this ethnic dilemma created by the war, and Smith offers fictional surrogates for them by portraying realistic confrontations between two different racial ethnicities. The concept of otherness here emerges out of the relative nature of the concept. The notion of being "other" could be paralleled to both the natives and their metropolitan counterparts; and Bhabha (1990) claims that "is something other than imperialism writ as large as this. It is, quite specifically, the battery of discursive and representational practices which define, legitimate, or valorize a specific nation-state or individuals as members of a nation-state" (138). But in Smith's *When the Lion Feeds* (1964), the concept of otherness would be suitable to describe the ethnic stances of Garrick and Sean and Zulus. On the one hand, Garrick and Sean are perceived as the metropolitan "otherness" arriving in the Zulus' homeland. On the other hand, the Zulus ethnicity is perceived as the "otherness" which might be resisted by war; the native feel comfortable when they feel that they might be independent: "there was also a feeling of release. That was another part of it. To go on his way: north to a new land. He felt the tingle of anticipation" (p.84). Such comfort alleviates their tense relationship with the hegemonic foreign culture.

The paradoxical nature of the concept of otherness is reinforced by the postcolonial systems created by the static nature of cultural identity which "could be transformed from mere spectacle to the precise measurement of characteristic elements was very widespread" (Said, 1979, p.119). The Zulus people do not accept the metropolitan identity, and they get involved in the war as a reaction to the refusal of the presence of any other form of ethnic identity in their homeland. In contrast, Garrick and Sean opposed this refusal and were involved in the war to rebuff such denial.

4. Conclusion

This essay has focused on the author-reader relationship and how it affects and is affected by the subjectivity of literary interpretations regarding liberal humanism linked to the ideological construction of Englishness and to imperialist ideology, margin and center, and the impact of postcolonial contexts on the recent developments in English studies as postulated in different postcolonial works. Being so, literary interpretations are various and diverse. They sometimes do not attend to the proper interpretation that must be followed when discussing a specific literary text. The study contributes to the interpretation of ideology and otherness in both literary and cultural studies. It reinforces previous studies' thematic as well as ethnic aspects due to the socio-cultural implications of its analysis. For this reason, the primary contribution of the study highlights the concept of liberalism and how it could profoundly affect different cultural norms and traditions within different contexts.

One significant contribution of the study is the appropriation of the concept of liberalism and ideology in terms of postcolonial contexts. That is, liberalism matures when it is nurtured by ideological prosperity, which allows the native culture to be independent. In this regard, liberalism intersects with ideology because of the stout cultural premise. The study, furthermore, contributes to the understanding of self-other relationships in the light of liberalism. As a matter of fact, the self-other relationship implies negative postcolonial nuances governing the imperial hegemony and the native ethnicity. However, liberalism makes it positive since it effectively results in new directions concerning the amalgamation of the colonized culture and the imperial one. In this sense, self-other relationships might pave

the way for further studies on bridging the gap between imperialism and its postcolonial effects. Here, the postcolonial peculiarities of the study are tackled via the study's perception of self-other relationships in terms of in terms of liberalism and otherness.

The study found that the concept of otherness is sorely necessary for conceptualizing the postcolonial insights of liberalism and ideology. In other words, the concept of liberalism would offer tangible advancement in reciprocal relations among different nations. The discussion of the concept of liberalism could be treated as the core of the ethnic intersection between the imperial colonizers and the colonized nations. This discussion might lead scholars to infer the importance of liberalism in providing literary texts with further thematic features of post-colonialism. Being so, the universal view of such a relationship could be enhanced by referring to the original impetus of culture aversion; and liberalism, as a construction, replaced it with a better and positive relationship. As a result, imperial hegemony finds a constructive substitute i.e., a new and effective worldview of postcolonial life between the dominant imperial and culture of the previously colonized nations. Therefore, the study recommends approaching the concept of liberalism considering the concepts of ideology, otherness, self-other relationship, and racial ethnicity. Hence, it paves the way for extra future research on the possibility of bringing contradictory postcolonial views together. Future research could expand the analysis by examining the portrayal of metropolitan imperialism across postcolonial genres (e.g., historical fiction, or magic realism, comparing representations in novels from diverse former colonies, and contrasting portrayals in postcolonial novels with visual media from the same period.

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Zeena Mohammad Tahir, Ghada Sasa, Saif Al-Deen Al-Ghammaz, Fatima A. Al-Khamisi, and Abdalhadi Nimer Abdalqader Abu Jweid were responsible for study design and revising. Zeena Mohammad Tahir was responsible for data collection Dr. Ghada Sasa drafted the manuscript, Saif Al-Deen Al-Ghammaz, Fatima A. Al-Khamisi, and Abdalhadi Nimer Abdalqader Abu Jweid revised it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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