The Justification of Colonial Policy through Violence, the Concept of Tyranny, the Various Forms of the Colonized People's Death, and its Mark in Literature

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Abstract. In this paper, the justification of the colonial violent practices which led to the indigenous people's physical death, social marginalization and cultural extermination is presented. The concept of death is indispensable in understanding the distance between the colonized and the colonizer, the stereotypically caused identity loss of the former, the reasoning of violence committed upon the disorganized, to-be-colonized world, which, resembling nature, abides solely by the natural law of power. Moreover, the role of colonial literature in justifying the indigenous people's objectification, dehumanization and subsequent death, as well as in supporting the imposition of colonial rule, is presented. Postcolonial literature is mainly approached with regard to native writers' perception of the fatal physical and cultural consequences of colonization upon the indigenous populations.

DEFINITION OF COLONIALISM

Colonialism is "the control of individuals and groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups" [10]. It refers to group sovereignty; it differs from imperialism in that settlers migrate from the colonizing power to the colony in significant numbers. The distinction between the two, however, is not entirely consistent in literature. "Some scholars distinguish between colonies for settlement and colonies for economic exploitation. Others use the term colonialism to describe dependencies that are directly governed by a foreign nation and contrast this with imperialism, which involves indirect forms of domination" [17].

Colonization assumes three different forms. Firstly, there is colonization in which the dominant relationship between the colonizers and the colonized is the extermination of the latter. Secondly, there is colonization in which the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized is one of assimilation. There is also an intermediate relationship, in which the

colonizers and the colonized live adjacently or apart, but neither total acculturation nor total eradication occurs [10].

VARIOUS FORMS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DEATH CAUSED BY COLONIALISM

In any form of colonization and in different percentages, deaths, mostly of the colonized, take place. They assume the forms of physical, cultural or social death. Whether the realm of death is literal or a metaphorical societal construct designed for oppressing the colonized, it is created through power dynamics.

In the case of extermination, physical death simultaneously extinguishes the indigenous people's culture and, thus, causes cultural death. Additionally, extermination marginalizes the few indigenous survivors through slavery, geographically or socially.

In the case of assimilation, physical death upon the colonized occurs on a smaller scale. There is a percentage of the colonized people's social assimilation by the colonizers, and there is partial cultural death of the indigenous culture through its absorption by the dominant culture. With regard to the imposition of the colonizers' culture, "the colonizers acted as a donor culture and the colonized people constituted a host culture, with a vast amount of cultural transfer……..from donor to host" [10]. This social or cultural death of the colonized occurs because the colonizers reject the existence of constructs such as pre-existent society and culture among the indigenous populations. Thus, cultural dominion upon the natives is a paternalistic practice which exports civilization in order to offer to the indigenous peoples an imposed cultural identity and to "humanize" them.

The colonized conclude that because their native culture is so diverse from the new dominant population, they are intrinsically inferior: "The native constantly compares and analyzes his ability to speak like the colonizer and dominant culture. Upon comparison, the native is in a state of high proclivity to develop an inferiority complex" [9].

In the case of adjacent living between the colonizers and the colonized, there is social marginalization of the latter by the former. Such marginalization, as well as the subsequent chaotic differentiation between the colonizers' and the natives' living conditions is described also through reference to diverse spatial worlds: "Between the European town and the native town, there is an interstellar distance of colonialism" [5]. This social death may lead to death of the indigenous culture as an imposed prerequisite for the colonized to be assimilated into the dominant system and earn financial rights through taxed labor. For instance, "the native Martiniquan individual learns at an early age to assume the language of the oppressor, for it is his only course to freedom and prosperity" [9].

However, language carries culture, and "culture carries, through orature and literature, the entire body of values" by which the natives of Kenya, for instance, "perceive themselves and their place in the world" [15]. Due to colonialism, indigenous languages are associated with humiliation, punishment and generally experiences offensive to human dignity, as colonialist education and relevant practices commit a linguistic, and thus cultural death, upon the natives.

SOVEREIGNTY AND TYRANNY

The concept of sovereignty is complex in political science and has had diverse definitions. The following two definitions are the most common: "The first definition applies to supreme public power, which has the right and, in theory, the capacity to impose its authority in the last instance. The second definition refers to the holder of legitimate power, who is recognized to have authority. When national sovereignty is discussed, the first definition applies, and it refers in particular to independence, understood as the freedom of a collective entity to act. Sovereignty is the full right and power of a governing body over itself, without any interference from outside sources" [6]. In political theory, sovereignty designates supreme authority over some polity. Sovereignty, as understood "in terms of governing competence, is tied to the prescription, application, and enforcement of law" [14]. Bodin claims that law is the source of power, and that "the power to legislate and to rule are identical" and "belongs only to the sovereign" [6]. In short, the sovereign is not subject to any authority. The conclusion drawn is that since the prince is not subject to his own decisions or decrees, he is superior to law.

Apparently, theological roots of sovereignty exist in that the governor is excluded from the power of law. "By granting himself the power to decree and annul laws, he acts like God. He forms a distinct entity, ruling the social body in the same way that God governs the cosmos" [6]. Thus, "on the one hand, political power is secularized; on the other, the sovereign, now identified with the state, becomes a person granted quasi-divine political power" [6].

However, in organized societies, superiority and power are agreed upon, according to various theorists. For instance, Hobbes invoked "a social contract based on the rationality of individuals", who "place themselves under the authority of a prince in order to end the war of all against all," which is characteristic of the "state of nature." [6].

Both Bodin and Hobbes draw a distinction between sovereignty and tyranny, as the first is defined by the sovereign's duty to abide by laws of nature or religion, by power and criteria directed towards the common good for the legitimate exercise of power ("law" or "individual consent" for Bodin and Hobbes respectively). For Althusius, "the sovereign cannot act willfully without being held accountable" [6].

Apparently, sovereignty involves conditioning the natural law through parameters like "people's consent". However, "sovereignty doctrine is understood as a stable and comprehensive set of ideas that was formulated in Europe and that extended inexorably and imperiously with empire into darkest Africa, the inscrutable Orient, and the far reaches of the Pacific, acquiring control over these territories and peoples and transforming them into European possessions" [2]. Consequently, sovereignty becomes tyranny when the colonized are deliberately presented in literature as members of unorganized, communal systems resembling nature and not considered citizens, thus deprived of the right to consent to a social contract; they are considered to be savages and nature is regarded as their ultimate master. In such societies, the natural law of power imposes divine or human sovereignty not through mutual consent, but by the proven manifestation of greater force upon the natives. Subsequently, in colonies, the sovereign, not subjected to law, have the justifiable natural jurisdiction to eliminate life at will and colonialist violence, even in its uttermost brutality, is

perfectly justifiable. Colonizers' governance of natives (who are deliberately regarded and presented as savages) is outside and above the law, thanks to colonizing power legitimized by self-granted superiority. The latter is granted by the guises of religion, war technology, acculturation to justify and forgive the mercilessness of natives' life elimination, cultural eradication or social marginalization.

Postcolonial Views on Sovereignty and Tyranny

Theorists from once-colonized countries assign to their analysis of literal death and colonialism a perspective burdened with the objective truth of the natives' historical pain and perceive sovereignty as "the power" "to dictate who may live and who must die" [13]. The dynamics of brutality of power, or else, of tyranny baptized as sovereignty, define the right to life or non-life as the space where power is manifested [13].

Regarding the linguistic and cultural death of native cultures, examples in postcolonial literature portray local authors' realization of the imposed attempt of extermination of their cultural identity by the colonizers. For instance, when the eradication of indigenous Kenyan languages and cultures was ventured by the colonizers, "one of the most humiliating experiences" was "to be caught speaking Gĩkũyũ in the vicinity of school" [15]. "The culprit was given corporal punishment" or "was made to carry a metal plate around the neck" [15]. This cultural tyranny of sovereign colonialism brought about "an active (or passive) distancing of oneself from the reality around; and an active (or passive) identification of what is most external to one's environment" [15]. Obviously, indigenous languages are described in postcolonial literature as relevant to the negativity of lack of progress and punishment.

In postcolonial literature, the politics of language play a vital role in manifesting the interaction between the upper class, native in origin but culturally representative of the colonizers, and the lower class, which is addressed pejoratively by their masters as "cripples" [1] or "rats"[1]. The lower-class natives' will for education is "a craze" [1], while for the upper class natives who embody colonialist values and status quo education is an expected normality. Lack of access to colonialist education leads to the lower-class natives' inert and unmanageable imprisonment in a system which perpetuates their marginalization due to lack of education and, subsequently, of social mobility. They may constitute a majority in terms of population percentages, but are objectified and, thus, expendable.

EPISTEMIC MURK

Colonizers' terrorism towards the colonized in cases is by far more bloodthirsty than could be explained by rational, economic motives and opposed to business interests, because of causing the destruction of indigenous labor power. This terror is viewed as an abreaction against the Wild Man, the anti-self of the colonist, "which necessitated violence as savage as the "savage" it was directed against" [18]. This not well-defined anti-self is presented in what Taussig calls "epistemic murk" [18]. The colonizers inspire terror through projecting

to the colonized an uncertain nightmarish reality and death as a likelihood for the disobedient.

This epistemic murk is the sequel of ways of disseminating information fabricated to cause uncertainty and is founded on the interplay of illusion and truth as both to the colonizers' powers and to the consequences of the natives' resistance. The stereotypical natives' characterization as "primitive" instead of civilized human beings justifies the colonizers' unscrupulous violence and the affliction of unprecedented chaos to indigenous societies as a normality. In turn, the colonized are subjugated to stereotypes justifiable of their death [18].

COLONIZERS' VIOLENCE; DEHUMANIZED BUT "HUMANIZING"

Death in the uncertain atmosphere of the colony is accompanied by a mystical element of violent and fatal forces existing in both opposing sides. Due to this element the colonized are identified with the stereotypical image of a savage and the colonizer substitutes this image for actual indigenous human beings.

The distance between colonization and civilization is great, despite acculturation through colonialism. Aimé Césaire explicates the colonialist mental processes which justify the imposition of brutality upon the colonized. A civilization justifying colonization and force, "is already a sick civilization" [4]. Colonization brutalizes the colonizer, awakens "buried instincts," "violence, race hatred and moral relativism" [4]. The colonizer sees the colonized as an animal in order to ease his conscience, gets habituated to treating him like an animal and "tends objectively to transform him into an animal." [4]. All the above are legitimized by widening inequalities between the colonizers and the colonized "and making them into a law" [4]. Indicative of the above is President Roosevelt's speech when referring to the Native Americans: "justice is on the side of the pioneers ……..this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game reserve for squalid savages" [11].

Colonialism yields space for the verbal liberation of Westerners' craze for power through torture. Death is not a punishment, it is a vice, as, for instance, it enforces upon De Montagnac forgetfulness through the imposing power of visual atrocity. Quoting the right to brutality and the power to verbally express it, De Montagnac states that "In order to banish the thoughts that sometimes besiege me, I have some heads cut off, not the heads of artichokes but the heads of men." and Count d'Herisson states that "we are bringing back a whole barrelful of ears collected, pair by pair, from prisoners" [4].

Contrastively and simultaneously, the colonized are considered savages who do not have the capacity for self-government because of their excessive love of freedom and need to be governed for their moral improvement, regardless of the way this governance is imposed. "Only commercial society produces the material and cultural conditions that enable individuals to realize their potential for freedom and self-government. According to this logic, civilized societies are acting in the interest of less-developed peoples by governing

them" [17]. History has proven the prevalence of violence as a practice for the colonized people's subjugation or the alleged "moral improvement".

ANOTHER DEATH; PURPOSEFUL DEHUMANIZATION, OBJECTIFICATION, INVISIBILITY

All kinds of "deaths" of the colonized are facilitated through the process of their purposeful dehumanization, objectification and invisibility.

In general, the colonized are objectified by the colonizers. This justifies the fact that they are expendable like any other natural resource of the colony, as parts of a background to the "human" presence of the colonizers. Consequently, from a colonizer's viewpoint, they are expected to succumb to the destiny of used resources with a passivity similar to any other inanimate or animal resource used, commercialized or even wasted. Moreover, "the Western world developed an elaborate vocabulary for denigrating" the colonized, "presenting them as suitable objects for conquest, and legitimizing the most extreme violence against them, all in the furtherance of the civilizing mission"[2]. The colonizers are agents performing invasion and acculturation, and "objectified" natives are passive to the point of being inanimate and soulless individuals, not real ones.

In other cases, the colonized appear to be devoid of human qualities of civilization and social identity. Colonial occupation pertains to defining borders and asserting control over a formerly uncivilized geographical area, the fauna of which could, among the species comprising its natural landscape and its local ecosystem, also be described as "non-civilized human". The colonizer reduces the colonized subject to an absolute evil, a savage being in need of structure and aid from the foreign occupants; this mentality therefore justifies the colonizer's actions……..the colonized subject is dehumanized, or reduced to a level not equal to that of the colonizer, but rather that of an animal, and referred to using purely zoological terms" [9].

There are also cases in colonial literature where the natives are presented as invisible. The indigenous people, reduced to servitude or inertia, rather constitute a part of a domestic or natural background, recipient of the colonizers' actions, which, in colonial literature, are aggressive, atrociously heroic. Fanon asserts that "The Algerians", "the palm trees, and the camels make up the natural background to the human presence of the French" [8]. The purposeful invisibility of the natives is characteristic of the creation of the topography of colonial dominion and death.

On the other hand, when natives are active, they may be so because of an important mission of servitude to the colonial regime. In *The Overland Mail*, even when the dedicated native adheres to a colonialist mission, there are hints of his potential inertia and he remains unnamed [12]. The native is reduced to a subservient, mysterious figure delivering mails to the important, colonized topography of an otherwise dark, uninhabited, uncivilized landscape [12].

TOPOGRAPHY OF (LITERAL) DEATH

The most imposing form of death is physical death. In the bloodshed history of colonialism it often happens through killing. The process of physical killing, be it instantaneous or a prolonged torture, endures less in time in comparison to social and cultural death, but more in memory to impose exemplification or, conversely, spark hatred, rebellion or revenge. Physical killing may carry epic martyrdom and inspire the attacked colonized people through its evocative imagery. Contrastively, natives' social and cultural deaths carry no immediate epic martyrdom, but, instead, the inability to fight against the colonizers' machinations and ruthlessness and yield strategic and collective freedoms. Thus, the space physical death creates is more visible, because, unlike social and cultural deaths, real death is not directly relevant to the status quo machinations and latent policies of everyday conscious, gradual and often indirect elimination of native cultures.

In colonial literature, physical death confines are often defined by silence before and after killing. Skillfully, the reader of colonial literature more often encounters auditory war imagery (silences, sounds of battle), and less often visual descriptions of, heroic through resistance, indigenous warriors. For example, in *Fantasia* "the silence of this majestic morning is……..the prelude to the cavalcade of screams"[7]. Also, when imprisoning and forcing the Algerians to die in the caves, silence and sound are used to describe the topography of death; "The gunshots are followed by silence; a ripple of sound, then a distant hammering that eats into the heart of the mountain."[7].

The skillful approach behind this dominion of sounds over images is that, by definition, images are visually represented in the human brain, and the occidental readership of colonial literature should grant to the colonized no heroic qualities of resistance till death or visualize the atrocities committed by the states whose they were citizens.

Elements of geography separate the colonizers and the colonized and serve not only as geographical confines, but also as symbolic gaps caused by the difference between them. In *The Stranger,* streets are used to create space between Meursault and the Arab[3]. There is a geographical distance between the colonizers and the colonized, which perpetuates fear and stereotypes from both sides. The colonizers' forcefulness is enhanced by their fear of the unknown and distant colonized, especially when stories of natives' atrocity, brutality (even cannibalism) were heard and distorted through retelling. The space of death is defined as a place "crucial to the creation of meaning and consciousness" especially "in societies where torture is endemic and where the culture of terror flourishes"[19]. Violence of death becomes a solution which clarifies the dynamics of power and establishes order.

CONCLUSIONS

For the imposition of colonial dominion, physical, social or cultural death of the colonized has served as an effective tool. Every form of the indigenous people's death has been achieved thanks to the reasoned practice of violence and under the colonialist objective of the colonized people's dehumanization, invisibility or objectification. It has also been justified; the colonized are considered expendable savages, who, as such and unlike citizens,

do not consent to a social contract accepting sovereignty, but succumb to the tyrannical imposition of a greater power upon their existence and constructs. Colonial literature often justifies literal death, imposition of colonialist societal constructs and the colonizers' culture by the objectification of the natives, by suppressing visual imagery of colonizing brutality and by the presentation of colonized areas as formerly savage areas, initially dominated upon by the only understandable law in nature, the law of power. Postcolonial literature frequently sheds light upon the colonizers' atrocities and on the purposeful death of indigenous cultural identity features (such as suppression of indigenous languages in education) and on the marginalization of the natives' identity at large, for the establishment and the perpetuation of the colonial regime. The colonial policy of violence through the diverse forms of the colonized people's death is reasonable owing to the justification of the means and the ends of the colonial rule in colonial literature; in postcolonial literature the concept of death is of great significance mainly as a means of addressing or exposing the mechanisms, apparent or latent, due to which native people died literally or socioculturally, along with their indigenous societies and cultures, which lost either part of or the totality of their identity.

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