

THE REVIVAL OF POSTCOLONIAL NATIONALISM IN GORETTI KYOMUHENDO'S *WAITING* (2007)

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ABSTRACT

The revival of postcolonial nationalism is the issue that is labored in Gorette Kyomuhendo's *Waiting*. This article delineates the process of cultural emancipation of post-colonial societies through the formulation of anti-imperial discourses based on cultural difference. Zeroing in on the postcolonial studies, this work explores the idea of nation that allows ex-colonies to re-construct self-image. Interestingly, the Ngugian hardcore approach to this theory (nationalism) helps to achieve this goal. Thus, the analysis will be focused on three sections namely. First, Western embargo imposed upon indigenous communities via their healthcare system. Second, the demonization of the West is explored. Third, the emancipation process of Africa is emphasized in this study. The revival of postcolonial nationalism is of note as it urges African people to cleave to their ancestral lore in a global world that threatens to lure Third-World people into Western cultural alienation.

Keywords : emancipation, embargo, nationalism, postcolonial, revival.

RÉSUMÉ

La problématique du renouveau du nationalisme postcolonial est abordée dans l'œuvre intitulée *Waiting* de Gorette Kyomuhendo. Cet article décrit le processus d'émancipation culturelle des sociétés post-coloniales à travers la formulation de discours anti-impériaux basés sur la différence culturelle. Avec la théorie postcoloniale en filigrane, cette étude explore l'idée de nation qui permet aux ex-colonies de reconstruire une image de soi et de s'émanciper en répudiant les codes étrangers. Heureusement, l'approche radicale Ngugienne de cette théorie (nationalisme) permet d'atteindre cet objectif. Ainsi, l'analyse s'articule autour de trois axes. D'abord, l'embargo occidental imposé au système sanitaire de la communauté indigène. Ensuite, la diabolisation de l'Occident est explorée. Enfin, le processus d'émancipation est mis en exergue dans cette étude. Le renouveau du nationalisme postcolonial est d'intérêt tant il exhorte les Africains à rester fidèles à leur héritage ancestral dans un village planétaire qui menace de contraindre les populations du Tiers-Monde dans l'aliénation culturelle occidentale.

Mots-clés : émancipation, embargo, nationalisme, postcolonial, renouveau.

INTRODUCTION

In postcolonial studies, the model of nationalism that is deployed in ex-colonized countries is understood as “postcolonial nationalism” (Forrest, 2006, p. 35). In its specificity, it is a movement identifying with the bucolic areas as a source of authentic life. Postcolonial nationalism also praises original African existence antedating the colonial experience. Moreover, it is a manifest implementation of the hardcore politics of anti-imperial thought. This means that it is not lenient to Western views and cultures. In some of the below works, its rejection of European paradigms is blatantly labored. Rhonda Cobham’s “Boundaries of the Nation: Boundaries of the Self: African Nationalist Fictions and Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*” (1991) evidences the culmination of the anti-colonial fight into a nationalist movement ushered in individual and social fragmentations due to the rise of new tensions brought about by post-colonial anxieties. If Cobham’s work emphasizes the negative sense of nationalism in Africa, other works view it as a determining factor in the construction of the African identity. For instance, Constance S. Richards’ “Nationalism and the Development of Identity in Postcolonial Fiction: Zoë Wicomb and Michelle Cliff” (2005) and Marie-Thérèse Abdel-Messih’s “Identity Text History: The Concept of Inter/Nationalization in African Fiction” (1995) are good illustrations of the foregoing. In fact, Abdel-Messih seeks to determine national identity in relation to the master discourse of the Western other in Ayi Kwei Armah’s *Why Are We So Blest* and Egyptian writer Son’Allah Ibrahim’s *Zhat*. Likewise, Richards is engrossed with the role of nationalism in consciousness raising and the construction of identity in postcolonial literary texts. It also sheds light on the momentous role played by Black Nationalist movements for the emergence of female nationalist characters in postcolonial works.

However, the current study is grounded on Gorette Kyomuhendo’s *Waiting*. It shares with the preceding works both the rebuttal to Western codes by the ex-colonized communities and their attempt to connect to indigenous life. In clear, postcolonial nationalism is actually an anti-West epistemology set in a rural area which makes the nation get rooted in its authentic way of life. Like in Richards and Marie-Messih’s works, this study predicates the contribution of nationalist discourse in the emergence of a cultural identity for post-colonial societies of Africa. As a matter of fact, the thrust of this paper is to show the author’s way of showing how anti-Westernism has gained currency in the framework of postcolonial studies. More importantly, it delineates the process of cultural emancipation of postcolonial peoples through the formulation of anti-imperial discourses based on cultural difference.

For its implementation, this study uses postcolonial theory as the theoretical framework for data collection, analysis and interpretation. It leans on the idea of ‘nation’ and the concept of shared community that Benedict Anderson glosses as “imagined community” (1983, p. 15). This permits post-colonial cultures to resist the West through its repudiation. It also helps re-construct both a self-image and an idealistic world in which they can seek liberation from Western cultural oppression. For a good understanding of this approach, the argumentative logic of the work emphasizes, in a first instance, Western embargo on African healthcare apparatus. In a second instance, it highlights the demonization of the West. In a last instance, the emancipation process of Africa through postcolonial nationalism is labored with acumen.

1. THE RHETORIC OF COLONIAL HEGEMONY: WESTERN EMBARGO ON AFRICAN HEALTHCARE

With the view to bringing under control the dominated Third-World and to upkeeping their interests in ex-colonies, some countries of the dominant First-World often use oppressive means. In the postcolonial framework, embargo is the political and economic weapon that the West uses to subdue, if need be, non-conformist African countries. Through the narratives of many a postcolonial novel, one can read the reprisals in store for the nation-states which refuse to owe allegiance both Western political and economic hegemonies in ex-colonies. In texts by many anti-imperial African novelists, the excesses of the Western intervention in a contemporary context are troubleshoot by the African people with particular acumen. The narratives of *Waiting*, the novel under consideration, accounts for the decolonization of the African communities and

advocates nationalism or what we could term the Africanization of local industries. This reality is evidenced through President Amin Dada's attempt to dispossess Indian businessmen of their business to the detriment of his fellow African citizens. In fact, we are informed that president Amin Dada nationalizes the coffee factory, the cotton mill and the sawmill owned by Indian businessmen in the text. One can read: "Then Amin chased all the Indian from Uganda" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 20). In his desire to free his land from European traces or marks, President Dada goes further striving to remove Western religion to the detriment of Islam. One is informed that "Amin Dada came to power in 1971, he wanted to convert all the people to Islam" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 75). Such a revelation is tantamount to promoting Arabic civilization or religion and erasing Western culture.

Further to this nationalist threat to foreign business together with the Islamicization of the country is an embargo on basic healthcare items meant for hospitals in a war-stricken Uganda is imposed upon by British authorities in order to subdue African communities. "[T]here were no vaccines" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 15) in sick houses in spite of the outbreak of measles epidemic. Infirmaries were forced to close down because of the British authorities' pressure on international suppliers with medical consumables. Owing to European lobbying on laboratories, medical cooperation with Amin Dada's regime breaks off. Ever since such vital products lack, hospitals irremediably become inoperative. The narrator explains that in these moments, people have nowhere to go to. Father laments over his sick new-born baby saying: "I wish I could take him to the hospital so they might give him an injection. I'm sure it would work faster" (Kyomuhendo, 2008, p. 51).

Beyond the punitive measures, what is substantiated is Western imperialism and the hideous face of these European decision-makers who view their interests. In a colonial or post-colonial context, when the interests of the West in a Third-World country are at stake because of reproachful actions and decisions of its leader, this nation-state gets blacklisted. It automatically gets prone to global opprobrium. International sanctions are yet to befall it even though some innocent populations should suffer from the subsequent side effects. In the implementation of this ban, the British appears to be less sanguine even about the plights of the peripheral rural populations trapped in the war. The reason for this sternness rides on the fact that President Amin Dada is portrayed as a black leader who seems to trample the British's interests under feet for adopting some untamed attitudes. In fact, not only does Amin Dada plan to Islamicize the whole of Uganda but he also promotes the nationalization of all Uganda-based foreign factories. Such a reappropriation of foreign wealth begins with chasing away Indian businessmen from the country. In this context, local communities are made visible. As a result, this anti-West posture leads the nation-state to trouble.

To better understand the hideous face of the West one needs to refer to their blameworthy agency in the narrative of *Waiting*. Indeed, British authorities impose embargoes on Uganda following the concept of "colonial discourse" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 70) in their dealings with the ex-colonized. Colonial discourse is an instrument of domination and power that enables the ex-colonizer to keep on maintaining the ex-colonized under surveillance. On this account, all decisions made by African political leaders should be in synch with the Western ideologies which consist in subjugating Africa. The course of life in ex-dependencies are quiet as long as the dispositions stipulating excessive rights of the center over the periphery are observed. But, when the margin refuses to recognize the supremacy of the Centre (the West), trouble comes in. As long as the subaltern tries to transgress the political hierarchization that grants the ex-colonizer more powers, it is then exposed to sanctions as we are allowed to read in the novel. This is what happens in *Waiting* where President Amin Dada and Uganda get prone to international bans. Vetoes befall Uganda because its leader decides to subvert a central principle of colonial discourse: domination and power of the former coloniser though the story takes place in post-colonial era. Colonial discourse also stipulates that the periphery is always subject to the center.

In spite of the efforts made by the margin, it can never escape what Homi K. Bhabha terms "fixity" which "connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 66). What "fixity" hints at, is that Africa is an inferior continent in the eyes of the West. Consequently, this stereotypical narrative never changes. The same principle according to which Africa

must stay under the influence of the West applies to the society of *Waiting*. In spite of the efforts made by the margin, it can never escape what Homi K. Bhabha terms “fixity” which “connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 66). What “fixity” hints at, is that Africa is an inferior continent in the eyes of the West. Consequently, this stereotypical narrative never changes. The same principle according to which Africa must stay under the influence of the West applies to the society of *Waiting*. In the novel, Uganda is also viewed as an inferior nation-state that should not only keep taking orders from the West but that should also identify with the dominating First-World. This downgrading idea should continue to circulate. In this condition, though President Amin Dada endeavors to repackage the image and the status of his country, it still remains a subaltern in the eyes of Westerners. Also, if Britain admits that Christendom is state religion of Uganda, things should remain so. Nobody should stand in breach because the status of Uganda is by far fixed according to colonial discourse. Nobody in the nation-state, be it the Head of State, should express reservations about the injunctions issued by the colonizer. However, if President Amin Dada decides to subvert this established order concerning the religious status of Uganda, this attempt irremediably sets problems both for himself and the country. The sanctions imposed by the West are justified by the fact that Uganda intends to break off the rigid and unchanged order by trying to write a new narrative. President Amin Dada’s Islamicization of his country is viewed as an attempt to impose a new religious order likewise. Therefore, he attempts to erase, to wipe out Western religion, thereby expressing his hatred for the West. One should contend that international bans befall Uganda because the country gets dislodged from the binding principles of colonial continuum that grants Britain rights to surveillance and domination over her ex-colonies.

In the articulation of cultural and racial dissimilarities, postcolonial studies foreground the concept of ‘alterity’. It has gained much currency in postcolonial criticism because it lays emphasis on the sense-upsetting issue of otherness: it is the idea of an ‘Other’ which is allegedly different from the ‘Self.’ In postcolonial literature, alterity or Otherness is the cultural and racial paradigm that the colonizer uses to promote otherness and differentiation. Basing on the binary opposition white-black, colonizer-colonized, First-World-Third-World, otherness specifically highlights the White man’s reification of the black man who seems not to be part of human critter. The harshness of the war in Uganda does not seem to arouse compassion in the Western community. With the closing of hospitals, these rural communities feel abandoned by the rest of the world: “[T]he rich countries refused to help us. Everyone has been watching and saying nothing as we suffer and drop dead like flies” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 49), a weary man laments.

In the height of the conflict in *Waiting*, the war-torn inhabitants of Ugandan villages have no one to rely on. There is no one they can turn to. The resentment of the West to lend a helping hand rides on their logic of binarism. This holds that the West and the non-West belong to different cultural settings, different racial backgrounds. On this account, the Other, which is in need, should not expect the assistance of the Self to get out of trouble. Also, if Ugandans undergo an embargo, it is not the concern of Britain to get them out this ticklish situation. It is rather up to the Ugandan leader to find ways to address this predicament. It is worth underlying that African problems should be resolved by Africans themselves; not Europeans. There is no way the West should indulge non-West problems as they are racially different. One can read in illustration: The West “see[s] the Other as different from the Self” (Al-Saidi, 2014, p. 95). The kernel of this quote shows that the embargo on Uganda is a sanction that the black continent is concerned with. Following alterity, there is no way for the rich countries to help the ailing populations of the poor nation-states. The reason is that the inferior Africa and the superior Europe are set apart by a dividing line. Even if people of the periphery (the Other) drop like flies this cannot be the concern of the British.

In *Waiting*, the conflict opposing imaginary British authorities to Ugandans sounds to take the form of what Aimé Césaire calls the “thingification” (Césaire, 2000, p. 42) of the black folks. This “thingification” which can be likened to racial animosity is backed up by the Westerners’ refusal to supply the African healthcare area with medicine. It is established that the Western Center and the African Periphery are so antagonistically opposed that there is no room for philanthropic actions as we are given to notice in *Waiting*. As it can be noted, colonial discourse, fixity and alterity contribute to the “*processes of subjectification*”

(Bhabha, 1994, p. 67) that lures Africans into the patronizing strategy of the West. But if such hierarchy have remained unquestioned so far, postcolonial nationalism rather proves critical.

2. POSTCOLONIAL NATIONALISM: THE DEMONIZING NARRATION OF THE WEST

In post-colonial Africa, the drawbacks of the West's political and economic pressures on ex-colonial dependencies are often noticeable at individual and collective levels. This unfair situation brings about happiness and grief in such black nation-states. In Kyomuhendo's novel, the side effects of the British authorities' embargo ushers in an unstoppable tide of anti-West dissatisfaction among the African populations. On this account, postcolonial nationalism turns out to be the timely strategy used by the non-West to voice out its tribulations and frustrations. It is a set of virulent criticisms with the view to constructing a distorted image of the ex-colonizer: an essentialist simplification of Europe. To better labor postcolonial nationalism in the essentializing process of the First-World in this work, a more appropriate concept is spotlighted: "Occidentalism", which is a "form of a hatred of all things Western" (Nayar, 2015: 117). It is a direct response to the West's misrepresentation of Asia and Africa that Edward Said has termed Orientalism. Occidentalism is the way the peoples outside the core of the West construe a negative image of the West through declamations of bitter condemnation. For sake of parallelism, the way the discourse of Orientalism (of the West) constructs a negative image of Africa and Asia, the same way the Occidentalist epistemology (of Asia and Africa) renders a pejorative outlook on the West.

This demonizing way of narrating the Occident; this vehement manner of seeing Western people in a distorted mirror is revealed in Kyomuhendo's novel. As a matter of fact in *Waiting*, the 'Occidental' clamor takes its impetus from the premise that the West's embargo imposed on fictitious Uganda causes an increasing rate of morbidity. The ban also takes its toll on the sick people who are rampant in the Ugandan rural areas. One can read in illustration: "Father had tried to get for Mother the pills that bring more blood, but he failed" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p.17). As it stands out, it is impossible to transfer Alinda's anaemic mother some blood because of the close-down of the Ugandan healthcare system caused by the West. And in spite of the acuity of Mother's health condition, nothing can be done about it because of the Western embargo. Father is therefore compelled to make do with his wife's untenable sufferings imposed on them by the heartless Britain. One may even imagine the unpleasant sensation the man experiences when he realizes he cannot save his spouse that the West causes to agonize. Consequently, the man is worn out from so much grief for not being able to bring his wife support and solace. Prone to such untenable load-bearing trauma, Father is amenable to curse the West for causing the fragmentation his family. Now, if this shortage of blood products should jeopardize human lives in Uganda, British authorities, who are thought responsible for this, are to blame. Deservedly, one may argue that this mischievous and malevolent situation reveals a negative image of the West.

The demonizing narration of the West is also analyzed through postcolonial nationalist discourse by means of Occidentalism. The latter aids in formulating reproaches against the Western mind and its claim to good sense. In fact, the British authorities' manifest agency in the collapse of the Ugandan medical apparatus does not reflect a humane image of themselves. Their greed for profit lures them into senselessness. How can they embargo a neocolonial partner that provides significant business assets to the point of agony? In so doing, the West gets prone to Occidentalist diatribes portraying their mind "as a kind of higher idiocy" (Buurma and Margalit, 2004, p. 75). What is suggested here is that the Westerners seem to have an intelligence under level far below average. One cannot understand that when it comes to preying on African resources, they shamelessly and publicly display their hunger for assets. And now that they face up to an opposing view in Africa, they hit back in reprisals. They doom the population they assume insurgent instead of establishing negotiations for a common ground. Such an attitude of the West to punish in contempt of their own interests is a senseless way of dealing with its ex-colonies. This way of Westerners to ruin the very assets they accumulate is not an intelligent approach.

Destroying a post-colonial dependency that yields fruit is to be highly idiot and less rational. It is the sort of hara-kiri business; that is, a manifest act against one's own interests. As it stands out, the West is richer and more developed than the Third-World. But, when it comes to matters related to good sense, Westerners seem less intelligent and less brilliant than people of the Third-World. This reality may lead one to argue that in material matters, Europe is smart but when it comes to issues inherent in mother wit, she displays a disconcerting imbecility. This is the reason why the idea that the West's claim to rationality is "only half true anyway-the lesser half" (Margalit and Buruma, 2004, p. 76) seems valid. Just to say that in their mitigated interpretation of the notion of rationality, they elect only the biased vision. Hence, their affiliation to the lowest intellectual group according to Occidentalists criticisms.

As a postcolonial nationalist novel, *Waiting* portrays the West as a dystopian society: a dysfunctional civilization with a very poor moral standard. The Western world is viewed as a society undermined by abasing practices of corruption. To enforce their embargo, the British government lobby hard. They exert pressure on distribution multinationals and the Africa-based European industry through bribery. The reason is to paralyze economic activities in Uganda. As it stands out, this economic embargo proves harsh for the population. The sequels of such a ban are patent. A destitute character laments: "there was no soap in the shops" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 19). The indigent man also notes: "[s]ugar, [...] paraffin, [...] those are things we forgot about long ago" (p. 49) because "the factories collapsed" (p. 49) in the whole country.

This hardheartedness to the plights of the famished war-stricken African populations deploys a negative representation of the Western world. It emphasizes their irremediable degree of moral decadence. A Western society that takes delight in perpetrating the slaughter of African communities through the imposition of economic restrictions is viewed as a society on the shore on moral ruin. By bringing the economic activity of Uganda to a dead-end situation with innocent populations severed from basic amenities, the British authorities get prone to Occidentalists condemnations. Such censures therefore liken them to "a repository of social ills" (Bonnet, 2004, p. 40). In the postcolonial nationalist view, the West is a repository of social ills because their presence in Africa rhymes with trouble and distress to populations. Occidentalists critics assume that the unfair sanctions imposed by Westerners on Third-World regimes negatively impact the lives of such peripheral populations. Millions of innocent people have died because of problematic and questionable vetoes by the heartless West take their toll on the life of million innocent people in Africa. Kyomuhendo, as an Occidentalists writer, confirms this assumption. Her novel *Waiting* depicts the difficult living conditions of some Ugandan villagers subsequent to cynical restrictions perpetrated by the callous British authorities. People are short of basic amenities. They drop like flies because of asphyxiating measures taken by the unsympathetic Britain. With the prohibition on medicines, anaemic people like Mother are obliged to put up with the lack of blood bank in the whole of Uganda. Such patients therefore see themselves sinking inch by inch into chaos.

In *Waiting*, the social ills perpetrated by the West is exacerbated by the death of Mother for want of blood plasma. This observation enables one to affirm that "the depiction of Western decadence" should be perceived in "the power of the West [...] to disorient lives" (Bonnet, 2004, p. 79). In fact, a country which was supposed to experience a period of economic and socio-political stability has seen its fate disoriented because of Britain's embargo. Likewise, these Ugandan villagers only needed basic facilities and a good healthcare system for them to take a full part in the development of their nation-state. But now, they sadly see their destiny disoriented because of the West's iniquitous actions. Given the dull picture of the situation depicted, one can doubtlessly assume in the Occidentalists view, Western people are a repository of social ills. They are described as a decadent society because they have the power to confuse the destiny of innocent populations of Africa. Illustratively, troubles, distresses, misfortunes and difficulties are the plights that Ugandan villagers endure through their exposure to the West.

Depicting Britain as a decadent world predicates that being conversant with it is not healthy for the non-West. This is what seems to stem from Kyomuhendo's *Waiting*. The fundamental reason for this posit is that contact with the West engages higher risk of being contaminated by its unscrupulous ways. Such a

First-World country which willingly contributes to the collapse of factories of poor African nation-states is deservedly viewed as an unfriendly fellow. In this perspective, if Ugandans keep bonds with such a predatory West, the legendary decadence of the West can negatively influence them. They subsequently run the risk of becoming as callous as European countries. If Uganda keeps bonds with Western countries, it is sure to be assimilated into the bad ways of the West. The nation might become such a malevolent state that shamelessly attacks neighbor countries with the view to preying on their mineral resources. This repugnant nature of the West concurs with the Occidentalism criticism which holds that Western powers are likened to an “Other” alluding to “a dangerous category, one [the non-Westerners] are well off without” (1996, p. 290) according to Frederic Jameson. Buruma and Margalit echo this essentializing construction of the West by evidencing on the subject matter. For them, the onus is on postcolonial nationalist writers to show that Westernization is as infectious as a bacterium that brings about global pandemics. According to Buruma and Margalit, it falls on the shoulders of Occidentalism authors and scholars to show that exposure to the West is a dangerous category because Westernization is assumed to cause the retarded breakthrough of some emerging economies of the Third-World.

Economic blackmails as well as political pressures exerted on many developing nation-states have finally held back or simply retrogressed some Third-World economies as described in *Waiting*. From the foregoing, one can argue that an Occidentalism author like Kyomuhendo is of the view that the West is a dangerous category that the non-West is well off without. For, not only does Westernization bring about a social malaise but it also represents a toxic process that Margalit and Buruma (2004) rightfully liken to “Westoxication” (p. 109). Through this metaphor, one should perceive the representation of the West as a poisonous or toxic substance that is likely to jeopardize the life of both Africa and Africans in colonial or neocolonial context.

It then comes into clear view that postcolonial nationalism and Occidentalism are similar paradigms. They are all antagonistic to a common oppressor: the West or the First-World. Moreover, they have the same principle which is to question the West: that is to raise skepticism about the Western system of thought. Both the Occidentalism discourse and the postcolonial nationalist narrative use the same strategy: the use of pejorative insinuations to represent the Western world. Their anti-imperial criticisms are so virulent that they are therefore likened to a form of hostility portraying the Periphery as the sworn enemy of the Center; what Nayar terms “hatred of all things Western” (2015, p. 117). To round off the whole, they are not complacent about the West’s impairments observed in international relations with the non-West. The way Occidentalism does not make concessions to the West, the same way African postcolonial “[n]ationalism knows no compromise” (Grosby, 2005, p. 18) with Europe either. However, beyond this criticism, one has to feel a hint of emancipatory project from the part of postcolonial nationalist Africans.

3. POSTCOLONIAL NATIONALISM: THE PROCESS OF CULTURAL EMANCIPATION OF AFRICA

Postcolonialism, in its particularity, encompasses a set of anti-imperial epistemologies aiming at the cultural, political, economic and medical emancipation of the ex-colonized dependencies of Asia and Africa from the tutelage of the ex-colonizer. As a variation of this discourse, postcolonial nationalism seeks freedom for subjugated people in three steps following Kyomuhendo’s approach in *Waiting*. In a first instance, the work suggests the repudiation of Western codes. In the novel, this hardcore trend claims freedom from Western politics of cultural imperium on behalf of African nation-states. The novelist’s narratives establish that the tendency to demonize the West paves the way for African people’s genuine fancy for liberty, excluding any collusion with the imperial power.

In this study, this strategy is glossed as postcolonial boycott of the English language. In the author’s view, Africans’ biased dealings with the foreign medium, their lack of due consideration for the colonial language falls into three reasons. The inability of Bahati, a Tanzanian soldier, to speak English leaves Alinda completely astonished: “I still don’t understand why he doesn’t speak English. I thought he went to school before he joined the army” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 82). In addition, *Waiting* fictionalizes the bad command

of English by Africans through Bahati who is earnestly redeemed by his girlfriend Jungu: “He has learned quite a lot, but he feels shy to speak it when there are many people around. I’ve assured him that you are also his friend and will not laugh at him when he makes mistakes” (p. 89), she confesses to Alinda. In addition to all this, the reduced teaching hours of the colonial language in Tanzania where “English is only taught in private primary schools as a language of instruction” (p. 82) is the last instance of postcolonial boycott of Western paradigms.

What the author drives at is not to emphasize Bahati’s illiteracy nor to insist on the reduced use of English in Tanzanian schools’ curricula. The thrust of Kyomuhendo’s text is to prove that postcolonial nationalism is a spearhead to resist the linguistic hegemony of English. It also allows to resist cultural imperialism. Additionally, and more importantly, the boycott of English suggests the “rejection of assimilationist preoccupation” (Richards, 2005, p. 21) of the British Empire. In implementing the repudiation of the cultural absorption of Africa into Western codes, the nationalist trend of the postcolonial discourse uses binary opposition as a baseline for its politics. “Nationalism knows no compromise” (Grosby, 2005, p. 18) with the West because it nurtures a hardcore fissure between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Under such circumstances, the idea of turning down English is totally at odds with the third space which encourages holistic bond of local and global codes.

In a second instance, the specificity of postcolonial nationalism is that it militates for the return to ancestral values. In this sense, nationalism emphasizes cultural difference between peripheral and central cultures with no possibility to mix up. As Africans, we do not need linguistic compromise with Europe for the upkeep of our local languages. Kiswahili expressions such as “*Poa!*” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 82), “*Mambo Cheupe*” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 82) and “*Huyo ni rafiki yangu*” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 82) are textual pieces of evidence that substantiate and corroborate Africans’ attachment to their ancestral values as a way of defining their own cultural identity. What is highlighted here is the postcolonial concept of ‘provincializing’ (Nayar, 2015, p. 128).

Provincializing is the attempt to continue to use cultural codes and avoid subjugation to foreign control at the same time. It is also an attempt to avoid bringing cultural heterogeneities into master narratives. When postcolonial nationalist people are engaged in provincializing, they even do not need to construct “New Englishes” (Bolton, 2006, p. 240) for the linguistic breakthrough of our indigenous mediums. Moreover, instead of promoting such hybrid languages, what postcolonial Africa needs is to revive its local codes in places where they are threatened of extinction. On this account, the Kiswahili expressions that are blatant in Kyomuhendo’s novel are perfect items and illustrations of provincializing. In fact, through their untranslated forms such as presented in *Waiting*, the readers realize that they are compelled into connecting to their culture if they wish to make out such coded words. However, the underground motivation behind such an initiative is the writer’s clarion call to all contemporary African people to make efforts to learn how to speak their mother tongues as it is the case in Tanzania. When efforts deployed by postcolonial nationalist intellectuals to make Kiswahili a language that bespeaks Tanzanians’ national identity, it therefore becomes a “nation language” (Innes, 2007, p. 238) to the benefit of Africa.

According to Kyomuhendo, provincializing also concerns the return to a local healthcare system based on traditional and ancestral knowledge of Uganda. This is a way of embarking on a radical transformation of the society which turns its back on Western medicine and therefore institutionalizes medicinal remedies derived from native plants. In *Waiting*, the Ugandan peasants rely on medicinal herbs to heal sicknesses. As a proof for “children with little blood” the Ugandan villagers “cook the red-leafed vegetables” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 17) for their healing. The Lendu woman confirms the efficaciousness of folk medicine in Zaïre through the following statement: “we had to use herbs to treat the soldiers’ wounds” (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 55). The use of herbs for medical purposes is illustrative of “nativism” (Nayar, 2015, p. 113). In postcolonial studies, not only does nativism promote the African logic of cultural difference with the West, but - in the course of decolonizing struggles - it also represents “a certain tendency to valorize local, native cultures as a resistance strategy to cultural homogenization by ‘Western’ or colonial texts” (2015, p. 113) to quote Nayar.

By returning to the African ways as portrayed in *Waiting*, the peasant populations of Uganda and Zaïre seek not only the upkeep and revival of ancestral cultural habits but also the revalorization of the African gnosis. To the postcolonial nationalist perspective, the process of nativism is one of the best options to cleave to the African lore. It is also a way of shielding African cultural paradigms from Western cultural contamination.

In a last instance, Kyomuhendo posits that the postcolonial nationalist project finds its most searching treatment when the cultural repudiation and antagonism to the West channels into a massive emancipation agenda. An ethnic people who has firmly resisted the pressures of Western cultural imperialism without falling into the complex of assimilation and cultural identification with the foreign canon, readily aspires to freedom. In Kyomuhendo's work, peasant folks are depicted as an African community which has escaped Western imperium by means of the upkeep and circulation of a national and unifying language. In illustration, Jungu confides in Alinda: "everyone in Tanzania speaks Kiswahili. It is used in offices, schools, and even among the village people who never went to school" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 82). The widespread and nationwide use of a local language partakes in the decolonization process of African cultural paradigms. It is a way for ex-colonized people to show the colonial empire that they have had enough of being subjugated to foreign codes. Therefore for them, it is high time they turned to the ancestral linguistic codes they best define themselves with; and which also bears their cultural burden. For postcolonial nationalists, returning to ancient ways hints at the desire of the non-West to show the West that colonial languages are not fit to speak for both Africans and their identity. This can only be done through reconciliation with the secular local medium. In *Waiting*, the choice of the Tanzanian nation-state to use Kiswahili as a suitable means of communication. Its use in offices, schools and even among illiterate people is of interest insofar as this language creates a tight link between and among African communities. The use of Kiswahili is pivotal. It is tantamount to constructing a nation language that not only leads to unification but which is also likely to assure cultural independence (decolonizing process) from the West's cultural imperium. As a sequel to this, to convey messages among themselves, Tanzanian people do not need the mediation of the colonial language, for their nation language already acts as a bond of union.

From what can be read from the politics of postcolonial nationalism, returning to both folk language and local medicine is a way for the periphery to participate in the anti-West project of writing back to the center. In *Waiting*, Ugandan women "pluck pawpaw leaves and squeeze them" until "they produced thick, dark green juice" (Kyomuhendo, 2007, p. 19). Then they "would mix [it] with hot water" (p.19) and the "mixture produced foam just like soap" (p.19). This ancestral soap production is likened to a postcolonial technique. It is in fact a way of "telling the other side of the story" (Khair, 2009, p. 18). Returning to secular medical practices is a pretext to tell the ex-colonizer that apart from their discourse, another medical epistemology is of great worth. It is also a way to make the West figure out that their biased outlook on Africa is no more valid; but that some emerging voices from the peripheral substrate also have their leeway. Based on *Waiting*, the debated point suggests that the way Western people validate their healthcare apparatus and proclaim it good for humanity, the same way Africa can also prove the validity of its medicinal plants. Africans are so resolute to make the truth surface that there is no way they should abandon their folk healing ways for the so-called conventional medicine.

To Kyomuhendo's contention, validating local medicine while repudiating Western healthcare system is a means for postcolonial nationalists to break the silence. It is a way to assert that Africa has long been imposed on by foreign paradigms; but now the black continent can have its say. This quest for emancipation is rightfully echoed by Bonnet (2004) who points out that the emergence of national awareness in European ex-dependencies appeared to "augur a world preparing to escape European control" (p. 128). Escaping the control of the West means that Africa has its own political, economic and cultural institutions inspired from ancient knowledge and that it does not depend on foreign system of thoughts to function. Being independent means for African nation-states to reach such a level of self-confidence, that is, they do not need foreign expertise for their development. Their economy should not be determined by a Western currency as it is the case of most ex-French colonies of Africa. Emancipated African nation-states are the likes with the full capacity of minting their own money. The development of a powerful economic system with no recourse to

Western financial aids is a determining factor for the emergence and the rise of independent African nation-states. Culturally speaking, independent nation-states are the ones which develop strong cultural standards that solidly subvert foreign codes. At this stage of the study, the postcolonial nationalist agenda of cultural emancipation is attainable only after the successful repudiation and resistance to foreign influences.

CONCLUSION

This paper essentially focused on postcolonial nationalism in Kyomuhendo's *Waiting*. It investigated the author's way of showing how anti-Westernism has gained currency within the framework of postcolonial studies. More importantly, it delineated the process of cultural emancipation of postcolonial societies through the formulation of anti-West discourses. In the deployment of the main issue, this article emphasized the West's imposition of embargoes on Africa's healthcare system as a matter of political and economic pressures on non-conformist leaders. In addition, as a response to colonial eccentricities, the work apprehends postcolonial nationalism not only as a set of vehement criticisms formulated by the ex-colonies of Africa but also as a process of cultural emancipation of African nation-states. The latter branches out into the repudiation of foreign codes, the promotion of national culture based on ancient ways and the politics of 'writing back' against the center.

In a world dominated by the discourse of globalization which sees the openness of all forms of cultural meaning to translation (Bhabha, 1990, p. 314), one may wonder whether the promotion of cultural heterogeneities advocated by postcolonial nationalism still matters. One may also wonder whether cultural difference between Africa and the West, local codes and foreign standards is worth promoting in this borderless world. But what can be argued is that in spite of the hybridization of all cultures and ways of life, the revival of postcolonial nationalism is a must. The revivification of the ancient ways is of vital importance. This premise takes its impetus from the observation that the quick expansion of Western cultural imperialism has lured many African citizens into "lactification" (Fanon, 1967, p. 33) which turns the individual into an "assimilado" (Nayar, 2015, p. 15). Even if it is not that easy to hold back the massive identity disorientation of contemporary African people, the revival of the African way (Armah, 2013, p. 439) can, at least, do something about the engulfing effect of ethnocide. Postcolonial nationalism can help recapture, reconfigure and reconstruct some of the lost cultural items of Africa. But, to attain this aim, it is necessary that this work stirs the society to action. It is high time that postcolonial nationalism served to keep under review the debates made so far on Africans' bond with their ancestral cultures.

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