

The Impacts of Post-Colonial Condition towards the Main Character's Trauma in Chris Cleave's *Little Bee*

ANNISSA MURSALINA AND SISWO HARSONO

**English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University,
Jl. Prof. Soedarto, SH, Tembalang, Semarang
50275**

ABSTRACT

Post colonialism is the result of colonialism. Generally, in post colonialism the values of colonialism still exist but only several people realize about this. This thesis discusses about the impacts of post colonialism that are experienced by the main character (Little Bee) in a novel "*Little Bee*" by Chris Cleave. The purposes of this thesis are to understand the symptoms of *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD) toward the main character and to understand the aspects of post colonialism that are used by the main character to overcome PTSD. In the analysis of PTSD, it requires the knowledge of the reasons someone experiences PTSD. To write this thesis, the writer uses library method and psychological approach. The theories that are used in this analysis are post colonialism and PTSD. The result of this thesis shows that the main character, Little Bee uses several aspects of post colonialism, such as hybridity, mimicry, and stereotype. The usage of these aspects are triggered or are influenced by the situation.

Keyword: Post colonialism, PTSD, Trauma, hybridity, Mimicry, Stereotype.

1.1 Background of Study

Post colonialism is a period when the values of colonialism still exist, although it has been combined with the indigenous. What are the values of colonialism that are left behind? We can say those are languages, style of clothes, and beliefs. We also can see many colonized countries experience post colonialism, some can survive with their limitations, but some can go forward when they decided to join colonized countries' association. One of the colonized countries that experiences post colonialism is Nigeria.

Trauma is a condition that is caused by the bad incident in the past. The incident could be an accident, violence, rape, verbal abuse, or bullying. Trauma could be wounding someone's mentally and physically. The patient usually will re-experience the incident, so the patients have to be cured as soon as possible.

Psychological trauma is one of the traumas that is caused by extreme stress. Psychological trauma happens when someone could not overcome his fear and he may be so stressed and depressed. The patient may end up his life because he is very afraid to experience the same incident like in the past.

Long-term traumatic condition is usually called *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD). Firstly, PTSD was found in 1970s to cure the soldiers after the war. The psychologist found many soldiers suffer trauma because they often see "suicide attacks, sexual assaults or severe sexual harassment, physical assault, serving in medical units, killing or injuring someone, seeing someone being killed, injured, or tortured, and being taken hostage" (APA, 2000, par.7).

PTSD is not only suffered by the soldiers who are back from war, but also common people, such as rape victims, murderer witness, and so on. The victims of PTSD suffer some symptoms like hallucination, feeling wrong, hard to sleep, and so on. Those characteristics make the writer remembers with the novel by Chris Cleave, titled *Little Bee*.

According to the description above, the writer is interested to analyse the novel with trauma and postcolonial theories as extrinsic elements and intrinsic elements to strengthen the extrinsic. Since intrinsic elements like character, setting, and so on are requisite to strengthen the psychological aspects of this novel.

Since the purpose above, the writer will analyse a novel from Chris Cleave, and the title of this thesis is "THE IMPACTS OF POST COLONIAL CONDITION TOWARDS THE MAIN CHARACTER'S TRAUMA IN THE NOVEL *LITTLE BEE* BY CHRIS CLEAVE."

1.2 Objectives of the Study:

The purposes of the study are presented as follows:

1.2.1 To analyse what are the cause of traumatic impacts to the main character in the novel *Little Bee*.

1.2.2 To reveal what are the strategies of the main character to overcome her trauma in the novel *Little Bee*.

1.3 Character

The author also has to give the clear description about his character because it also influences the reader's point of view. Characters are divided into two: those are major and minor characters.

1.4 Setting

There three kinds of setting that can make the reader imagine the atmosphere of a story, those are setting of time, place, and social environment.

1.5 Conflict

Conflict itself differentiates into two; those are internal and external conflicts. Internal conflict happens when someone has a problem with himself and it may be caused depression. Then, external conflict is a conflict that happens when someone has a problem with something outside himself, such as his environment, or other man.

1.6 Theme

Themes may be about fate, death, revenge, or prejudice. Therefore, the points and purpose of the novel can be seen.

1.7 Post colonialism Theory

Post colonialism is a study that learns about the period after colonialism. This theory is important to understand the colonialism era. Here, post colonialism is used as an equipment to overcome trauma. The writer

chooses this theory because in Postcolonial studies, it also learns about post-colonial literature that has a relationship with the novel entitled *Little Bee*.

1.7.1 Hybridity

Post-colonial literature is always connected with the concepts of hybridity, mimicry, and stereotype. Hybridity is one of many ways to make the colonizers more superior than their colonized. Hybridity happens to make the best combination. It can be concluded that the colonizers try to combine their culture with the indigenous. The culture, such as language, art works, behaviour, and so on.

1.7.2 Mimicry

Mimicry is a way to imitate others, in this case the colonized want to be the same as the colonizers. This concept appears because the colonized wants to have the same position as the colonizer either in their homeland or in another country.

1.7.3 Stereotype

Stereotype is a crucial concept of postcolonial literature, because it is always related to race and skin colour. In this case, nigger is always wrong and ignorant. Black people or niggers are always considered as inferior class and white people are always considered as superior class.

1.8 Symptoms of PTSD

1. Re Experiencing: Intrusive recollections of a traumatic event, often through flashbacks or nightmares.
2. Avoidance or numbing: Efforts to avoid anything associated with the trauma and numbing of emotions.
3. Hyper arousal : Often manifested by difficulty in sleeping and concentrating and by irritability
4. Avoidance : Negative feelings about yourself or other people
5. Changes in emotional reactions : Always being on guard for danger

2. Analysis of Character

There are many characters that appear in the novel *Little Bee*. In this story Little Bee is a major character. While, minor characters are Andrew O'Rourke, Sarah O'Rourke, Lawrence, Charlie, Nkiruka, The Soldiers, and The Police. They are classified into minor characters because they appear in the whole story and support the problems of the story. In this analysis, the writer will only analyze the major character.

2.1 Analysis of Setting

In this story, setting differentiates into three; those are setting of place, setting of time, and social setting. Setting of place are in Nigeria, Immigration Detention Centre, and Sarah's House. While, setting of time are in Summer 2005 and Spring 2007. And for social setting, there are upper, middle, and lower class.

2.2 Analysis of Conflict

Little Bee has an external conflict, that conflict is between her and her environment in the Immigration Detention Centre. Little Bee also has an internal conflicts, that is she and herself, especially her thoughts.

2.3 Analysis of Theme

The theme of this story is asylum seekers because the entire story tells about that.

2.3 Aspects of Post Colonialism

The analysis below will explain about PTSD that happens to the major character Little Bee. However, before analysis about PTSD, the writer will also analyze about post-colonialism that happens in the novel and how does the main character can cope her trauma with the post-colonial's aspects.

Why are mimicry and hybridity used by Little Bee to overcome her trauma? Because, mimicry helps her being someone else in every different place, like a chameleon and this act makes her forget her trauma. Whereas, hybridity is used to make a "new Little Bee," so she can ignore her trauma.

Post colonialism has positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is hybridity in Little Bee's clothes, and the negative impact is trauma/ fear of people in the colonized country. The example that explains about post colonialism is the colonizers leave language and religion in the colonized country.

2. 4 PTSD in Little Bee

In analysing the novel *Little Bee*, the writer uses *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD), because trauma is a part of PTSD that is reflected in this novel. The writer would like to give an idea of what the symptoms are experienced by the main character that is presented in The Novel *Little Bee*. Little Bee experiences more than one PTSD symptoms and this have happened more than a month. However, in this story, PTSD that is experienced by Little Bee is not because she is a victim of something that makes her trauma, but she is a murdered and raped witness.

CONCLUSION

After analysing the previous chapter, the writer can conclude that the post-colonial in *Little Bee* have some impacts, includes the psychological aspects of the colonized people. Post colonialism is a scourge that happens in most of the developing countries around the world. Post colonialism gives so many impacts to its colonized countries. Either positive or negative impacts, one of the positive impacts is the cultural mix of the major character with the colonizer so it creates a new culture that is better for them, whereas the example of the negative impacts is fear or trauma. The main character suffers the long-term trauma or is usually called *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD).

At the end, post colonialism may not be seen which are superior and which are inferior, but the long impacts of post colonialism itself must be rethought again. Post colonialism does not only leave positive impacts, but also leaves so many negative impacts. Moreover, a real freedom is a right of every country in the world and we can live side by side without hurting or robbing someone's rights.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APS. (2015). Understanding and managing psychological trauma. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*. 27 Feb 2015 <http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip_sheets/trauma/#s6/>.

Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. (2006). *Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Diagnosis and Assessment*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academy Press.