

Interpretation of Postcolonial Consciousness in British Literature from the Perspective of Common People

Boyang Zhang

Henan Normal University, Xinxiang, Henan 450000, China

461364132@qq.com

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Abstract: Using postcolonial theory, this paper analyzes the national consciousness embodied in the national literature of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and other British regions, and points out that the national literature expresses its love for its own language and culture in various ways, and opposes English in various non-standard forms, especially subverting standard English through “violent language”, So as to highlight the identity and status of national literature and reflect the thought of national independence.

1. Introduction

Postcolonial literature is an important part of postcolonial criticism. Bill Ashcroft and others pointed out that postcolonial literature refers to “The literature of all former colonial countries ruled by Britain and other European powers, as well as the literature of countries and regions affected by imperialist expansion from the colonial era to today [1]. Sheng Ning said:” the postcolonial literature we usually talk about actually covers' postcolonial literature 'and' suzerain literature on colonies and colonies [2]. “ To sum up, the definition of postcolonial literature can be summarized as follows: first, postcolonial literature is the literature of independent countries or regions after being enslaved by the British Empire and other powers and becoming colonies, such as Nigerian literature, Indian literature, Australian literature, and even American literature; second, from the perspective of time, postcolonial literature does not refer to post colonial literature, “Post” is not the concept of time, but people's reflection and evaluation of colonialism relative to the colonial period. Postcolonial refers to “since the emergence of colonialism until today”; thirdly, postcolonial literature also includes “people who have been closely related to it since the colonization of the British Empire” National and regional literature, such as West Indies literature, South Pacific literature, African literature, Chinese literature, British literature other than England, etc.; finally, postcolonial literature also includes literature about the process and experience of colonization within the Empire, that is, within the suzerain itself, such as Defoe's Robinson Crusoe in the familiar English literature , Dickens's great future, Thackeray's vanity fair, etc. [3].

From the above concept, we can find a problem, that is, postcolonial literature researchers pay more attention to British imperialism The relationship between colonies and the study of postcolonial literature are mostly influenced by the binary opposition categories such as the development / development of postcolonial theory, the first world / third world, colonist / colonized, colony / suzerain country, East / West and South dagger, but ignore the anti colonial tendency and national awakening consciousness in the suzerain. As Wang Xufeng said: “The post colonial liberation practice has not only been limited to the colonies and suzerainty, but also began to turn to the inside of the colonies [4].” Based on the theory of postcolonial literature, this paper analyzes the postcolonial consciousness of British literature through the literary interpretation of Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

2. National Consciousness in British Literature

2.1 Nationalism and Irish Literature

Ireland has quite a number of heavyweights in British literature, such as Yeats, Joyce, Beckett, lady Gregory, John Millington Synge (also translated as “Qin Gu”), etc. Olivier, the famous leader of the Irish national movement, believes that the development of eternal British and Irish literature depends on whether a writer can and is willing to take the cause of nationalism as his own responsibility... No great literature can exist without its nation.

If a nation leaves great literature, it cannot determine its characteristics. In order to get rid of Britain's political and cultural constraints, Irish writers must create conditions for the development of Ireland's unique national imagination. This idea has received a positive response from a large number of writers [5]. Joyce is regarded as “the core figure of post colonial writers in English literature because of his way of dealing with British tradition and forcing English to serve his Irish theme”. He found a way to express Irish nationalism from European symbolism and realism. His novel *Finnegan's awakening* fully embodies the spirit of post colonialism and makes “standard English go to bed”. Eagleton said: “Joyce uses English as a carrier to oppose the country that nourishes it (English), which changes the power relationship at the discourse level... Therefore, in the eyes of the language owner, English has become strange. He (Joyce) represents the oppressed and humiliated ancestors and gives a powerful counterattack to the colonists [6].”

2.2 Nationalism and Native Language: Scottish Literature

While the British colonists promoted English and strengthened cultural rule on the British island, they also suppressed the Celtic language (Celtic is mainly used in Wales, Scotland and other places). The branches of Celtic, Manx and Cornish, have become extinct. Although England promotes a strong culture, Scottish nationalities have not given up their own language. They continue to use Celtic for literary creation, and even use Scottish Gaelic, which is the least spoken of the three Celtic languages on the British island [7]. In Scotland, Gaelic literature is closely related to nationalism, in which important Scottish writers and poets Sorley MacLean and novelist Iain Crichton Smith play a great role. “MacLean's poetry is better than everything”, “Gaelic is still the important core of young people's view of Scottish culture”. However, there are less than 80000 people who can speak Scottish Gaelic. Scottish is often regarded as “dialect of English” or “variant of English” [8].

Although the Scottish language is on the verge of extinction, Scots cherish their own language. Robert Burns, the great Scottish poet, set a good example for their nation: only in Scottish can they express their deepest and hottest feelings. Hugh MacDiarmid is a major Scottish poet in the 20th century and one of the main founders of the Scottish National Party in 1928. When he started writing, he also used English. However, he gradually found that he could not express his thoughts in English [9]. In the poem “the long snake coiled”, he lamented: “curse my double life! Two languages! / - the good Scottish language is ravaged by English. / speaking of Scotland in English words is like asking squeaky birds to sing Beethoven.” later, he wrote in a unique Scottish language, *laalans*. This language is an artificial combination of ancient Scottish words and lowland dialects found in dictionaries. Only writers who really understand the soul of Scottish and can use it freely can really give full play to its charm and characteristics. Bill Ashcroft and others called this phenomenon “the misappropriation of language” in the reverse writing Empire: the theory and practice of postcolonial literature. “The misappropriation of language is an important means for postcolonial writing to show cultural differences.”

2.3 Nationalism Consciousness: Welsh Literature

As an ancient Celtic language, Welsh didn't get the same status as English until 1965. But today, the status of Welsh is challenged by English. Even if there are a small number of works created in Welsh, these works lack the ability to compete with works created in English. Thomas is the most famous nationalist in Wales. In one of his early poems, he mourned that the Welsh people were enslaved by the English language and lost their right to speak. But Thomas is a contradictory figure. At first, he hated English, but he had to write in English. He admitted that “if he writes poetry in Welsh, he lacks the ability to understand the nuances of that language”, and finally he can write in authentic Welsh [10]. When he recalled the past, Thomas was full of guilt and remorse. He always

felt that poetry written in English was like taking salt from his wound. In fact, his Welsh language doesn't sound pure, some stiff and bookish.

In short, other peoples in the British Isles regard English as a foreign language rather than their own language. This view is the same for those expatriates who are proficient in English. At the end of the portrait of a young artist, Joyce described Stephen as: no matter how proficient he was in English, he still felt that he was “a foreigner, low-level and deprived of his rights”. The national consciousness of these three nationalities is because they have been constantly seeking national cultural identity. “Scottish, Irish and Welsh writers have never stopped thinking about their cultural identity, but English poetry lacks that element [11],” said skemer, editor in chief of poetry review

3. “Violent Language” in Literature

Postcolonial writers used misappropriation, rewriting and addition to subvert the language centralism of the suzerain state, so as to highlight their national language and cultural identity. Cultural identity is an important concept of postcolonial theory. “Cultural identity is a value identity that forms cultural differences in contrast with the cultural mirror image of others. Generally speaking, cultural identity potentially exists in various power struggles at home and abroad. Its gender, race, class, age, language, circle, community and other factors make the identity structure present a motley color, which means that the individual existence value cannot be separated from its cultural identity, On the contrary, it is always deeply influenced by the whole society and ethnic groups. When post colonialism is popular, cultural identity is related to discourse. Language can better reflect the discourse power of literature. With a language to express their thoughts, the result is to have a real cultural identity and realize individual values [12] However, the best expression of this nationalism is the use of dialects in literary creation that cannot be found in standard English. Such languages make people sound as if they have been attacked by violence, which can be called “violent language” (i.e. dirty words or curses). James Kelman and Irvine Welsh It is a writer who subverts English in this way.

Another Welsh writer with similar creation is Elvin Welsey. He is a contemporary Scottish novelist. He has also written scripts and film scripts and directed films. *Trainspotting* (also translated as *psychedelic train*) is his masterpiece [13]. The novel language of train guessing is described as “obscene” and “filthy” In Welsey's first work for television, the word f.word (short for luck) appeared 61 times, which is much worse than that in Kelman's novel which appeared more than 4000 times. In Irving Welsey's novel *guess the train*, many dirty words were deleted [14].

On the whole, this novel uses less foul language than Coleman's novels. Coleman's and Welsey's subversive language is considered postcolonial, which is related to an event in the Australian theater. In 1968, Alex Buzo's new work *Normand Ahmed* premiered with “f_” As a result, several members of the crew were arrested. Australian scholars Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins believe that the “F -,” contained in the play is undoubtedly a symbol of anti colonialism (or a word used to express the strongest emotions of post colonialism against colonialism) The use of these languages in drama is also a challenge to standard English in Australian English. In this way, the use of the words “F -,” marks the greater application of dialects and the significance of anti colonial traditions. The latter is an important element to be considered in the interpretation of Scottish novels in Post Colonial literature.

4. Conclusions

Elleke BOEHMER summed up British Postcolonial Literature: anti colonialism is the core of national unity in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and literature provides them with spiritual weapons [15]. The author wants to use the views of two famous Chinese and foreign experts to end this paper. Indian scholar ranaj Guha put forward “subaltern studies” (also known as Dalit Studies), which means the study of the relationship between the bottom characters (i.e. subordinates) who do not have their own discourse power and the ruling class who has discourse hegemony and fictitious history. The purpose is to clarify the history and reveal the true face of the ruling class, so as to get

rid of the mainstream culture and highlight multiculturalism. Wang Yuechuan, a Chinese scholar, said that cultural pluralism tells people to resist unilateralist culture at the cultural level and insist that the world should not be dominated by one yuan, but should show pluralism and multipolarity of culture and discourse. This is where we pay attention to the postcolonial consciousness in British literature

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