

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The writer uses the theory of stereotyping as a signifying practice to explain the analysis on the novel *Home and Exile*. In addition, the writer also includes the notion of domination and subordination on a nation. Therefore, the writer will discuss about the notion of Igbo people.

A. Stereotyping as a Signifying Practice

According to Stuart Hall, in his book *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple essential characteristics, which are represented by Nature. Here are four aspects that explain about stereotyping: (a) the construction of otherness, (b) stereotyping and power, and (c) the role of fantasy (Hall 257).

a. The Construction of Otherness

Stereotypes get hold of the few simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized characteristics about a person, reduce everything about a person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development of eternity. Therefore, the first point is stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes, and fixes difference (Hall 257). Stereotyping divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. Then it excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different. For this

reason, stereotypes are also more rigid than social types. Therefore, another feature of stereotyping is its practice of closure and exclusion. It symbolically fixes boundaries, and excludes everything which does not belong.

Stereotyping in other words, is part of maintenance of social and symbolic order. It sets up a symbolic frontier between the 'normal' and the 'deviant', the 'normal' and the 'pathological', the 'acceptable' and the 'unacceptable', what 'belongs' and what does not or is 'other', between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', Us and Them. It facilitates the 'binding' or bonding together of all of Us who are 'normal' into the 'imagined community', and it sends into symbolic exile of Them - 'The Others' - who are in some way different (Hall 258).

In short, stereotyping classifies people according to a norm and constructs the excluded as 'other'. Stereotypes is one aspect of the habit of ruling groups to attempt of fashion the whole of society according to their own world view, value system, sensibility and ideology (Hall 259).

b. Stereotyping and Power

Within stereotyping, there is an establishment of a connection between representation, difference, and power. People often think of power in direct physical coercion or constraint. However, people have also spoken, for example of power in representation; power to mark, assign and classify; of symbolic power; of ritualized expulsion. Power, it seems, has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including power to represent someone or something in

a certain way. It includes the exercise of symbolic power through representational practices. Stereotyping is a key element in this exercise of symbolic violence (Hall 260).

Power also involves knowledge, representation, ideas, cultural leadership, and authority, as well as economic constraint and physical coercion. Power can not be captured by thinking exclusively in terms of force or coercion, power also seduces, solicits, induces, wins consent. It can not be thought of in terms of one group having a monopoly of power, simply radiating power downwards on a subordinate group by an exercise of simple domination from above. It includes the dominant and the dominated within its circuits. The circularity of power is especially important in the context of representation. The argument is that everyone – the powerful and the powerless – is caught up, though not on equal terms, in power's circulation (Hall 261).

c. Power and Fantasy

The most important thing is that stereotypes refer as much to what is imagined in fantasy as to what is perceived as 'real'. They also refer to what is visually produced by the practices of representation. In addition, stereotypes also have deeper meaning that lies in what is not being said, but is being fantasized, what is implied but can not be shown. Therefore, stereotypes have a particular type of power, a hegemonic and discursive form of power, which operate as much through culture, the production of knowledge, imagery and representation, as

through other means. Moreover, Stereotype is circular. It implicates the subject of power as well as those who are subjected to it (Hall 263)

B. Domination and Subordination

Issues of domination and subordination surface most directly in terms of colonial military control genocide and economic under development. In more cultural terms, questions arise about the denigration and subordination of native culture by colonial power. This includes the very language of a major colonial power, a suitable tool for postcolonial writer. On the other hand, English has a variety of global terms, leading postcolonial literatures to be concerned with a range of Englishness. Depending on which side of the equation is stressed, a postcolonial writer might choose to either abrogate on appropriate English.

According to Chris Barker in his book *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practices*, the abrogation or denial of the privilege English involves a rejection. The second, the appropriation and reconstitution of the language to new usages, marks a separation from the site of colonial privilege. Abrogation is a refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetics, its assumption, its illusionary standard of normative or correct usage and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning inscribed in words. Appropriation is the process by which the language is taken and made to bear the burden of one's own cultural experience, or to convey a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own (Barker 220).

Domination and subordination is a relationship which occurs not only between nations or ethnic groups but also within them. The emphasis on ethnicity in postcolonial theory literature can mask the power relations of gender. For example, images of women are significant bearers of the purity and reproduction of the nation. Further, women carry a double burden of being colonized by imperial power and subordinated by colonial and native men. Indeed, Spivak has argued that the 'subaltern cannot speak', by which she means that poor women in colonial context have neither the conceptual language to speak nor the ear of colonial and indigenous men to listen. It is not that women cannot literally communicate but that there are no subject positions within the discourse of colonialism which allow them to articulate themselves as persons. They are condemned to silence (Barker 221).