

Law and Literature: A Discourse on the Dialectics of Colonial Justice in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Paradise*

ABIGAIL ONOWOSEMENMEN OAIKHENA

Abstract

This research investigates the state of colonial justice and fairness as portrayed in Abdulrazak Gurnah's novel, *Paradise*. It explores the trajectory of the epistemic laws and dispositions of the colonizer towards the colonized, as the cultural values, traditional norms and taboos of the natives were not considered during colonization. Consequently, the literary representation of the irregularities in the established colonizer's epistemic law upon the colonized, makes the empiricism of justice questionable, as the malignancy of their laws hit hard on the colonized. Hence, the literary artist interrogates the dispensation of the alleged universality of justice by the West on colonial subjects, within the functionalities of their established jurisprudence in these colonies. Thus, the postcolonial literary writer, Abdulrazak Gurnah, protests against the subjugation and domination of the established colonials' hegemonic laws against the natives (their hosts), due to the obvious lack of ethical and cultural negotiations. As seen in *Paradise*, the Nobel Laureate, raises salient thoughts in line with Gayatri Spivak's discourse on law and the subalterns in postcolonial literary discourse. Data were collected through fictional, critical and analytical method based on textual discourse/analysis. Postcolonial literary theory is suitably applied, as it lucidly unravels the disregard and abuse of the fundamental human rights of the margins by the West during colonization in Zanzibar, a major region in Indian Ocean narratives.

Keywords: Epistemic, Colonizer, Jurisprudence, Postcolonial, Subaltern

Introduction

Given the complementary roles of law and literature, it is important to investigate their cognate functions in addressing societal travails, in order to achieve a noble and healthy society. It is on this substantive prism, in recent studies, that researchers begin to investigate the intersection between law and literature, while empirically

highlighting their distinctive positions in the society generally. Law, according to Paton, “consists of a body of rules which are seen to operate as binding rules in the community by means of which sufficient compliance with the rules may be secured to enable the set of rules to be seen as binding” (45). Austin added that, “a law is command which obliges a person or persons to a course of conduct” (10), while literature, on the other hand, “is at bottom, a criticism of life” (Matthew Arnold, 65), as it is about “writing, which expresses and communicates thought, feelings and attitudes towards life” (Rees, 59). They are both concerned with individuals and the society itself.

Succinctly, the synergy between law and literature, in societies, is anchored on the interplay of tradition, ethics and justice. They both advocate and influence the society for good; while literature addresses and speaks on issues, law commands and enforces orders when necessary. Literature can easily be understood, while in most cases, law needs to be interpreted by professionals and experts; it is this level of interpretations that usually comes with irregularities, compromise, infringement and abuse of victims.

Although A. V. Dicey believes that “Law is the reflection of public opinion” (28), while Salmond supports that it is a “body of principles recognised and applied by the State in the Administration of Justice” (87). But Roscoe Pound is of the view that “Law is a social control through systematic application of force in a politically organised society” (24). Hence, it is “the form of the guarantee of the conditions of life, of society, assured by State's power of Constraints,” (Hearing Hearing). So, Austin simply says that “law is aggregate of rules set by men politically superior or sovereign to men as politically subject” (18). Evidently, law becomes an established rule of the politically superior on the politically inferior. Ironically, any command or justice that comes within the ambience of rules set by the politically superior (colonizer) upon the politically inferior (colonized) can be perceived as an epistemic injustice in the traditional society of the colonized.

From the foregoing, law can be manipulated and this is the interest of postcolonial writers in the discourse of law and literature. To the colonized, the colonizers implement punishments, sanctions and trials, in accordance with their law(s) that subjugate and derogate the colonized. That is why Gayatri Spivak asserts that “It is also that, in the constitution of that Other of Europe, great care was taken to obliterate the textual ingredients with which such a subject could cathect, could occupy (invest?) its itinerary – not only by ideological and scientific production, but also by the institution of the law” (75). She further asks “can the subaltern speak? ... the exclusion of the margins of even the center periphery” (90). So, the subalterns are colonial subjects in every postcolonial society whose narratives reflects on similar

thematic parallels that preoccupy postcolonial literature.

So, the new narrative is that the thoughts of the postcolonial writer should not be glorified as clash of cultures, but a protest against the abuse of human rights and a gross infringement of a people's law. As the natives are conquered, they, however, lack the courage to confront their colonizers and their intimidating weapons, which they usually use to unleash mayhem upon their host communities at the face of any resistance or hesitation; hence, the law of the colonizer takes preeminence. This law, according to Cilliers, "has little to do with rationality and a lot with power" (9). The natives are subdued, subjugated and striped of their human rights as against the 'cultural clash narrative' which suggests an equal counter resistance. That is why Cornell views Jaques Derrida 'Deconstruction' on colonial discourse as not just "to expose the nakedness of power struggles [but], indeed, of violence masquerading as the rule of law" (155).

Consequently, the colonizer's law only attracts civil punishment upon the politically targeted offenders, (a tool of oppression), as Robert F. Kennedy rightly puts that "the poor man looks upon the [colonizer's] law as an enemy, not as a friend. For him the law is always taking something away" (6). However, that of the colonized attracts divine punishment like death, insanity, barrenness etc. upon the true offenders, based on the level of the abominable act or taboo commented, as it indiscriminately prosecutes both the ruler and the ruled alike.

Hence, in the dispensation of justice of the colonized, there is no act of selective justice, as it is divinely dispensed at traditional shrines to ensure equity and transparency, rather than intimidation and falsehood suggested by that of colonizer, through the power of litigations and interpretations in courtrooms. As Lawrence Freidman admits that "on the whole, it is reasonable to suppose that justice is not as blind and classless as it pretends; it squints in one direction" (185). This actually questions the interest and intention of the colonizers upon the colonized, as the latter seem already organized and pragmatic in their dealings than the former, whose alien law is politically bias and corrupt. So, this could be their desire for their colonies in order to protect their interest, as Spivak will say "we never desire against our interest, because interest always follows and finds itself where desire had placed it" (7)

Then, it is evident that the foreigners forcefully and deliberately destroy the unique existing law of the natives in order to establish their unstable and manipulative law for their personal interest, and at the detriment of the society's development. Herbert Jacob warns that "it is easy to jump to conclusions based on superficial observations; the reality is quite complicated" (7). Thus, these altered societies, keep struggling with these caustic alien laws, of survival of the fittest, right from independence till date. So, to Staley Fish, the colonizer's law is a

“machine...[that] functions to erase the mythical foundations authority” (158) in order to erect “radically unjust societies”. (Lotter, 4)

So, the unbalanced scale of justice, which usually swings its pendulum of injustice against the politically inferior, colonized, and the poor comes to play when Spivak, again notes that:

Antonio Gramsci's work on the subaltern classes' extends the class-position/class-consciousness argument isolated in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. Perhaps because Gramsci consider the movement of historical-political economy in Italy within what can be seen as allegory of reading taken from or prefiguring an international division of labour. Yet an account of the phased development of the subaltern is thrown out of joint when his cultural micrology is operated, however remotely, by the epistemic interference with legal and disciplinary definition accompanying the imperialist project “(9).

Consequently, the effect of the arbitrary interpretation of laws to displace the colonized is still palpable in these post colonies as at present, as Achille Mbembe notes that the “banality of power ... simply referring to the way bureaucratic formalities or arbitrary rules, implicit or explicit, have been multiplied” (1) and “confrontation occurs the moment the *commandement*, with vacuous indifference to any sense of truth, seeks to compel submission and force people into dissimulation” (8). So, to the subalterns, the colonizer's law is just a façade of oppression targeted for the weak, since it is established for the politically inferior *ab initio*.

Postcolonial Theory

The concept of Otherness in Edward Said's *Orientalism* can be analyzed through Žižek's (2002) idea of 'Redemptive Violence' (his approach on Lenin, V. I. (1992). *The State and Revolution*), where the colonial subject relegates himself, degrading himself to a state where he can no longer have a worse experience and the master can do no worse thereby, rendering the master's abusive tendencies redundant. Said's Otherness reflects the subjugation of the Orient, as he already classified and categorized 'himself' before the West, in order to avoid the Eurocentric attitude of class-rule towards the colonized subjects.

According to N. Krishnaswamy,

Edward Said's *Orientalism* enlarged the scope of the post colonial approach by exposing the Eurocentric universalism which establishes Western superiority over East, identified as the 'other'. The Orient, a colony, according to Said, features in the Western mind as a sort of surrogate and underground self. In other words, the Orient is represented in terms of the

qualities that the Westerners do wish to attribute to themselves, qualities like decadence, laziness, stupidity, sensuality, effeminacy, etc. The people in the East are seen as 'masses and not individuals' (91)

It is within this ambience of psychological abuse, with the fast-eroding cultural values of the natives, due to the established Western laws, that postcolonial theorists begin to address issues affecting their local communities. As Andrew Bennet and Nicholas Royle add that “the term postcolonial should be seen as covering all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (214). Ann Dobie further stressed that:

The subject matter of postcolonial literature is marked by its concern for ambiguity and loss of identity. Written by culturally displaced people, it investigates the clash of culture in which one culture deems itself to be the superior one and imposes its own practice on the lesser powerful one. Its writers examine their histories, question how they should respond to the changes they see around them, and wonder what their society will become (Ann Dobie, 208).

Thus, postcolonial theory is primarily concerned about a people who encountered colonialism at any point in their history. So, to John Lye, “Postcolonial theory deals with the reading and writing of literature written by previously or currently colonized countries or literature written in colonizing countries, which deals with colonization or colonized people” (1). Hence, as a multi facet discourse, Bill Ashcroft et al. assert that “postcolonial theory involves discussion of various kinds of migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, differences, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial cultures such as history, philosophy and linguistics”. (1-2)

Consequently, postcolonial theory is not restricted to any region or space, as it traverses all areas of discourse within the purview of colonial interferences. So, affected critics/writers are engaging this discourse from different perspectives, while exploring and highlighting the harsh realities that have engulfed these societies since their encounter with imperialism.

The Discourse

The intriguing novel, *Paradise*, is set in Zanzibar and neighboring hinterlands. The society generally is a precolonial society that is at the verge of colonization. A society, governed by no formerly written law, but with long held traditional practices until the coming of the Arabs, Germans and Europeans. These colonialists

established laws that favor them to the detriment of the natives who could not interpret or understand the intricacies of their laws. Hence, law becomes a major tool for plunder by the colonialists, as Škop argues that “law is characterized by battles for influence. Various actors try to obtain monopoly over the definition of individual notions and these battles have the nature of battles over language and interpretation” (9).

So, despite the existence of their atypical imperialist laws that displaced the native, they still treat them with contempt, as they are regarded as the inferior. The Literature Nobel Laureate describes this society as underdeveloped, timid, enslaved and further denigrated by these invading colonialists. However, the society is first controlled by some Indian merchants, who treated the natives with scorn, as the Indians are so money conscious and greedy in the novel. After Mohammed Abdulla, a character in the text, encounters the Indians, he warns, “never, you trust the Indians!... he will sell you his own mother if there's profit in it. His desire for money knows no limits” (133). Nevertheless, these foreigners haggle their supremacy over the natives, as they are more interested in what to plunder than the society's development.

However, the Arabs displaced the Indians and established their autonomy. They introduced them to their religion, trade and other forms of exchange. The Arab traders, the merchants, do business on their own terms, which do not usually favour the natives, but they have no choice as they are their first call to civilization. The Arabs are perceived to be vicious traders, and their introduction of slave trade further attest to this fact, but the natives were too timid and naïve to distinguish between fair and unjust treatment. According to the narrator:

you'll be thinking: how did so many of these Arabs come to be here in such a short time. When they started to come here, buying slaves from these parts was like picking fruit off a tree. They didn't even have to capture their victims themselves, although some of them did so for the pleasure of it. There were enough people eager to sell their cousins and neighbours for trinket. And the markets were open everywhere (131).

It is evident that the Arabs introduce them to slave trade, an undignified trade, which denigrates a people's history and cultural heritage. Conversely, at that time, their form of trade was trade by barter- the Arab merchants go to the up hills, deep deserts and the hinterlands to trade with those they refer as savages, who they will not offer money, but cheat them with items like used clothes, food and other things. During this era, these traders regarded themselves as the superiors, as they oppressed and dominated the land with no interest towards the natives' development. They exploit

these savages to enrich themselves and maintain their class. Again, Abdalla reveals that;

To trade, we go to the driest desert and the darkest forests... [where] they live like paralysed insects.... There, cloth was still the most common item to exchange. The savage did not trade for money. What could he do with money? They also had some clothes, sewing needles, hoe blades and knives, tobacco and a well-hidden supply of powder and shot, which were taken with them as a special gift for to the more difficult sultans. When all else fails, powder and shot never does (119).

So, the Arabs seem more cruel than the Indians in their mode of trade, as they entice the natives with some intoxicants and harmful objects in order to carry their trades. It is also a period where homosexuality is frowned at by few religious Arab faithful, not because there is any established law for or against it, but many of their young men carelessly indulged in it. The handsome protagonist is always warned by the father not to play with the older boys who usually “forced the younger ones to expose their little abdallas” (7). While living with Uncle Azizi, he also warned him against his porters and guards who were practicing gay. But finally, he had an experience with Abdalla, according to the narrator: “after a moment he reached for Yusuf’s thigh and squeezed it gently. How you have grown in this journey, he said looking away. Yusuf saw that Mohammed Abdalla had an erection under his cloth and immediately rose to leave” (174).

The period is known with illegalities and intimidation by these Arab elites and merchants. Uncle Azizi, one of the popular merchants, also known as the Seyyid, is well known for confiscating his debtors’ children, using them as his personal slaves until their debts are settled. This is the case of the protagonist, Yusuf, a young boy taken by the Seyyid due to his father’s debt. It is also the case of Khalil and Amina, the latter that Seyyid takes as his second wife.

The unconscious trope of betrayal in Gurnah’s writings, surfaces in the novel as the young protagonist’s father betrays his son, Yusuf. At first, Yusuf sees Uncle Azizi, the merchant, as his biological uncle and addresses him as such. He is oblivious of his father’s dealings with the merchant, neither did he envisage himself being used as a collateral for his father’s unpaid debt when he is asked to pack his little belongings and go with the merchant on one of his visits. Yusuf wakes up to reality as Khalil, the young man who suffers the same fate as him at the merchant shop, where they are kept as dirty shop keepers, reveals to him that:

You’re here because your Ba owes the seyyid money. I’m here because my Ba owes him money... your father owes him a lot, otherwise you wouldn’t

be here. Your Ba would've paid him, so you could stay at home and eat malai and mofa every morning... you don't have a sister, maybe, or he'd taken her. He ain't your uncle. You'd better learn that quickly, zuma. It's important for you. He doesn't like little beggars like you calling him Uncle, Uncle, Uncle. He like you to kiss his hand and call him seyyid. In case you don't know what that means, it means master. (24-5)

In this mundane religious society, the subjugation of the poor natives by the Arabs elite is like norm or 'constituted law' which is still supervised by these foreign Arabs. The majority of the natives live in abject poverty while depending on their rich religious/capitalist invaders, who have taken over the economy, for survival. This is another level of epistemic injustice upon the colonized Gurnah tries to depicts through religion. Igwe puts that: "It is important to note that despite the proclaimed secular nature of the colonial state, there was a mix between colonial politics and colonial religion . . . [such that the colonized] did not know who came to missionize and who came to politicize" (26).

However, the natives accommodate any kind of judgement or rule given by the foreign politically superior in order to survive in their land. In all of these irregularities, Gurnah projects Hussein, a petty trader, as a lone voice of justice, who frowns at the Arabs' selfishness and the nature of their inhuman trade upon the natives. He warns Hamid (a middle man) about his business partner, Azizi, the merchant, on the nature of their trade. He interrogates him:

What is that crooked partner of yours up to this these days? ... you know how it is. How many people has he ruined already? He cuts you above your means, and then when you can't pay up, he takes everything.... That is if the partner cannot pay up, he takes his sons and daughters as rehani. This is like in the days of slavery. It is not the way honourable people should conduct themselves. (88-9)

However, Hamid, like every other capitalist trader, is more concerned about the benefits and profits of trade. He believes the trade is all about profit making, irrespective of what is involved or their mode of exploitation. Even if Hussein should talk about law and justice in Zanzibar, not in the hinterlands where they carry out their dubious trade. In Hamid's defense, he attacks Kalasinga, a friend, who tries to make him see reason in Hussein advice. To him, Kalasinga is corrupt in his own trade, and so is everyone else. So, no one should correct the other, despite knowing what is just. He asks, "when did you discover the law, you lying scoundrel? Whose law are you talking about? The amount you charge all of us for simple task...you call that living by the law?" (88).

The 'law' Hamid is referring to here is not the civil law, but that of the religion as they tend to propagate as Muslims. Gurnah depicts this act to portray the role of religious leaders in the precolonial society. He shows the first level of the perpetrated injustice upon the natives by the Arabs, a supposed religious people. They also introduced formal slave trade and homosexuality to the natives, according to the text. So, with these, the writer interrogates the true nature of foreign religion in these colonies and post colonies presently.

Succinctly, this Arab colonial society is preoccupied by religious deception, hypocrisy and quest for power, as they protect their selfish interest through their religious scumbling laws before the coming of the Europeans. But Gurnah is raising salient questions, as he juxtaposes the European rule against that of the Arabs. As for him, does the establishment of European colonial laws really change anything? Was it the same act like that of the Arabs, but different in style? Is the exploitation still prevalent in this society? These and many other questions he raises in this novel as he writes on the infringement of a society's cultural heritage by the invaders' laws.

However, the coming of the European colonizers ushers in a different phase and new mode of living upon the colonized. In the text, the Arab traders are not at ease with the imminent presence of the west, whose mode of governance is alien to their culture. As they rule with much authority and high disregard for the Arabs and natives alike. To Spivak, the Arabs suddenly became “the margins of the circuit marked out by epistemic violence, ... the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban subproletariat” (78). The case of sultan of Tayari and German Amir Pasha depicts the extent of gross abuse by Germans upon the colonized in the novel. The Arab sultan tried all he could to cope with the intimidation of the foreigner upon him. According to the narrator:

Amir Pasha treated the sultan with utter contempt, deliberately, provoke him to war. This was their method. He demands that the sultan to fly the flag of the Germans, that he swear loyalty to the German sultan and that he hand over all the arms and cannon he possessed, because he was sure to have stolen them from the Germans in the first place. The sultan of Tayari did everything he could to avoid a fight... after Amir Pasha came Prinzi, the German commander, and he made war at once and killed the sultan and his children. (132-3)

Though the Arabs govern with quasi law and order, they are mild in dispensing judgement, unlike the West, who came with established laws, while disregarding the

aborigines with impunity. They constantly abuse the human rights of the natives despite their self-acclaimed lawfulness. They trampled and infringed on the rights of the colonized as though they are less humans. Killing a ruling king and his children in the Western society will attract sanctions and bans, as the world will rise for justice and speak of punishment against the offender, but that is not the case with the colonized. That is why Jack B. Weinstein asserts that: “equal access to the judicial process is the sine qua non of a just society. While we have made enormous strides towards that goal, it is still a glaring truth that equality of access is in the real world little more than a figment of jurisprudential imagination” (655)

However, it is evident that the imperialist laws are alien to the natives, but the foreigners never made any adjustment to accommodate or consider their host. They show little or no mercy in administering judgement to culprits who may not understand what is expected of them. Simba Mwene laments that:

With us, if a culprit show repentance we find it hard to punish him, especially if the sentence is severe. People will come to beg and plead for him and we all have loved ones who'll mourn. But with the German it's the opposite. The more severe the punishment, the more firm and unforgiving he is. And his punishment is always very severe. (115)

The natives actually have their own mode of administering judgement, as they usually put a lot into consideration for the good of their society, which a foreigner may not understand or consider. So, it cannot be said that these precolonial societies were lawless, but there were laws that were inculcated in their culture or religion. These are what the West failed to understand about these societies by being harsh and inhuman towards them. Again, in the text, Abdulla explains a scenario to Yusuf of how the natives grant pardon to offenders, as he talks about Simba Mwene who is journeying with them to trade across the waters; he explains:

He has murdered a man, that's why he's on the journey. To earn enough to compensate the people he has injured, or to perish himself if God wishes it. It was on my words that he was given this chance to redeem himself. Otherwise the relatives of the murdered man would have delivered him to the Germans for vengeance. The Germans would have strung him up sooner than spit at him. They like that kind of thing. Bring them a murderer and their eyes light with happiness as they get the gallows ready. (118).

The German laws in the novel seem to be subjugating and inhumane to the people. They govern them with much disregard and feign interest towards developing and modernizing these colonies. The colonizers are more concerned about their business

and how to use the locals to enrich themselves. They appear to be worse than the Arab merchants they displaced under the guise of their positive laws. Also, they care little or nothing about the natives' wellbeing that they claim to salvage with their concept of colonialization. That is why they make stringent laws to eradicate majority of the strong natives, dispossess the remaining few weak and take charge of their land and natural resources. The narrator confirms that the Europeans:

Take the best land without paying a bead, force the people to work for them by one trick or another, eat anything and everything however tough or putrid. Their appetite has no limit or decency, like plague of locust. Taxes for this, taxes for that, otherwise prison, for the offender, or the lash, or even hanging. The first thing they build is a lock-up, then church, then a market-shed so they can keep the trade under their eyes and then tax it (72).

The European laws introduced the natives to another phase of slavery by weakening the few powerful ones among the colonized and unleashing mayhem. Fair enough, they truncated the Arab trades stopping local taxes in form of tributes, but hanging offenders without investigation, while forcefully harvesting the able-bodied young men to work and till the soil for them, just as the Arab is what Gurnah questions. So, the natives are handicap in their own place, confused and disorientated about all the happening. There is fear, pain and panic from a supposed freedom which the European colonisers promise to grant them after displacing their Arab oppressors. In the novel, the Arab took over by disposing the Indians. The Indian Mukki were businessmen who usually lend money in order to make profit. But, "the Arabs stole the money and bought slaves from one of the savage sultans near here and made the slaves work in the fields and build comfortable houses for them. This is how the town grew" (132).

So, the activities of the European is like a continuation of the Arab under the guise of colonialism. Hence, the natives keep bearing the brunt, especially with the Europeans unfamiliar rules. Again, the narrator laments that "everywhere they went they heard of stories of the Germans, who had forbidden the people to ask for tribute, and had even hanged some people for reasons no one understood" (176). The Europeans treats them as less than animals, despite their interest on their natural wealth. That is why Hussein explains to his friends that:

The European are very determined, and as they fight over the prosperity of the earth they will crush all of us. You'd be a fool to think they're here to do anything that is good. It isn't trade they're after, but the land itself. And everything in it...us. Even in South Africa, it is only the gold and the diamonds that make it worthwhile killing all the people there and taking the

land. ...look how they have divided up the best land on the mountain among themselves...they have driven off even the fiercest peoples and taken their land. They chased them away...and even buried some of their leaders alive.... In their eyes we're animals, and we can't make them stop thinking this stupid thing for a long time (86-7)

The Europeans through their caustic laws subjugate and dominate by making their host subservient. With no regard for cultural traditions, they impose and practice their laws with no interpretation as “it's they who make the law and dictate” (131). Under the pretext of colonization, they plunder and destroy the native cultural heritage. The colonisers are more concerned about their supremacy and superiority than anything else. Hussien asks again, “do you know why they are so strong? Because they have been feeding off the world for centuries” (87). They forcefully take control of everything and eliminate or eradicate any existing tradition or what they do not like about the natives. They intruded and abused that which is held sacred by the colonized, and Gurnah is afraid of the consequences of this European's infringement as he reveals:

I'm afraid... we'll lose everything, including the way we live...these young people will lose even more. One day they'll make them spit on all that we know, and will make them recite their laws and their story of the world as if it was the holy word. When they come to write about us, what will they say? (87)

What makes a people is their law, which often is rooted in their culture. Again, in the novel, the Europeans are mainly interested in altering the already existing culture of the colonized. A deliberate act to disconnect them from their true identity while forcefully inculcating in them that of the European. This is an act of ownership and possession, which will stay through generations as it is the colonialists' intension. So, they dispossess the natives of the land, natural resources and identity through colonialism, as Gurhan describes them as “envious good-for-nothing paupers, with no understanding for business.... They are vicious businessmen” (91). A people who came under the guise to offer freedom but made the natives captives. At the end of the novel, “the captives are formed into two silent lines, and in the gathering darkness they are made to march off the town. The German officer marched at the head of the shuffling, his body upright and his movement precisely understated” (247).

Conclusion

From the foregoing, Gurnah depicts the state of the law as portrayed in a literature of

a colonized society, the colonialists' attitude and administration of justice within the purview of their established laws upon the colonized. *Paradise* is a vivid reflection of the exact condition that has engulfed the different societies, who have encountered colonialism. It is seen that in the precolonial society, the people were conscientious in their dealing, guarded by their cultural heritage, despite the absence of written laws. There was a sheer understanding between them, as practices were intoned with their culture.

However, the coming of colonialists disrupted the already existing tradition and beliefs of the colonized, coupled with their established laws and orders, which further expresses the foreigners' hostility towards the natives. They rule the colonized with contempt and are selfish, inconsiderate and covetous. Thus, Gurnah, therefore, questions the basis of colonization and the intensions of the Westerners upon their colonies.

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