

Post-Colonialism:

The postcolonial era was a huge advance in art worldwide. There are many different aspects to Post-Colonialism art, including different techniques and media.

Colonialism alone changed society which then of course affected the way people created and viewed art. There is a huge number of 'native' Post-Colonial artists, this is because they have their own perception of how Post-Colonialism affected society and culture. This essay will be about relating the key principals of Post-Colonialism to artists and their artwork.

The key principals of the postcolonial art theory are as follows:

- Modes of cultural perception

This basically means the views and expressions on culture; the way that culture is perceived. It can be from a native point of view or from an outsider's opinion, such as the view of someone in a colonial position. Someone's view on a culture is never wrong because it is their own perceptive views and comments.

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- Human relations among colonised nations

The relationship between colonial people and native people. This can be among one nation or multiple nations. This documents historical and everyday events which occurred during the Post-Colonial times. How humans interacted with others. This is also about the outcome of human interaction.

- Combines both iconography and iconology of both nations.

Iconography = visual subject matter. Iconology = the meaning behind the subject matter. Incorporating both nations (colonial and non-colonial) symbols and traditions into one piece. This gives you an insight to things that were important during the Post-Colonial times. It can also be individual symbols and concepts focusing on either the colonial nation or the native nation.

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- Mimicry

This is when someone or a group of people 'adopt' a culture and mimic their way of life and cultural beliefs. This is a matter of identity. It's most common in native people. When they first became colonised they wanted to copy the way of the Colonial people because they were considered higher class people.

- May or may not allow spaces for both natives and colonies to have a voice.

It could be a one sided argument commenting on colonialism or incorporating both sides of Colonialism equally. This may be small things like Iconography, or bold things such as documenting historical events.

Yinka Shonibare:



Yinka Shonibare shows his native colonial roots by giving us some detailed material from his home country, Nigeria. In this series of work we see a balance of iconology and iconography from both nations. It's clear that the materials in his installations represent the native side of colonialism and the guns show what colonialism brought to the nations/world. The girl on the swing, to me, represents a certain type of freedom. I think that Shonibare is trying to express the issue of freedom for native people during Colonialism. For example it gives you the implication of aiming and achieving high but once you reach that height you are ripped back down to normality again. It appears that you have all this freedom but in reality there are boundaries on where you can go and what you can do. During the Colonial period the colonial people were in charge and had strict rules and regulations in which black people had to obtain. This side of freedom is shown through the ropes of the swing that are ultimately holding you back.

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Kehinde Wiley:

