

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and scientific Research  
Mohamed Khider University of Biskra



Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English Language and Literature

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**Postcolonial Rewriting of Colonial Texts:**  
***V.S Naipaul's A Bend In The River and Jean Rhys' Wide Sargasso Sea***

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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature  
in Candidacy for the Degree of *Doctorat* in the English Language

Option: **Cultural Studies**

**Submitted by**

Miss Lamia MECHGOUG

**Supervised by**

Dr. Salim KERBOUA

**Board of Examiners**

Chairperson: **Prof. CHELLI Saliha**, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

Supervisor: **Dr KERBOUA Salim**, Mohamed Khider University

Examiner: **Prof. BEDJAOUI Fewzia**, Djilali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas

Examiner: **Dr SOUHALI Hichem**, Moustafa Ben Boulaid University, Batna 2

Examiner: **Dr SAIHI Hanane**, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

Examiner: **Dr MEHIRI Ramdane**, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra

## **Dedication**

*I dedicate this humble work to:*

*The memory of my grandmother peace upon her...*

*My dear parents to whom I owe my life and success...*

*My dear siblings Afaf, Manel, Imad and Abd El Hamid...*

*My young aunt Abir and my uncle Zoubir...*

*My closest friends Boumaraf Hanan and Saifi Warda...*

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, my deep gratitude goes to my supervisor **Dr. Kerboua Salim** for his great efforts and guidance that contributed greatly to the accomplishments of this humble work.

I also wish to thank the members of the board of examiners Prof. **CHELLI Saliha**, Prof. **BEDJAOUI Fewzia**, Dr **SOUHALI Hichem**, Dr **SAIHI Hanane** and Dr **MEHIRI Ramdane**, for their valuable time and patience in evaluating this thesis.

I am also indebted to my teachers **Mr. Smatti Said** and **Mr. Boulegroune Adel** whose pieces of advice formed a turning point in my academic path and whose lessons are priceless.

I would also like to express my thanks to all the people who boosted and helped me along my path.

## Abstract

The postcolonial period was a period of upheaval in which writers from the previous colonies started to gain space on the literary scene and to interrogate the works of their predecessors through the rewriting of colonial texts from a postcolonial perspective. The present thesis is based on the textual analysis of Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* (1979) and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). It looks into the ways Naipaul and Rhys' novels rewrite colonial narratives and how their novels display different versions of truth regarding colonized people's experience through the rewriting of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* respectively. Accordingly, the aim of this thesis is two-fold. It investigates how Naipaul's and Rhys' rewritings show that particles of truth could be represented from different perspectives not only from the lens of the colonizer. It also intends to examine the extent to which their rewritings can be regarded as independent works. To attain these objectives, an eclectic approach is adopted in which the postcolonial theory and Julia Kristeva's intertextuality converge. Research findings indicate that colonial narratives provide only a one-sided representation of the colonized world that makes them questionable. As a result to this, Naipaul and Rhys' novels provide the other side of the story to reveal the truth of their colonized worlds. It also demonstrates that their novels are not mere imitations of Conrad's and Bronte's novels. They are, rather, independent works that carry new realities of their postcolonial societies.

**Key words:** colonial narrative, hybridity, intertextuality, originality, postcolonial novel, rewriting.

## ملخص

عرفت فترة ما بعد الاستعمار كفترة تغيير حيث بدأ كتاب المستعمرات السابقة في اكتساب مكانة على الساحة الادبية واستجواب اعمال من سبقهم من الكتاب من خلال اعادة كتابة النصوص الاستعمارية من منظور ما بعد الاستعمار. تعتمد الأطروحة الحالية على التحليل النصي لرواية "منعطف في النهر" (1979) لفيددير سيراجبريساد و "بحر سارجا سو الواسع" (1966) لجين ريس. تبحث هذه الأطروحة في الطرق التي تعيد بها روايات نيبول وريس كتابة الخطابات الاستعمارية وكيف تعرض هذه الروايات نسخًا مختلفة للحقيقة المتعلقة بتجربة الشعب المستعمر و ذلك من خلال إعادة كتابة "قلب الظلام" لجوزيف كونراد و "جين آير" لشارلوت برونتي على التوالي. وفقًا لذلك، الهدف من هذه الأطروحة ذو شقين إذ تسعى إلى إظهار كيف ساهمت إعادة كتابة نيبول وريس للخطابات الاستعمارية في اظهار امكانية تمثيل جزئيات من الحقيقة من وجهات نظر مختلفة و ليس فقط من خلال عدسة المستعمر. تسعى هذه الأطروحة أيضا الي دراسة مدى إمكانية اعتبار كتاباتهم اعمال مستقلة. لبلوغ هذه الاهداف، تم اعتماد نهج انتقائي تتلاقى فيه نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار و نظرية التناص لجوليا كريستيفا . تشير نتائج البحث الي أن الخطابات الاستعمارية تقدم تمثيلاً متحيزاً حول العالم المستعمر مما يجعلها موضع شك. نتيجة لذلك، توفر روايات نيبول وريس الجانب الآخر من القصة لتسليط الضوء على حقيقة عوالمهم المستعمرة. كما توضح الأطروحة أن رواياتهم ليست مجرد تقليد لروايات كونراد وبرونتي. إنما، بالأحرى اعمال ادبية مستقلة تحمل حقائق جديدة عن مجتمعاتهم ما بعد الاستعمار.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** النص الاستعماري، التهجين، التناص، الاصاله، رواية ما بعد الاستعمار، إعادة الكتابة.

## List of Acronyms

**BR:** A Bend in the River

**HD:** Heart of Darkness

**JR:** Jane Eyre

**WSS:** Wide Sargasso Sea

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## **General Introduction**

Colonialism was not only a matter of "physical violence of the battlefield" but also a "psychological violence" (Thiong'o 9) exercised on people of the colonies. This psychological violence was implemented through colonial language that was taught in European schools. Apparently, the physical violence of colonialism was clearly brutal while the psychological violence was gentile on the ground that it was accomplished through language, a significant vehicle through which colonialism "fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation" (Thiong'o 9). On one hand the natives were punished as criminals for speaking their native tongue. On the other hand, they were praised and rewarded by their colonizer for achieving a good level in English. In so doing, the colonizer sought to erase the native's language and replace it with its colonial language. Accordingly, colonial language became "the official vehicle" (Thiong'o 11-12) through which the colonizer could impose its colonial culture in the non-western world.

Many postmodern thinkers argue that in every society or culture there is always a dominant culture that imposes its ideology, its values, what is right and what is wrong and where all people are supposed to comply with that "prescribed hegemony" (Bressler 264). However, this dominant culture may not conform to all people's ideas and personal backgrounds. It may conform to whites and Anglo-Saxons while blacks and many other people of the third world could neither conform to nor respond to it. Thus, the only solution for those people was silence. They lived, worked and even thought quietly as the dominant culture sent them a message that says: "conform and be quiet; deny yourself and all will be well" (Bressler 264).

However, this was not the case with men and women of letters in the postcolonial societies who did not welcome this situation and who refused to remain silent. They have challenged the dominant culture on the ground that there was not only one culture, but different cultures; there was not only one cultural perspective, but several; there was not one interpretation of life but different interpretations. The belief of postcolonial writers in their ability to bring cultural changes resulted in their rejection to be shaped by the dominant culture of their colonizers (Bressler 264). In so doing, they paved the way for a new type of literature that would reflect the reality of their colonized societies embodied in postcolonial literature.

Postcolonial literature refers to the writings concerned with the different experiences of people who were dominated by British colonialism. The term postcolonial suggests the national culture that emerged after the retreat of the imperial power and that was influenced by the imperial process from the moment of colonization till independence. Although the literatures that are incorporated within postcolonial literature belong to different countries and are of different regional characteristics, they are unified in their desire to speak and act forcefully to highlight their tension with the imperial power and to emphasize their differences from those assumptions created by the imperial centre (Ashcroft et al, *The Empire Writes Back* 1-2).

During the colonial period, writings related to the imperial centre were written by the literate elites who directed their writings to the interests of the colonizing power using the language of the imperial centre. So, the first texts that were written by people from the colonies using the new language were also produced by people who represented the imperial power such as travellers, soldiers...etc. As a result, those texts were not regarded as part of the indigenous culture because they privileged the centre at the expense of the margin (natives) (Ashcroft et.al, *The Empire Writes Back* 5).

Under the colonial rule, indigenous writers were not free to express their anti-imperial attitudes as literature was under the control of the imperial centre that did not allow any different perspective to be transmitted. Thus, postcolonial writers were conscious that in order to develop an independent literature, they must transcend this restricting power and appropriate colonial language to their own context. This appropriation was gradually accomplished through their postcolonial novels (Ashcroft et al, *The Empire Writes Back* 6).

In fact, the post-colonial period has witnessed enormous changes in the history and the direction of English literature. While the British empire was once regarded as a source of knowledge for its colonies, now those countries, that were formerly colonized, provided a new version of literature written by writers from different origins including those from Africa, the Caribbean, India, ...etc. (Innes 1). These writers sought to transmit the experience of the different colonies during the colonial period and to break the stereotypical images that were associated to them as exotic and inferior.

In addition to this, writers from the postcolonial world have been determined to break independent from their former colonizer both intellectually and socially. Instead of rejecting English as the language of the colonizer, postcolonial writers chose to tame it to their postcolonial context. They developed different techniques and concepts through which they could narrate their stories with colonialism from their own standpoint and reclaim their land as well as their history through different literary genres. The fact of reclaiming their land and history, suggested the idea of reinventing the English language as well as the traditions of literature (Innes 8). This was carried through their inclination toward the rewriting of colonial narratives.

The politics of rewriting colonial novels is well established in postcolonial literature and it emerged as a reaction to the marginalization of postcolonial texts in

the Western literary world. The twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new wave of writers from the postcolonial world whose main concern was to correct the distortion of their culture and their history as established in colonial narratives. Through the rewriting of colonial texts, some writers sought to liberate and define their literature and culture with no direct reference to the colonial context. They intended to reveal that as colonial texts are exposed to different rewritings, they are liable to change over time and thus the meaning (truth) they conveyed is not fixed (Innes 75). Several postcolonial writers, including David Dabydeen and Tayeb Salih, were involved in the process of rewriting colonial texts from a postcolonial perspective. The Caribbean writers Jean Rhys and V.S Naipaul are another example.

Although, I have always been interested in novels that shed light on the rural life in England and its beautiful landscapes, I became much more inclined towards a different kind of literature, namely, postcolonial literature. After some readings related to postcolonial literature, I felt myself more interested in knowing the conditions that have produced this kind of writing as well as in reading works that express the voice of the subaltern. Such books have given me the chance to enhance my knowledge in the writings that convey a mosaic picture of writers from different cultural backgrounds. To mention, the Caribbean writers Jean Rhys and the V.S Naipaul are among the writers who emerged from the colonies and who were concerned with issues related to the postcolonial world. What attracted me more in this kind of literature and in the two aforementioned writers was their tendency toward the rewriting of classic English novels. I became agog to know the reasons behind such orientation. Although Rhys and Naipaul's novels seem different at certain levels, they converge in several other points.

Nowadays, we refer to postcolonial writers who have gained space on the literary scene as powerful voices to be reckoned with among literary artists from the

western world. Most of those writers received famous prizes for their great works. Rhys is one of those writers who have voiced the colonial experience through her different literary works. She won the Smith Literary Award for her novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* in 1966 (Staley 8). As for the Trinidadian writer V.S Naipaul whose works earned him several prizes including Knighthood in 1990 and the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2001 (Kellman 1846). Just like Rhys, Naipaul's writings have a postcolonial dimension as he deals with issues related to postcolonial societies.

In this research, the focus is on the textual analysis of Rhys' magnum opus *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) (Henceforth *WSS*), a feminist and postcolonial novel that brought her wide readership and literary fame and on Naipaul's masterpiece and controversial novel *A Bend in the River* (Henceforth *BR*).

Rhys' novel *WSS* is an example of a novel that transmits the experience of colonized people in the West Indies from a postcolonial perspective. Published in 1966, *WSS* writes back Charlotte Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre* (2003) (Henceforth *JE*), one of the famous novels in English literature. Set in Coulibri, Jamaica, Rhys' novel recounts the story of a creole girl named Antoinette who lived an isolated life in her family estate with her mother Annette and her brother Pierre. Being the daughter and the wife of an ex-slave owner made blacks develop antagonistic attitude toward Annette and her family. As a result to this racial tension, Antoinette and her mother lived in constant fear of any expected danger from blacks. Being affected by the sarcastic and racist attitudes of blacks in their community, Antoinette's mother started to isolate herself from people in her community and even from her daughter. As the events of the story proceed, Antoinette got married to an English man whose name brings to the reader's mind the English Classic novel *JE*. This character's name is Mr Rochester, an English man who held no feeling toward his wife Antoinette whom he married only for her money.

Although the character's name is not mentioned at the beginning of Rhys' novel, the reader can observe the intertextual connection he has established between the two literary works.

Most works on Rhys' novels and more precisely those on her masterpiece *WSS* scrutinized the novel in the light of intertextuality and irony as two essential devices of postmodernist literature. In their article "Evaluation of Intertextuality and Irony in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*: A postmodern Outlook", the critics examine intertextuality as a postmodernist aspect in Jean Rhys' novel in which Julia Kristeva and Gerard Genet's theories intersect. They analysed the way Rhys was captured by the English classic text *JE* to the extent that she produced a novel based on that text. Although each novel belongs to a different century, these critics believe that Rhys managed to bridge the gap between centuries. They argue that, by using intertextuality, the writer brought about an alternative story for a novel which is set in a cultural context different from that of her work (Eyvazi et al. 155-156).

On the other hand, Dennis Porter examines Rhys' novel focusing on characterization in which he studies the female character of Antoinette in comparison with the male character Mr Rochester. Porter also draws attention to the way the reader's familiarity with Charlotte Bronte's *JE* (characters) enriches his/her reading of Rhys' *WSS* (qtd.in Staley 101). In similar vein, in his article "Intertextuality in Post-Modern Fiction: A Study of Jean Rhys' Novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*", Mohd Abas Parrey analyses the intertextual nature of the novel with reference to its reader. Parrey explains that the reader who is familiar with Victorian novels particularly with Charlotte Bronte's fiction may observe traces from her novel *JE* once he engages in the reading of Rhys' *WSS*. In addition to this, he analyses Rhys' novel from the perspective of gothic elements that are part and parcel of the Victorian novel. In her masterpiece, Rhys



borrowed gothic elements from Charlotte Brontë's *JE* that are manifested through the gothic scenes she associated to her female protagonist (497).

In contraposition with the aforementioned critics, Staley comments on the use of romantic elements in Rhys' *WSS* that bring to the reader's mind nineteenth century English literature, namely, Charlotte Brontë's novel *JE*. He explains the way Rhys makes use of certain romantic elements from Brontë's novel and associates them with significant aspects and themes of modernist literature including psychology and alienation (101).

Now, if I turn to the second selected work, Naipaul's *BR*, the novel portrays the aftermaths of colonialism in postcolonial Africa. Published in 1976, *BR* rewrites Joseph Conrad's famous novella *Heart of Darkness* (Henceforth *HD*) from a postcolonial perspective. Set in postcolonial Africa, the novel follows the journey of Salim, a trader of an Indian origin who was brought up and lived in Africa. Salim's journey that starts from the east coast to the centre of Africa is fuelled by the desire to start a new life there. Through this journey, Salim uncovers the situation of the newly independent Africa and the amount of destruction created by colonialism. His journey also sheds light on the new rulers in postcolonial nations (Africa) and how their dictatorship served to destroy their countries instead of constructing them.

In addition to the criticism on Rhys' works, Naipaul's novels have also gained the attention of many critics. However, most of the literature on his works focused on his novel *A Bend in the Rive*. The latter, was examined from different perspectives including that of identity while a little attention was paid to the counter-discursive nature of this postcolonial text. In fact, postcolonial writers and the Trinidadian writer Naipaul in specific invented a new literature out of the rewriting of another colonial text, namely, Conrad's *HD*. This tendency towards the rewriting of a prior text was

discussed in Haidar Eid's article "Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* and Neo-colonialism as a comparative context". In this article, Haidar examines the intertextuality of Naipaul's novel regarding it as a response to Joseph Conrad's famous novella *HD* as he believes that Naipaul's novel retells the journey that has been undertaken by the protagonist in the prior text (4).

Similarly to Haidar's article, the critic Shafuil Alam Khan Chowdhury examined Naipaul's novel in comparison with two other postcolonial writer's works. In his thesis *Representation of Africa in postcolonial Anglophone writings: V.S Naipaul, Chinua Achebe and J.M Coetzee*, Shafuil Alam Khan Chowdhury discusses Naipaul's novel *BR* with reference to Conrad's *HD* to foreground Naipaul's retelling of the Conrad's novel from a different perspective. He explains how Naipaul's novel can be seen as a return to Conrad's *HD* as it includes details from that novel. He also argues that Naipaul portrays Africa and Africans from the standpoint of the west rather than from the perspective of a writer from a postcolonial world (29-37).

Antithetical to the aforementioned critics, Dexu Zhang provides another insight regarding Naipaul *BR* and its rewriting of Conrad's *HD*. In his article "Inscribing African History: Contemporaneity and V. S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*", Zhang discusses the use of time and contemporaneity in Naipaul's novel in order to write "a post-orientalist history of Africa" (248), a history that prevents the west from historicizing it as "other" once it is compared to its Western history. *BR* reflects Naipaul's extensive contemplation in imperial and post imperial history mirrored through his narrator Salim who is ambivalent toward western historiography. Zhang argues that the neglecting of one side in this ambivalence in addition to the narrator's pessimism toward the situation of postcolonial Africa are behind the reading of Naipaul's novel as compliant with "Eurocentric historicism" by many critics (248).

Taking into consideration the notions of time and contemporaneity, *BR*, reflects twofold notions of time: historical time related to the west and sacred time of Africa. It is through the second notion that Naipaul challenges European time and historiography and inscribes a new version of African history instead (Zhang 250). In addition to this, by narrating the many-sided history of Africa through the native characters, Naipaul reveals his idea of African historiography (Zhang 256).

Although several studies were conducted on Naipaul's *BR* and Rhys' *WSS* in the light of their intertextuality, no research has discussed the topic of rewriting colonial narratives as an area of research by comparing the novels of the two postcolonial writers, namely; Naipaul and Rhys through an eclectic approach that will be carried out throughout this thesis.

It has been thought that writings from the British Empire have always been the standard for literature, but several writers from the former British colonies came to the forefront to prove the validity of their postcolonial texts. This research explores the ways Naipaul and Rhys' novels display different versions of truth regarding colonized people's experience with their colonizer through the rewriting of colonial texts from their postcolonial perspective. Therefore, in order to investigate the problematic and attain the objectives of this research, the following research questions are formulated:

- Why and how do postcolonial writers head toward the rewriting of colonial texts?

From this main question, the novels trigger other sub-questions:

- To what extent are the postcolonial theory, Kristeva's intertextuality and Homi

K. Bhabha's theory relevant to the analysis of the colonized people's experience in V.S Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*?

- In what ways does V.S Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* rewrite Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*? To what extent can his novel be considered as an original work of art?

- In what ways does Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* rewrite Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*? To what extent can her novel be regarded as an independent work of art?

- In what ways do Naipaul's and Rhys' novels converge and diverge in their rewriting of colonial narratives?

Simultaneously, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

- Although the rewriting of colonial narratives was applied differently by the aforementioned writers, it aims at the subversion of dominant narratives. These variations of rewritings result from the different experiences undergone by the two writers and that have affected their literary production.

- Naipaul and Rhys' rewritings of English classic novels can be acknowledged as new independent literatures.

The aim of this study is two-fold. It intends to examine postcolonial experiences from different perspectives in which the Caribbean writer Jean Rhys, who rewrites Charlotte Brontë's *JE*, and the Trinidadian writer Naipaul, who rewrites Joseph Conrad's *HD*, converge towards postcolonial rewritings of colonial texts. Although both writers belong to the same cultural background (the West Indies); they reconstruct the world of the colonized each from his own perspective to reveal that truth could be represented from different perspectives not only from the lens of the colonizer.

The study also intends to demonstrate that the aforementioned rewritings are independent literatures rather than mere imitations of their precursors.

The thesis adopts an eclectic approach to compare Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Naipaul's *BR* in which the postcolonial theory of Homi K. Bhabha (hybridity and mimicry), the rewriting approach and Julia Kristeva's intertextuality converge to highlight the way Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Naipaul's *BR* rewrite colonial narratives.

The results of the thesis will be of benefit to those who are interested in Caribbean and comparative literatures and also to master two students who are intending to conduct thesis in the field of Cultural Studies. It might be a starting point for a new area of research for them in the same field.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. In addition to the general introduction and conclusion, the first chapter is devoted to the analysis of the postcolonial theory and its basic concepts. It clarifies the approach of rewriting as an essential part in the postcolonial theory. It also provides an explanation for Homi k. Bhabha's theory of hybridity and mimicry and its significance in expressing resistance to the dominant discourse. The chapter also covers the postmodernist technique of intertextuality as an essential form within the rewriting process and as an approach adopted and adapted in the analysis of the selected novels.

The second chapter examines the way Naipaul's *BR* writes back and subverts Joseph Conrad's *HD* through his narrator Salim. It highlights the different textual strategies of resistance used in the rewriting of the dominant discourse and in shedding light on the colonized people's culture and identity in Africa. The chapter also analyses the extent to which Homi K. Bhabha's theory (Hybridity and mimicry) can be relevant to providing a site of empowerment and resistance against Conrad's novella. In addition to this, the chapter scrutinizes how far Naipaul's postcolonial novel can be considered as an original work and not an extended discussion of Conrad's novella.

Along the same lines, the fourth chapter is devoted to the textual analysis of Rhys' *WSS* to uncover the way she rewrites Charlotte Bronte's colonial discourse *JE*. To accomplish this objective, the chapter discusses the different textual strategies employed by Rhys in her rewriting and how those strategies contributed to subverting the dominant discourse and in highlighting the cultural distinctiveness of the colonized

in the West Indies. The chapter also examines to what degree Homi K. Bhabha's theory can be a powerful weapon for the colonized to express his resistance against the dominant discourse and its basic assumptions. Along with that, the chapter analysis whether Rhys' novel can be regarded as independent literature or a mere imitation of the dominant discourse.

The fourth chapter discusses convergences and divergences in Naipaul and Rhys' rewritings of the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*. It sheds light on the similarities and the differences between the two novels to uncover how truth concerning the colonized world is transmitted through each novel. The chapter also discusses the extent to which Naipaul's and Rhys' novels can be original works of arts and not extended discussions of their predecessors.

## Chapter One

### Postcolonial Theory and the Rewriting of the Canon: An Insight into Homi K. Bhabha's Theory, Rewriting Approach and Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality

"The people of the periphery return to rewrite the history and the fiction of the metropolis"

Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*

"We...need to uncover the history of 'the people without history' "

Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*

#### 1.1. Introduction

The present chapter serves as a theoretical part for the thesis. It provides an insight regarding postcolonial theory and its contribution in shaping the colonized people's resistance against colonial domination. The postcolonial theory is born out of the frustration experienced by people of colonized nations. It is the product of their constant fear about their future, their identity, hopes, dreams as well as the cultural clash between their culture and the colonizer's culture (Bressler 266).

Postcolonial theory has gained power in the 1950s-1960s to become more prominent in the 1980s. In fact, most of the intellectuals of this theory belong to the third world, but they received their education in Britain and the United States (Israel 86). Thanks to those theorists, the postcolonial theory was acknowledged as a discipline in literary study in 1989 (Israel 93). Actually, postcolonial theory developed as a result of the literatures which have emerged from the former colonies using colonial language (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 7) and from its discontent with the former European theory that proved its inability to deal more appropriately with the

cultural origins and the complexities of postcolonial writing. It emerged also to uncover the conflict that characterizes the colonizer and colonized relations (Bertens 200).

The major concern of this chapter is to discuss the postcolonial rewritings of colonial discourses as an essential approach within the aforementioned theory. Following the period of independence, a trend of resistance emerged within the postcolonial theory embodied in the challenge and the interrogation of the colonial discourse and the rewriting of this latter from the perspective of the colonized. The chapter also draws attention to a number of strategies and key concepts employed in the rewriting of the colonial narratives. In addition to this, it discusses Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theory and explains its basic concepts, namely, hybridity and mimicry.

It is worth mentioning that the emergence of the postcolonial theory and writing coincided with the rise of postmodernism in the western world, this coincidence results in the confusion between the two (Ashcroft, *Post-colonial Studies Reader* 117). Thus, the chapter also alludes to the overlap between the two theories and writings through the discussion of the postmodernist technique of intertextuality which is adapted to the postcolonial discourse as an essential form within the process of rewriting colonial narratives.

## **1.2 The Postcolonial Counter-Discourse: Basic Features**

What does it mean a counter-discourse? The term counter-discourse was introduced to postcolonial studies by the critic Helen Tiffin in 1980s as she has adopted it from Richard Terdiman's *Discourse /Counter-Discourse: the Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France*. In this book, Terdiman explains the term through two concepts: con-text which refers to those postcolonial texts that engage in the subversion of the canon and the pre-text which refers to the canonical discourse towards which subversion is directed (Thieme 4). On this basis, a counter-



discourse refers to those writings that have emerged from the former colonies and that have sought to interrogate dominant discourses.

The postcolonial counter-discourse emerges as a reaction to the colonial discourse and its "one-sided and hierarchical understanding and truth of the colonized world in general" (Diaz 54). Thus, the key concern of the postcolonial counter-discourse is to dismantle the dominant discourse, to appropriate and to reconstruct "identity for and by the colonized". That is, it seeks to challenge the colonial discourse and its claim for being "natural, universal and timeless" (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 33). It also aims at breaking the colonizer's assumptions of being the focus of history while marginalizing the natives through its colonial discourse which has the authority to both label and control the colonized. In so doing, the counter discourse, seeks to destroy the distance created in the colonial discourse between the centre and the periphery to protect its culture from any changes and to prove the claim that the colonized people came into being through the interpretation of history and civilization provided by the colonizer (Diaz 55).

It is noteworthy that the phrase "the Empire writes back" (qtd.in Bartels et al. 189) and which forms the core of the postcolonial counter-discourse was coined by the Indian novelist Salman Rushdie in a newspaper article published in 1982. Such phrase was adopted by the postcolonial theorists Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin to the postcolonial context to define the tendency of postcolonial writers who write against the centre and its assumptions. Those critics regard the process of writing back as "ironic, satirical, subversive and crucially concerned with undercutting ...or envisioning alternatives to reductive representations in the colonial mode" (qtd. in Bartels et al. 189). In fact, postcolonial counter-discourse seeks to achieve authority and

liberation from the hegemonic European culture as the latter claims to have control over the narrative, its interpretation as well as its communication (Bartels et al.189).

In their process of writing back, postcolonial theorists seek to interrogate and undermine the colonial text's basic assumptions in order to provide instead a "pluralistic view on history through the revelation of new cultural horizons" (Bartels et al.189). Through the rewriting of the dominant discourse, they uncover the blind spots, the biases and the ideological assumptions that are regarded as "central to the western canon" (Spengler 1).

The tendency of rewriting the western discourse has emerged as a vital task at the core of the postcolonial theory and it is manifested through the postcolonial counter-discourse's preoccupation with the subversion of the colonial narratives (Kundu, "Jane Eyre and Jean Rhys" 70). In fact, many postcolonial writers are involved in this process of writing back in order to produce new literatures that would express new realities far from those provided by the centre as it is confirmed by the critics Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in their book *The Empire Writes Back*:

Writers such as J.M Coetzee, Wilson Harris, V.S Naipaul, George Lamming, ... Chinua Achebe , Margaret Atwood, and Jean Rhys have all rewritten particular works from the English 'canon' with a view of reconstructing European 'realities 'in postcolonial terms, not simply by reversing the hierarchical order, but by interrogating the philosophical assumptions on which the order was based. (32)

In fact, the driving force behind the postcolonial writers' inclination toward the rewriting of the English canon is their desire to subvert the assumptions of that canon and thus to reconstruct reality from the perspective of the colonized.

The postcolonial counter-discourse is an attempt to understand history from different perspectives and to recover the lost past. Now, what has been once regarded as the periphery emerged to challenge the centre (Diaz 55). Although the theorist Gayatri Spivak has once mentioned that the subaltern cannot speak, postcolonial counter-discourse emerged as a discourse that provides the means through which the colonized voice could be heard (Diaz 57-58). This is asserted by Bill Ashcroft who believes that the subaltern must find a way to speak and to "intervene in colonial discourse to contest it, challenge it, or generally make the voice of the colonized be heard" (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 45).

It is worth noting that the rewriting of canonical texts from the perspective of the marginalized serves to highlight those relations of power and privilege within that discourse. Such process of getting access to a classic text from the perspective of a new text is referred to by the poet Adrienne Rich as "an act of survival" (qtd.in Spengler 1) for those repressed voices that emerged from the former colonies to reclaim their past as well as their identity (qtd.in Spengler 1). In fact, what makes rewriting an important weapon is the use of famous narratives as a backdrop to reveal difference (Spengler 3).

### **1.3 Colonial Language as a Weapon of Resistance: Foregrounding Colonized Culture**

English is one of the major ways through which the imperial rule has exercised its oppression, power and imposed its own notion of truth over the colonized (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 7-8). In imperial terms, the centre is regarded as the source of standard language and of order whereas the margin that employs variants and "the edges of language" is regarded as a source of disorder (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 87). Accordingly, the critic Edu-buandol argues that the colonial discourse exercises a kind of linguistic imperialism embodied in the transference of its dominant

language as well as its dominant culture in a way that deprived the colonized of the freedom to choose his own language or to form his own identity (37).

However, this power is now challenged and discarded by the powerful voices that emerged from the formerly suppressed colonies (Ashcroft et al., *Empire Writes Back* 7-8). These latter refused to associate the notion of truth to those experiences authorized by the centre as the centre neglects and relegates the colonized to the margin of Empire (Ashcroft et al., *Empire Writes Back* 90). Thus, "the myth of centrality embodied in the concept of a 'standard language' is forever overturned... English becomes english" (Ashcroft et al., *Empire Writes Back* 86). That is to say, by subverting the myth of English as the "cultural capital" of the colonizer, postcolonial writers seek to break any notion of superiority and privilege for the colonizer (Teke 77). As a result, two forms of language existed: Standard English of the British Empire and the 'english' developed by postcolonial theorists and writers to express their resistance to the canon and that incorporates a specific linguistic code (Ashcroft et.al, *Empire Writes Back* 7-8).

In fact, the debatable issue for postcolonial writers is the centrality and authenticity of the colonial narrative in its representation of the colonized people's experience that must be challenged, interrogated and abrogated. In so doing, postcolonial writers sought to privilege the margin in their discourses in order to provide an alternative to what has been said and to correct the depiction of their experiences in the colonial narratives (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 40).

In the postcolonial-counter discourse, language is regarded as an essential position of struggle against the colonial discourse. The latter, controls the colonized by imposing its language as a standard language and discarding other variations as impure (Ashcroft et.al, *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 282). Thus, the postcolonial counter-discourse reacts against the centre by using its language as "an ethnographic tool"

(Ashcroft et.al, *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284). A tool that will transmit a correct image about their different experiences and different cultures instead of those misrepresentations provided in the colonial discourse (Ashcroft et.al, *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284). In order to accomplish this, postcolonial writers followed a linguistic deviation (Teke 72) in which a language is developed by transforming the colonizer's language through subversive strategies. At this level, colonial language is used in a way that meets "the demands and requirements of the place and society into which it has been appropriated" (Ashcroft et al., *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284). That is to say, a different language is produced where Standard English is transformed to fit the needs of a mother grammar, vocabulary and syntax (Ashcroft et al., *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284).

Once the postcolonial writer follows a linguistic deviation within his postcolonial counter-discourse, the syntax and the lexicon of the standard language are subverted and new ones are set instead (Teke 72). In so doing, postcolonial writers lead "the Eurocentric reader to give up an old-fashioned imperialistic vision of dominant cultures and more or less prestigious languages" (Rizzardi 358).

The new language embodied in "english" with small "e" as it was previously mentioned by the critic Ashcroft is a different language. It breaks Standard English by introducing "marginal variations of English use" as the real components of a particular language (Ashcroft et al., *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284). Thus, the conflict that characterizes the centre-margin relations is now brought to literature through the counter-discourse between Standard English and language variants namely "new english". In a word, this counter-discourse involves writing back to the centre with a different accent (Zekmi 62) that can be noticed through V.S Naipaul's and Jean Rhys' writings.

#### **1.4 Textual Strategies of Resistance: Abrogation and Appropriation of the Colonial Language**

For postcolonial critics, the act of writing is an act of resistance as it presupposes the existence of two poles: the centre and the margin and it is from the latter that postcolonial writers start to write back to the former in order to define themselves. This is embodied in the process of abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language (Zekmi 58-59). Abrogation and appropriation are two complementary processes which involve in a conflictual relationship with colonial language (Britton 33).

Abrogation "is the rejection of normative forms of the colonizer's language as opposed to its non-standard and dialectical use in the colonies" (Zekmi 58-59). It tends to reject any possible control from the centre over the means of communication. It is an act that breaks away from the colonizer's language as well as from its aesthetic values and cultural norms. As a first phase in the process of language subversion, abrogation seems to replace the "prestige and power of the colonial language with that, newly created, of an indigenous language" (Britton 33). Following the phase of abrogation, postcolonial writers reject the concept of Standard English which is used in the Western discourse as opposed to "inferior 'dialects' or 'marginal variants' " (Ashcroft et.al, *Postcolonial Studies* 3-4). Abrogation made it possible for postcolonial writers to use the tools of the master (its language) for liberation purposes as language is always adaptable (Ashcroft et.al, *Postcolonial Studies* 3-4).

The second phase in the process of rewriting the colonial discourse is appropriation. This concept refers to the way the postcolonial counter-discourse takes certain aspects of the imperial culture (language and forms of writing) and transforms them to voice the colonized people's cultural identity (Ashcroft et.al, *The*

*Empire Writes Back* 9). The language which has been subverted in the first phase is now appropriated in a way that makes it able to transmit the colonized's experience as the writer Chinua Achebe confirms that it must "bear the burden of their experience" (qtd.in Ashcroft et.al, *The Empire Writes Back* 9). Instead of being dominated by the colonizer's language, postcolonial writers prefer to transform it and to produce a language that would translate their cultural realities (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 67); a "language variant of cultural fidelity" (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 55). Through appropriation, postcolonial writers also uncover the way the centre claims hegemony over the culture that it has once surveyed and invaded (Ashcroft et.al, *Postcolonial Studies* 15).

Postcolonial writers employ the colonizer's language with vengeance. By appropriating this language, they come up with a "variously hybridized English" (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 44), a form of local English through which they can represent themselves and transform the official genres that characterize English literature (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 44). In so doing, they destabilise the novel as a European genre by writing in English, but in a form that does not resemble that of the English novel (Godiwala 71). Through their transformation of the colonial discourse, postcolonial writers insert their voice and concerns into the dominant discourse as representatives of the colonized. Hence, they produce "new forms of cultural production" (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 19). This means that appropriation is not exclusive to language because the novel as a form of writing is also appropriated (Zekmi 61).

Through the appropriation of English, they have made a relevant vehicle for the transmission of their postcolonial culture and for marking their difference from the centre while at the same time using its language. The postcolonial writer addresses his

colonizer through his appropriated language saying: "I am using your language so that you will understand my world, but you will also know by the differences in the way I use it that you cannot share my experience". In this way, the postcolonial writer exposes his reader to an "other culture" instead of the one presented in the colonial discourse (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 75).

Postcolonial critics assert that the abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language in the postcolonial discourse is an attempt by its writers to stand against the claim that the colonized people's existence is defined by a language, as a uniting element, imposed by the colonizer (Zekmi 58-59). Instead, Postcolonial writers call for the need to recover their pre-colonial language and culture or at least to appropriate the colonizer's language to fit their experience once the recuperation of their pre-colonial culture is not possible (Zekmi 60). It is noteworthy that the appropriation of the colonial language is inevitable once it is placed in a different context as this latter would impose changes in its meaning. This is asserted by the critic Bill Ashcroft who argues that "when English is used in a once-colonized location, the specifics of the site of textual production will necessarily force its meaning to change" (qtd.in Mcleod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 123).

The Indian writer Salman Rushdie also comments on the need to appropriate the language of the colonizer in order to be able to transmit their experiences from their own perspective:

One of the changes [in the location of [postcolonial writers]] has to do with attitudes towards the use of English. Many have referred to the argument about the appropriateness of this language to [the postcolonial context]. And I hope all of us share the opinion that we can't simply use the language the way the British did; that it needs remaking for our own



purposes. Those of us who do use English do so in spite of our ambiguity towards it, or perhaps because of that, perhaps because we can find in that linguistic struggle a reflection of our struggles taking place in the real world ... To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free. (17)

Through the above words, Salman Rushdie insists on the need to appropriate the language of the colonizer if they are willing to transmit their struggle to the world. For him, the appropriation of the imperial language would make them free from any sort of domination from the part of the centre.

Rushdie argues that the new "english" that emerges from the appropriation of the colonial language serves to dismantle the authority of the centre and thus it serves as an act of resistance. That is, Standard English is delocalized from its centre and its imperial character to be relocated in "a hybrid space". As a result, it ceases to be regarded as an imperial language once the postcolonial writer releases it of its cultural dominance (Teke 73).

In fact, the use of colonial language becomes a strategy of empowerment for the postcolonial writers once they master it. That is to say, the meaning of the postcolonial counter-discourse is determined by the way the postcolonial writer employs the imperial language (Teke 75). In addition to this, when the postcolonial writer transforms the colonial language through linguistic variance, he highlights: a gap and a distance of cultural difference and of distinct experience. This is what Bill Ashcroft calls "a metonymic gap" and which he defines as follows:

The metonymic gap is that cultural gap formed when appropriation of a colonial language insert unglossed words, phrases or passages from a first language, or concepts, allusions or references which may by

unknown to the reader. Such words become synecdoche of the writer's culture. The part that stands for the whole.... Thus the inserted language 'stand for' the colonized culture in a metonymic way, and its very resistance to interpretation constructs a "gap" between the writer's culture and the colonial culture. (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 75)

Ashcroft argues that when the postcolonial writer attempts to appropriate the imperial language for his own use, he creates a cultural gap. Through this latter, he makes his culture and experience, expressed through his writing, different from that of the colonizer.

In their attempt to transmit the specificity of their postcolonial world and culture through a different language, namely the colonial language, the Indian novelist Raja Rao explains the obstacles encountered by postcolonial writers: "the telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought-movement that looks maltreated in an alien language" (5). By using English in a variety of ways, postcolonial writers make it adequate to express their different cultural experiences and convey the gap that exists between the world of the colonizer and the world of the colonized (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 38).

As the postcolonial experience is hybrid in its nature, postcolonial theorists believe that such nature rebuts "the privileged position of a standard code in the language and any monocentric view of human experience" (Ashcroft et al, *Empire Writes Back* 40). Thus, to confirm this truth, postcolonial writers follow a process of challenging the authority of colonial discourse by engaging in a "linguistic hybridity" of the colonizer's language (Bhati 525). This involves the use of a number of devices and techniques referred to as "devices of otherness" (W. Ashcroft 72). The latter are

employed by postcolonial writers in their rewriting of the colonial narratives. These techniques serve to highlight the uniqueness of the postcolonial discourse, a sense of difference as well as their desire to signal creatively their "local indigenous identity" (Bhati 531).

In their rewriting of the colonial narratives, postcolonial writers utilize a number of strategies that serve to highlight their resistance to the dominant discourse and to highlight their marginalized native culture.

#### **1.4.1 Code-switching: A Spotlight on Colonized Culture**

Code-switching is a linguistic technique of hybridization where there is a shift between two languages or dialects (Hamamra and Qararia 126). In the postcolonial counter-discourse, it is remarked through the mixing of English with words or phrases that belong to an indigenous tongue (Klinger 36) or another language. In a text where English is the dominant language, any language change occurs in the novel with another language is regarded as code-switching (Jonsson 213). That is, once a word, a phrase or a sentence from another language is used, it is regarded as a code-switching (Callahan 39).

The use of such technique in the postcolonial counter-discourse is not accidental, but rather deliberate. It serves to create a "textual and cultural *hybridity*" (Pacheco 69) within that discourse. In fact, the character's shift from one language to another and from one culture to another indicates his or her hybrid identity (Pacheco 69). The critic Martin confirms that such phenomenon occurs for a purpose "switching between two or more languages is not an arbitrary act, nor is it simply an attempt to mimic the speech of their communities; code-switching results from a conscious decision to create a desired effect and to promote the validity of author's heritage language" (qtd.in Hamamra and Qararia 126). The use of code-switching in the counter-

discourse indicates the insufficiency that exists in a language and which is compensated by a shift to another language or dialect. This indicates a cultural diversity in which a term may not have its equivalence in the other culture (Hamamra and Qararia 126).

In their famous book *The Empire Writes Back*, the critics Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin assert that code-switching is a common technique employed by postcolonial writers in their counter-discourse for the purpose of "inscribing alterity ...[and] installing cultural distinctiveness" in the text (71). When he switches codes from one language to another, the postcolonial writer sometimes does not provide the translation of the word from the second language between parentheses. In so doing, the writer spots light on the cultural distinctiveness that exists between the two languages. That is, the inclusion of more than one language in the text reflects the textual hybridity of this discourse as two cultures are combined through language as a medium (Hamamra and Qararia 129).

In such way, the technique of code-switching does not only allow the postcolonial writer to develop a new tool, language, through appropriation but also helps in the construction of a different social world (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 74) and a different mode of expression (Quinto and Santos 161). Accordingly, it permits the postcolonial writer to contribute in "the transformation of English literature and in the dismantling of those ideological assumptions that have buttressed the canon of that literature as an elite western discourse" (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 76). Code-switching within the postcolonial counter-discourse could be recognized through quotations or reported speech and it sometimes takes the form of interjections and sentence filler such as (um, uh, ok). The speaker to whom the message is addressed is specified through this alternating use of two languages. In addition to this, this technique of resistance serves to clarify or emphasize something within the text

(Bertacco 150-151).

It is interesting to note that the technique of code-switching is typical to a discourse where there are two competing sides: one is the dominator and the other is the dominated. The critic Klinger confirms this idea in relation to the postcolonial counter-discourse "code-switching is only possible in a context of competing knowledge or command of languages... it occurs in situations of unequal power relations between languages and of ideologically determined choices in relation to questions of identity ... and national language" (169). This is the case with postcolonial counter-discourse in which writers seek to express their own repressed voice by questioning the authority of the dominant discourse. Thus, code-switching works as "a creative response to domination" as the language which is used in such case comprises "empowering functions" (Jonsson 212). It is strongly linked to the concept of power as it changes power relation where silent voices can be heard and where their status and language can be legitimized (Jonsson 226).

As the prefix "anti" in anti-colonial discourse signifies resistance and reaction to the dominant discourse, postcolonial writers resist the colonizer's language by mixing it with their native tongues and other languages. In fact, the encounter between Standard English of the centre and the local language used in the ex-colonies results in a new language, namely "english". Strictly speaking, "the same language is used, but it is taken further from the centre and from the rules imposed by the centre" (Cavagnoli 323-324). In fact, this kind of language appropriation is regarded as a "re-invasion of the centre...an appropriating syntactical fusion which invades the home of the Received Standard English with [a dialect]" (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 68-69).

#### **1.4.2 Untranslated Words and Glossing: Highlighting the Culture of the Colonized**

In addition to the aforementioned techniques of resistance to the colonial discourse, postcolonial writers make also use of untranslated words and/or glossing strategies in their rewriting. In their process of transforming Standard English to make it appropriate to their context, postcolonial writers follow an "inner translation" (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58) in which they include untranslated words in their texts. In fact, those words which are kept untranslated do not hinder the understanding and interpretation of the text as their meaning lie in the sentence itself. That is, the word gets its meaning once it is placed in a sentence and this is the case with vernacular words that the postcolonial writer presents in an English sentence (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58).

It is worth noting that words are expression of the culture from which they originated. Accordingly, once a word such as a Caribbean word is incorporated in an English text by a postcolonial writer, such word carries the culture of the oppressed because the language that surrounds this word is in itself contaminated by its colonial origins (Ashcroft et al., *Empire Writes Back* 53). Hence, when the postcolonial writer includes untranslated words in his text, he does not only foreground a sense of "cultural distinctiveness" from the centre, but also imposes his reader into "an active engagement with the vernacular culture" (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58). On this basis, the reader grasps the meaning of those untranslated words through the subsequent conversation of the text (Ashcroft et al., *Empire Writes Back* 64). However, to acquire further understanding, the reader must expand his knowledge about this cultural matter beyond the text (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58).

In fact, the presence of untranslated words in a postcolonial counter-discourse signifies that the language used in this text is "an /other language"

(Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 63). This absence of translation gives a specific sort of interpretive function to this postcolonial discourse. Thus, the cultural difference that characterises this text is created by such technique and not inherent (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 64). Speaking about the function of untranslated words in foregrounding cultural difference from the centre, Bill Ashcroft asserts that they "do have an important function in inscribing difference. They signify a certain cultural experience which they cannot hope to reproduce but whose difference is validated by the new situation. In this sense they are directly metonymic of that cultural difference which is [represented] by linguistic variation" (Ashcroft et. al, *The Empire Writes Back*, 52).

Although postcolonial writers sometimes choose to incorporate some cultural words in their discourse and to keep them untranslated for the purpose of respecting their cultural specificity, in other cases they prefer to gloss some words by providing "an approximate English translation" for them. Such parenthetical translation of the word serves also to foreground their cultural distance and difference (Wright 169). The latter is embodied in this gap that exists between the word and its referent. It is through this gap that the identity of the colonized people is foregrounded (Ashcroft et. al, *The Empire Writes Back* 61). In both cases, whether the cultural word is translated in the text or is kept untranslated, the postcolonial writer has a purpose behind choosing to gloss some words while to integrate some others without translation.

### **1.5 Criticizing the Empire Writes Back Approach**

Writing back to the colonial centre has paved the way for many indigenous writers from the ex-colonies to emerge and to express the voice of the colonized people who were either suppressed or misrepresented in the colonial discourse. Although this trend has cleared the way for them to introduce their writing as a new literature, it has

also paved the way for several critical voices. The latter included literary critics and also some writers from the ex-colonies.

Arun P. Mukherjee argues that if all writings from the ex-colonies are to be considered as writing that oppose the colonial discourse this means that we, writers, will forever be obliged to question only those European discourses which tend to degrade us. In such case, he adds, "our cultural productions are created in response to our needs". In addition to this, Mukherjee argues that the advocates of this approach have placed together different literatures from diverse places in their analysis while they have discarded the differences that characterize them (qtd.in McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 28). It has discarded gender differences between writers since women writers and men have different experiences which would influence their relation with language (McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 27). In addition to this, it has neglected national differences when talking about writings from different nations as colonialism did not happen in the same way in different locations. Critics also argue that writings of countries whose historical and cultural relations with the centre differ must not function in the same way (McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 27).

Other critical voices have interrogated the validity of the writing-back paradigm. They claimed that such paradigm defines English-language literatures as the outcome of this "binary opposition between colonial (imperial) discourse and postcolonial discourse" (Gaile 247-248) and this has resulted in two things: first, postcolonial literatures are reduced to a kind of literature that reacts to imperial textuality and this turns it to a sort of "second-class creativity" that gets its driving force from the western canon. Second, as the western canon is the source for the writers who are involved in the writing-back paradigm as it is claimed by those critics, this paves the way for the centre to establish itself as "the privileged addressee of postcolonial text"



(Gaile 247-248). That is to say, by rewriting the colonial discourse, critics argue that the postcolonial counter-discourse would remain linked to its former which strengthens the possibility of staying dependent on colonial culture. To further strengthen their claim, critics argue that the process of rewriting will find value in the canonical text and use it as a reference regardless of its aim to challenge the colonial text. They claim that rewriting does not fully challenge the authority of the canonical text. Rather, it invests value in this text making it a reference for the postcolonial counter-discourse (McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 169).

The critic Bill Ashcroft, one of the advocates of this approach, has been criticized for his argument that colonial English could be transformed into "english" once it is placed in a different environment. Such appropriation of the colonizer's language is regarded as a form of "internal colonialism" of the indigenous people whose values, representations and language are defined by and discarded as narrow according to western terms (McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 125).

In addition to those critics, scholars and authors from the global South also believe that this tendency towards writing back must be overthrown as it minimizes the status of postcolonial writers to write back to the centre and in return it reinforces and restores the West as the centre. Furthermore, by presenting writings from the third world as "anti-art in relation to European literature", this will portray the postcolonial counter-discourse as hostile, resentful and reactive. They argue that such kind of writing should not be considered as writing back to the centre but rather writing back to themselves in a way they address their own issues and in such way this kind of writings would increase to cover a large number of topics and genres (Bartels 190).

### **1.6 Bhabha's Theory: Challenging Colonial Narrative's Basic Assumptions**

Just like other postcolonial theorists, Homi K. Bhabha employs a specific

mode of postcolonial criticism when he explores dominant discourses (Selden et al.227). This mode is embodied in the notions of mimicry and hybridity.

### **1.6.1 Mimicry: Confronting the Colonizer with its Own Weapons**

Bhabha defines mimicry as "one of the ...effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" that looks for "a reformed, recognizable other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*". Such desire, for Bhabha, makes the compromise that the colonizer tries to establish look ironic (*The Location of Culture* 86). Through this form of colonial control, the colonizer works to make the colonized adopt its values as well as its norms as part of its so-called civilizing mission. Under this mission the colonizer aims to transform the culture of the colonized people by making them copy and imitate its superior culture (Moor-Gilbert 119-120).

However, through this strategy the colonized can reveal the ambivalence within the colonial discourse, get access to it and then subvert the basis of its authority. In fact, the ambivalence of colonial discourse lies in its attempt to make the colonized people mimic their colonizer while it is also careful to keep their difference and not to be identical to their colonizer (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86). In other words, while colonial discourse criticizes the savagery of the natives, it seeks to reform and make them follow westerners through the mimicry of the west. However, such discourse does not demand full reformation of the natives that would make them equal and similar to whites; it rather seeks to keep their difference from the colonizer (Moore-Gilbert 173). Huddart also explains that the logic of colonial discourse does not promote any kind of correspondence with its colonized people because such correspondence will impede the ideologies used by the colonizer to justify its rule, namely the civilizing mission. Such ideologies operate on the principle of non-equivalence where there is a superior and inferior group. However, the gap of difference that the colonizer seeks to maintain in

order to immune its authority places it in the dilemma of not being able to manage the outcomes that this difference generates (40).

In fact, the colonizer's call for the colonized to be "almost the same, but not white" would define this latter as the product of the mimicry of his colonizer and which is done in an imperfect way (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 89). Such imperfect imitation is embodied in "a flawed identity" imposed on the colonized once he finds himself obliged to mirror back his colonizer's image (McClintock 62). Bhabha argues that this identity would make the colonised "inhabit an uninhabitable zone of ambivalence that grants him neither identity nor difference" as he is just obliged to imitate an image that he can not fully acquire (qtd.in McClintock 63). It is at this level that the failure of mimicry lies as in lying between identity and difference; the colonial discourse's authority is brought into question (Bhabha, *the Location of Culture* 90).

Although the colonized mimics his colonizer's identity embodied in its language, culture and manners, such identity is neither fixed nor final. The colonizer does not possess "an absolute pre-existent identity" (Huddart 48) that the colonized imitates and the same thing for the colonized whose identity is not fixed. Thus, the colonized people's imitation of his colonizer's identity does not mean that he is betraying his identity (Huddart 48). Rather, his imitation is a proof that "there are no facts of blackness or whiteness, and this is a more catastrophic realization for the colonizer than for the colonized" (Huddart 51). In addition to this, although the colonized adopts then adapts his colonizer's culture, his mimicry "is not a slavish imitation". The colonized does not assimilate in the dominant culture; rather he keeps his difference that defines him (Huddart 39) according to his own terms and not his colonizer's terms.

Mimicry as a strategy of reforming and appropriating the colonized in the

colonial discourse can be used as a strategy of resistance by the colonized. Through this strategy, he can define and express his difference according to his own terms and thus to threaten the dominant discourse and its knowledge. In fact, the threat that mimicry creates for the authority of the dominant discourse is deep and disturbing. Bhabha argues that the menace of this strategy lies in its double vision that serves to uncover the ambivalence of the dominant discourse and to disrupt its authority turning it into uncertain one and fixes it into "partial presence"; that is, incomplete. Thus, mimicry turns to be "at once resemblance and menace" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86, 88). Brantlinger argues that mimicry becomes a menace to the colonial discourse as it reveals:

the inauthenticity both of the 'mimic man', who can never completely assimilate or, in the parlance of Victorian imperialism can never become fully civilized, and of the colonizer, whose claim to a 'civilizing mission' is his chief moral justification for undertaking the religious conversion or the education (or both) of the colonized .(82)

In the above quote, Brantlinger explains the threat that mimicry creates to the colonial discourse as it serves to question its authenticity by using its own weapons (mimicry). That is, while the colonized is supposed to mimic their colonizer to become civilized, he is regarded as someone who cannot become fully civilized according to the colonial parlance. It also serves to question the authenticity of the so-called civilizing mission which is just a pretext to hide the colonizer's real intention (colonialism).

Bhabha argues that mimicry evokes repetition as a way for the colonizer to prove its image as authentic and superior (*The Location of Culture* 88). In such way, it acts in the reverse of the colonizer's aims and destabilizes colonial discourse in which by producing "subjects whose not-quite sameness 'acts like a distorting mirror which

fractures the identity of the colonizing subject and--as in the regime of stereotype--rearticulates [its] presence in terms of its 'otherness', that which it disavows" (Moor-Gilbert 119-120). That is to say, the colonizer's confidence would be weakened as the colonized repeats its values and manners in a strange and distorted manner. Thus, once the colonizer sees its own image through the mirror (colonized) as distorted, this would "unsettlingly [other] his own identity" in return (Berten 208).

As the imitation of the colonizer would produce a blurred image of it, mimicry turns into a mockery which would threaten the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission where this latter would be placed in an "area between mimicry and mockery" (Bhabha *the Location of Culture*, 86). Huddart refers to this comic quality of Bhabha's mimicry as "a comic approach to colonial discourse" (39) because it mocks and belittles both the continuous claims of colonialism and empire as well as the colonial discourse's claims of being serious and having a mission to educate and improve the colonized people (39). It is in this area that both the power of mimicry as an act of resistance lies and the validity of the civilizing mission is interrogated. As a result, the gaze is reversed from the colonized as a mimic man into the colonizer as being mocked at.

In fact, the effectiveness of mimicry for the colonized lies in the way it reverses the gaze from the colonizer as observer to being observed and that the partial representation of the colonizer will rearticulate "the whole notion of identity" provided by the colonial discourse (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 89). That is, the identity constructed through stereotypes and through the repetition of the colonizer's values and ideas becomes different. This is what Bhabha refers to as "discriminatory knowledge" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 90) which raises questions over the authorization of those representations of colonized people provided in colonial discourse. This knowledge serves to question the priority of the colonial man as "an *object* of regulatory

power, as the subject of racial, cultural...representation" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 90). Just like mimicry, Bhabha argues that hybridity also provides the colonized with "a subversive strategy of subaltern agency that negotiates its own authority..." (*The Location of Culture* 185).

### **1.6.2 Hybridity: An Interrogation of the Colonial Myth of Purity**

The notion of hybridity has been popularized and defined by Bhabha in his work *The Location of Culture* as "a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rules of recognition" (114). Hybridity serves to change colonial representations of the other (114) by blazing the trail for those denied voices and knowledge to enter to the dominant discourse and to subvert its claims and assumptions of white's uniqueness, the fixity and purity of cultures and the dichotomy of self and other (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 58,116).

It is interesting to note that hybridity does not seek to settle the conflict between cultures as it is the case with the colonizer and the colonized. Rather, it creates crisis for the dominant discourse (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 113) by supporting the "impure, the heterogeneous and the eclectic" (Guignery 3). This is confirmed by the critic Bill Ashcroft who argues that the major concern of the postcolonial counter-discourse is to exceed and disrupt the colonial-discourse's established binaries (colonizer and colonized) that produce and strengthen differences of black and white (*On Post-colonial Futures* 128).

Bhabha argues that colonial discourse, in its "space of the other" (*The Location of Culture* 101), portrays the colonized as degraded people, barbarian and violent on the ground of racial origin in order to find a way to justify its conquest (*The*

*Location of Culture* 101). However, through hybridity, postcolonial writers and critics found a way through which they can disturb the colonial discourse's representations of the colonized as well as its claims of remaining "unmixed, uninfluenced by anything other than itself" (Mizutani 4). Hybridity serves to challenge hegemony and any kind of discourse which excludes the colonized (Tymocenko 157). Its claims to remain the centre and not influenced by those they have once colonized makes this discourse internally split. Thus, Bhabha's hybridity is an effective tool in challenging the claims and assumptions of the colonial discourse's "never-changing identity" (Mizutani 9).

In fact, hybridity could take different forms: racial hybridization and cultural hybridization. Racial hybridization is the product of the white race and non-white race as a result of the former's colonization of the latter (Godiwala 73) while cultural hybridization calls for the mixed-ness between the colonizer's and the colonized's cultures. It also considers difference but without any imposed hierarchy (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 4). Bhabha argues that cultural mixed-ness results from the fact that cultures are not separate and distinct phenomenon as they are in contact with each other and this serves to highlight their impurity (qtd.in Huddart 4). This form of hybridity is created at the moment of colonial encounter in which the colonizer and the colonized's contamination by each other becomes unenviable (M. Wolf 134). On this basis, this form serves to convey a sense of "the identity of an equally valorised non-western culture" (Godiwala 71-72). This cultural identity constitutes a threat to the claim of a superior colonial culture (Godiwala 71-72) and it breaks any claim of a pure identity to this authority (Kuortti and Nyman 9).

As a site of change and transformation, hybridity in the postcolonial counter-discourse calls into question those fixed identities presented in colonial narratives and then, it serves to provide an alternative to those discourses that praise

white supremacy (Kuortti and Nyman 6). Through hybridity, a third space is provided by Bhabha who calls it "the third space of enunciation" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37). This space serves as a site of resistance to the dominant discourse whose language and culture are subverted (M. Wolf 141). Bhabha argues that although this space is one of contradictions, it also serves to "give rise to something different, something new...a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (Bhabha, "The Third Space" 211). This latter can appear in a hybrid identity (Bhabha, "The Third Space" 216) and in the creation of "new perspectives on the world... [and] in artistic forms which can combine different styles, language s... and genres" (Guignery 3).

Bhabha explains that the third space is a space where negotiation takes place, but not in the common sense that all people relate to as a compromise. He rather means a sort of resistance as he regards subversion of the colonial discourse as negotiation where the colonized will be able to resist the dominant discourse (Bhabha, "The Third Space" 216). The critic Bill Ashcroft shares him this idea as he believes that negotiation is opposition and resistance to the canon but in a different way. That is to say, it is modified into a tool which expresses a sense of identity and culture (qtd.in Karanja 9-10).

What makes this in-between space vital is that the issues of identity and representation of the colonized provided by the colonial discourse can be questioned, resisted and even reshaped by "new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (Bhabha, "The Third Space" 211). It is also important as it bears the burden and the meaning of culture (Ashcroft, *On Postcolonial Futures* 124) and it provides the colonized with the possibility to represent itself beyond the colonizer's perspective. Besides, It is regarded as a natural creation as it results from this "violent clash of civilizations" (M. Wolf 138).



In fact, the third space of enunciation serves to clarify that there is no prior or original culture and identity (Bhabha, "The Third Space" 211) as those entities are not fixed to a certain time period or even to a certain space but are rather in change (*The Location of Culture* 37). It guarantees that "the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated ... and read anew" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37). In the third space, where the colonizer and the colonized cultures meet, the colonized will be provided with the possibility to recast any sense of fixed identity by his colonizer (Kuortti and Nyman 8). Thus hybridity helps the colonized to get their identity liberated from the fixed sense that the colonial discourse assigned to it. In addition to this, as a result to the interaction between the two cultures, the colonial culture is transformed (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 127). That is, once the colonized culture intervenes into the dominant discourse, it transforms it in such a way that it liberates "the representation of local realities" (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 32). Under hybridity, the colonial discourse loses its control over meaning and "finds itself open to the traces of the language of the other" making the alteration of the colonial text by the postcolonial writer possible (Young 21).

Young regards hybridity as an active moment that resists the colonial culture. Such active moment is translated by Bhabha into "a hybrid displacing space" (21). This latter, is the outcome of the interaction between the colonial culture and the indigenous culture. It serves to deprive the dominant culture of its authority that it has exercised over the colonized for a long period as well as of any claim to authenticity (21).

### **1.7 The Question of Cultural Identity**

Identity is defined as: "the recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group and the expression of some form of

allegiance" (Burton 41). The postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha argues that identity is not a fixed condition as it is presented through the colonial discourse but rather a question of negotiation (qtd.in Burton 41). In the case of the colonizer-colonized relationship, the colonizer sees no value in changing the identity it has associated to the colonized who is portrayed as "other" since it tends to construct its colonial discourse on the basis of difference as a vital element in its representation of the colonized. Thus, the colonized is subjected to separation by difference and to marginalization in the colonial discourse (Burton 41).

Speaking about the formation of the colonized people's identity involves the discussion of two important elements: difference and representation. Difference is used by the colonizer as a justification for its domination over the colonized by relegating this latter and associating it to the margin. The binary oppositions of centre/ margin and colonizer/colonized are effective means for the colonizer in setting "the parameters of a constructed dichotomous relationship" (Burton 42) and which are presented through its colonial discourse. By constructing identity on the basis of difference, involving language, culture and race, the colonizer exploits this element to back its state of being superior (Burton 42).

Homi K. Bhabha argues that colonial discourse relies in its construction of the colonized as "other" on racial origin in order to justify its colonialism. It claims that colonized people are racially degenerate and in this way it will be able to strengthen its established dichotomy of self and other (*The Location of Culture* 70). This is confirmed by Frantz Fanon who also opines that the colonizer portrays the colonized as "a kind of quintessence of evil" just to find a way to justify its colonial exploitation of the native's land (6). Accordingly, the process of rewriting the colonial discourse from a postcolonial perspective is triggered by the need to interrogate these notions of

universality and centrality that the colonial discourse provides and to construct their own sense of identity instead (Burton 43).

In addition to difference, representation is another essential element that identity is associated with (Burton 43). Representation refers to "the way the individual or group is perceived along the lines of race, gender or ethnicity" (Nayar 132). In other words, it is related to the way people, societies and their culture are presented to the world. Representations are not neutral acts as they are informed by a relation of power where one side is represented and the other one is doing the representation. In fact, forms of representation are established on political ideology. One of these forms is stereotype. The word refers to a "preconceived idea that attributes certain traits, behaviours, tastes, or other characteristics to a group of people". Those prior images may not be the product of "some kernel of truth" (Peer 43). Rather, they are the outcome of overgeneralizations where differences between individuals of a group, race...etc. are disregarded. As they are based on false thinking and beliefs, stereotypes are nothing but misconceptions (Peer 43).

As an essential discursive strategy within the colonial discourse, stereotype is defined by Bhabha as "a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always in 'place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (*The Location of Culture* 66). In fact, this concept is closely related to the construction of identity as people's identity is formed to represent the society and the culture to which the people belong (Edu-Buandoh 39).

However, stereotypes in the colonial discourse reflect a sense of ambivalence within this latter. As the images that the colonizer has constructed about the colonized are regarded as truth, why are they (stereotypes) constantly repeated? (Hook 7). In fact, this repetition of the same images of the colonized is an attempt by the colonizer to

convince himself several times of the "truthfulness of the stereotype - and thus, by extension, of his own identity" (Bertens 208-209). However, this repetition contributes instead in highlighting the uncertainty of the colonial discourse. It undermines the colonizer's sense of confidence and authority as the colonial discourse relies on stereotyping to ensure its authority (Bertens 208-209).

Used in the colonial discourse as an ideological tool, representations strengthen inequality, subordination and create stereotypes (Burton 44). In such case, representations allude to the power that depicts and dominates the represented object. This is the case with the colonizer's representation of the colonized as primitive (Nayar133) and weak abject (Madsen 7). Homi K. Bhabha states that colonized people are regarded as peculiar creatures with an eccentric nature. They are identified as other by western culture as well as western civilization according their colonial representations (qtd.in McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 53).

As perceptions of the colonized as well as of reality are arranged by the representations that the colonial discourse provides, such representations of the natives are regarded as truth in a way that the reader who got used to these forms of representations will no longer get interrupted by them. On the contrary, he will regard them as true reflections of the natives. It is on these representations of the natives that the colonial system and narrative depends (Nayar133-134).

In fact, representations involve an act of interpretation, thus the major concern of postcolonial writers is about who is doing the representation (Burton 44). Their interest is directed toward breaking the images that the colonial discourse conveys about the colonized people and cultures. They are aware that to represent their own culture by themselves is "a marker of sovereignty"(Nayar 133) that the colonizer has denied them. The issue of authentic and inauthentic representations of the natives and their culture is

ingrained within the postcolonial counter-discourse and the colonial discourse as well. On this basis, the postcolonial counter-discourse seeks to assert the right of the colonized to represent themselves on the ground that "representations are not simply signs but construct identities ..." (Nayar 133-134).

### **1.8 Criticizing Homi K. Bhabha's Theory**

Although Homi K. Bhabha's theory has cleared the way for postcolonial writers to challenge dominant discourses and provided them with solid arguments, it has been criticized from different perspectives. Bhabha's notion of hybridity forms an essential part of his theory beside mimicry. Although it is theoretically correct (Bertens 210), critics reject it on the ground that this notion does not provide convincing and substantiated claims which makes it useless. They went even further in their argument by casting doubt over hybridity as a widely used notion in postcolonial studies and they deemed it as "no more than old wine in a new bottle" (Acheraiou 105-106).

To clarify the aforementioned idea, the critic Acheraiou refers to the case of Napoleon Bonaparte and Alexander the Great as examples. He makes an analogy between Bhabha's theory of hybridity and Napoleon's desire to create a hybrid universal civilization when he conquered Egypt and which he got from his model Alexander the Great. The later announced hybridity as a universal project for the expansion of his empire after his conquest of Persia. Acheraiou regards Bhabha's hybridity as a continuation of "ancient colonial perceptions of hybridity" (112) promoted by the aforementioned imperial conquerors. As those conquerors have used hybridity as a way to dominate non-Europeans, postcolonial hybridity discourses could be suspected for being supported by "dubious pragmatic, cultural, political, and ideological goals that are just as hegemonic" (112).

The Marxist scholar Aijaz Ahmad is among those critics who criticize the deficiency of postcolonial theorizations of hybridity. He blames Bhabha for developing a theory which is totally separated from both colonial context as well as the postcolonial realities of the ex-colonies. He argues that "Between postcoloniality as it exists in a former colony like India, and postcoloniality as the condition of discourse by such critics as Bhabha, there would appear to be a considerable gap" (qtd.in Acheraiou 108). Aijaz Ahmed seeks to uncover the way postcolonial scholars are detached from daily preoccupations of people in the ex-colonies (qtd.in Acheraiou 108).

In addition to Aijaz Ahmed, Shalini Puri criticizes Bhabha for distancing the theory of hybridity from classical Marxist class discourse in an attempt to provide a new speaking subject which would be different from those class-subjects that characterize classical Marxism. That is, postcolonial scholars of hybridity, including Bhabha, have neglected the question of class inequality (85) which is essential to classical Marxism. This claim is confirmed by Amar-Acheraiou who argues that Bhabha and other advocates of hybridity neglect class inequality which is accorded an important place by Marxist critics to perpetuate the priority of culture. He bases his argument on the fact that postcolonial scholars have always ignored Marxist social and economic theories as they argue that the analysis of certain Marxist notions including class organization has turned to be obsolescent. That is to say, as the Marxist notion of class has been set in a different economic and cultural context it is discarded as anachronistic and irrelevant for those advocates of hybridity (122).

Beside Marxist critics, feminist critics also criticise Bhabha's idea of the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized which is introduced through his notion of hybridity. They argue that hybridity would not do justice to the heterogeneity that characterizes such encounter. Their argument is that Bhabha's hybridity overlooks

the differences between men and women and between social classes while it addresses the colonial situation (Bertens 210).

It is noteworthy that Bhabha's theory was criticized even in terms of his writing style which is deemed as difficult for the reader to grasp as it proved to be "extremely dense (or clothed) texture of his style" (Moor-Gilbert 114). As a result to his writing style, his works turned to be inaccessible to the reader who struggles through it in order to fully understand his ideas (Moor-Gilbert 114).

### **1.9 Postcolonialism and Postmodernism: Intertextuality from the Postmodernist Context to the Postcolonial Context**

As the intensity of the theoretical interest in the postcolonial has synchronized with the emergence of postmodernism in western society, this has resulted in not only confusion but also overlap of both (Ashcroft et al. 117). Just like postmodernism, postcolonialism appoints critical practice which is difficult to define (Quayson 1). Such confusion is because postmodernism is concerned with the project of decolonizing "the centralized...master narratives of European culture" and which makes it overlap with the postcolonial project of dismantling "the centre/margin binarism of imperial discourse" (Ashcroft 117). The decentring of discourse, the stress upon the importance of language in the construction of experience and the use of certain strategies to subvert the original discourse; these strategies are also part of postmodernism and thus the blending of the two is the outcome (Ashcroft 117). Such overlap between postcolonial and postmodern writings appears through the use of intertextuality in the postcolonial context where the postcolonial theory intervenes in postmodernism.

In postmodern literature, intertextuality is an important practice which turns to be a major approach in critical analysis. Despite of its Euro-centred origin, this approach is not foreign to the postcolonial context (Kehinde 374). It has been adapted

to postcolonial literature where many intertextual works are produced. As a result to this, intertextuality turns to be one of the major concerns of postcolonial critical discourse (Brietinger xxii). In their rejection of the canonical discourse's claim of universalism, postcolonial writers make use of intertextuality as an effective weapon in their challenge. Postcolonial critics use intertextuality to examine matters of cultural diversity in literature which are embodied in the colonizer and the colonized's cultures (Kehinde 375).

The notion of intertextuality was coined, defined and launched by the theorist Julia Kristeva in the poststructuralist context; however, its usage has surpassed this context to be used in the literary context by postmodernists (Panagiotidou 73) and later by postcolonial writers. In fact, intertextuality emerged in literary theory and studies in 1966 through Kristeva's essays which were published in *Tel Quel* and *Critique Journal* and more specifically through her essay on Mikhail Bakhtin and dialogue. Kristeva developed her theory of intertextuality from the synthesis of Saussure's study of semiotics and Bakhtin's theories of language (Juvan 13-14). From this latter, she has taken Bakhtin's idea of dialogism in which she views language as dialogical embodied in the plurality of meaning behind a word and regardless of both the speakers and the author of the work (Irwin 227-228).

The term intertextuality is a compound noun derived from the Latin prefix "inter" which means "between, in, among, or shared" and which indicates "complexity, connectedness, and mutual dependence of the two component conditions" (Juvan 13-14). It also comprises the root "textual" which refers to a text. Together, they form the word intertextuality which refers to the relation and interaction between texts (Juvan 13-14).



Critics argue that the starting point of Kristeva's intertextuality was the concept of intersubjectivity and interaction (Juvan 13). In her translated essay "Word, Dialogue and Novel", Kristeva explains that intertextuality has replaced intersubjectivity (*Desire in Language*, 66) as meaning is not transmitted directly from the writer to the reader but rather it is "mediated through, or filtered by 'codes' imparted to the writer and reader by other texts" (Kadam et al. 63). In the same essay, she has defined intertextuality stating that "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and the transformation of another..." (Kristeva, *the Kristeva Reader* 37).

In explaining her theory of intertextuality, Kristeva uses the metaphor of a mosaic to describe the way texts are related to each other. Mosaic indicates different colours and styles which are part of the newly created text. That is to say, the writer creatively makes use of the stylistic features that previous artists and masters have used creating a mosaic in his work. However, the writer creates such mosaic in a way that makes his text "a new creation" that carries his signature as the creator of this work (Nolte and Jordan 4).

In addition to Kristeva's definition of the term, the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines intertextuality and refers to some of its common forms and concepts that are present in an intertextual discourse. It regards intertextuality as "... a term [that] designate the various relationships that a given TEXT may have with other texts. These intertextual relationships include ...Allusion, adaptation, [appropriation],... and other kinds of transformation ...the term intertext has been used variously for a text drawing on other texts, for a text thus drawn upon, and for the relationship between both" (Baldick 128). In this quote, Baldick refers to an essential term within the theory

of intertextuality which is the intertext and whose meaning and usage varies from one critic to another.

Michael Riffaterre regards intertextuality as "an experience of literature" which could be summarized in three essential components: the text, the reader, and his reactions expressed through words. Accordingly, he defines intertextuality as "an operation of the reader's mind, but it is an obligatory one, necessary to any textual decoding ... It is the perception that our reading of the text cannot be complete or satisfactory without going through [the prior text]" (142-143). However, going through those earlier texts, as Riffaterre opines, does not deny originality to the main text. This is because the prior text is not a collection of literary works imitated by the writer of the intertext nor is intertextuality a new name for imitation as some scholars think. Thus, prior texts can never determine the originality of the main text nor its meaning (142-143).

In a similar vein, Linda Hutcheon argues that intertextuality is a "critical mode of perception" for the reader as it grants the latter an important position in the analysis of the text (23). Such position is created by the textual strategies employed by the writer in his/her text. This in return generates "an intertextual echo in the reader" (235-236) in a way that enables him/her to perceive the prior text. To Hutcheon, texts come to life once they are read, and this confirms that the meaning of the text is not dependent on other texts as so far as it depends on the reader who recognizes and activates the "intertextual process" (235-236).

To facilitate the reader's task of decoding the intertext, Bazerman provides a number of dimensions of intertextuality which would uncover the way a prior text is used in an intertext. In the first dimension, the reader observes how the earlier text is incorporated in the intertext. At this level, he could raise the question: Is that earlier

text fully referred to in the new text or just alluded to it through an amount of its material?. The second dimension uncovers the forms taken by the reference: is it in a form of a cited direct quotation or a paraphrase that echoes words from a recognizable prior text?. The third dimension reveals how the position and the evaluation of the new writer place the prior text in the intertext and how it changes its meaning. Through such dimension, the reader will be able to interpret the way the writer of the intertext has used the prior text and the purpose behind its use (62-63).

For Roland Barthes, intertextuality is a process of deconstruction and reconstruction which aims to rearrange prior texts or parts of texts before they are integrated in the new one. However, the fact that the text under question draws upon earlier texts does not necessarily mean that this latter is a deliberate conscious imitation of that earlier text, nor it can be considered as a reproduction of it. Rather, it is an indication of productivity. Through this process of deconstruction and reconstruction of prior texts, emerges the intertext. This word is defined by Barthes as a text where "other texts are present ...at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding cultures" (39).

Plett asserts that all intertexts are texts, but not all texts can be regarded as intertexts. He explains the difference between the two through the prefix "inter". While a text is viewed as "an autonomous sign structure, delimited and coherent" and whose boundaries are clear-cut where its beginning, middle and end are clearly defined, an intertext is characterized by features which exceed its boundaries. That is to say, it is not restricted as its elements refer to elements of one or many other texts. Hence, the intertext has twofold coherence "an *intratextual* one which guarantees structural ... integrity of the text, and an *intertextual* one which creates structural relations between itself and other texts" (5).

Allen argues that writers draw from other texts to produce their texts. Thus, the text can't be seen as an isolated phenomenon but rather a compilation of other texts. In addition to this, Kristeva's theory highlights the fact that texts do not only use previous "textual unites" but they transform them in a way to give them new positions (53). That is to say, the text does not simply present other texts but rather it "consumes and incorporates, and at the same time it alters [those intertextual threads]... into something else" (Nolte and Jordan 4), into a text that the writer desires it to be. In the aforementioned essay, Kristeva explains also that texts cannot be separated from "the larger cultural or social textuality out of which they are constructed". As a result, all the ideological struggles of society are present in those texts (Allen 36).

Speaking about language of an intertextual discourse, Mikhail Bakhtin states that language in those texts "lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's" (293). In order to make this language one's own, appropriation would make this possible. This is the major concern of postcolonial writers who believe that the appropriation of the colonial language and culture is extremely important. Focusing on intertextuality and taking into account the postcolonial counter-discourse, it is important to note that postcolonial writers, using English, are writing "against the othering processes of colonial fiction" (Morey 84). In fact, discussing postcolonial intertextuality brings into attention also the broad history that nourishes the literary text and reflects the cultural and the social background of that text (Morey 84). The critic Morey describes the way intertextuality works in a postcolonial counter-discourse by emphasizing that when the postcolonial writer rewrites a colonial text, "the original [text] disappears after having been consumed". As a result, an updated version of this text is produced in which the original text is given a different meaning, locals and times (85).

In the writing of their literary works, some postcolonial writers, when exercising their creativity, borrow ideas, sentences and structures from pre-existing literary works. This highlights the level of similarities which might exist between those works of literature as well as the existing differences between them in terms of time and place. Such feature of literature, as a mirror to other texts, is what defines intertextuality as a technique (Nwadike 76).

Speaking about intertextuality as a postmodernist technique and its relation to the novel, Holquist argues that "novels are overwhelmingly intertextual" (85-86) as they refer to other earlier works outside them. That is to say, novels tend to quote other works in a way or another. In addition to this, he argues that intertextuality has the effect of undermining the claims to singularity and authority raised by other discourses where intertextual novels serve to have a literary influence on other novels to subvert their aforementioned claims (85-86). This idea is shared with and confirmed by Michel Foucault who believes that:

The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network ... The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands ... its unity is variable and relative. (23)

For Foucault, the borders of a book cannot be specified as each book is related somehow or another to other books, other texts or other sentences. Thus, such kind of references creates a network where the book is the node in this network as it is related to other works through those references.

In fact, intertextuality "has the effect of multiplying the meaning of the text" (Gosselin 29-30) by the integration of other texts, classics, in the intertext in a way that creates new meaning and different interpretations. By producing a text with multiple meanings, intertextuality serves to stand against the claims for unity of the text on the part of the colonial discourse. As a result, a "non-hierarchical text" is produced to undermine the binary oppositions provided in the source text (Gosselin 29-30). That is, a text where the actions of the characters are given equal importance and where there is no room for a dominant element (Gosselin 31). By integrating parts from another text, the writer creates a sense of fragmentation, confusion as well as multiplicity in his text to reflect the lived experience of his characters (Gosselin 26). Such process of deconstructing the source text and reconstructing it through intertextuality serves to transform the reader's way of grasping literature. Intertextuality undermines any claim of a privileged text as well as the principles on which this text is based (Gosselin 32).

In its practical side, critics tried to adopt Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality by taking it away from her principle that texts presuppose other texts and by narrowing it instead to a group of devices where one text refers to another as its pre-text (Pfister 210). In fact, the presence of one text in another can take different forms. Intertextuality could be a reference or a parallel to another literary work such as a novel; it could be an extended discussion of another work or an adoption of another author's style (Kadam et.al 62). It involves an aspect of aesthetical production of texts in which the existing literature is transformed into a new text. Under this aspect, intertextuality can involve techniques such as criticism, interpretation and allusion (Venter 159). On this basis, Lodge argues that aesthetic does not mean that intertextuality is "a decorative addition" (102). Rather, it is an important factor in the text's composition as it serves to shape the text and determine its form and content not to decorate it (102).

In the postcolonial discourse, intertextuality is regarded as "a subtle interplay of writing and re-writing". Thus, critics identify certain ways in which the original text can be used in another text (Reguig Mouro 32). It is about the way references to an original text are presented in another through appropriation and integration. In an intertextual discourse, appropriation refers to a mode of intertextuality where an artist appropriates the work written by another artist and he presents it in his work (D'Angelo 37). That is, through this mode of intertextuality, the colonial narrative is appropriated and then incorporated into the new text (Arguedas 49), namely in the postcolonial counter-discourse. In fact, the primary goal of this mode of intertextuality is to express opposition to the appropriated work. Accordingly, appropriation is regarded as "one of the forms of oppositional production" as it aims to subvert the adopted work (D'Angelo 37).

### **1.10 Modes of Intertextuality**

In addition to appropriation as a mode of intertextuality, Interfigural and integration are two other essential modes of intertextuality.

#### **1.10.1 Postcolonial Intertextual Integration**

According to Christiane Achour and Amina Bekkat, Integration is a mode of intertextuality that comprises three ways: by allusion, by absorption, and by suggestion

Integration by suggestion appears through the text's reference to a name or a title (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 32). It could be even a simple reference that provokes the reader's memory to go back to the prior text (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 81) such as a sentence. It could also be names of characters from various texts which mean that characters are not independent as there is a relationship between literary characters of various authors (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 33).

Integration by Allusion appears only through signs where the reader is supposed to have certain prior knowledge in order to observe the reference in the text under question (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 32). Allusion is an intertextual marker which belongs "to another independent text". It could be a title of another literary work, a name of a protagonist (Hebel 136) or a scene from another literary work. Wheeler argues that the most common kind of allusion is textual allusion which creates a link between "specific adopted and adoptive texts" (20). Hebel summarizes the steps of how intertextual relationships could be created through allusion: the recognition of a marker, the identification of the source text through such marker and then, the activation of that source text as a whole in order to "form a maximum of intertextual patterns" (138). For Hebel, what makes allusion a successful instrument is that it evokes an intertextual relation between a text and a source text (138).

Integration by Absorption appears when the writer of the new text integrates the original text implicitly in a way that makes it melt in his/her work. In other words, the original text is absorbed in the new text and it is not pasted by the writer otherwise it would be considered plagiarism (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 32). Thus, the new text is considered as the product of the writer's interaction with the source text and this contributes in changing the reader's perception of the source text (Kundu, *Intertext* 398).

### **1.10.2 Postcolonial Intertextual Interfiguralty**

As a mode of intertextuality, Interfiguralty is concerned with the relationship between characters of different texts. This mode of intertextuality appears through "a fictional character's... identification with, a character from another literary work" (Muller 102-103). That is to say, a character from a certain text is transferred in another text once writers "pass over the boundaries of different literatures" (Muller 102-103).



Among the interfigural devices that could be identified in the analysis of the relationship between texts are names. Such interfigural device serves to relate characters from different literary works whose relationship can be noticed through the writer's borrowing of a character's name from another text. This name can be identical to the name of the figure in the prior text or modified (Muller 102-103).

In fact, Interfigurality through names is similar to a quotation as quoted names are names that "repeat [...] a segment derived from a pretext within a subsequent text" (Muller 102-103). Besides, just like quotations from the pretext are liable to modification and transformation once they are placed in the intertext, names also undergo the same changes once they are borrowed from a pretext and used in the intertext (Muller 102-103). That is, in the intertext, the writer follows an interfigural deviation by liberating names from another fictional context and incorporating them in his text after making changes (Muller 104). Interfigurality in names can also be identified through the omission of the characters' names from the source text once they are incorporated in the intertext. Thus, characters in the intertext are placed as nameless characters. Through interfigural deviation, the writer of the intertext will be able to integrate the borrowed characters in the formal and the ideological structure of his text by taming them to fit his own use (Muller 106-107).

As in a literary work a character is regarded as a group of qualities tied together, the name which this character receives becomes "its identifying onomastic label" (Muller 102-103). Interfigurality permits the comparison between not only characters from different texts but also between different stories. Such comparison is made possible by the reader who generates the meaning of the interfigural devices and thus establishes connections between different texts through his observation (Varis 6-7).

As an act of rewriting, intertextuality is regarded as continuous process of creativity which contributes in bringing out truth (Kundu, *Intertext* 24). This is confirmed by Sudha Shastri who has commented on the intertextualist rewriting arguing that "in the ongoing evolution of literary tradition, each writer believes that a predecessor text contains a space that requires to be filled" (qtd.in Kundu, *Intertext* 24). It is through this space in the colonial discourse that the postcolonial writer can have access and appropriate those practices imposed by the colonial discourse. As a result to this, he decolonizes their literature from any colonial control (Kundu, *Intertext* 38).

In fact, the subversion of the dominant discourse through intertextuality is the major concern of the postcolonial counter-discourse (Kundu, *Intertext* 38). This concern is made possible by the intertext which provides "a site for the dialogue between discourses and counter-discourses" (Kundu, *Intertext* 20). Such textual space which indicates the mark of the dominant discourse can be appropriated by the second writer who writes back that discourse from the perspective of the marginalized (Kundu, *Intertext* 20). Accordingly, the voices which were suppressed in the original text can find a room to appear in the second text (Kundu, *Intertext* 401). When the postcolonial writer rewrites a colonial narrative, the intertextual mode is the literary device used in this situation. In fact, the intertext is one of the effective devices "by which 'the empire' would have written back" (Kundu, *Intertext* 21-22). The use of this device does not only involve the disruption of the dominant discourse, but also involves a departure from "the time-space continuum" of that canonical text (Kundu, *Intertext* 21-22).

It is worth noting that the writer's borrowing of another work does not deny sense of originality to the produced work as the claim to originality is not associated to isolation. Rather, it is about association and the influence of one work on another as some critics regard borrowing as a kind of conquest (Olofinsao 20). Thus, the result of

intertextuality is the creation of a universal text or an intertext in which "other texts reside or echo their PRESENCE" (Nwadike 77) in a creative way. Ogede explains the idea of originality in an intertextual discourse by associating it to the writer's ability to invent. By this latter, he means "to use one's own tools responsibly... borrowing, and allusion, except when ...done irresponsibly, then can all be vital components, in differing, varying gradations, of creative talent" (5)

### **1.11 Conclusion**

As a conclusion, the emergence of the postcolonial theory in the literary scene paved the way for marginalized groups to express their voice and to define themselves on their own terms rather than on the terms of their colonizer. On this account, postcolonial writers took the burden of being the spokesmen and the spokeswomen of their people. They sought to represent their native culture as well as their history and to liberate them from being contaminated by their colonizer whose discourse tends to be biased.

In their way to decolonize literature from eurocentrism, postcolonial writers have followed the process of rewriting famous classics of English literature from their own perspective. Such tendency enabled them to express their resistance towards those representations provided in the colonial discourse about their colonized people and culture. They have engaged in the abrogation and the appropriation of both imperial language as well as genres of English literature. In so doing, they have managed to create new languages and genres that would liberate them from the stereotypes created by the centre and that would enable them to reclaim their repressed identity.

In drawing on famous classics of English literature and incorporating them in their postcolonial discourse, postcolonial writers made use of the postmodern technique of intertextuality by adapting it to their postcolonial context. By basing

their counter discourse on a colonial narrative, postcolonial writers have the chance to highlight the hybrid nature of the colonized character, culture as well as experience.

The following chapter is devoted to the first practical part of the thesis. It discusses postcolonial rewriting of colonial narratives through Naipaul's *BR* that writes back Joseph Conrad's *HD*. The chapter uncovers the textual strategies as well as the linguistic indicators of resistance that are part and parcel of the writing back approach. It analysis the way these strategies are used in Naipaul's novel and the purpose behind their use. The chapter also spots light on the question of identity for the colonized as well as on Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity and mimicry as an act of resistance against the assumptions presented in Conrad's *HD*. The chapter also analyses the different modes of intertextuality used in Naipaul's novel and that recall its relation to the colonial text of *HD*. Through these modes, the chapter examines the extent to which his novel is an original work of art.

## Chapter Two

### The Deconstruction of the Colonial Narrative in V.S Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*:

#### A Rewriting of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

The colonist makes history and he knows it...The history he writes is therefore not the history of the country he is despoiling, but the history of his own nation's looting raping and starving to death ...

Franz Fanon, *the Wretched of the Earth*

### 2.1 Introduction

The chief concern of this chapter is to discuss the way Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul's postcolonial novel *BR* rewrites Joseph Conrad's colonial discourse *HD*. The chapter analyses the novel to highlight the different textual strategies used in *BR* to express resistance to the dominant discourse *HD* and highlight the culture of the colonized. Accordingly, the reader will be exposed to another side of the story (truth) about the colonized people's experience with their colonizer narrated from the perspective of the colonized.

The chapter also examines the extent to which Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theory of hybridity and mimicry are applicable to Naipaul's *BR* in its challenge to some of the basic assumptions provided in Conrad's colonial discourse. It spots light on the way the colonized can address and challenge his colonizer with its own weapons and lay bare the falsity of its assumptions.

Another critical perspective which is adopted in the analysis of Naipaul's postcolonial novel and which is suggested by the interaction between the two aforementioned texts is Julia Kristina's theory of intertextuality. However, this latter would be stripped of its poststructuralist essence as a theory to be applied in the

postcolonial context as a technique to examine the extent to which the postcolonial novel, *BR*, which rewrites the English classic novel *HD* can be regarded as an original work of art.

## **2.2 Linguistic Abrogation and Appropriation of the Colonial Language in *A Bend in the River*: Foregrounding Colonized Culture**

The colonizer has managed not only to gain control over other people's lands but also to manipulate their minds. One of the major means employed by the colonizer to maintain its rule over the colonized is language. English proves to be a powerful weapon in the colonizer's hands to transmit its culture and its own version of truth about the colonized people's history and culture. The critic Edu-buandol argues that the colonizer has exercised a sort of linguistic imperialism in which it has deprived the colonized of the freedom to choose its own language and to form its own identity (37). However, such cultural and linguistic domination ceased to exist once postcolonial writers took the burden of rewriting colonial narratives to come up with different kinds of writings. While some postcolonial writers chose to employ their native tongues (dialects) in the rewriting and the interrogation of the dominant discourse, some others were inclined toward the appropriation of the master's language to their postcolonial discourse and Naipaul is no exception.

In his postcolonial novel *BR*, Naipaul manipulates the conventions of Standard English as exposed in the colonial discourse *HD*. In order to make an adequate language for his postcolonial context, he engages in the abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language. Through such deviation from the norms of Standard English, Naipaul produces a new version of English which transmits the experience and the culture of colonized people in Africa. This new language could be referred to as "postcolonial english", a language which is taken far from the centre to

carry the culture, the tradition and the identity of colonized people in Africa. It should be noted that the word "english" is deliberately written in lower case in order to be distinguished from the colonial language as it has been previously explained through the words of the postcolonial critic Bill Ashcroft "the myth of centrality embodied in the concept of a 'standard language' is forever overturned...English becomes english" (*Empire Writes Back* 68).

Zekmi defines abrogation as "the rejection of normative forms of the colonizer's language as opposed to its non-standard and dialectical use in the colonies" (58-59). In *BR*, this linguistic strategy is used in a variety of ways. Naipaul plays with the standards rules of English Grammar to appropriate it to the postcolonial context of his novel. In *BR*, instances of this include the use of sentences without subjects as in the following examples: "Hot and heavy." "Remember that." (Naipaul 23-24); "Just like that." "Or take it seriously." (Naipaul 32); "That was bad." (Naipaul 69), "But no." (Naipaul 132). In these examples, the colonizer's language is transformed in a way that the reader cannot identify the subject which stands against the rules of English grammar. Naipaul also makes use of one-word sentence which deviates from the usual one-word sentence of Standard English. Instances of this in the novel include: "Two." (Naipaul 24); "Still." "So." (Naipaul 236).

In *BR*, Naipaul also manipulates upper case letters by incorporating them in his postcolonial novel in unusual way. In the novel, the first letter after each colon is capitalized to highlight the thoughts of the narrator Salim and his reaction towards the situation of the African town. Instances of this in the novel include: "I thought: That is the sound of war" (Naipaul 69); "I thought: This is too stupid" (Naipaul 70); "Or: This is 1963" (Naipaul 65); "I thought: Nothing stands still" (Naipaul 107). In these examples, the use of capital letter after a colon deviates from the standards rules of English in

which there are only specific cases where the letter should be capitalized after a colon and the examples used by Naipaul do not fall under these cases.

In addition to the above-noted examples of abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language (English), Naipaul incorporates marks which are specific to the colonized African's dialect within an English sentence producing a non-standard language. In their local language, the natives use abbreviated version of titles and names when they speak. As a matter of example, when the African woman Zabeth visited Salim's shop, he advises her using an abbreviated version of her name "One day, Beth, somebody will snatch your case. It isn't safe to travel about with money like that" (Naipaul 6). Zabeth's reaction to his words also includes an abbreviated word which highlights the language of the natives and their culture as she said: "The day that happens, Mis' Salim, I will know the time has come to stay home"(Naipaul 6). According to the narrator Salim, the word "Mis' " is short for "mister" and it is used by Zabeth and other natives in order to distinguish him from other foreigners who resided in their town (Naipaul 6). Other instances of this case in the novel include: "Naz' says Indar's become help-assistant" (Naipaul 241). The word "Naz'" stands for the name Nazruddin and it is used in a shortened way by the colonized character Kareisha, the daughter of Nazruddin when she reports her father's words to Salim.

Through the aforementioned examples of "linguistic deviations" (Teke 72), Naipaul seeks to decolonize the natives' language by making the colonizer's language fit "the demands and the requirements of the place and the society into which it has been appropriated" (Ashcroft et.al, *Postcolonial Studies Reader* 284), namely the postcolonial context. Out of this linguistic deviation, a new language is produced (postcolonial english) with different grammar and lexicon. In addition to the above



mentioned strategies of resistance, Naipaul makes also use of code-switching, glossing and untranslated words.

### **2.2.1 Code-Switching: Highlighting Colonized Culture in Africa**

Code-switching is a linguistic technique of hybridization where there is a shift between two languages or dialects (Hamamra and Qararia 126). In the postcolonial counter-discourse, it is remarked through the mixing of English with words or phrases that belong to an indigenous tongue (Klinger 36) or another language. In fact, in a discourse where English is the dominant language, any language contact occurs in the novel with another language is regarded as code-switching (Jonsson 213).

In his postcolonial counter-discourse *BR*, Naipaul displays this strategy of abrogation and appropriation in a variety of ways to express his resistance to the dominant discourse *HD*. Native characters sometimes switch codes from English to local patois and sometimes to French which is very close to their native tongue. As a matter of example, when the African character Zabeth goes to Salim's shop to ask him to look after her son Ferdinand, she uses English with her local patois within this English sentence "No, no Mis' Salim. Fer'nand will come to you. You beat him whenever you want" (Naipaul 36). Another instance appears when Zabeth speaks to Salim about the future career of her son "I suppose Fer'nand will be commissioner, Salim" (Naipaul 223). The fact of using local patois with English through the abbreviated title "Mis'" and the dropping of letters in the name Ferdinand makes the colonizer's language mixed with the natives local patois. As a result to this, colonial language is no longer pure or superior as the colonizer and the colonized languages are placed in equal status.

Another instance in the novel appears in the scene when Salim goes to Mahesh's house to ask for his tennis shoes and Mahesh switches codes using English while addressing Salim and local patois when he addresses the African Ildephonse. Addressing Salim first, he says: "I'm sending the boy down with the tennis shoes for you. Right, Salim! ...*Phonse! Aoutchikong pour Mis' Salim!*" (Naipaul 92). In this example, the colonizer's language is introduced in normal style while the colonized language is italicized. In fact, the use of the natives' local patois with English either in the previous examples of Zabeth or in this example is for the purpose of "inscribing alterity...[and] installing cultural distinctiveness" (Ashcroft et.al, *The Empire Writes Back* 71) ; a difference which is defined according to the standards of colonized people and not those of their colonizer.

According to Bertacco, the strategy of code-switching in postcolonial counter-discourse could be recognized through quotation or reported speech and sometimes it takes the form of interjection and sentence filler (150-151). In *BR*, Naipaul introduces code-switching through interjection in local patois. In the novel, the African character Ferdinand enters the flat of Salim and once Metty hears his voice, he calls him out using local patois "Oo-oo!". Ferdinand responds to Metty's interjection and they start their conversation in patois (Naipaul 57).

Another instance of code-switching in the novel is reflected by the African president. When he made a speech addressing his citizens, he switches codes from French to English subverting some norms of Standard English. In this speech, the president expresses his anger at the Youth Guard portraying them as people who were disloyal to him:

*Citoyens-citoyennes*, monkey smart... Monkey can talk. You didn't know that? Well, I tell you now. Monkey can talk, but he keep it quiet.

Monkey know that if he talk in front of man, man going to catch him and beat him...*Citoyens! Citoyennes!* We will teach these people to be like monkey. We will send them to the bush and let them work their arse off.

(Naipaul 207-208)

In the aforementioned speech, Naipaul utilizes non-standard language in which he abrogates the colonial language and empties it of its power, and then he appropriates it to the colonized people's context. Such appropriation is reflected through the shift from French to English and through the manipulation of standard rules of English Grammar. The latter appears through the omission of the auxiliary "is" in the followings sentences: "Monkey smart like shit." and "man going to catch him and beat him". In addition to this, the writer appropriates verbs (keep, know and talk) by omitting the "s" of the present simple in the third person.

The critics Hamamra and Qararia argue that the use of code-switching in postcolonial counter-discourse indicates the insufficiency that exists in the colonizer's language and which is compensated by the shift to another language or dialect (126). In Naipaul's *BR*, the insufficiency in the colonizer's language is compensated by the shift to French and to local patois. Such compensation has resulted in the creation of a new language which would echo the colonized people's culture and identity in Africa. It has also resulted in the construction of, what Ashcroft et.al call, a different social world (*The Empire Writes Back* 74).

Through the careful analyses of the aforementioned examples of abrogation and appropriation of the English language, it is possible to say that Naipaul has, as Salman Rushdie described it, delocalized the colonizer's language from its centre and then relocated it in "a hybrid space" (qtd.in Teke 73). Through appropriation, Naipaul produces a "new english" by depriving the colonizer's language of its power.

Accordingly, English ceases to be an imperial language and becomes instead a postcolonial language. Through this latter, Naipaul dismantles the dominant discourse *HD* and challenges its authority as a superior discourse which controls the means of communication (English).

Another instance of code-switching from French to English is reflected by the African character Ferdinand. When Ferdinand is about to climb the steamer, an African woman demands his tickets to examine them. After she hands them back to him, he reacts by switching codes from English to French to show respect to her "Thank you, *Citoyenne*" (Naipaul 160). Another scene in which the colonized switches codes from French to English, which is used beside their local patois, appears through the character Metty. Once Metty enters the flat, he explains himself to Salim the owner of the flat and the store where Metty works "I must do nothing incident in front of the *patron*" (Naipaul 33). In addition to this scene, Metty appears again speaking to Salim and suggesting for him to move to Bujumbura, a nice city in Africa, in which he switches codes from English to French "We must go there, *patron*. I hear it is the last good place in Africa. *Ya encore bien, bien des côté-qui -là*. It have a lot of white people up there still" (Naipaul 54). In these examples, the use of French is not accidental. Rather, it is used to abrogate the language of the dominant discourse *HD* and this appears also through the use of the auxiliary "have" instead of "has" with the third person pronoun "it".

Through this strategy of abrogation and appropriation, the postcolonial writer Naipaul interrogates the authority of the dominant discourse *HD* and expresses his voice as a representative of the colonized. Code-switching in his postcolonial-counter discourse *BR* serves as "a creative response to domination" because the new language which is produced in this novel comprises an empowering function (Jonsson 212). In

fact, through code-switching, the silenced colonized people in *HD* are given voice in Naipaul's postcolonial discourse to speak either in local patois mixed with French or to mix the colonizer's language (English) with French or local patois. As a result to the transformation of the colonial language the status and the language of the colonized is legitimized (Jonsson 226).

### **2.2.2 Untranslated Words and Glossing: Reclaiming Colonized Culture**

Bill Ashcroft argues that postcolonial writers follow an "inner translation" in which they include untranslated words in their texts. In fact, those words which are kept untranslated do not hinder the understanding and interpretation of the text as their meaning lie in the sentence itself ("Bridging the Silence" 58).

Instances of this strategy in Naipaul's *BR* include the words which were said by Metty's secret wife who comes to Salim's shop looking for him. She asks Salim using local patois which is very close to French "*Metty-ki là?*" (Naipaul 105). The narrator does not provide an immediate English translation to this italicized question. Rather, he directs the task to the reader who is required to grasp its meaning through the context as the statement holds its inner translation in the text. Another untranslated word is reflected through Salim's reaction to Metty's decision to leave his wife "How can you leave her?...You've got that child out there...Don't you think it's disgusting to have a little African child running about in somebody's yard, with its *toto* swinging from side to side? Aren't you ashamed, boy like you?" (Naipaul 106). The italicized word "*toto*" is an African word whose meaning is not provided by the narrator. Again the reader, who is not familiar with African culture, cannot understand the meaning of this word. Rather, he needs to undergo a research to obtain its meaning which refers to the male or female's private parts. Bill Ashcroft et.al argues that the absence of translation in the

postcolonial text serves to give this latter a specific interpretive function (*The Empire Writes Back* 64).

It is interesting to note that the aforementioned untranslated words are deliberately left untranslated by the narrator in order to highlight the culture of the oppressed in Africa as the word carries the culture it represents. Through those words, Naipaul transmits a sense of "cultural distinctiveness" from the centre (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58) represented by the colonial discourse *HD*. It also sheds light on the uniqueness of the colonized culture which is marginalized in the colonial discourse.

The fact that Naipaul does not provide an immediate English translation for the word he integrates in his postcolonial discourse creates a metonymic gap between the culture of the colonized and that of the colonizer (in *HD*). The critic Bill Ashcroft explains this gap of cultural difference as follows:

The metonymic gap is that cultural gap formed when appropriation of a colonial language insert unglossed words, phrases or passages ... which may be unknown to the reader. Such words become synecdochic of the writer's culture. The part that stands for the whole... Thus the inserted language 'stand for ' the colonized culture in a metonymic way, and its very resistance to interpretation constructs a "gap" between the writer's culture and the colonial culture. (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 75)

The use of untranslated words is one of those strategies that create a metonymic gap in the postcolonial discourse, a gap that serves to highlight the marginalized culture of the colonized. It is through this gap that Naipaul, the postcolonial voice for the colonized people in Africa, foregrounds the colonized culture.

Another instance of untranslated words used in Naipaul's postcolonial counter-discourse is the word "Kohl". In one of the scenes in the novel, the narrator Salim goes back in time to his childhood memories on the east coast of Africa in order to shed light on the culture of colonized people there. As an African of Indian origin, Salim recalls the way his family members used to put "kohl" in his eyes when he was a child "When I was young ... I would be bathed and dressed; they would put kohl on my eyes and hang a good-luck charm around my neck..." (Naipaul 13). The word "kohl" is used in Naipaul's narrative without translation for the purpose of bringing the once marginalized culture and tradition of the colonized to the forefront. As a strategy of abrogation and appropriation of the colonizer's language, Naipaul's use of the untranslated word "kohl" serves to expose the reader to the "other culture" (Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* 75). In so doing, Naipaul marks the colonized people's difference from their colonizer by using his language after it has been appropriated to the postcolonial context. In this way, Naipaul is able to address the colonizer "I am using your language so that you will understand my world, but you will also know by the differences in the way I use it that you cannot share my experience" (Naipaul, *Postcolonial Transformation* 75).

In addition to the use of untranslated words as a strategy of resistance to the colonial discourse *HD*, Naipaul also makes use of glossing. This strategy of resistance refers to the "approximate English translation" of the word or the sentence provided in the text (Wright 169). Although Naipaul provides English translation for the cultural words and expressions he uses in his postcolonial counter-discourse, these words still function as indicators of cultural distinctiveness.

Instances of glossing in Naipaul's *BR* include the word "popo" which appears in the speech of Metty's secret wife. When she comes to Salim's shop looking for

Metty, she explains to Salim that "*Popo malade. Dis-li Metty*". In African culture, the word "Popo" means "baby" (Naipaul 105). The fact that Naipaul provides an approximate English translation for this word makes the speech of this African woman clearer for the reader who is not familiar with African culture. In fact, the translation of this African word into English does not devoid it of its value. Rather, the word still serves to foreground the cultural difference and identity of the colonized.

Another instance of glossed cultural words in the novel includes the following sentence "Ali\_ Ali\_ wa (Ali! Ali! But where is this Ali-wa?)" (Naipaul 33). In this sentence the narrator Salim explains that Metty's real name when they were on the east coast of Africa was Ali. Whenever they get annoyed by Metty's (Ali) attitude, they call him "Ali\_ Ali\_ wa" to refer to his "wild and unreliable nature" (Naipaul 33). In addition to this sentence which sheds light on the colonized people's culture, the name "Metty" is another instance. This name was given to the half-African boy Ali when he moved to live in the centre of Africa. "Metty" is derived from the French word "*metis*" to mean "someone of mixed race" (Naipaul 33). In addition to this, Naipaul also makes use of the word "*Aoutchinkong*" which is derived from the French word *caoutchouc* and he provides its translation in English which means "rubber". However, as the English word "rubber" does not reflect the appropriate meaning of the word, Naipaul explains its meaning in local patois which means canvas shoes (Naipaul 92). In so doing, the writer foregrounds the cultural distinctiveness of the colonized people's culture expressed through the non-standard language (english).

As Africans use French beside their native language, Naipaul also integrates French sentences and provides their English translation. Instances of these include "*un pé pourrie*. A little rotten" (Naipaul 256). This sentence is a mixture of local patois (*pé*) and French and it was said by the African character Théotime when he tried to describe



the situation of Africa to Salim after the new president followed his plan of racialization. By including this sentence and its English translation; Naipaul seeks not only to uncover the natives' cultural distinctiveness from the centre but also to spot light on the situation of Africa under new rulers. Besides to this example, Naipaul uses another French sentence which was painted on the wall of the police office "*Discipline Avant Tout*\_ 'Discipline Above All'". When Metty was arrested, Salim goes to the police station to release him and he was attracted by this sentence (Naipaul 209). Through this French sentence, Naipaul seeks to spot light on the hypocrisy and the corruption of new rulers and officials in Africa who exploit people and seize their possessions and at the same time hold slogans of being honest and rightful.

In addition to the above mentioned examples, Naipaul also makes use of the French word "boucané" to highlight the nature of life in Africa and people's traditions and customs there. When the narrator Salim sheds light on the practicing of trade by African women through the river, he integrates the French Word "boucané" then; he provides its English translation "The food was mainly fish or monkey, fresh or *boucané*\_ smoked in the way of the country" (Naipaul 7). The italicized word is deliberately highlighted and its meaning can be deduced from the context to make the reader who is not familiar with the colonized people's culture and traditions in Africa knowledgeable about it.

In the aforementioned instances of glossing, Naipaul mentions the African word first instead of the English word directly and this is an indicator that the English word cannot reflect African culture and thus it acts just as a referent to it. Ashcroft et.al argue that a gap exists between the cultural word and its referent and it is through this gap that the colonized people's cultural distance and difference are highlighted (*The Empire Writes Back*, 61).

Through the above mentioned strategies of abrogation and appropriation of the colonizer's language, Naipaul has created a new language which will be able to transmit the experience and the culture of colonized people in Africa. This tendency toward the appropriation of the colonizer's language stems from the inability of this latter to convey the cultural identity of the colonized people as the Indian novelist Raja Rao confirms "the telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of certain-thought-movement that looks maltreated in an alien language" (5).

### **2.3 The Appropriation of the Western Literary Genre to Convey the Colonized People's World**

The tendency of postcolonial writers toward the rewriting of colonial narratives involves not only the appropriation of the colonizer's language but also the appropriation of the western literary genre of the novel. According to Godiwala, in their rewriting of the colonial discourse, the postcolonial writers write in English but in a form which does not resemble that of the English novel. In so doing, they contribute in destabilising the novel as a European genre (71) and in producing "new forms of cultural production" (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 19) which will reflect the reality of their postcolonial societies.

Edward Said argues that English novels of the nineteenth century worked as "a cultural artefact of imperialism" (*Culture and Imperialism* 70). Thinking about the novel entails thinking about imperialism as they fortified each other to the extent that makes it impossible "to read one without in some way dealing with the other" (*Culture and Imperialism* 71).

Conrad's *HD* is an example of those novels that Edward Said has alluded to as it sheds light on the presence of European colonizers in Africa in a form of a journey

undertaken by Charles Marlow. In this colonial narrative, Conrad adopts a narrative within narrative technique in which he creates an initial nameless narrator who introduces Charles Marlow's tale. The initial narrator introduces the setting of Marlow's story which is the Thames River and the characters who accompanied Marlow in his journey. From his description of the men who accompanied Marlow on the boat, it appears that the initial narrator also was among those men who were on the boat listening to Marlow's tale "We exchanged a few words lazily" (Conrad 7). What makes this narrative style confusing for the reader is that the borderline between the initial narrator and Marlow as a narrator of his own tale is difficult to be traced unless the reader pays close attention.

At the beginning of the novel, the narrative is controlled by the initial narrator who reports Marlow's words. However, when he comes to hand over the narrative to Marlow, he starts to make the reader aware of this shift beforehand "We were fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inclusive experiences" (Conrad 11). Immediately, after the words of the initial narrator, Marlow starts in his turn preparing the reader for his own tale "I don't want to bother you much with what happened to me personally". Although the narrative is now directed by Marlow, the initial narrator's presence is still remarked through the comments he makes on Marlow's words (Conrad 11).

The characteristics which define Conrad's *HD* as an English genre are appropriated in Naipaul's postcolonial counter discourse *BR*. Naipaul's novel is an example of a work which rebels against the European forms of fiction, namely Joseph Conrad's colonial narrative. By rewriting this classic English novel, Naipaul appropriates the official genres of the English novel. In so doing, he produces a genre that fits the demands of the colonized people's social world as the English genre proved

its disability to transmit the experience and the truth of the colonized. In his counter-discourse, Naipaul adopts a unique narrative style which is somehow direct but not easy to follow and grasp. In order to liberate the genre of the novel from the confines of the centre that manipulates the narrative and its interpretation, Naipaul privileges the margin in his postcolonial counter-discourse. He grants the narrative to the male narrator Salim to be the representative of the postcolonial voice in Africa. As a spokesman of the colonized, Salim interrogate Conrad's colonial discourse *HD* to provide an alternative story about the colonized people's experience and history in Africa.

Unlike the western novel in which the narrative is usually told by a single narrator as it is the case with Charles Marlow, Naipaul's postcolonial novel is characterized by multiple narrators. The latter appears through the shift from the essential narrator Salim to other colonized characters to tell their stories and express their voice to the world. Through such shift, the reader is exposed to different experiences and stories about colonized people who were denied voice in the dominant discourse *HD*. In addition to this shift in narrative, the setting of the novel is also appropriated. While in the colonial discourse *HD* the narrator's journey starts from England (Thames River) toward the heart of Africa, in Naipaul's postcolonial novel *BR* the journey is reversed from the east coast of Africa to its centre in order to suit the context of his postcolonial novel.

In fact, appropriation of the English genre of the novel is also noticed at the level of the text itself (form). While in the colonial discourse the writer employs long paragraphs and sometimes one paragraph covers a whole page, in Naipaul's postcolonial novel the writer employs short and sometimes fragmented paragraphs. These short paragraphs seem to reflect the disorder and the destruction that characterize

Africa after independence. Such social disorder is also remarked through the illogical sequence of events that characterizes the novel. As a matter of example, while the reader is following the logic of Salim's narrative talking about his affair with Yvette and his visit to Mahesh's shop, suddenly this logic is broken by his shift to a scene in which he is speaking to Zabeth and getting from her news about her son Ferdinand (Naipaul 223). Again without preparing the reader, the sequence of events is suddenly broken. When Salim is in London, the reader learns about his engagement with Nazruddin's daughter Kareisha (Naipaul 230) which is not introduced beforehand. As a result, the reader feels that some events related to their marriage are missing which creates a gap in time in the novel.

#### **2.4 The Subaltern Speaks: Challenging Stereotypes and Binary Oppositions in the Dominant Discourse**

Gera C. Burton argues that the colonizer relies in the construction of its colonial discourse on difference as an essential strategy in the representation of the colonized which makes this latter subject to separation and marginalization out of difference. In order to justify its domination over the colonized, the colonizer uses difference as a pretext (41-42) which would guarantee its position as a superior entity.

In the colonial discourse *HD*, the notion of difference is reflected through the binary opposition of civilized/uncivilized and which is constructed to justify the colonizer's presence in Africa. In this dominant discourse, the colonizer is portrayed with prejudice in which the narrator Marlow appears biased in his representation of white men. He identifies them with positive qualities while he attributes the negative ones to the native Africans. In this colonial discourse, Marlow portrays the colonizer as "a civilized man" (Conrad 10) who has got a civilising mission to fulfil in Africa. He admires white men to the extent that he regards them as pilgrims whom he had the chance to meet "I shook hands with this miracle" (Conrad 21). He also regards them as

"hospitable and festive" people (Conrad 23). Among those white men, Marlow shows more admiration towards one man called Mr Kurtz. Although he does not know him in person, Marlow reveres him and makes judgments about his personality out of prejudice. He even regards him as a "universal genius" (Conrad 30), "a gifted being" (Conrad 48) and as an extraordinary man (Conrad 51). Marlow's admiration of Mr Kurtz exceeds into eagerness to meet him and to have the honour to speak to him.

While the colonizer occupies the first side of the binary opposition as civilized, the colonized is classified in the other side of the binary as uncivilized. Homi K. Bhabha argues that the colonial discourse depends in its representation of the natives as "other" on racial origin in order to justify its colonialism. It claims that colonized people are racially degenerate and thus it manages to strengthen its dichotomy of "self" and "other" (*The Location of Culture* 70). In the colonial discourse *HD*, the natives are represented by the colour of their skin rather than by their names "A black figure stood up, strode on long black legs, waving long black arms across the glow", "Dark human shapes" (Conrad 60, 64). They are dehumanized and reduced to the status of animals not having the capacity even to express themselves through words as the narrator Marlow describes their behaviour:

The prehistoric man was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us\_ who could tell? ...No they were not inhuman. Well, you know that was the worst of it\_ this suspicion of their not being inhuman. It would come slowly to one. They howled and leaped and spun and made horrid faces, but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity\_ like yours\_ the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. (Conrad 37-38)

Through the above quote, the narrator Marlow bases his portrayal of the natives as animals on racial origin. When he identifies the natives as prehistoric men, he alludes to them for being animals by nature. He stresses upon the strangeness of their behaviour that reflects their disability to speak using words, so they used sounds and gestures instead.

In another scene in the colonial discourse, the narrator Marlow emphasizes on the cannibalistic nature of the natives when he recalls the way a black man approached him asking for something to eat "he snapped with bloodshot widening of his eyes and a flash of sharp teeth" (Conrad 42). His attitude made Marlow and the white men who accompanied him horrified of the possibility to be eaten by those hungry natives. In addition to this, Marlow notices the rotten hippo-meat which those natives carried with them wrapped in leaves and which smelled badly (Conrad 42). By representing the natives as other (cannibals), the colonizer finds in this representation the pretext for establishing its empire in Africa and for maintaining its superiority and dominance over the natives there.

In addition to this, the binary opposition is also noticed through female characters that are not given equal importance in the narrative. Native women are not given voice or names. They are described and identified with prejudice compared to white female characters. The narrator Marlow describes one of the native women who has approached him in the inner station through her physical appearance "She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her deliberate progress...Her face had a tragic and fierce aspect of wild sorrow and of dumb pain mingled with the fear of some struggling..." (Conrad 60). Although the native woman did not do anything harmful to those white men, Marlow's

description of this woman is racist. He highlights the strangeness and the savagery in her appearance that evokes a feeling of horror and expected danger from her.

On the other side of the dichotomy stands the white woman who is given voice to express herself and who is described differently by the narrator Marlow. Although he does not know Mr Kurtz's girlfriend before, he is biased in his portrayal of her character "She had a mature capacity for fidelity, for belief, for suffering...the dark eyes looked out at me. Their glance was guileless, profound, confident, and trustful" (Conrad 73).

Another effective discursive strategy used by the colonizer in the construction of its colonial discourse and the representation of colonized people's identity is stereotypes. Homi K. Bhabha defines stereotypes as "a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always in 'place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (*The Location of Culture* 66). Those prior images of the colonized cannot be conceived as "kernel truth" because they are the outcome of those generalizations made by the colonizer who disregards the differences that already exist between groups and races (Peer 43).

In the colonial discourse *HD*, stereotypes about African natives are well established. Throughout the novel, there is a repetition of the same image associated to the natives, an image emphasising their blackness and savagery "black fellows... A lot of people, mostly black and naked" (Conrad 17-18), "black figures" (Conrad 28), "a whirl of black limbs" (Conrad 37), "the crowd of savages" (Conrad 59), "savage movements" (Conrad 59), "the savages" (Conrad 62), "unhappy savages" (Conrad 19), "four paddling savages" (Conrad 34). As Bhabha has alluded, stereotypes are based on anxious repetition of images. Accordingly, the colonizer gets recourse to the repetition of stereotypes in order to ensure its authority, confidence and to hide truth. However,



this discursive strategy may work in the reverse of the colonizer's aims and reveal its colonial discourse as an ambivalent discourse out of this repetition.

Hook argues that since the colonizer is convinced in the truthfulness of the images it constructs about the colonizer, why are those stereotypes constantly repeated? (7). In fact, Hook's question serves to uncover the way the colonizer attempts to convince itself of those stereotypes because it is through them that its superiority and authority are guaranteed. The more those stereotypes are repeated, the more the colonizer gets convinced of their validity and of his superiority. Thus, once the validity of those repeated images of the colonized is interrogated and proved as misconceptions, the authority of the colonizer will be questioned as well. Besides, its representation of the colonized will be proved as a racist attitude and not the truth.

In an attempt to ensure the right of the colonized to represent himself on his own terms and to correct the misrepresentations (falsified truth) provided in the colonial discourse, Naipaul got recourse to the rewriting of the colonial discourse *HD*. In his postcolonial counter-discourse *BR*, the stereotypes and the binary oppositions established in the colonial discourse are interrogated by giving the narrative voice to the subaltern. In so doing, the subaltern is now able to tell his own story and to represent himself and his own culture on his own terms. For colonized people, to be granted voice is "a marker of sovereignty" which has been denied to them by the colonizer (Nayar 133-134). In his counter-discourse, Naipaul privileges the margin by giving important space, lengthy description and voice to the native characters to tell their stories and experiences to the world. The native characters that were deprived of their names in the colonial discourse are now given names and identity in Naipaul's counter-discourse. Muller argues that the name which the character receives is "its identifying onomastic

label" (102-103). In *BR*, the names assigned to characters reflect the culture of colonized people in Africa.

While native female characters are marginalized in the colonial discourse, in Naipaul's *BR* they are given important space and voice. This appears through the character of Zabeth who is portrayed as a strong independent African woman. Her powerful personality is expressed through her relationship with her people in the village who depend on her in providing their daily needs and which makes her "the good and direct business woman that, unusually for an African, she was... She was not an ordinary person" (Naipaul 6, 9). By attributing qualities different than those which have been given to the nameless native woman in the colonial discourse, Naipaul challenges the stereotypes established by the colonizer.

Although she is illiterate, Zabeth could manage her life. She is a model of a colonized woman who fears nothing and who is ready for any trouble "No one liked going outside his territory. But Zabeth travelled without fear; she came and went with her vanity case and no one molest her" (Naipaul 6, 9). Despite of the difficulties and the dangers encountered by Zabeth in her journeys, she and her fellow African women were strong enough to undergo a journey by their dugouts to sell food cooked in their native way in exchange of goods for their people (Naipaul 6-7). By providing a detailed description of her daily adventures and her practice of trade in the river, Naipaul corrects those misrepresentations about the natives provided in the colonial discourse and spots light instead on their tradition and culture.

Despite of her illiteracy, Zabeth wants her son Ferdinand to be educated. She sends him to the lycée because she wants him to live a better life "Zabeth lived a purely African life...But for Ferdinand she wished something else" (Naipaul 35-36). In fact,

Zabeth's decision reflects her deep consciousness and in this way she refutes the stereotypes associated to the colonized as uncivilized being.

In addition to her consciousness and strong personality, Zabeth is portrayed as a woman endowed with a capacity of deep analysis. The narrator Salim recalls the way she has analysed the big space occupied by the president in the photograph compared to other officials and which Salim regarded as just a difference in space. For Zabeth, she was not interested in the photograph as a picture, but rather in this space occupied by the various figures. Through her analysis, Salim could observe something which he did not notice before. While in newspapers only foreign visitors occupied equal space with the president, with local people this was not the case "as the president was always presented as a towering figure. Even if pictures were of the same size, the president's picture would be of his face only, while the other man would be shown full length" (Naipaul 224).

It is worth noting that Zabeth's analysis serves to uncover the corrupted nature of the political regime in Africa symbolized in the photograph of the president who was called "the Big Man". This photograph was stuck everywhere to remind the people of their dependency on the president and of being always controlled by him (Naipaul 168). This feeling of being watched through those photographs made Salim feel that whatever things or job they are doing, it is not done for themselves but to serve the Big Man (Naipaul 184). Salim notices that in spite of her illiteracy, Zabeth seems to be the only one who is aware of the situation of the town and what was going around them. Unlike others colonized people who got deceived by the president's speeches and position, Zabeth was aware of his aims and she could read the photograph and grasp many things hidden behind it.

In his counter-discourse, Naipaul devotes also a lengthy description for the African character Ferdinand. In this narrative, the narrator Salim portrays him as a person who is calm, respectful and of great power (Naipaul 36-37). In order to challenge and alter the binary opposition of the colonized as uncivilized other, the character of Ferdinand is constructed as the hope for a better Africa. Ferdinand proves to be a successful kind of a colonized who manages to improve his conditions, to become educated and to obtain an administrative post as Salim clarifies "from a forest village to the polytechnic to an administrative cadetship...his passage hadn't always been easy; during the rebellion he had wanted to run away and hide. But he had since learned to accept all sides of himself and all sides of the country; he rejected nothing" (Naipaul 158). Ferdinand was successful and self-confident to the extent that Salim got jealous of his progress "Ferdinand, starting from nothing, had with one step made himself free, and was ready to race ahead of us...we lived on the same patch of earth; we looked at the same views. Yet to him the world was new and getting newer. For me that same world was drab, without possibilities" (Naipaul 102-103). Ferdinand's progress as an individual in a destroyed postcolonial society serves to interrogate the authenticity of those binary oppositions and stereotypes established by the colonizer in order to legitimize its colonialism and its superiority.

Through his counter-discourse, Naipaul gives also space and voice to the half-African character Metty to shed light on another side of truth that has not been exposed in the colonial discourse. Metty recounts the terrible scenes of tribal wars which he has experienced on his way from the east coast to the centre of Africa and which are the aftermaths of colonialism in this country (Naipaul 32). On the east coast, Salim used to look at Metty as someone unreliable. However, when he accompanied him to the centre of Africa, Salim changes his view and realizes that Metty is someone

handsome and distinctive (Naipaul 30, 32). He portrays him as a native who evolved into someone with different manners, someone who is aware of his worth and who is helpful in Salim's shop "he learned to assert himself...And he became, increasingly, an asset. He became my customs clerk. He was always good with the costumers and won me and the shop much goodwill" (Naipaul 33-34). By providing a character that works to improve his personality and to assert himself in his society, Naipaul changes the stereotype of the colonized as someone passive and violent. Rather, he uncovers the willingness of colonised people to develop and improve their situation.

In addition to the aforementioned characters, Naipaul gives voice also to the character Nazruddin to tell his own story about his experience and his adventures in the centre of Africa and in other countries. The narrator Salim portrays Nazruddin as a model of a successful colonized who has an enthusiastic personality that makes things work well for him. His belief in his unflinching luck made Salim attracted by his character to the extent he wanted to do what he did (Naipaul 22-23) and he took him even as his exemplar (Naipaul 25).

Another instance in which Naipaul interrogates the colonizer's discursive strategies of stereotypes and binary opposition is by placing the colonized and the colonizer in equal status. In his counter-discourse, the narrator Salim portrays different kinds of people, the positive personalities and the negative ones in the society. He recalls the way African women sleep with men whenever these latter asked (Naipaul 39) and on the other side he recalls another similar image of his sexual affair with a European woman called Yvette (Naipaul 220). By bringing those two scenes together, Naipaul follows a strategy of applying the same stereotype on the colonizer. In so doing, he breaks the binary opposition of the colonizer as "self" and turns it into "other".

He turns the colonizer embodied in Yvette into "other" (corrupted) after it has been superior to the colonized.

## **2.5 The Reconstruction of Colonized People's History to Illuminate Truth**

Diaz argues that the colonial discourse has always provided one-sided version of truth about the colonized people's history and experience (54). In *HD*, the narrator Marlow undergoes a journey from England to Africa in order to accomplish what he considers as a "noble cause...glorious affair" (Conrad 12-13). The narrative is constructed over the claim that Africa is "one of the dark places on the earth" and the white man has a civilizing mission to fulfil in this place "I was loafing about, hindering you fellows in your work and invading your home, just as though I had got a heavenly mission to civilise you" (Conrad 11).

As a reaction to the colonial discourse's manipulation of history and truth, Naipaul heads towards the rewriting of *HD* from a postcolonial perspective in order to dismantle its basic assumptions and interrogate the validity of its history. In his counter-discourse *BR*, Naipaul adopts a strategy in which he uncovers the way the colonizer has manipulated the colonized people's minds as children to make them believe in its documents of history and to gain their trust.

As a child, the narrator Salim recalls the way the Europeans made him believe that all of what he knows about their history (as a colonized) is obtained from those books written by Europeans. What reinforces his belief is the absence of documents written by colonized people as there were only stories passed from one generation to another. To gain the colonized people's trust when manipulating their history, the colonizer incorporated details praising other races including names of famous Arab adventurers, writers and Indian figures. As a result, Salim's first impression toward those documents was innocent to the extent he thought that Europe gave him an idea

about his history. Nevertheless, Salim still has a feeling that those documents "formed no part of [their] knowledge or pride" (Naipaul 12) and here was the starting point for his interrogation of the validity of western documents of history.

Salim's journey from the east coast to the centre of Africa has marked his shift from innocence to maturity and from ignorance of his colonized history to knowledge. This shift has been accompanied with his interrogation of the validity of western documents that he previously regarded as the only source that gave him idea about his history:

If it was Europe that gave us on the coast some idea of our history, it was Europe, I feel, that also introduced us to the lie. Those of us who had been in that part of Africa before the Europeans had never lied about ourselves...we didn't lie because we...didn't think there was anything for us to lie about...But the Europeans could do one thing and say something quite different... It was their great adventure over us. The Europeans wanted gold and slaves...but at the same time they wanted statues put up to themselves as people who had done good things for the slaves...they could express both sides of their civilization; and they got both the slaves and the statues. (Naipaul 16-17)

In the above quote, Salim lays bare the true hypocrisy of the colonizer and its real intentions. In addition to its manipulation of history, the colonizer was skilful in telling lies which will enable him to construct its empire in Africa. Salim argues that the European's advantage over them lied in their ability to show one side of their civilization embodied in the civilizing mission while the real side is kept hidden (imperialism). Thus, through this strategy they managed to get both the land and its

people as slaves. They also could erect monuments which will glorify them as people who brought civilization to Africa.

Through the aforementioned quote, Salim uncovers the real intentions behind the European's presence in Africa which is to get gold and slaves. He questions the validity of the civilizing mission as nothing but exploitation of the native's land. He confirms this intention through the European character Father Huismans, a Priest who is interested in African treasures. He collects African oldish wood carvings as he believes that "out of Africa there was 'always something new' " (Naipaul 61). This motto reflects the malicious aims of the colonizer in Africa. The significance of those oldish wood carvings lies in their religious value, in being part of the colonized culture and in being original (Naipaul 61).

Salim has alluded to the way the European colonizer has skilfully decorated its lies in order to achieve its aims. After colonialism, Salim feared the new political system in Africa to be just a replacement of colonialism (corrupted). He feared African rulers to imitate the lies of the white colonizer "the political system we had known was coming to an end, and that what was going to replace it wasn't going to be pleasant. I feared the lies- black men assuming the lies of white men" (Naipaul 16). Indeed, Salim's expectations and fears become a reality as the new president and his politicians were as cruel and corrupted as the colonizer used to be with the natives "There had been order once, but that order had had its own dishonesties and cruelties- that was why the town had been wrecked...Instead of regulations there were now only officials who could always prove you wrong, until you paid up" (Naipaul 58).

In addition to the pressure that the new political system exercised on the natives, the accumulated rage of colonialism resulted in tribal wars and in violence by the rebels. Salim noticed the grief and the regret in the eyes of Africans after they have



destroyed their town and their wish to see it as before "They were like people who didn't know their mind. They had suffered so much..." (Naipaul 67). This accumulated rage made the natives unconscious of what they were doing and it is only afterwards that they realized what they have done. Once he understood their situation, Salim started to sympathize with those rebels against the president and his army "I wasn't happy with our new army. I preferred the men from the warrior tribe, for all their roughness. I understood their tribal pride and...I had found them straight" (Naipaul 91).

Frantz Fanon explains this accumulated anger of as a psychological state in which "the muscles of the colonized are always tensed" (16) and looking for change at any moment. These tensed muscles (anger) find a room after independence and erupt into "bloody fighting between tribes, clans, and individuals" (17). This is the case with colonized people in Africa whose accumulated anger is the outcome of colonialism as well as their new political system that abuses and mistreats them (Naipaul 67). The latter used their power to attain their pragmatic aims in which they robbed the natives of their possessions (Naipaul 91). Salim realizes that the new political system is not much different from the colonizer. Just like the colonizer in *HD* was interested in the treasures of the land (ivory) which Mr Kurtz collects from his exploration of different places in Africa (Conrad 34 ), the president of the newly independent Africa and his officials also express their greedy interests in ivory. They have denounced the trade of gold and ivory as illegal while they secretly stole gold and ivory from traders and they traded in it (Naipaul 91-92).

Another instance in which the narrator Salim interrogates the validity of western documents of history is reflected through the European character Raymond. The latter, is a historian who is interested in African history and who tends to write a book about Africa. As a first impression, Salim thought that this man is very

knowledgeable in African history. However, he discovers that Raymond relies in his writing on quotes taken from European archive and letters which make Salim question the validity of his writings. He realizes that Raymond "didn't seem to know" anything about Africa and all what he wrote seems to support the interest of the colonizer. He also does not provide reasons for any detail he mentions in his articles simply because he did not look for them (Naipaul 182). In Addition to this, Raymond's articles gives Salim the impression that Raymond did not visit places nor asked the natives to hear the truth from them as they have lived the events "His subject was an event in Africa but he might have been writing about Europe or a place he had never been" (Naipaul 181).

In addition to this, Salim discovers that Raymond strongly relies on newspapers in his writings. Being aware that newspapers on the coast are not a reliable source as they focus their interest on a specific category of people (businessmen, high officials...etc.), Salim starts to cast doubt on the real intentions of Raymond. What makes Salim question Raymond's writings is that those newspapers provided "a special kind of truth" which is far from the interests of the local people in Africa and their experience with colonialism (Naipaul 181).

What makes those documents of history unreliable and invalid is that Raymond expresses his admiration to a famous historian Theodor Mommsen and he takes him as his model. Just like this historian who rewrote the history of Rome (Naipaul 193), Salim thinks that Raymond tends to follow his path and to rewrite the history of Africa in a way that fits the interests of the colonizer through the book which he decided to write about Africa.

The colonized interrogation of western history is transmitted through another scene in the novel in which Salim notices a motto written in Latin on a ruined monument that was erected by the European colonizer. It is only after Father Huismans

explains its meaning that Salim discovers the hypocrisy of the colonizer "He approves of the mingling of the peoples and their bonds of union" (Naipaul 62). Those words were taken from an old poem about the founding of Rome, but they were altered by the European colonizer to fit its aims before it was used as its motto. The story behind the poem is about a Roman hero who was travelling to Italy to found his city, but he landed on the coast of Africa. There, the local queen falls in love with him and his journey was concealed. Then, the watching gods of Rome agreed and one of them explained that "the great Roman god might not approve of a settlement in Africa, of a mingling of people there, of treaties of union between Africans and Romans" (Naipaul 62). This was the original version of the poem which was falsified by the European colonizer when he has erected his monument in Africa. Salim notices how the words of the original poem were altered by the colonizer to legitimize his presence in Africa. The meaning on the monument approves of the colonizer's settlement and a mingling in Africa "a settlement in Africa raises no doubts: the great Roman god approves of the mingling of peoples and the making of treaties in Africa" (Naipaul 62).

Through this motto, Salim uncovers the falsity of the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission which was used as a pretext in *HD* to justify his presence in Africa. Salim satirizes the validity of the colonial discourse and its dependency on Roman culture (poem) in order to preserve the myth of his superiority and to hide his real objectives. On this account, Salim uncovers the way the colonizer has established his empire in Africa over a lie "the course of history was being altered" (Naipaul 63). Being aware of the impossibility to quote the poem as it is, the colonizer got recourse to the appropriation of that Roman poem in order to refine and whiten its picture.

## **2.6 Mimicry: A Form of Empowerment for the Colonized**

During its so-called civilizing mission, the colonizer adopted a strategy to

maintain its domination over the colonized. It sought to make the colonized mimic its manners, culture and language in order to produce "a reformed, recognizable other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same but not quite*" as Homi K. Bhabha defines it (*The Location of Culture* 86). Through such strategy of colonial domination, the colonizer sought to transform the colonized people's culture and to make them civilized. However, this colonial strategy proves to be weak from within as it reflects an ambivalence which could be exploited by the colonized to express its resistance against the colonial discourse.

An instance of mimicry in Naipaul's postcolonial novel *BR* can be traced through the character of Nazruddin, the man who sold his shop to Salim in the centre of Africa. Nazruddin has experienced colonialism while he was living in the centre of Africa. After independence, some Europeans lived there among Africans and Nazruddin was in contact with them. As he practiced his business with those Europeans, Nazruddin got affected by their culture in a way he started to mimic their manners "He played tennis, drank wine...wore dark glasses and suits..." (Naipaul 20).

Following the logic of mimicry as a strategy of colonial domination, Nazruddin is supposed to mimic those Europeans (colonizer) in the centre of Africa and in so doing; he becomes civilized like them. However, the colonizer is careful to keep a distance from the colonized (Nazruddin) and not to make him identical to it. By producing a version of a colonized who is civilized like his colonizer and at the same time different from his colonizer, this strategy reveals the colonial discourse *HD* as an ambivalent discourse that calls for sameness and difference at the same time.

Homi K. Bhabha argues that the ambivalence of the colonial discourse serves as a loophole for the colonized to get access to it and subvert the basis of its authority. In the Colonial discourse *HD*, the narrator Charles Marlow portrays the white colonizer

as a "civilized man" (Conrad 10) who came to Africa in a mission to civilize the uncivilized natives. On the other hand, he portrays the natives as savage and wild to justify his conquest. During his journey to Africa, Marlow and his fellows have been attacked by the natives whom he describes their savagery through the following scene "They had not the fierce character boding of immediate hostile intention. Unexpected, wild, and violent as they had been they had given me an irresistible impression of sorrow" (Conrad 44). While the narrator criticizes the natives' savagery, he seeks at the same time to reform them and make them civilized. In fact, such intention of making the colonized look like the colonizer but not his equal makes this colonial discourse ambivalent and destroys the gap which it has previously established between the colonizer and the colonized (superior/ inferior; civilized/uncivilized). It also makes the colonial discourse's mode of representing the colonized paradoxical and questionable.

Homi K. Bhabha argues that mimicry, as a strategy of resistance for the colonized, turns to be a menace for the colonial discourse owing to its double vision. It does not only uncover the ambivalence of the colonial discourse but also disrupts its authority by providing only a partial presence of the colonizer. Thus, mimicry acts "at once resemblance and menace" (*The Location of Culture* 86, 88). This is the case with Nazruddin whose mimicry of the Europeans in the capital makes him look strange in the eyes of the people in his community who are not accustomed with his European appearance and manners. Nazruddin's mimicry was partial as he could not assimilate in the European culture to fully mimic it and this appears through the mocking reaction expressed by the people in his community (Naipaul 20). As a result, Nazruddin reflects only a partial vision of his colonizer which makes his presence incomplete. In fact, such partial presence of the colonizer disturbs and interrogates the authority of *HD* that

portrays the colonizer as superior to the colonized by having a "noble cause" (Conrad 12).

The colonizer's noble cause embodied in the civilizing mission is exposed to a menace that the strategy of mimicry creates. The menace of mimicry lies in its ability to reveal:

the inauthenticity both of the 'mimic man', who can never completely assimilate or, in the parlance of Victorian imperialism can never become fully civilized, and of the colonizer, whose claim to a 'civilizing mission' is his chief moral justification for undertaking the religious conversion or the education (or both) of the colonized (Brantlinger 82).

Based on the above words, the inauthenticity of both the colonized and the colonizer is reflected through the character of Nazruddin who could not fully assimilate in his colonizer's culture. Through his mimicry, he interrogates the validity of the colonial discourse *HD* which expects the colonized to mimic his culture to become civilized and at the same time it portrays him as not fully civilized according to the parlance of imperialism. In addition to this, Nazruddin uncovered the shortcomings of the civilizing mission and how the colonizer used it just as a pretext to justify its imperialism.

Another instance of mimicry appears through the character of Ferdinand, the son of Zabeth. Ferdinand was sent by his mother to the lyceé to be educated by Europeans as they were in charge of education in the centre of Africa. Ferdinand's contact with his European teachers has gradually developed into mimicry of their appearance and manners. Being exposed to European teachers, Ferdinand got influenced by them. Just like Europeans, Ferdinand liked to wear a school uniform as it makes him feel that he has adopted the manners of his European teachers. He also tried to copy the gestures of his teachers in which he stood "with crossed legs against the white studio wall and,

fixed in that position, attempt to conduct a whole conversation. Or, copying another teacher, he might walk around the trestle table, lifting things, looking at them, and then dropping them, while he talked" (Naipaul 47).

According to Homi K. Bhabha, the strategy of mimicry demands repetition as a way for the colonizer to prove its superiority (*The Location of Culture* 88). As a result, this strategy acts in the reverse of the colonizer's aims and destabilizes the colonial discourse. By producing subjects who are not quite the same as their colonizer makes the strategy of mimicry "act like a distorting mirror which fractures the identity of the colonizing subject and- - as in the regime of stereotype –rearticulates [its] presence in terms of its 'otherness' that which it disavows" (Moor-Gilbert 119-120).

This is reflected through the character Ferdinand whose repetition of his teacher's manners results in a distorted image of his colonizer (teachers). In addition to this, throughout his rehearsal of his teacher's manners on Salim treating him like his language teacher (Naipaul 47), Ferdinand's difference as a colonized is reflected through his mimicry and thus the image of his colonizer is distorted. While in the colonial discourse *HD* the colonizer portrays the colonized as other "Dark human shapes..." (Conrad 60), in the postcolonial discourse the image which Ferdinand's mimicry reflects serves to reverse the process by portraying his colonizer (teachers) as "other". In fact, Ferdinand's distorted image of his colonizer "unsettlingly [other] his own identity" (Berten 208).

It is worth mentioning that the colonial strategy of mimicry turns into mockery through the blurred images which both Ferdinand and Nazruddin convey. Just like Nazruddin's mimicry of the manners of the Europeans makes him look strange in the eyes of his community and mocked at, Ferdinand's mimicry of his teachers' manners and his constant wearing of the school uniform make Salim look at his appearance as

absurd and at his European manners as a reflection of colonial snobbishness (Naipaul 38, 48). Through Ferdinand's distorted image of the colonizer, Bhabha argues that the civilizing mission is threatened and placed in "an area between mimicry and mockery" (*The Location of Culture* 86). It is in this area, where both the power of mimicry as an act of resistance lies, that the validity of the so-called civilizing mission is interrogated. Thus, the gaze is now reversed from the colonized as a mimic man to the colonizer as being mocked at.

Placing the civilising mission between mimicry and mockery gives a comic effect to Bhabha's strategy of mimicry. The latter is embodied in the possibility to mock and belittle the colonial discourse for its claim of being serious and having a civilizing mission to accomplish toward the colonized (Huddart 39). Such comic effect on *HD* is highlighted through Nazruddin and Ferdinand's mimicry whose mocking effect serves to undermine what Charles Marlow refers to as a "noble cause" (Conrad 12).

The colonizer's call for the colonized to be "almost the same, but not white" (Bhabha, *the Location of Culture* 89) makes the colonized embodied in Ferdinand and Nazruddin imitate their colonizer in a flawed way. According to the colonizer's logic, the colonized is supposed to be like white men, but not quietly white (different). In such case, both Ferdinand and Nazruddin are forced to obtain what the critic McClintock calls a "flawed identity" (62). This is because both of them find themselves obliged to imitate a culture that they are exposed to through education or business and which they think will add something different to their characters.

Bhabha argues that the identity which the colonized obtains through his mimicry of the colonizer makes the colonized "inhabit an inhabitable zone of ambivalence that grants neither identity nor difference" (qtd.in McClintock 63) because he finds himself obliged to just mimic an identity that he cannot fully acquire (qtd.in



McClintock 63). This is the case with Ferdinand whose attraction to his teacher's manners gradually fades away as he finds himself in a situation being identified neither as a white man nor as a colonized. This situation stands in opposition with the colonizer's aims which seeks to keep the colonized as different from his colonizer.

Being unable to fully assimilate in the colonial culture, Ferdinand soon gives up "the bright-young-lycée-man pose... There was no more standing against the wall with crossed legs, nor more walking around the trestle table and lifting and dropping things, nor more of that serious conversation" (Naipaul 52-53). It is at this level between identity and difference that the failure of mimicry lies and that the colonial discourse *HD* is interrogated. Ferdinand's dropping of his teacher's manners is an indication that he feels alien in an identity which has been imposed upon him. His action enables him to define himself as a different being but according to the colonized own standards. The same thing could be traced though the character Nazruddin. While he is mimicking the manner of Europeans, he finds also himself bound to his community's tradition. This inhabitable zone of ambivalence which Nazruddin inhabits stands in opposition with the colonial discourse's objectives and thus brings it into question.

Huddart argues that the colonizer's identity is neither fixed nor final as this latter does not possess "an absolute pre-existent identity" and the same thing is for the colonized. Thus the colonized's mimicry of his colonizer's manners does not mean that he is betraying his identity (48). When Ferdinand and Nazruddin mimicked their colonizer's manners, this is because they were exposed to something new and because the context they were exposed to (education/business) forced their colonizer's culture on them. Thus, their mimicry cannot be regarded as a betrayal of their own identity as this latter is already not fixed but liable to change. This fact acts for the benefit of the colonized and not the colonizer as the critic Huddart confirms that mimicry is a proof

that "there are no facts of blackness or whiteness, and this is a more catastrophic realization for the colonizer than for the colonized" (51).

As Ferdinand and Nazruddin kept their difference while mimicking their colonizer's manners, this is an indication that their mimicry "is not slavish imitation" (Huddart 39) because they did not assimilate in their colonizer's culture. Moreover, they have kept a difference which defines them as colonized people according to their own terms not the terms of their colonizer (colonial discourse) whose image is already distorted and its standards and mode of representation are interrogated.

### **2.7 Hybridity: Challenging the Colonial Discourse's Myth of Purity**

According to Homi K. Bhabha, Hybridity is "a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority- its rules of recognition" (*The Location of Culture* 114). This strategy paves the way for the colonized to enter to the dominant discourse and dismantle its assumptions of white's uniqueness, the fixity and the purity of its culture and the dichotomy of self and other (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 58,116). In *HD*, the colonizer is portrayed as a superior race endowed with "a heavenly mission" to civilize the natives (Conrad 11). It believes in the superiority, the uniqueness and the purity of its culture and identity which cannot be mixed or affected by the culture of the colonized.

In Naipaul's Counter-discourse *BR*, this myth of purity is challenged and dismantled in which two forms of cultural hybridity are transmitted. The first form is racial hybridity. It is reflected through the characters of Metty the half-cast and the steward in the steamer who served Indar in his cabin and who was described by the narrator Salim as a "man of mixed race; his mother or father might have been a mulatto"

(Naipaul 165). This kind of hybridity is the product of colonialism in Africa in which there was intermarriages between the white race and the colonized race as a result of their displacement. By producing characters that are racially hybrid, Naipaul breaks the colonial discourse's assumption of racial purity and the superiority of its race. In so doing, he brings the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission which is based on the claim of racial superiority into question and proves its falsity.

In addition to this form of hybridity, Naipaul also transmits a form of "cultural mixed-ness" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 4) through the hybrid African society that he creates in his novel. The binary that the colonial discourse has established between the two cultures (colonizer/colonized), is now dismantled in which the colonizer's culture is brought into contact with that of the colonized in a way that promotes the "impure, the heterogeneous and the eclectic" (Guignery 3).

Instances of this in the novel are transmitted through the character Zabeth who stands for African culture "She was formerly dressed, wrapped in her cotton in the African style...She wore a turban – a piece of downriver style" (Naipaul 8). In her African mode of life, Zabeth and other Africans depended on modern means "she bought pencils and copybooks, razor blades...iron pots and aluminium pans, enamel plates and basins" (Naipaul 6). Such dependency on the colonizer's culture indicates the beginning of the cultural mixed-ness between the two cultures which stands in opposition to the colonizer's myth of purity.

Another instance that indicates the inevitable fusion between the colonized and the colonizer's cultures is when Salim mentions that in his house he is accustomed to use kerosene. As there was no kerosene for a number of weeks, he used one of the "English-made cast iron charcoal brazier" (Naipaul 26) in order to boil water. This modern means was among the shop stock which Salim tends to sell to Africans living in

villages and which is brought to the town by Europeans (Naipaul 26). This encounter between the colonizer and the colonized people's cultures serves to convey a sense of "equally vaporized non-western culture" (Godiwala 71-72). Through the equal importance that he assigns to the colonized culture, Naipaul challenges the colonizer's claim of the superiority and purity of its culture.

Another instance of cultural hybridity in the novel is reflected through the colonizers Yvette and her husband Raymond who lived in a house in the president's town (the Domain). These latter, lived a European mode of life in a house furnished with African furniture in a way that adds an African cultural atmosphere to their life. In this African setting, they have made a party in which an American girl sang (Naipaul 126-127) creating an atmosphere of "Europe in Africa...But it isn't Europe or Africa" (Naipaul 139). This atmosphere uncovers the inevitable contact which occurs between the two cultures in what Bhabha calls "the third space of enunciation" (*The Location of Culture* 37). As a result to this contact, the two cultures undergo changes in which something new emerges embodied in a hybrid identity ("The Third Space" 216). In fact, the hybrid culture that emerges from the third space serves to confirm that there is no inborn superior British culture or inferior African culture because, as Bhabha argues, culture in itself is not static or fixed to a certain time period or space. Rather, culture is in change and its symbols "have no primordial unity or fixity, that even the same signs can be appropriated... and read anew" (*The Location of Culture* 37). On this basis, the colonial discourse's so called- civilizing mission is interrogated and proved invalid.

Through hybridity, the binary of colonizer/colonized and the claim of "never-changing identity" (Mizutani 9) established in *HD* are challenged and subverted. In *BR*, being exposed to their colonizer's culture and their mimicry of it, Ferdinand constructs a hybrid identity as a result to the fusion that occurs between his African culture and his

colonizer's in the third space. An instance of this hybrid identity is noticed when Ferdinand visits Salim's shop wearing his European school uniform, he exchanges greeting with him in the African way which suggests his in-between position: torn between his former African identity and the new identity which he seeks to obtain. Out of what Bhabha calls the "in-between space" ("The Third Space" 211), a new hybrid identity is formed. This hybrid identity appears also in Ferdinand's ability to use French and English (language of his colonizer) when he speaks to Salim and local patois when speaking with Metty (Naipaul 38). In fact, Ferdinand's hybrid identity creates a position of power for him as a colonized and not of weakness in which the colonizer's claim of a fixed identity and its representation of the colonized as other are destroyed.

Another instance of Hybrid identity that questions the colonizer's claim of remaining "unmixed, uninfluenced by anything other than itself" (Mizutani 4) is transmitted through Indar. The latter went to London in order to study at one of its universities there. Accordingly, he constructed a hybrid identity out of the inevitable encounter that occurs between the two cultures "there was London in his clothes, the trousers, the striped cotton shirt, the way his hair was cut..." (Naipaul 110). Indar had an appointment for a job and once he entered that English building, he felt torn between his identity as a colonized and that of the colonizer "I felt in that building I had lost an important part of my idea of who I was. I felt I had been granted the most cruel knowledge of where I stood in the world" (Naipaul 146). This in-between position makes Indar look like "a man-of- two -worlds" (Naipaul 147) in which the colonizer's and the colonized's cultures are placed in equal status without any hierarchy. As a result to this equal position, the binary opposition of colonizer and colonized is challenged and the colonial discourse of *HD* becomes internally split

## **2.8 Intertextuality and the Question of Originality in *A Bend in the River***

The predisposition of many postcolonial writers toward the rewriting of colonial texts from a postcolonial perspective brings the question of the originality of their works into the forefront. Naipaul is among this wave of writers whose novel *BR* establishes an intertextual relationship with the colonial discourse *HD*. Despite of the intertextual connections established in Naipaul's novel, its originality can be traced by the reader through two modes of intertextual interpretation, namely integration and interfigurality. Michael Riffaterre defines intertextuality as "an operation of the reader's mind... necessary to any textual decoding" (142). Through Riffaterre's words, it appears that the reader plays a substantial role in decoding the intertext. He/she is appointed as "the active co-creator of the text" (Hutcheon 232) who interprets and deconstructs the intertext to reveal how an earlier text is used in the intertext and the extent to which can the work be original.

In the analysis of the extent to which Naipaul's novel can be an original work of art, two modes of intertextuality are analysed, namely integration and interfigurality.

### **2.8.1 Postcolonial Intertextual Integration**

Christiane Achour and Amina Bekkat argue that this mode of intertextuality comprises three ways which can be identified as follows: Integration by allusion, by absorption and by suggestion.

According to Achour and Bekkat, integration by allusion appears only through signs where the reader is supposed to have certain prior knowledge in order to observe the reference in the text under question (qtd.in Reguig Mourou 32). Hebel regards allusion as an intertextual marker which belongs to "another independent text" and which could take different forms depending on the way the prior text is integrated in the intertext. To facilitate the reader's task, he summarizes the steps of how intertextual

relationships could be created through allusion. These steps include: the reader's recognition of the marker, the identification of the prior text through such marker, and finally the activation of that prior text to "form a maximum of Intertextual patterns" (136,138).

In Naipaul's novel *BR*, this form of integration appears through the novel's allusion to a scene from Conrad's *HD*. Such scene could be recognized by the reader through the marker of the journey undertaken by the protagonist Marlow. This marker serves to provoke the reader's memory in a way that enables him/her to identify the source text *HD* based on his/her prior knowledge. When the source text is identified, the reader starts to activate it and to form as many intertextual connections as possible. In his postcolonial discourse, Naipaul makes use of integration by allusion by opening his novel with a scene where his protagonist, Salim, is undertaking a journey to an interior town in Africa. The journey starts from the east coast toward the centre of Africa where he spends a week in his way before he reaches his target (Naipaul 3). Through such scene, any reader very attentive and familiar with Conrad's *HD* would think that there is a resemblance between the scene introduced in the intertext and the one in the source text *HD* where the protagonist Marlow undertakes a journey from the Thames River (England) up to the great river of Africa. However, this journey is not undertaken by road but rather by the sea in which Marlow spends "upward of thirty days" before he comes close to his target (Conrad 7,18).

In his intertext *BR*, Naipaul integrates the scene of the journey from the source text in an original way. The reader observes the way details from *HD* are neither quoted directly nor reproduced. Instead, they are appropriated and transformed by the writer to fit his postcolonial discourse, leaving some intertextual clues that would help him/her to

recognize the source text. Naipaul's intertext does not fully refer to the source text; it rather provides an indirect reference to it embodied in the marker of the journey.

In addition to his appropriation of the direction of the journey which is ironically reversed by the writer, Naipaul appropriates also the objective behind this journey. In the source text, Marlow's first objective behind his journey is to fulfil his childhood tendencies toward adventures. He used to have a desire for looking at maps and dreaming to visit some of the blank spaces on it. And one of these places was more appealing to visit than the rest. It was Africa and more specifically the Congo River. He was attracted to that river and he referred to it indirectly by its shape on the map, one that resembles a snake "And as I looked at the map of it in a shop- window it fascinated me as a snake would a bird- a silly little bird". Marlow's dream comes true once he gets an appointment from a company of trade in Africa to be in charge of its steamboat (Conrad 11-12). However, Marlow's first objective in going to Africa for adventure changes later on into a strong desire to meet a man named Mr Kurtz whom he gets to know only from what other seamen say about him.

The scene depicted above is appropriated in the intertext *BR* and integrated in a way that the reader who is not very acquainted with the source text cannot recognize it. In the intertext, the objective behind Salim's journey to Africa is to start a new life there as a trader in a shop he has bought from an old friend named Nazruddin (Naipaul 3) "I drove through Africa... to a place where this life might be re-created for me" (Naipaul 25). The mentioning of such appropriated detail at the beginning of the novel is accompanied by the description of the situation of Africa that has been in trouble and in ruin as a result of colonialism. Such details help the reader to situate the time period of the events - Africa after independence- (Naipaul 3) and prepare him/her to discover other things about the colonized people's experience once he/she digs more in the



intertext.

By ironically reversing the direction of the journey and appropriating it and its objective in his postcolonial novel, the writer seeks, through his narrator Salim, to draw the reader's attention to the real intentions behind Marlow's journey from the West to the East (Africa). This cannot be reduced to a simple childhood tendency toward adventures and love for sailing as it is expressed in the source text, it could rather be interpreted as an indication to the idea of the civilizing mission introduced by the West to justify its presence in Africa.

Once the reader has identified the source text guided by the scene of the journey alluded to in the intertext *BR*, he/she becomes able to deconstruct the source text *HD* to uncover other possible intertextual references. In this stage, the reader depends on his prior knowledge and interpretation because the only traces of the source text that remain in the intertext are the scene of the journey to Africa.

Achour and Bekkat argue that integration by absorption is noticed once an earlier text is integrated implicitly and absorbed by the new text (qtd. in Reguig Mourou 32) and not pasted in it in such a way that would suggest the idea of imitation of an earlier text.

An instance of this form of integration in *BR* lies in number "sixty years". In the novel, the reader is attracted by the image of a ruin of a steamer monument in the centre of Africa, a steamer that dates back to sixty years. This latter, has been destroyed by the natives (Naipaul 26) as an indicator of their resistance to any trace of the colonizer. Although no direct reference is made to the source text, this number reminds the attentive reader of *HD*. In this novella, he/she can recall that the same number is mentioned in a way that could not be considered as a coincidence. Rather, it is done deliberately to reveal the colonized people's resistance to any trace related to the

colonizer. As this number and its accompanying details are absorbed in the intertext, the reader relies on his own interpretation to establish the intertextual relation between the two texts. Back to the source text, the reader may also notice the use of the aforementioned number when the protagonist Marlow, in his way to the inner station, finds a sixty years old book in a hat owned by a white man. Marlow regards it as an "amazing antiquity" because it deals with seamanship, something of great interest to him (Conrad 39).

It is worth mentioning that the detail from the source text is absorbed in the intertext in a creative way in which the reader who is not very attentive may skip it. He/ she may not pay attention to such detail thinking it just a number of years which may not signify anything. Thus, the reader's familiarity with the source text may make a big difference in his observation and interpretation of this intertextual clue.

In addition to this, Achour and Bekkat argue that integration by suggestion appears through the text's reference to a name, a title (as cited in Reguig Mourou 32) or any simple reference which would provoke the reader's memory to go back to the other text (Reguig Mourou 81).

In the intertext *BR*, this form appears through a simple reference to a sentence mentioned at the end of the novel. This detail provokes the reader's mind to associate the intertext with the source text *HD*. In the postcolonial discourse *BR*, the reader is stopped by a sentence said by the narrator's friend and which suggests a similar sentence used in the source text. At the end of *BR*, Salim is taken to the jail and afterwards he is ordered to the office of the commissioner where he discovers that the latter is his old friend Ferdinand. When Ferdinand recognizes Salim, he recalls the time when they were together on the steamer before they departed to different directions: "That was where we last met ...there were four of us on the steamer...that was the

best moment. The last day, the day of leaving. It was a good journey" (Naipaul 273).

In the above-mentioned passage, Ferdinand's indication of their number on the steamer reminds the reader of the beginning of *HD*. In this latter, the initial nameless narrator, who accompanies the sailors on the yawl of the journey, describes their position looking at the captain: "we four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bows looking to sea-ward" (Conrad 7). In fact, the way this borrowed sentence is integrated in the intertext *BR* highlights the writer's creativity. While the number of sailors in *HD* is mentioned at the beginning of the novel to introduce the journey of Marlow as a departure toward Africa, in *BR* this detail is appropriated and mentioned at the end of the novel to refer to a sweet moment witnessing the departure of friends to different targets. Again, it is only the attentive reader who can observe this detail and deduce the connection that exists between the two works.

In fact, what makes this form of integration interesting is that it leaves it up to the reader to interpret the borrowed material based on his/her own prior knowledge. In such case, the reader who is knowledgeable enough can suggest the sentence as an intertextual reference that recalls the source text *HD*. Thus, the integration of this detail (number four) in *BR* cannot be considered as a sign of "a reproduction but of a productivity" (Barthes 39). It highlights an essential part in the source text, one that can be regarded as the key to other coming events in the novel.

It is noteworthy that, the three forms of integration discussed in this paper are like pieces of a puzzle which complete each other. For example, integration by allusion serves integration by absorption: after the reader is able to identify the source text through the sign of the journey alluded to in the intertext, his mind is provoked to generate other intertextual references which are absorbed in the intertext through his interpretation. Additionally, integration by absorption is related in some way or

another to integration by suggestion to refer to the partial presence of *HD* in the intertext *BR*.

### **2.8.2 Postcolonial Intertextual Interfigurality**

Interfigurality is a mode of intertextuality that appears through "a fictional character's...identification with, a character from another literary work" (Muller 102). The character from a prior text is transferred in another text when writers "pass over the boundaries of different literatures" (Muller 102). Among the interfigural devices that could be identified in the analysis of the relationship between texts are names. The latter could be either identical to the name of the figure in the prior text or different (Muller 102-103).

The character who appears to fit to this mode of intertextuality in the intertext *BR* is the narrator Salim. He identifies with the character of Marlow in *HD* through the idea of the journey to Africa. However, when the writer of the intertext passes the boundaries of the source text, he follows "an interfigural deviation" (Muller 104) on the borrowed character (that of Marlow), in which he transforms and liberates him from the source text by changing his name into "Salim" before he is integrated in his postcolonial discourse. By borrowing a character from a colonial discourse, Naipaul establishes an intertextual relationship with that discourse. However, such relationship is based on an interfigural deviation which appears through the Arabic name he assigns to his character as well as in the qualities he attributes to him.

In *HD*, Marlow is portrayed as an Englishman who has great passion for the sea from his childhood and a wanderer who regards the ship as his home and the sea as his country (Conrad 9). However, in *BR*, Salim is portrayed as a settler trader of Muslim Indian origin and a native who is brought up and lives on the east coast of Africa (Naipaul 11). Unlike Marlow who does not represent his class and he is portrayed as

just a seaman and an adventurer (Conrad 9), Salim represents his cultural group who have specific customs and attitudes that make them different from the Arabs and Muslims of the coast. Although Salim is a settler in Africa, he considers it as a home for him and for his family. As a result, this character represents the voice of colonized people in Africa. This is clearly expressed when he asserts that "Africa was my home, had been the home of my family for centuries ... We felt like people of Africa (Naipaul 10-11).

Another instance of interfigurality is reflected through the character of Father Huismans who can be identified in his brutal nature with Mr Kurtz in the source text. Before the character of Mr Kurtz is borrowed by Naipaul to be integrated in his postcolonial discourse, his name has been modified to Father Huismans. In the intertext *BR*, Father Huismans is a man of European origin who works as a priest in the lyceé in Africa (Naipaul 60) and who manages to make the natives believe that he admires Africa hiding his brutal nature behind his status as a priest. He gets pleasure in collecting masks that belong to the natives being killed. Then, he keeps them displayed on shelves in the museum in which each mask has got a date. Eagerly, he shows them to Salim as if he is presenting goods or souvenirs (Naipaul 64-65).

In the source text *HD*, the character of Mr Kurtz is portrayed as a man of a European origin who manages to make the natives adore him on the basis that he would do good in their land. However, his brutal nature is discovered through the black men's heads that he keeps them exhibited on sticks in front of his house. The latter's faces are kept turned to the house in a way that gives the narrator Marlow the impression that they are kept for ornamental purposes. In addition to this, he even thinks that "they would have been more impressive, those heads on the stakes, if their faces had not been turned to the house"(Conrad 57).

Through interfigurality, Naipaul manages to implicitly establish an intertextual relationship with the source text *HD* through the borrowed characters. In fact, the way those characters are integrated in the intertext contributes in highlighting the inventiveness of this postcolonial discourse. The latter appears through the characters of Salim and Father Huismans who are not a reproduction of Marlow and Mr Kurtz, but rather a sign of productivity for the intertext. This productivity can be observed through the effect that is created on the reader whose perception of the source text changes once he is exposed to the brutality of the colonizer toward the natives in Africa. Thus, Naipaul's borrowing of characters does not deny sense of originality to his work as Olofinsao confirms that the claim to originality is not about isolation. Rather, it is about association (20) and the way the borrowed material is integrated in his text.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

It is possible to conclude that Naipaul's novel is two-fold in nature. From one side, it deconstructs the colonial discourse *HD* through the abrogation and appropriation of the English language in which Naipaul produces a new language "english" which is able to transmit the culture and experience of the colonized. From another side, the novel spots light on crucial issues that threaten the stability of postcolonial Africa including the corruption of new rulers. In addition to this, in his appropriation of the colonial language, Naipaul appropriates also the western genre of the novel to make it fit the demands of the colonized world.

In fact, the abrogation and appropriation of the colonizer's language demands also the subversion of the one-sided version of truth provided by the colonial discourse. Through his counter-discourse, *BR*, Naipaul interrogates and reconstructs colonial history by giving voice to the formerly silenced colonized to share their experience and to present a different view on their history. In so doing, Naipaul uncovers the way the

European colonizer has disfigured and manipulated documents of history to make them convenient with its colonial objectives and how it has tried to make the colonized believe and trust its stories.

In addition to this, Naipaul's novel highlights the possibility of addressing the colonizer using its own weapons. Through the colonial strategy of mimicry, Naipaul sheds light on the ambivalence of the colonial discourse *HD* and the invalidity of its civilizing mission. As mimicry paves the way for a hybrid identity, Naipaul's novel also establishes a hybrid society in which the world of the colonized and the colonizer are fused to emphasize that there is nothing like a pure African identity or a pure British identity, rather there is a hybrid identity. Accordingly, the binary opposition of superior and inferior is challenged and the colonial discourse's myth of purity is subverted.

Another essential element in the analysis of the novel is intertextuality. Through the different modes of intertextuality that have been employed, it is possible to conclude that this novel is neither a reproduction of the source text *HD* nor an extended discussion of it. Rather, it is an independent work of art whose originality lies in the way Naipaul used his borrowed material in a responsible way.

The next chapter will include the second practical side of the thesis. It will be devoted for the textual analysis of Jean Rhys' *WSS* and the different textual strategies used in the rewriting of the colonial discourse *JE* and which contributed in its subversion. To challenge the colonial discourse's basic assumptions, the novel will also be analysed on the basis of Homi k. Bhabha's theory of mimicry and hybridity to challenge. The chapter will also discuss the originality of Rhys' novel through Kristeva's theory of intertextuality.

## Chapter Three

### From the Margin to the Centre: Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* Writes Back

#### Charlotte Bronte's Colonial Narrative *Jane Eyre*

When I read *Jane Eyre* as a child, I thought, why should she think Creole women are lunatics and all that? What a shame to make Rochester's first wife, Bertha, the awful madwoman, and I immediately thought I'd write the story as it might really have been. She seemed such a poor ghost. I thought I'd try to write her a life. Charlotte Bronte must have had strong feelings about the West Indies because she brings the West Indies into a lot of her books, like *Villette*. Of course, once upon a time, the West Indies were rich, and very much more talked about than they are now.

Jean Rhys, "Jean Rhys and the Novel as Women's Text"(interview)

If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. Gayatri C. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

### 3.1 Introduction

The present chapter is based on the textual analysis of Jean Rhys' *WSS*, as a rewriting of Charlotte Bronte's colonial narrative *JE*. The chief concern of this chapter is to examine the way Rhys' postcolonial novel rewrites Bronte's colonial discourse from a postcolonial perspective. It aims at showing how Rhys' rewriting contributes in spotting light on another side of the story and in providing a different version of truth about the colonized people's world. On this basis, the chapter analyses the different textual strategies of resistance used in Rhys' counter-discourse to challenge Bronte's novel and, in return, shed light on the colonized people's culture and identity. The chapter also uncovers the way Rhys appropriates the western genre of the novel in order to make it suitable for the context of her postcolonial characters.



In addition to this, the novel is also scrutinized in the light of Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity and mimicry which is adopted for the purpose of questioning the basic assumptions of the dominant discourse. As rewriting recalls intertextuality, the chapter draws also on Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality in order to discuss the extent to which Rhys' rewriting of Bronte's *JE* can be considered as an original work of art rather than a mere imitation of its predecessor.

### **3.2 Textual Strategies of Resistance: Linguistic Abrogation and Appropriation of the Colonial Language in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea***

English has proved to be an effective weapon used by the colonizer in practicing its domination over the colonized and in transmitting its own version of truth about their world. The critics Bill Ashcroft and others argue that in imperial terms, the centre is regarded as a source of standard language and of order whereas the margin as a source of disorder occupying "the edges of language" by using variants (*The Empire Writes Back* 87). By establishing itself as the centre that monitors the means of communication, the colonizer imposes its superior language and culture on the colonized. Accordingly, the colonized people's culture and language were discarded as inferior. As a reaction to this domination, postcolonial writers sought to rewrite colonial narratives in order to abrogate and appropriate its language and make it convenient to their postcolonial world, the postcolonial writer Jean Rhys is no exception.

In her postcolonial novel *WSS*, Rhys challenges the claim of a superior colonial language by subverting the norms of Standard English. This abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language appears in a variety of ways in which a new language is produced manifested in "Caribbean english", a language that incorporates a specific linguistic code (Ashcroft et. al, *the Empire Writes Back* 7-8) and carries the cultural identity of the colonized people in the West Indies. Through her counter-

discourse, Rhys manipulates the standard rules of English grammar that appear through the dropping of the "s" of the simple present with the third person pronouns as in the following examples: "That's not what she hear...She hear all we poor like beggar...when it rain...Old Mr Luttrell spit in their face if he see how they look at you" (Rhys 22-23); "In the end he come to find out what you do, how you get on without him, and if he see you fat and happy he want you back ...Jo-jo my son coming to see me, if he catch you crying, he tell everybody" (Rhys 100,102).

The manipulation of standard rules of English grammar is also reflected through the unusual use of the auxiliary "to have and "to do" with the third person pronouns such as "She have eyes like Zombie...She have no money and she have no friends" (Rhys 45, 87); "He don't know how old he is, he don't think about it...She don't care for money" (Rhys 62, 138). Rhys also produces new words out of the abrogation of the English language. This appears through the use of verbs as adjectives "Look don't you provoke me more than I provoke already...It's she won't be satisfy" (Rhys 136, 143). In this example, Rhys uses the verbs "provoke" and "satisfy" as adjectives instead of using "provoked" and "satisfied". In so doing, she makes the colonizer's language "meet the demands and requirements of the place and society into which it has been appropriated", namely, the West Indies (Ashcroft et. al, *Post-colonial Studies Reader* 284). Accordingly, Rhys manages to produce a new language (english) that carries the cultural identity of the colonized in the Caribbean instead of the colonial language which proved to be ineffective.

Another instance of linguistic deviation (Teke72) is embodied in the unusual use of capital letters. In her counter-discourse *WSS*, Rhys opens each part of her narrative with capital letters in a way that draws the reader's attention. The letters are presented in a way that stands against the rules of English grammar. Instances of this

case are noticed in part one "THEY SAY WHEN TROUBLE comes close ranks, and so the white people did." (Rhys 15); in part two "SO IT WAS ALL OVER, the advance and retreat, the doubts and hesitations" (Rhys 59) and even in part three "THEY NEW THAT HE WAS in Jamaica when his father and his brother died" (Rhys 159). This abrogation of the English language recurs inside each part to confirm that this unusual use of capitalization is not accidental.

In addition to this, Rhys' manipulation of the colonizer's language involves also the unusual use of italic type within the text's normal type. In part two, long paragraphs sometimes covering more than one page are written in italic. Instances of this are reflected through the letter which Mr Rochester, the English man, writes to his father. In this letter, he provides his father with news about the success of their plan in the West Indies:

*Dear Father, we have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days. This little estate in the Windward Islands is part of the family property and Antoinette is much attached to it. She wished to get here as soon as possible. All is well and has gone according to your plans and wishes. I dealt of course with Richard Mason. His father died soon after I left for the West Indies as you probably know. He is a good fellow, hospitable and friendly; he seemed to become attached to me and trusted me completely... I will write again in a few days' time.* (Rhys 68-69)

Through the above italicized paragraph, Rhys abrogates the conventions of Standard English that are established in the colonial narrative *JE* in which the text and even the letters written by the protagonist Jane are written in normal type. In so doing, she does not only abrogate and appropriate the colonizer's language through italic type but also uncovers the cunning nature of the colonizer embodied in Mr Rochester and

his father who were plotting against the colonized Antoinette (Mr Rochester's wife).

Rhys' abrogation and appropriation of the colonizer's language (English) is also reflected through the use of this language as "an ethnographic tool" (Ashcroft et al., *Post-colonial Studies Reader* 284). In her counter-discourse, Rhys integrates songs to highlight the oral tradition of the West Indies. Instances of this case are presented by the character Antoinette who asks her aunt to sing for her the song of "*Before I was set free*" and she agrees "Before I was set free...the sorrow that my heart feels for ...the sorrow that my heart feels for" (Rhys 43). Through this song, Rhys spots light on the history of the natives in the West Indies and their sufferings due to slavery before they were emancipated. She also highlights the hatred that blacks developed toward them as racially hybrid people who remind them of the white colonizer. This hatred appears also through the song that the black servant Amélié sings to insult the creole Antoinette:

The white cockroach she marry

The white cockroach she marry

The white cockroach she buy young man

The white cockroach she marry. (Rhys 91)

In this song, Amélié insults Antoinette for her mixed race and for the husband she bought as her white husband got her money after marrying her.

Through abrogation and appropriation of Standard English, Rhys produces a new language (english) that serves to subvert the "old-fashioned imperialistic vision of dominant cultures and more or less prestigious languages" (Rizzardi 358). Instead, she brings her colonized people's culture and traditions into the forefront. In addition to the aforementioned instances of linguistic deviation, Rhys' counter-discourse integrates also other textual strategies to abrogate the colonizer's language and express her resistance to its colonial discourse *JE*. These strategies are also referred to as "devices

of otherness" (W. Ashcroft 72) as they foreground the uniqueness of the postcolonial discourse, serve to mark their difference from the centre and highlight their "local indigenous identity" (Bhati 531). These strategies include code-switching, untranslated words and glossing.

### **3.2.1 Code-switching: Decolonizing West Indian Culture**

Code-switching is a linguistic technique of hybridization where there is a shift between two languages or dialects (Hamamra and Qararia 126). In a discourse where English is the dominant language, any language contact occurs in the novel with another language is regarded as code-switching (Jonsson 213). In Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS*, this subversive strategy is displayed through the shift from the colonized's "French patois" (Rhys 61) to English. Instances of this case in her novel include the words said by Antoinette's mother a creole woman who came from Martinique, an island in the Caribbean "*Qui est la? Qui est ta? Don't touch me. I'll kill you if you touch me. Coward. Hypocrite. I'll kill you*" (Rhys 42).

Another instance is reflected by Antoinette when she explains to her husband Mr Rochester whether the snakes he saw in her island are poisonous or not "Not those. The *fer de lance* of course" (Rhys 80). Trying to make the colonizer Mr Rochester familiar with her native culture, Antoinette switches codes from English to French to explain how fireflies are called in their local patois "Ah yes, fireflies in Jamaica, here they call a firefly *La belle*" (Rhys 73). On another occasion, reacting to Mr Rochester's admiration of her wedding dress, Antoinette switches codes to her native language to highlight their cultural distinctiveness from the centre. As her dress is made in Martinique, one of the islands in the Caribbean, she clarifies that the natives "call this fashion *à la Joséphine*" (Rhys 72).

Most remarkably is when Rhys makes the colonizer Mr Rochester switch codes from English to the natives' French patois when he informs the native servant Baptist that Antoinette is asleep "Asleep, *dormi, dormi*" (Rhys 148). When Mr Rochester shifts to local patois, he tries to make Baptist understand him. This shift indicates the insufficiency that exists in his English language and which is compensated by a shift to the natives' language. In fact, this shift from the natives' French patois to the colonizer's language (English) results in "textual and cultural hybridity" (Pacheco 69).

In the postcolonial counter-discourse, code-switching could also take the form of interjection and sentence filler (Bertacco 150-151). In *WSS*, the black servant Christophine switches codes from local patois to English when she addresses Antoinette "Aie Aie Aie! Look me trouble, look me cross!" (Rhys 122). In this example and in the aforementioned ones, code-switching within Rhys' counter-discourse has an empowering function (Jonsson 212) in which the language of the colonized is legitimized. This intermingling between the two languages is done for the purpose of expressing resistance to the colonial discourse and its claim of the prestigious position of its language. The Indian theorist Gayatri Spivak describes the language used by Christophine as "incorrect English" ("Three Women's Texts and a Critic of Imperialism" 252), an abrogated version of English that breaks the rules of standard English as being established in the colonial discourse *JE*.

### **3.2.2 Untranslated Words and Glossing: Shedding light on Colonized Culture**

In addition to the above mentioned strategy of abrogation and appropriation of the English language, Rhys' counter-discourse incorporates also untranslated words to highlight the natives' culture and express its resistance to the colonial discourse *JE* where this culture is marginalized. In fact, the use of untranslated words does not hinder

the understanding of the text as their meaning can be deduced through the context. This is the case with vernacular words that the postcolonial writer presents in an English sentence (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58).

Instances of untranslated words in Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS* include the Spanish word "Sangoree". When blacks attacked and burned the house of Antoinette's family, her Aunt Cora threatened one of the black men with perpetual fire as a punishment from God for their deeds "And never a drop of Sangoree to cool your burning tongue" (Rhys 40). Although no English translation was provided for this Spanish word, the reader can deduce its meaning that refers to a refreshing drink. Another instance is the word "*ajoupa*" which is used by Antoinette when she points to a house in Granbois. In Caribbean culture, this untranslated word means a "thatched shelter" (Rhys 80) and the reader gets to know its meaning through the context.

In addition to this instance, the black servant Christophine uses the word "béké" when she talks with Mr Rochester about Antoinette. She explains that Antoinette "is not *béké* like you" (Rhys 140). As no English translation is provided for this word, the reader is sometimes required to extend his knowledge by searching in other sources apart from the text itself. This ambiguity is created on purpose by the writer in order to highlight the "cultural distinctiveness" (Ashcroft, "Bridging the Silence" 58) of the natives of the West Indies from the centre embodied in the colonial novel *JE*. According to the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*, the word "béké" alludes to those people of Martinique who "descended from white creoles or 'békés', Africans, Orientals, from Indian china and Annam, and Europeans known as 'békés'..." (Allsopp 91) and who have settled in the West Indies.

Another instance of untranslated word is the word "souciant", a word uttered by the black servant Christophine when she practised her obeah on Antoinette "Your

face like dead woman and your eyes red like soucriant" (Rhys 105). In Caribbean folklore, the word Soucriant or soucouyant refers to a woman who is ordinary by day, but at night "she shed her skin, transformed herself into a ball of fire, flew about the community, and sucked the blood of her unsuspecting neighbors. Afterward, she would return home and slip back into her skin, and the repeated practice made her human form unusually wrinkled" (Anatol IX). The fact that no English translation was provided for that cultural word makes the reader aware of the need to extend his knowledge outside the text to grasp its meaning. Thus, this word highlights that the language used in the text is "an/other language" (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 63-64) and the absence of an immediate English translation gives Rhys' counter-discourse a specific interpretive function (Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* 63-64).

In *WSS*, Rhys uses also the strategy of glossing in which she chooses to provide "an approximate English translation" (Wright 169) for the words of Caribbean origin. In so doing, Rhys takes off any ambiguity over her native culture and contributes instead in its foregrounding. Instances of this strategy include the word "da" which is used by Antoinette when she speaks about the black servant Christophine "And here is Christophine who was my da, my nurse long ago" (Rhys 65). In Caribbean culture, the word "da" is used to refer to a nurse. Although Rhys was able to use the English word "nurse" immediately, she prefers to use the word that foregrounds her native culture. In fact, Rhys' recourse to the word "da" indicates that the colonizer's language (the English word nurse) cannot transmit the colonized people's culture and it serves only as a referent to it. Another instance is reflected through the word "bull's blood" which has been used by Christophine when she spoke to Mr Rochester "Taste my bull's blood, master" (Rhys 77). In Caribbean culture, the word "bull's blood" means coffee (Rhys 77). The fact of using this cultural word instead of the English word "coffee" serves



to uncover the gap that exists between the two cultures. It is through this gap that the cultural difference of the colonized of the West Indies is highlighted.

In addition to her use of untranslated words, Rhys uses also the strategy of glossing to highlight the oral tradition (songs) in the West Indies. Instances of this are transmitted by the character Antoinette who tries to teach her English husband songs that are part and parcel of her native culture "*Ma belle ka di maman li. My beautiful girl said to her mother*" (Rhys 83). Although the song is in local patois, Rhys provides the English translation for it to make foreign readers familiar with the oral tradition of the West Indies.

Other instances of glossing include the word "*Morn*", a Caribbean word that means mountain. Rhys uses this word instead of the English word mountain because the natives in the West Indies believe that "Mountain is an ugly word" (Rhys 151). In this way, Rhys makes the reader who is not acquainted with Caribbean culture aware of this important detail. In addition to this, the character Daniel uses an expression that could be understood only by the natives in the West Indies "*nancy stories*" (Rhys 90). However, the English translation she provides for this expression makes its meaning clear and serves to uncover the uniqueness of the natives' culture. Speaking to Mr Rochester, Daniel warns him that "*Richard Mason is a sly man and he will tell you a lot of nancy stories, which is what we call lies here*" (Rhys 90). Another instance of glossing is reflected through the character of Daniel when he speaks to Mr Rochester "*to hear the woman jump over a precipice 'fini batt'e' as we say here which mean finish to fight*" (Rhys 88). As Mr Rochester is an English man who is not familiar with West Indian culture, Daniel provides the English translation for the cultural expression ('fini batt'e') he used. However, the English translation he provides does not devalue the natives' local patois or their culture which is transmitted through this word. On

the contrary, it serves to highlight the natives' language at the expense of their colonizer's language that works only as a referent to it.

### **3.3 Appropriation of the Western Novel: A Spotlight on the Colonized World in the West Indies**

According to Gayatri Spivak, it is impossible to read nineteenth century British literature in isolation from imperialism as literature at that time was the driving force for the British Empire. It has played an essential role in "the cultural representation of England" as a superior nation ("Three Women's Texts and a Critic of Imperialism" 243) with a superior language and culture. The colonial discourse of *JE* is one of those kinds of literatures that refer in one way or another to British imperialism. However, this official genre (novel) is now appropriated by the postcolonial writer Rhys through her novel *WSS*. In this novel, Rhys destabilizes the feminist novel as a western genre and produces instead "new forms of cultural production" (Ashcroft, *On Post-colonial Futures* 19) embodied in her postcolonial counter discourse.

In *WSS*, Rhys' appropriation of the colonial narrative is not exclusive to the colonial language, but also to the genre in itself. The appropriation of the Western genre of the novel *JE* is remarked from the title itself. Rhys appropriates the title of the colonial narrative and rewrites it in a way that fits the postcolonial context of her novel. In fact, the choice of the title *WSS* is not arbitrary; rather, it is meant to highlight a real place in the north Atlantic and which form an essential part of Rhys' setting. In addition to this place, all the places mentioned in Rhys' fictional work are real places in the West Indies and this makes her novel credible to a great extent.

In the colonial feminist novel *JE*, Bronte constructs her narrative in the form of a bildungsroman, a novel of education that follows the growth of the female protagonist Jane from childhood (innocence) to adulthood (knowledge). The narrator Jane opens the

novel by recounting her childhood at Gateshead where she lives with her uncle's wife and her children. In the first chapters of the novel, Jane transmits her suffering in this house and the bad treatment she has received. However, Jane's life undertakes a turning point once her uncle's wife decides to send her to a convent school. There, Jane starts to acquire knowledge of the world around her and to sharpen her skills. In this colonial narrative, some events are missing in which the reader notices that there is a gap in time. It is only in chapter ten that the reader becomes aware of the growth of Jane who becomes an adult and a teacher (Bronte 124).

This western genre of the feminist English novel is challenged and appropriated in Rhys' postcolonial novel *WSS*. While Bronte's novel is set in England during the Victorian period, Rhys' novel appropriates the narrative by setting the events in the West Indies after the emancipation of slaves (Rhys 15). In her counter-discourse, Rhys appropriates the conventional structure of the English novel to make it fit the demands of her postcolonial discourse. In addition to this, instead of the first person narrative adopted in the colonial discourse *JE*, Rhys employs a multiple narrative embodied in the shift from one narrator to another. The narrative shifts from the female narrator Antoinette in part one to the nameless narrator in part two and back again to Antoinette in part three. This shift is accompanied at the same time by a shift in place. This multiplicity in narrative is not accidental, but rather, aims at uncovering the hidden side of truth about the colonized experience with their colonizer; a truth that has been concealed in the colonial narrative.

It is interesting to note that the innovation in Rhys' postcolonial novel lies in the interest she devotes to the inner world of her characters. She creates an interior monologue for her narrators to enable the reader to get access to their thoughts, feelings and to learn about their internal conflicts. An instance of this appears in the first part

narrated by the formerly silenced female character Antoinette. In one of the scenes in part one, Antoinette recalls how her mother got angry at seeing her daughter wearing the clothes of Tia, the daughter of their servant, in front of their guests. Tia seizes the opportunity and tries to instil in Antoinette's mind the idea that her mother is ashamed of her. Being influenced by Tia's words, Antoinette felt sad and the idea of being hated by her mother haunted her dream "I dreamed that I was walking in the forest. Not alone. Someone who hated me was with me, out of sight. I could hear heavy footsteps coming closer and though I struggled and screamed I could not move. I woke crying" (Rhys 24).

Through Antoinette's dream, the reader could get access to her psychological profile and learn about her anxieties. He could also read her mind as if she is thinking loudly "I lay thinking, I am safe. There is the corner of the bedroom door and the friendly furniture. There is the tree of life in the garden and the wall green with moss. The barrier of the cliffs... I am safe. I am safe from strangers" (Rhys 24). Through this interior monologue, the reader discovers the truth about the colonized people and their world.

Another instance of interior monologue is reflected in part two by the narrator Mr Rochester, an English character. His interior monologue is introduced through Daniel's words that haunt Mr Rochester's mind and whose echo interrupts his narrative from time to time:

I said it, looking at her, seeing the hatred in her eyes – and feeling my own hate spring up to meet it. Again the giddy change, the remembering, the sickening swing back to hate... *(That girl she look you straight in the eye and talk sweet talk — and it's lies she tell you. Lies. Her mother was so. They say she worse than her mother).* (Rhys 150)

In the above quote, Mr Rochester's narrative is presented in normal type while his

interior monologue that echoes Daniel's words is introduced in italic. Through Mr Rochester's spontaneous flow of thoughts, the reader could know about his internal conflicts that he could not forget. Through his exposed conflict and unforgettable things, the reader discovers the truth regarding the nature of the British colonizer: his cruelty and hatred of the colonized.

In the colonial narrative *JE*, the writer follows the conventional structure of the English novel in which there is a chronological sequence of events created by the first person narrator Jane and by the nature of the novel as a bildungsroman. This logical sequence of the events makes the beginning and the ending of the novel clear in the reader's mind "My tale draws to its close: one word respecting my experience of married life, and one brief glance at the fortunes of those whose names have most frequently recurred in this narrative, and I have done" (Bronte 638).

However, this conventional chronological order of events is subverted in Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS* through the multiple narratives in which different stories are brought together resulting in an incoherent text. This incoherence appears also through the gap in time which is created by the shift from one narrator to another in the three parts and by the characters' interior monologues that interrupts their narrative. An instance of this is noticed in part one when Antoinette is in the convent school narrating her day there with the nuns, then the sequence of events is disrupted in which the narrator speaks about different events as if they are happening together "No one spoke of her now that Christophine had left us to live with her son. I seldom saw my stepfather. He seemed to dislike Jamaica, Spanish Town in particular, and was often away for months. One hot afternoon in July my aunt told me that she was going to England for a year" (Rhys 50-51). After this break in narrative, Antoinette goes back to speak again about her days in the convent school which makes her narrative incoherent

"This convent was my refuge, a place of sunshine and of death where very early in the morning the clap of a wooden signal woke the nine of us who slept in the long dormitory" (Rhys 51).

### **3.4 Challenging the Colonial Dichotomy of Superior Colonizer and Inferior Colonized**

In order to maintain and justify the colonizer's domination over the colonized, the colonial discourse establishes a dichotomy of a superior colonizer and an inferior colonized. In order to ensure this dichotomy, the colonial narrative claims that identity is something fixed just to find an excuse for the stereotypes it has created about the colonized. Burton argues that such fixity makes the colonized liable to separation and marginalization by difference in the colonial discourse (41).

#### **3.4.1 The Representation of the Colonized in the Colonial Narrative *Jane Eyre: A Falsification of Truth***

In the colonial discourse *JE*, a "dichotomous relationship" (Burton 42) of a superior white and inferior non-white is well established between the white English characters and the non-white female character Bertha. In its representation of the colonized, this colonial discourse relies on stereotypes that to maintain the colonizer's hegemony over the colonized.

In Charlotte Brontë's colonial discourse *JE*, the white characters are portrayed with partiality in which the character of Jane is depicted as a strong, independent and educated woman who managed to improve her living conditions at an early age and to build her future on her own terms. Despite of the harsh treatment and the injustice she has received from her uncle's wife as a child and at the convent school, Jane could overcome her conditions and become a teacher (Brontë 124). When compared to the colonized character Bertha, most of the female characters in this colonial discourse

including Jane are portrayed as superior characters with positive traits regardless of the hierarchy of the Victorian society that grants power to men at the expense of women.

In addition to the female character Jane, Mr Rochester is also portrayed as a superior wealthy man who belongs to a superior race. The narrator Jane portrays him as "talented and so lively in society, that I believe he is a general favourite: the ladies are very fond of him...I suppose his acquirements and abilities, perhaps his wealth and good blood, make amends for any little fault of look" (Bronte 228-229). In this Victorian society, white men's superiority is defined by the amount of wealth they possess as well as their blood as whites. This is the case with Mr Rochester who is portrayed as a white wealthy man.

On the other side of the dichotomy stands the female colonized character Bertha who is portrayed as an inferior character. Homi K. Bhabha argues that the colonial discourse forms its stereotypes on the basis of racial origin in which it claims that the colonized are racially degenerate (*The Location of Culture* 70) and thus its dichotomy of "self" and "other" will be justified and strengthened. In Bronte's colonial discourse *JE*, neither voice nor space is given to the non-white female character Bertha who appears at the last pages of the novel. The narrator Jane introduces Bertha as a strange mad woman who has a laughter of a demon "This was a demoniac laugh-low, suppressed, and deep-uttered, as it seemed, at the very keyhole of my chamber door" (Bronte 215). Bertha is kept in a separate room guarded by an English servant because she is regarded as a source of danger to the white people in Mr Rochester's house.

In this colonial discourse, the West Indian female character Bertha is reduced to an animal and she is identified through the sounds and gestures she makes rather than through words. In one of the scenes of the novel, the narrator Jane hears Bertha's cry and compares it to "a savage, a sharp, a shrilly sound ...I heard thence a snarling,

snatching sound, almost like a dog quarrelling" (Bronte 295, 299). Stereotypes of the colonized Bertha as an animal recur throughout the colonial discourse to confirm the inhuman nature of non-whites and the superiority of whites. Jane describing Bertha's character "a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with wild as a mane, hid its head and face" (Bronte 416-417). Through such description, Jane deprives the colonized Bertha of her human traits and attributes to her animal traits instead. She identifies her using the pronoun "It" instead of "she" to confirm her bestiality.

In one of the scenes in the novel, the English character Mr Rochester highlights the dichotomy of civilized colonizer and uncivilized colonized when he compares between Jane (colonizer) and his imprisoned wife Bertha (colonized) "Compare these clear eyes with the red balls yonder - this face with that mask - this form with that bulk; then judge me, priest of the gospel and man of the law, and remember with what judgement ye judge ye shall be judged! Off with you now. I must shut up my prize" (Bronte 410). In a sarcastic tone, the colonizer Mr Rochester refers to his West Indian wife Bertha as a prize that he keeps imprisoned in a separate room. Through his comparison, Mr Rochester seeks to highlight the difference between the white girl he intended to marry (Jane) and his non-white wife to find a convincing reason for his wife's imprisonment. His decision to marry the English girl is to "seek sympathy with something at least human" (Bronte 415) that he didn't find in Bertha whom he depicts as a mad woman in a beast shape.

Nayar argues that as perceptions of the colonized and of truth are arranged by those misrepresentations provided in the colonial discourse, they are regarded as truth



by the reader who got used to them. In fact, the recurrence of those misrepresentations makes the reader no longer uncertain or interrupted by them. Rather, he will regard them as true reflections of the natives (133-134). This is the case with the image of Bertha as a mad woman and a beast which is repeated in the colonial discourse to make the reader believe in this image and regard it as the truth. This manipulation of truth about the colonized and their world is challenged by Rhys' counter-discourse. The latter seeks to correct those misrepresentations of the colonized as well as the reader's perception of them.

### **3.4.2 Counter Representation of the Colonized in *Wide Sargasso Sea*: the Creole Silenced Woman Speaks Out Truth**

Peer argues that the stereotypes established in the colonial discourse *JE* about the colonized are not the product of "some kernel of truth", but rather the outcome of its overgeneralisations and false thinking (43). On this account, Rhys' postcolonial novel employs a strategy of counter representation in order to challenge the colonial discourse's misrepresentation of the colonized female character Bertha. In her counter-discourse *WSS*, Rhys deconstructs the colonial discourse *JE* in which she privileges the margin by giving voice and space to the previously silenced character Antoinette (Bertha). In so doing, Rhys enables Antoinette to tell her own version of the story and to correct the misrepresentations that have been associated to her in the dominant discourse.

In *WSS*, Rhys portrays the female character Antoinette (Bertha) as a rebellious beautiful girl who is mentally stable to refute the stereotype established by the colonizer of her hereditary madness in the colonial discourse *JE*. Going through Bronte's colonial narrative, the English man Mr Rochester treats his wife Bertha as "other" and he attributes this to her state as a mad woman. However, he admits afterwards to his

English beloved girl Jane that if the violent reaction that Bertha has shown was done by her (Jane), he would have accepted it:

Jane, my little darling ... it is not because she is mad I hate her. If you were mad, do you think I should hate you?... if you flew at me as wildly as that woman did this morning, I should receive you in an embrace, at least as fond as it would be restrictive. I should not shrink from you with disgust as I did from her. (Bronte 428)

The above words reveal the prejudice that the colonizer expresses towards the colonized Bertha. Mr Rochester's words can be taken as a testimony to confirm that his portrayal of the colonized Bertha as other and the hatred he holds toward her is because of her race (as a non-white woman) and not because of her madness.

In fact, in Rhys' counter-discourse, Antoinette is deliberately identified in relation to her English husband Mr Rochester to reveal the true cruel nature of the colonizer. Antoinette's marriage to the white man Mr Rochester can be regarded as a metaphor for colonialism in which he is the colonial figure (the dominator) and Antoinette is the colonized (dominated) and the victim of the greedy deceptive nature of her English husband. The latter, makes a plan to marry Antoinette, to get her money and thus to improve his status in a society where wealth matters a lot according to their English law. Once the colonizer's plan succeeds, Mr Rochester sends a letter to his English father to confirm its success "Dear Father. The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition...I have a modest competence now. I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother the son you love... I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all is it such a bad bargain?" (Rhys 63-64). Through his words, Mr Rochester as a colonial figure uncovers that the real intentions behind the colonizer's presence in the colonized world is to exploit the natives and not to civilize

them as they always claims.

In addition to this, throughout the novel, Rhys spots light on the way the colonial figure Mr Rochester mistreats his wife Antoinette and keeps distance from her in order not to be identified as his equal (marriage partner) "IT WAS ALL VERY BRIGHTLY coloured, very strange, but it meant nothing to me. Nor did she, the girl I was to marry. When at last I met her I bowed, smiled, kissed her hand, danced with her. I played the part I was expected to play. She never had anything to do with me at all" (Rhys 115). For this colonial figure, to accept Antoinette as his equal means to threaten his superiority and break the established dichotomy of superior colonizer and inferior colonized that he seeks to maintain.

However, Antoinette's reaction to his bad treatment signifies her challenge to this dichotomy and her rejection to be treated as "other". While Bertha's violent reaction toward Mr Rochester has been interpreted as a sign of madness in the colonial discourse *JE* (Bronte 415), in the counter-discourse *WSS* Antoinette's (Bertha) violent reaction of wounding her husband with the glass of a broken bottle is attributed to the bad treatment she received from her English husband and not to her madness. In this way, Rhys provides an explanation for her female colonized character's behaviour; an explanation that ought to be provided in the colonial discourse. The latter has deliberately withheld this explanation in order to make its portrayal of the colonized Bertha, as a strange and inferior being, legitimate.

It is worth mentioning that in Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS*, much space is devoted to Antoinette's narrative to provide the missing piece in her story that she could not provide in the colonial discourse as a silenced marginalized character. After Mr Rochester received a letter from the coloured man Daniel, who claims that he is Antoinette's brother and that her family are mad and tricksters (Rhys 116-117),

Antoinette insists on Mr Rochester to hear her own version of the story as well. She wants to clarify for him that what Daniel said was nothing but lies "There is always the other side, always" (Rhys 116). In so doing, Antoinette challenges the colonial discourse's story of the colonized and breaks the silence that has surrounded Bertha's life in *JE*. Through her story, Antoinette proves the invalidity of Mr Rochester's claim of Bertha's madness in *JE* and denounces it as a one-sided representation that cannot be taken for granted. In addition to this, by not allowing Bertha to speak, the colonizer's claim of her insanity cannot be judged as true. Rather, it can be regarded as an attempt to justify his oppression and imprisonment of her.

At the beginning of the novel, although Rhys deprives her colonizer character Mr Rochester of his name, she gives him a narrative voice. Nevertheless, this voice cannot be regarded as a sign of empowerment. Rather, it is meant to make him divulge the lies and the true face of the colonizer embodied in the hatred and the racist attitude he expresses towards the natives. Although he does not know all the natives nor got in contact with them, the colonial figure Mr Rochester judges the natives through the servant Amélié whom he views as "sly, spiteful, malignant perhaps, like much else in this place" (Rhys 59). Through his racist attitude, Mr Rochester makes overgeneralizations about the natives in the West Indies that emerge from the hatred he holds towards them and toward their land (Rhys 62). Through such strategy of granting narrative voice to a colonial character, Rhys challenges the stereotypes provided in the colonial discourse *JE* and denounces them as nothing but overgeneralizations and misconceptions.

After being given a narrative voice to express his racist attitude and the stereotypes he holds toward the natives, Rhys counters those stereotypes through her colonized female narrator Antoinette. Antoinette provides an image of a civilized and a

non-savage native reflected through the character of Baptiste who is able to speak his colonizer's language (English) in a good way (Rhys 65). In addition to Baptiste, Rhys spots light on the black servant Christophine who masters English besides French and her local patois (Rhys 19). By breaking the stereotypes that have been constantly repeated in the colonial discourse, Rhys uncovers the untruthfulness behind such repetition; a repetition that presents the colonial discourse as ambivalent. Bertens argues that the repetition of stereotypes by the colonizer is an attempt to convince himself several times of the truthfulness of those images he already regards as true (208-209). However, such repetition of the same images of the colonized does not contribute in preserving the colonizer's identity as a superior entity. Rather, it contributes in highlighting his fragile confidence and the uncertainty of the colonial discourse *JE*.

In Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS*, the narrator Antoinette gives voice also to other colonized female characters including her creole mother who corrects the stereotype of her hereditary madness that the colonial discourse transmitted through the character of Mr Rochester. Through her voice, Antoinette's mother (Annette) uncovers the truth behind her insanity. The reader learns that her mental breakdown is due the loss of their family house after it was burned by blacks, the loss of their wealth (Rhys 16) and the death of her son afterwards (Rhys 42).

The other female native character who is given voice is the black servant Christophine. Antoinette portrays her as a strong woman who addresses the colonizer Mr Rochester with orders and without fear. An instance of this in the novel appears when the colonizer Mr Rochester asks Christophine to leave the house or he will use force (the police) and throw her out. In front of this situation, Christophine challenges him "No police here. No chain gang, no tread machine, no dark jail either. This is free country and I am free woman" (Rhys 145). Through her words, the colonized

Christophine sends a message to her colonizer that they are no longer colonized. In addition to this, Christophine strengthens Antoinette's version of the story about her family and challenges Mr Rochester's malicious plans and manipulation of truth about the hereditary madness of Antoinette and her family "It is in your mind to pretend she is mad. I know it. The doctors say what you tell them to say. That man Richard he say what you want him to say – glad and willing too, I know. She will be like her mother. You do that for money? But you wicked like Satan self!" (Rhys 145).

### **3.5 The Reconstruction of Colonized People's History: Truth as it should be Told**

Rhys argues that society sometimes damages literature. By literature, she refers to those writers within the English society whose works serve the dominant ideology. They try to tame and appropriate truth to make it serve that prevailing ideology. On this basis, Rhys believes that "if books were brave enough the repressive education [of the ant civilization] would fail but nearly all English books and writers slavishly serve the ant civilization" (qtd.in Gregg 111). Bronte's colonial novel *JE* is among those books that serve the prevailing ideology of British Imperialism in nineteenth century Victorian society.

In her colonial discourse *JE*, Bronte spots light on British colonial history and presents British expansion in the East as a missionary task that aims to transmit its superior civilization and religion to those dark and inferior regions. This claim and glorifying of British history is reflected through the character of St. John who devotes his life for the fulfilment of missionary missions in India. He claims that God has chosen him for this task that will preserve a house for him in heaven. Accordingly, he will never think to give up this noble task:

God had an errand for me; to bear with afar, to deliver it well, skill and strength, courage and eloquence, the best qualifications of soldier,

statesman, and orator, were all needed: for these all centre in the good missionary...Relinquish! What! my vocation? My great work? My foundation laid on earth for a mansion in heaven? My hopes of being numbered in the band who have merged all ambitions in the glorious one of bettering their race - of carrying knowledge into the realms of ignorance - of substituting peace for war - freedom for bondage - religion for superstition - the hope of heaven for the fear of hell? Must I relinquish that?. (Bronte 514, 531)

The colonizer embodied in the character of St. John claims that he is among the chosen people on earth. As a result, he believes that God has assigned him the mission of spreading knowledge and religion to the inferior places of the non-western world that believe in superstition. Through his claim of the missionary errand, the colonizer seeks to create a pretext for the British presence in the East and to hide the real objectives behind this presence.

Through her counter-discourse *WSS*, Rhys invents a "new creole literary space" (Raikin 112). Through this latter, she interrogates the history of British colonialism in the West Indies and inscribes her native history that has been erased in the colonial discourse. Through her rewriting of Bronte's colonial narrative *JE* that glorifies British history and presence in the East, Rhys reconstructs her native history from a West Indian perspective. In so doing, she sheds light on the different forms of exploitation and suffering that her people were exposed to.

Through her female narrator Antoinette, Rhys uncovers one of the blind spots in the history of the colonized of the West Indies which is slavery. The novel opens with the passing of the Emancipation Act that has freed slaves in the West Indies, but did not end their exploitation. Antoinette's mother, Annette, uncovers the way the white

colonizer's wealth depended on the enslavement and the exploitation of blacks in the West Indies during colonialism. So, after the emancipation of slaves, many whites lost their wealth and ended in mental break down as it is the case with Mr Luttrell (Rhys 15). Annette spots light also on the way native women were reduced to gifts granted to their wives as it was the case with her in which her English husband has granted her the black servant Christophine as a gift in their wedding "She was your father's wedding present to me - one of his presents. He thought I would be pleased with a Martinique girl" (Rhys 19). As Antoinette's mother was from Martinique, one of the islands in the West Indies, her English husband thought that the best gift for her would be a servant from Martinique whom he looked at as an object rather than a human being.

Although the Emancipation Act was meant to put an end to slavery and to free slaves, Rhys' counter-discourse uncovers the lies of the colonizer in which nothing changed in the lives of blacks in the West Indies. The justice that this act promised to create in the society was not realized and the conditions of blacks remained the same if not worse than before. Antoinette remarks that the life of blacks under white men's authority did not improve "These new ones have Letter of the Law. Same thing. They got magistrate. They got fine. They got jail house and chain gang. They got tread machine to mash up peoples feet. New ones worse than old ones - more cunning, that's all" (Rhys 24). Antoinette spots light on the way the colonizer is skilful in manipulating things under the cover of law in order to attain its objectives. In addition to this, no change was created in the lives of blacks as the only change was embodied in those new men (magistrates) who replaced the old ones (slave holders) and followed their strategy of exploiting the natives. The only difference between the two is that the magistrates were more cunning and worse than slave holders.



In addition to this, Antoinette's half-brother Daniel uncovers the hypocrisy of the colonizer embodied in his English father Mr Alexander Cosway. This latter, wrote a motto in Latin on a "white marble tablet" (Rhys 11) of an English church built in the West Indies. The purpose of this motto was to glorify his deeds as a white man who has done well to the natives "Pious...Beloved by all...Merciful to the weak" (Rhys 111). As an illegitimate son of this white man (Alexander Cosway), Daniel was familiar with his father's tricks and lies. Thus, he was not deceived by his words that hide his real intentions. On the contrary, by spotting light on this motto, Daniel challenges the colonial discourse's *JE* claims that the reason behind the British presence in the East is the missionary missions assigned by God as the English character St. John claims. For the colonized character Daniel, this Latin motto serves the objectives of the colonizer as it does not mention anything about the natives who were bought and sold by his father like cattle. Contrarily, it presents the white colonizer as an angel sent from heaven to do good to the natives.

In an ironic tone, Daniel uncovers the hypocrisy behind those words that are written in the wrong place (church):

Merciful to the weak...Mercy! The man have a heart like stone.

Sometimes when he get sick of a woman which is quickly, he free her

like he free my mother, even he give her a hut and a bit of land for

herself ... but it is no mercy, its for wicked pride he do it. I never put my

eyes on a man haughty and proud like that - he walk like he own the

earth... I can still see that tablet before my eyes because I go to look at it

often. I know by heart all the lies they tell - no one to stand up and say,

Why you write lies in the church. (Rhys 111)

Being familiar with his father's lies, Daniel was aware that the motto that his English

father wrote in the church was done for colonial pride as the colonizer's aim was always to show his superiority to the natives. However, such motto reflects the way the colonizer has manipulated things in order to attain its objectives even if this required him to alter history and reality.

Through her counter-discourse, Rhys spots light also on other aftermaths of colonialism in the West Indies embodied in racial tensions. These latter are ignited by the white colonizer's enslavement of the colonized (blacks). After their emancipation, blacks developed great animosity toward all people with white skin. This had its negative effect on those Creoles who found themselves victims of the colonizer's strategies whose effects are long lasting. Antoinette is among those victims as she is a Creole. Her white skin was a source of trouble for her as it made her hated by blacks as she resembled white colonizers. Through her narrator Antoinette, Rhys highlights the social gap that colonialism has created in the colonized world. It has divided the society into blacks (former slaves), whites and coloured people who are rejected by blacks although they are also victims of colonialism.

Instances of racial tensions in *WSS* are reflected through the attacks that blacks made on Antoinette's family house (Rhys 36). In fact, the hatred expressed by blacks towards them is due to the history of Antoinette's English father who was a former slave owner and also due to their situation as Creoles (resembling whites). Blacks' rejection of Antoinette and her family is also reflected through their mocking words. Whenever Antoinette's mother is outside, she hears blacks' insults and sarcasm (Rhys 16). In addition to this, through the narrative voice that Rhys grants to her female character, Antoinette finds a room to transmit the different racial insults she has encountered with her family despite of their indigeneity. Antoinette was aware of the hatred of blacks, so she evaded looking at them to avoid their racial insults calling her

white cockroach "White cockroach, go away, go away. Nobody want you. Go away" (Rhys 20).

Due to this social gap that the colonizer created between blacks and creoles, Antoinette and her family lived isolated and detached from their community as no one befriended or visited them "And no one came near us. I got used to a solitary life, but my mother still planned and hoped - perhaps she had to hope every time she passed a looking glass...I had longed for visitors" (Rhys 16, 20). They lived like people who are denounced in their society for a sin that they have not committed. As a result of this rejection, Antoinette sought refuge in nature. There, she thought that she would find the peace she is looking for. Antoinette compares the racial insults she received from blacks as more harmful than a pain caused by a razor grass or the feeling of seeing a snake "And if the razor grass cut my legs and arms I would think 'Its better than people'... once I saw a snake. All better than people" (Rhys 25).

To interrogate the colonizer's claim of the missionary missions, Rhys' counter discourse uncovers the continuous exploitation of the natives' land by the colonizer in different ways even after independence. She highlights the way white men got married to women from the West Indies in order to get their wealth. Mr Mason is one of those English men who went to the West Indies to accumulate more wealth as estates have become cheaper after the emancipation of slaves. In order to attain his objectives, he married Antoinette's mother (Rhys 27) and he decided to import workers whom he referred to as "coolies" (Rhys 32) to work in his estates. According to the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*, the word coolies "came to be applied to all East-Indian persons in post-immigration times...this term is generally regarded as offensive" (Allsopp 168). Those imported labourers were meant to be exploited as indentured labourers with a contract but without wages.

### 3.6 Mimicry as a Strategy of Resistance and Empowerment for the Colonized

According to the postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha, mimicry is "one of the...effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" (*The Location of Culture* 86). Through this strategy, the colonizer seeks "a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (*The Location of Culture* 86). As a strategy of colonial domination, the colonizer aims to make the colonized mimic its culture, language and manners as part of its so-called civilizing mission in the Colonies (Moore-Gilbert 119-120). Nevertheless, Bhabha has taken this colonial strategy far from the centre and exploited the ambivalence it manifests to create a powerful site of resistance for the colonized.

In Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS*, this strategy of resistance is reflected through the female character of Antoinette. The latter tries to mimic the appearance of an English girl whom she sees in a picture to make her English husband love her "So I looked away from her at my favourite picture, 'The Miller's Daughter', a lovely English girl with brown curls and blue eyes and a dress slipping off her shoulders" (Rhys 32). According to colonial parlance embodied in the strategy of mimicry, in this scene Antoinette conforms to the colonizer's attempt to make the colonized mimic its superior culture embodied in the appearance of the English girl in order to become civilized.

However, Antoinette's (Bertha) portrayal in the colonial discourse *JE* as someone who is savage and uncivilized presents that discourse as ambivalent "a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was whether beast or human being, one could not tell" (Bronte 416). Such ambivalence lies in the way this narrative criticizes the savagery of the colonized while at the same time it seeks to make her mimic the colonizer to become like him (civilized), but not identical to him. This attention of

preventing the colonized from being identical to his colonizer is because the former will threaten its so-called civilizing mission which is constructed over the claim of difference (superior/ inferior). In fact, it is the colonizer's desire for producing sameness as well as difference in the colonized that makes its colonial discourse ambivalent and its mode of representing the colonized questionable and paradoxical. In addition to this, when Antoinette mimics the English girl to resemble her and become accepted as a civilized girl, her act makes the colonial strategy (mimicry) work in the reverse of the colonizer's aims. The gap already established in the colonial discourse between the colonizer as superior and the colonized as inferior is now destroyed and Antoinette becomes her colonizer's equal (civilized).

To further strengthen this site of resistance, Bhabha argue that when the colonized mimics his colonizer, he will produce a blurred image of this later as he cannot fully assimilate. This blurred image forms a threat to the so-called civilizing mission by placing it in "an area between mimicry and mockery" (*The Location of Culture* 86). In *WSS*, when Antoinette's husband Mr Rochester looks at her wearing like the English girl and mimicking her manners, he starts to mock at her as he finds her appearance annoying "She was wearing the white dress I had admired, but it has slipped untidily over one shoulder and seemed too large for her. I watched her holding her left wrist with her right hand, an annoying habit" (Rhys 115). In fact, Mr Rochester's mockery does not downgrade the colonized (Antoinette), but rather it serves to distort the image of the colonizer (the English girl) which is reflected through Antoinette's mimicry.

Through her imperfect imitation of the English girl, Antoinette obtains "a flawed identity" (McClintock 62). The latter is imposed on her as she finds herself obliged to mirror back the image of the English girl to please her English husband. This

identity makes the colonized Antoinette "inhabit an inhabitable zone of ambivalence that grants [her] neither identity nor difference" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 90). She is neither fully similar to the colonizer (the English girl) nor different from her. It is at this level that the failure of mimicry can be highlighted as in being placed between identity and difference; the authority of the colonial discourse *JE* is questioned.

Bhabha argues that mimicry, as a colonial strategy, is based on repetition as a way for the colonizer to prove its superiority (*The Location of Culture* 88). However, he thinks that such repetition acts in the reverse of the colonizer's aims and destabilizes the colonial discourse. By producing "subjects whose not-quite sameness 'acts like a distorting mirror that fractures the identity of the colonizing subject and--as in the regime of stereotype-'rearticulates [its] presence in terms of its 'otherness', that which it disavows" (Moor-Gilbert 119-120).

In *WSS*, Antoinette mimics the speech of her English husband Mr Rochester in a mocking way when he tells her that her closest black servant Christophine "won't stay here very much longer...She won't stay here very much longer" (Rhys 132) Antoinette mimics his words, "and nor will you, nor will you. I thought you liked the black people so much but that's just a lie like everything else...You abused the planters and made up stories about them,...You send the girl away quicker, and with no money or less money, and that's all the difference" (Rhys 132-133). Through her mockery, Antoinette mirrors a distorted image of the colonizer and uncovers his brutal nature, the hatred he holds toward blacks and his lies. Such lies are reflected also through his words when he justifies slavery and looks at it as a matter of justice which makes Antoinette mock at his unreasonable words and challenge them "Justice...I've heard that word. It's a cold word. I tried it out, I wrote it down. I wrote it down several times and always it looked like a damn cold lie to me. There is no justice." (Rhys 133).

Huddart argues that the colonized people's mimicry of their colonizer does not denote a betrayal of their cultural identity. On the contrary, it is a proof that identity is not something fixed as the colonizer claims and it indicates that "there are no facts of blackness or whiteness, and this is a more catastrophic realization for the colonizer than for the colonized" (48, 51). In *WSS*, when the coloured man Daniel mimicked white men's mode of life by living in a house with one room devoted for sitting and by hanging the pictures of his father and mother on the wall (Rhys 109), his mimicry serves to subvert the colonial discourse's claim of identity as something fixed. Daniel's ability to resemble whites is a proof that there is no persisting identity that establishes the colonizer as inherently superior and the colonized as inherently inferior.

### **3.7 Hybridity and the Question of Identity: An Interrogation of the Colonizer's Myth of Racial and Cultural Purity**

In order to challenge the colonial discourse's claims of white men's uniqueness and the purity of their culture, the postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha developed the concept of hybridity. He defines it as "a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rules of recognition" (*The Location of Culture* 114). Through hybridity, Bhabha provides a site of resistance for the colonized to enable him to interrogate the colonial discourse's myth of purity.

In Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS*, this strategy of resistance is well established and reflected through two forms. The first of these forms is racial hybridity which is the result of the intermarriage between the white colonizer and the non-white colonized. Instances of this form in the novel appear through the creole female character Antoinette whose racial hybridity is the product of being the daughter of a white man

and a West Indian woman. As Antoinette is neither a white woman nor a purely West Indian woman (Rhys 61), her position forms a threat for the dominant discourse in which the colonizer's claim of being "unmixed, uninfluenced by anything other than itself" (Mizutani 4) is subverted.

In addition to this, through Antoinette's in-between position, the colonizer's claim of the fixity of its identity is subverted on the ground that there is nothing such as an inborn white superiority or black inferiority. In the colonial discourse *JE*, the colonial figure Mr Rochester claims that he belongs to "a good race" (Bronte 434) highlighting the uniqueness and superiority of his race. However, this established binary opposition is subverted by Antoinette's hybrid identity to confirm that such gap is not produced by racial origins. Rather, it is a mere creation of the colonizer as it is asserted by the colonized character Godfrey "The Lord make no distinctions between black and white, black and white the same for him" (Rhys 16).

The non-fixed nature of identity is also confirmed by the colonial figure Mr Rochester who is not able to identify Antoinette due to her creole identity "her eyes which are too large and can be disconcerting. She never blinks at all it seems to me. Long, sad, dark alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either" (Rhys 60). Although Mr Rochester could not determine the identity of Antoinette from her appearance that resembles Europeans (but not quietly European), on another scene he imagines that she might be an English girl (Rhys 64).

It is worth noting that, the in-between position occupied by Antoinette (hybrid identity) is the outcome of the colonizer's strategy of marrying West Indian women to spread his authority in the colonized world. In fact, such hybrid identity creates identity crisis for the colonized Antoinette who finds herself torn between two origins in which both blacks and whites communities reject her. As a result, Antoinette ends in



questioning her identity "The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself...What am I doing in this place and who am I?" (Rhys 162).

Another instance of racial hybridity in the novel is reflected through Antoinette's mother Annette who is a creole also as she is the daughter of a former slave owner (Rhys 29). Although the colonizer in its dominant narrative *JE* claims that its race is pure and superior, Annette resembles whites in the colour of her skin as a creole woman whose mixed-ness contributes in subverting the colonizer's myth of purity. In addition to Annette, racial hybridity in the novel appears also through the half-cast servant Amélie, the coloured men Sandi, and Antoinette's half-brother Daniel. According to the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*, the word coloured refers to "those who are of a mixed-race –of a breed mixed...between the white European and the black African. Speaking of Jamaica, [it] might almost [be] between the Anglo-Saxon and the Africans; for there remains...but a small ting of Spanish blood" (Allsopp 164). Although the colonizer's intention behind marrying West Indian women was to exploit their wealth and land, its strategy has contributed in producing hybrid identities that would challenge the claim of its superior race and "never-changing identity" (Mizuani 9).

The second form of hybridity transmitted through Rhys' counter-discourse is cultural hybridity. Homi K. Bhabha argues that this form of hybridity results from the mixed-ness between the colonized' and the colonizer's cultures (*The Location of Culture* 4). He adds, cultures are not separate phenomenon as they are in contact with each other which highlight their impurity (qtd.in Huddart 4). Instances of this form in the novel appear through the inevitable contact between the colonized and the colonizer's worlds in what Bhabha calls "the third space of enunciation" (*The Location of Culture* 37). This contact results in the fusion of both cultures. It is remarked through

Antoinette's family life which is culturally hybrid in which the culture of her English step father mixes with their native culture making both cultures in equal status. Their cultural hybridity appears through the English food that Antoinette and her mother started to eat once her mother got married to the English man Mr Mason "We ate English food now, beef and mutton, pies and puddings." (Rhys 32). It is through this "Third Space" that the colonized can express his resistance to the dominant discourse *JE*. He is now able to challenge its binary opposition that separates white characters' life from the life of the non-white character Bertha. In addition to this, the contact between the two cultures paves the way for something new embodied in a hybrid identity.

Another scene where the colonized and the colonizer's cultures meet is reflected through the coloured character Daniel whose mode of life is culturally hybrid. Daniel's manners resemble those of whites. He reads the bible like them and he lives in a house that resembles English houses with one room devoted for sitting. He also hangs two pictures of his parents on the wall as the whites do in their houses (Rhys 109). Homi. K Bhabha argues that there is nothing like a prior or original culture and identity ("The Third Space" 211) as the colonial discourse claims. Rather, cultures are in change and not fixed to a certain time period in which "the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated ... and read anew" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37). Having an eye on Bhabha's argument, it is possible to say that Daniel's cultural hybridity is the outcome of the mixed-ness between his native culture and the colonizer's culture in the third space. In this site, both cultures got transformed and a hybrid identity emerged instead. As a result to this transformation in both cultures, Young argues that the colonizer's culture loses its authority as well as any claim to authenticity (21).

### **3.8 Intertextuality and the Question of Originality in *Wide Sargasso Sea***

Whenever there is a rewriting of a prior literary work by a writer successor, the first thing that readers and critics think about is whether this work should be considered as an original work of art or just a mere imitation of its former. This act of rewriting a former literary work by another writer reveals the existence of an intertextual relationship between two literary works. This intertextuality can be highlighted through different dimensions. Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS* is one of these works that rewrites the classic English novel *JE* and whose intertextuality and originality are a question under study. These latter, can be examined through two modes of intertextual dimensions, namely; integration and interfigurality.

#### **3.8.1 Postcolonial Intertextual Integration**

The critics Christiane Achour and Amina Bekkat identify three ways in which a prior text can be integrated in an intertext and which include: Integration by allusion, by absorption and by suggestion.

Achour and Bekkat argue that integration by allusion appears only through signs where the reader is supposed to have certain prior knowledge of the source text in order to observe the reference in the text under question (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 32). As an intertextual marker, allusion could be a title of another literary work, a name of a protagonist (Hebel 136) or a scene from another literary work. Hebel summarizes the steps of how intertextual relationships could be created through allusion: the recognition of a marker, the identification of the source text through such marker and then, the activation of that source text as a whole in order to "form a maximum of intertextual patterns" (138).

An instance of this form in Rhys' novel *WSS* is conveyed through allusion to the gothic. In this novel, the reader's attention is attracted by a scene in which the creole

character Antoinette gets horrified by the things she sees in the room of their black servant Christophine "I was afraid. I was certain that hidden in the room (behind the old black press?) there was a dead man's dried hand, white chicken feathers, a cock with its throat cut, dying slowly, slowly. Drop by drop the blood was falling into a red basin and I imagined I could hear it" (Rhys 28).

This gothic scene provokes the reader's memory in a way that activates in his/her memory the prior text of *JE* where he/ she thinks that a similar scene has been experienced by one of the characters there. Through this textual allusion observed by the reader, an intertextual relationship is established between "specific adopted and adoptive texts" (Wheeler 20). In the prior text *JE*, the female character Jane experiences the same felling of Antoinette when she was imprisoned as a child by her uncle's wife in the red room (Bronte 23). As the room was deserted since the death of her uncle who, Jane felt terrified:

the secret of the red room - the spell which kept it so lonely in spite of its grandeur. Mr Reed had been dead nine years: it was in this chamber he breathed his last; here he lay in state; hence his coffin was borne by the undertaker's men; and, since that day, a sense of dreary consecration had guarded it from frequent intrusion...All looked colder and darker...and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still. (Bronte 27)

Being imprisoned in an abandoned room, the child Jane could not bear to be kept alone in a room where her uncle died. She started to remember his body lying in this room and to imagine that a spell haunted and possessed this room since his death.

It is worth noting that Rhys' allusion to this scene of gothic in her intertext

*WSS* is not done in an explicit way. Rather, it is integrated in a way that only the attentive reader who is familiar with the prior text *JE* can notice this intertextual dimension. Otherwise, he will skip it as a mere scene presented in her novel. What makes Rhys' integration and her text original is that before she integrates this borrowed scene of gothic in her intertext, she appropriates it in a way that she keeps only the marker of the strange room, the dead man and the colour red to help the reader to observe the intertextual relationship between the two texts. At this level, the reader occupies an important position in determining whether this scene can be examined as an intertextual dimension or not. It is up to his mental faculties that this intertextual dimension can be deduced. In addition to this, without the aforementioned markers, it will be a bit difficult for the reader to associate the two texts which means that the integration of this scene in the intertext is not a sign of reproduction of the prior text, but rather a sign of productivity for Rhys' intertext.

Another instance of this form appears through Rhys' allusion to a scene in the prior text *JE* and the reader recognizes it through the marker of the dream. In her intertext *WSS*, Rhys borrows the marker of the dream from the prior text and integrates it in an original way. This appears through her creole character Antoinette who dreams that she is leaving Coulibri at night toward the forest wearing a nice white dress that impeded her from walking. She sees that she was following a man at the same time holding her dress in order not to get stained by the mud. She was afraid of that man but she could not save herself from him. When they reached the forest and under dark trees, the man addresses her pointing to the place "'Here?' He turns and looks at me, his face black with hatred, and when I see this I begin to cry. He smiles slyly. 'Not here, not yet,' he says, and I follow him, weeping. Now I do not try to hold up my dress, it trails in the dirt, my beautiful dress" (Rhys 54-55). Afterwards, Antoinette finds herself in an

enclosed garden with strange trees. The place was too dark that she barely sees the steps leading upwards. She stumbled and she tried to get up by counting on a tree but the tree's jerks seemed to throw her away. Then, she heard a strange voice addressing her "Here, in here," and the tree no longer jerked (Rhys 54-55).

The reader's familiarity with the prior text *JE* makes him/her notice the intertextual marker of the dream in Rhys' intertext. This marker provokes his mind in a way that he/she starts to decode the intertext to uncover its intertextual dimensions that recall the prior text. In this latter, the English female character Jane sees a dream in which the Thornfield Hall was in ruin and nothing of it remained except the fragile wall. In this place, she saw owls and bats while she was carrying an unknown child with her. Despite of the child's weight that impeded her from walking, Jane could not leave him/her alone. Then, she hears a horse and sees Mr Rochester leaving her toward another country. She tries to follow him but she could not (Bronte 402).

Although Rhys' intertext *WSS* borrows the marker of the dream from the prior text *JE*, details associated to this latter are neither quoted directly nor reproduced. Rather, they are appropriated and transformed by the writer to fit her postcolonial counter-discourse, leaving only some intertextual clues that would help her reader to recognize the source text. As a result, Rhys' drawing upon Bronte's *JE* does not deny any sense of originality to her work as the intertextual dimension suggested by the marker of the dream cannot be noticed unless the reader pays close attention. Roland Barthes confirms that borrowing does not necessarily mean that the intertext is a deliberate conscious imitation of that prior text or it can be considered as a reproduction of it. Rather, it is an indication of productivity (39) for Rhys' intertext. This latter appropriates the gothic scene of the Thornfield that Jane transmitted in the prior text *JE* and transforms it in a way that serves to convey the anxieties of her colonized female

character Antoinette. The man whom Jane follows in the prior text is her lover Mr Rochester whose identity is not divulged in the intertext *WSS* through Antoinette's dream. However, the reader may deduce that the man who treats Antoinette in a sadist way in the dream is her English husband Mr Rochester who gets pleasure from maltreating her in reality.

Achour and Bekkat argue that integration by absorption is noticed once an earlier text is integrated implicitly and absorbed by the new text (qtd. in Reguig Mourou 32) and not pasted in it in such a way that would suggest the idea of imitation of an earlier text.

An instance of this form in Rhys' intertext *WSS* is reflected through Antoinette's third dream that recalls a real scene from the prior text *JE*. In this latter, the English character Jane returns to Thornfield and finds that Mr Rochester's mansion has been burned and only the ruins are left (Bronte 604). She learns from the servant that the calamity was caused by Mr Rochester's lunatic wife Bertha. The latter, escaped from her confinement by taking the keys from her guard Grace Poole when she lost consciousness due to wine. After escaping from the room, Bertha set fire to the house (Bronte 605-606). Once Mr Rochester discovered the disaster, he looked for his mad wife who was on the roof waving to them with her hand before she threw herself (Bronte 607).

The above mentioned scene is absorbed in Rhys' intertext in a way that makes her text an original one and not a mere imitation of its former. She has transformed what the prior text presented as a reality into a dream. The real scene of the prior text is integrated as a dream in which Rhys' narrator Antoinette dreamt that she seized the opportunity of seeing her guard Grace Poole sleeping and took the keys from her. She saw herself walking inside the house feeling that someone was following her and

laughing. This person was a "ghost of a woman who they say haunts this place." (Rhys 168). Roaming in the house, Antoinette suddenly found her Aunt Cora's room and entered it. Inside this room, she found many candles and knocked them down burning the place. When she tried to escape, she encountered the ghost woman again, but she could escape from her to the battlement (Rhys 169-170). There, many images that Antoinette encountered in her life were recollected in her mind. Then, she looked to the bottom in order to throw herself. She saw her black friend Tia laughing at her for not being able to jump. As a result to Tia's sarcasm, Antoinette threw herself and gets up from her dream (Rhys 171).

By transforming the scene that the prior text presents as a reality into a dream, Rhys challenges the prior text. She provides another version of truth about the colonized Antoinette who was accused for being inherently mad and for burning the house that might not be true. Through the integration of a scene from the prior text *JE*, Rhys produces a text with multiple meanings in which the prior text is not pasted in her intertext, but rather absorbed in a way that it has become part of it. In so doing, Rhys makes of her intertext "a new creation" that carries her signature as the creator of the work (Nolte and Jordan 4) and that exposes the reader to the other side of the story about the colonized.

In addition to the aforementioned modes of intertextuality, Achour and Bekkat provide another mode, namely integration by suggestion. This form of integration appears through the text's reference to a name, a title (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 32) or any simple reference that would provoke the reader's memory to go back to the prior text (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 81). It could be even a sentence or a name of a character. This means that characters are not independent as there is a relationship between literary characters of various authors (qtd.in Reguig Mouro 33).



An instance of this form in Rhys' intertext *WSS* is reflected through the name Grace Poole that suggests the colonial discourse *JE*. For the reader who is familiar with this prior text, this character's name generates "an intertextual echo" (Hutcheon 235) in his/her mind in a way that enables him/her to perceive and recall that prior text. In *JE*, Grace Poole is the name of the English servant who is assigned the task of guarding Mr Rochester's mad wife Bertha (Bronte 606). She is portrayed as a strange woman with an "enigmatical character" (Bronte 225) and who is always staying in separate room sewing without having contact with the rest inhabitants of the house. She is a compliant kind of a woman who accepts to be blamed by the housekeeper for something that she did not do. When Jane hears the strange noise and laughter of Bertha, the housekeeper tries to hide the truth of Mr Rochester's imprisoned wife by attributing this noise and laughter to the servant Grace Poole (Bronte 158-159). The latter, remains silent in front of the blame she receives because she was part of the colonizer's plan of keeping the bad treatment of the non-white woman Bertha as a secret. In fact, Grace Poole's submissive behaviour is done in return of a great amount of money promised by Mr Rochester and as she served Mr Rochester's objective well; he viewed her as a woman who is worth trusting "Grace has, on the whole, proved a good housekeeper" (Bronte 440).

In Rhys' intertext *WSS*, the integration of the character Grace Poole appears in the third part of the novel. In this part, she introduces the narrative and contributes through the conversation that she has with the creole character Antoinette (Bertha) to provide the missing piece in Antoinette's (Bertha) story. The latter, is portrayed as a mad woman in the prior text *JE*. In this latter, the reader is immediately introduced to the character of Bertha as a mad woman without any explanation for the reasons behind her madness. However, in the intertext *WSS*, Grace Poole recounts the day she has been

accepted as a servant in Mr Rochester's house when he came with his wife Antoinette (Bertha in the prior text) to England. She remembers the way the housekeeper tried to seduce her with money to accept to look after the imprisoned wife Antoinette (Bertha) and to remain silent over the matter as Mr Rochester demanded "*If Mrs Poole is satisfactory why not give her double, treble the money*" (Rhys 159). In the prior text *JE*, Grace Poole never speaks to Bertha. However, in the intertext *WSS*, through their conversation the reader learns how Antoinette (Bertha) was given a drink by a man that makes her sleep during their journey from the West Indies to England. When she got up, she found herself imprisoned in a room in a place that she did know. Due to this drink, she could not remember anything about their journey and she thought that they have lost their way (Rhys 162-163).

Being "the active co-creator of the text" (Hutcheon 232), the reader can deduce from the details provided through the conversation between Grace Poole and Antoinette that Antoinette is not inherently mad as the prior text *JE* portrays her. Rather, her deteriorated health is the result of the bad treatment she receives from her English husband and the drink that she was given. This latter, was meant to make her lose her consciousness in order not to protest on Mr Rochester's decision of taking her away from her land to England and of depriving her of her wealth.

In fact, Rhys' borrowing of this character's name and integrating it in her counter-discourse is not for the purpose of creating a copied version of an earlier character or of the prior text in itself. Rather, the way she integrates and makes use of this character serves to uncover the creativity in her intertext. Through her integration of the name Grace Poole, Rhys deconstructs the prior text, and then she reconstructs it in a way that makes truth about the colonized character Antoinette divulged through the English servant Grace Poole. This creativity is confirmed through the missing details

that this English servant highlights and that the prior text has transcended. Thus, Grace Poole's presence in the intertext contributes greatly in changing the reader's perception of what has been mentioned in the prior text *JE* about the colonized character Bertha (Antoinette in the intertext).

### **3.8.2 Postcolonial Intertextual Interfigural**

In addition to integration, Interfigural is another mode of intertextuality. It is concerned with the relationship between characters of different texts. This relationship appears through "a fictional character's...identification with, a character from another literary work" (Muller 102). Among the interfigural devices that could be identified in the analysis of the relationship between texts are names (Muller 102-103).

Being the activator of interfigural, the reader determines the character that may fit to this mode of intertextuality based on his background knowledge of the prior text *JE*. Instances of this mode of intertextuality can be traced through the character of Antoinette who identifies with the character of Bertha in the prior text. However, when Rhys passes the boundaries of the prior text and borrows the character of the West Indian woman Bertha, she follows what Muller calls an interfigural deviation (104). The latter, appears through the liberation of the character of Bertha from the prior text and her transformation before she is integrated in the intertext *WSS*. Interfigural through names could be expressed in different ways in which the character's name could be either identical to the name of the character in the prior text or changed (Muller 102-103). In the case of Rhys' intertext, the writer's originality appears through the changes that she applies to the name of the borrowed character in which she renames Bertha, Antoinette.

In fact, Rhys' interfigural deviation and originality is not limited only to the changes she applies to the name of the borrowed character but also through the

qualities she assigns to that character. Muller regards the character as a group of qualities tied together (102-103). In the prior text *JE*, Bertha is the name that the non-white female character receives in this text. She is identified as a lunatic with bestial features depriving her of her humanity as the narrator Jane describes her "I had to listen as well as watch: to listen for the movements of the wild beast or the fiend in yonder side den ... I never saw a face like it! It was a discoloured face - it was a savage face. I wish I could forget the roll of the red eyes and the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments!" (Bronte 301,404).

In the intertext *WS*, the borrowed character of Bertha undergoes transformations in which Rhys grants her another name "Antoinette" and identifies her with human features instead. In fact, the choice of the name Antoinette is not accidental, but rather done for a purpose. In the prior text, when the brother of Bertha Richard Mason suddenly appears, he mentions in front of all the audience in Mr Rochester's house that his sister's real name is Bertha Antoinetta Mason (Bronte 413). As her husband Mr Rochester insists on calling her Bertha, Rhys renames the borrowed character Bertha, Antoinette in her intertext to foreground that marginalized name.

Through her appropriation of the name and the bestial features that the prior text associated to this colonized character, Rhys places her own touch of creativity and originality on her intertext producing an independent work rather than a mere imitation of its predecessor. In her intertext, Rhys integrates the character of Bertha with the name of Antoinette and portrays her as a young, beautiful and independent girl who does not resemble Bertha in anything. Rather, she evolves from being lonely and sensitive towards the cold feeling of her English husband to a resistant woman. In the intertext *WSS*, Antoinette's English husband calls her Bertha in an attempt to deprive her of the freedom and the identity that Rhys created for her and to take her back to her

former position as a marginalized other "Goodnight, Bertha...Don't laugh like that , Bertha" (Rhys 103, 122). However, not like Bertha of the prior text, Antoinette expresses her resistance to the new identity imposed on her by her English husband "My name is not Bertha; why do you call me Bertha?" (Rhys 122).

In fact, the interfigural deviations that Rhys applies to the character of Bertha (Antoinette in her intertext) are done in an original way. The reader who is not familiar with the prior text *JE* will not notice the intertextual connection between the two female characters and the two texts. It is only through the mentioning of the name Bertha in her intertext that the reader starts to generate intertextual dimensions with the prior text *JE*.

Another character that seems to fit to this mode of intertextuality is the English character Mr Rochester whose name appears in the prior text *JE*. Muller argues that interfigural in names can also be identified through the omission of the character's name once it is borrowed from a prior text and integrated in the intertext (106-107). In Rhys' *WSS*, the borrowed character Mr Rochester is integrated as a nameless character in order to deprive him of his identity. In fact, Rhys' creativity and originality of her intertext appears through her ability to portray this nameless character in a way that helps the reader to associate him to Mr Rochester of the prior text. In *JE*, Mr Rochester is portrayed as a victimized English man who has been deceived by getting married with a West Indian mad woman (Bronte 415). However, in the intertext, Rhys deprives Mr Rochester of his role as a victim who is excused for the imprisonment of his West Indian wife Bertha and portrays him as a trickster who is skilful in manipulating things. She also uncovers his bad treatment and his coldness with his wife whom he married for the sole reason which is her wealth (Rhys 63).

Through the character of Mr Rochester, Rhys' establishes an implicit intertextual relationship with the prior text *JE*. She does not quote the character of Mr Rochester, but rather transforms him in a way that serves her postcolonial intertext. In so doing, Rhys highlights the inventiveness in her intertext and changes the reader's perception of the colonial figure Mr Rochester from being a victim to being guilty.

In addition to the aforementioned characters, Mr Mason is another character who seems to fit to this mode of intertextuality. Once the writer borrows a character from another text, the name of the borrowed character could be either identical to the name used in the prior text or changed (Muller 102-103). In the case of Mr Mason, his name in the intertext *WSS* is identical to the name used in the prior text *JE*. However, Rhys' originality lies in the way she integrates this character in her intertext. She does not quote him, but rather transform him in a way that nothing remains of this borrowed character except his name.

In the prior text *JE*, the name Mr Mason appears for the first time when Mr Rochester tries to explain to his beloved girl Jane that his marriage to Bertha Mason was his father's plan. He tries to convince her to stay with him after she discovered the presence of another woman in his life who was imprisoned in a separate room:

Well, Jane, being so, it was his resolution to keep the property together; he could not bear the idea of dividing his estate and leaving me a fair portion: all, he resolved, should go to my brother, Rowland. Yet as little could he endure that a son of his should be a poor man. I must be provided for by a wealthy marriage. He sought me a partner betimes. Mr Mason, a West India planter and merchant, was his old acquaintance. He was certain his possessions were real and vast: he made enquiries. Mr Mason, he found, had a son and daughter; and he learned from him that

he could and would give the latter a fortune of thirty thousand pounds: that sufficed... My father said nothing about her money; but he told me Miss Mason was the boast of Spanish Town for her beauty: and this was no lie. (Bronte 433)

In this text, Mr Mason is introduced as the father of Bertha, a West Indian merchant and a very wealthy man. As Mr Rochester's father knew of this man's properties and of the thirty thousand pounds he will leave to his daughter, he starts to arrange for a marriage between his son and Mr Mason's daughter Bertha. In this way, he will secure the position of his family and his son as money matters in their Victorian society.

In her intertext *WSS*, Rhys transforms the character of Mr Mason before she integrates him in her novel. While in *JE* Mr Mason is portrayed as a planter and a merchant from the West Indies who has a son (Richard) and a daughter (Bertha) (Bronte 433), in Rhys' intertext he is introduced as an English man who gets married to a West Indian woman Annette in order to obtain her properties. He also has only a son from his first marriage called Richard and a step-daughter called Antoinette who is introduced as Bertha in the prior text *JE* (Rhys 25, 29).

Through this mode of intertextuality, Rhys does not use the material from the prior text as it is but rather transforms it in such a way that makes it acquire a different meaning in her intertext. Thus, in her intertext *WSS*, the prior text *JE* "disappears after having been consumed" (Morey 85) and a new text with different characters, different time and place are produced instead.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

It was the main concern of this chapter to discuss the way Rhys' *WSS* rewrites Bronte's colonial discourse *JE* in the light of the rewriting approach, Bhabha's theory and Kristeva's intertextuality. Based on the analysis that has been conducted above, it is

possible to conclude that Rhys' novel is a counter-discourse to Bronte's work and not an extended discussion of it. In this counter-discourse, she adopts a number of textual strategies that abrogate and appropriate the conventions of Standard English and make it convenient to the postcolonial world of her characters. As a result to this abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language, Rhys comes up with a new language ("Caribbean english") that incorporates a specific "linguistic code" (Ashcroft et. al, *the Empire Writes Back* 8) and carries the cultural identity of the colonized in the West Indies.

In her rewriting of the colonial discourse, Rhys sheds light on the other side of the story regarding the colonized people's history and world in order to confirm that what has been mentioned in the colonial discourse cannot be considered as absolute truth. On the contrary, it remains a one-sided story about the colonized people's experience with colonialism in the West Indies. This side of the story (truth) is conveyed through the multiple meanings that her text transmits through her multiple narrators. In so doing, Rhys contributes in destabilizing the western genre of the novel *JE* that keeps the suffering and marginalization of West Indian people unknown to the public (reader) and sheds light instead on the glorious deeds of British colonizer in the non-western world.

Through her rewriting of Bronte's *JE*, Rhys' counter-discourse *WSS* challenges also the colonial discourse's basic assumptions of the fixity and purity of its race and its culture through Bhabha's mimicry and hybridity. In *WSS*, Rhys adapts the colonial strategy of mimicry and turns it into a source of empowerment for the colonized people to express their resistance to the colonial discourse. She redirects the gaze from the colonized as "other" who ought to be civilized into the colonizer as "other" through the distorted images that the colonized reflects once he mimics his colonizer. It is at this



level that Rhys uncovers the ambivalence of the colonial discourse, interrogates its so-called civilizing mission and proves its falsity. This ambivalence is embodied in the colonizer's attempt to achieve difference (superior/inferior) and sameness (civilized/civilized) at the same time. Thus, through her counter-discourse, Rhys sends a message that: there is nothing as inherent superiority for the colonizer or inherent inferiority for the colonized and that these binaries are nothing but the colonizer's creation.

In addition to this, Rhys' counter-discourse challenges the claim of racial purity and cultural purity provided in the colonial discourse *JE*. Through the racially hybrid characters of Antoinette, Annette, Daniel, Amélié, Rhys subverts the colonizer's claim of not getting mixed with the colonized because of the superiority of its race and culture and confirms that the mixed-ness between the colonized and the colonizer's worlds (cultures) is inevitable. Such mixed-ness refutes the superiority of the colonizer's culture and places it in equal status with the culture of the colonized.

Although Rhys' novel reveals many intertextual dimensions with the colonial discourse *JE*, her novel "exists in its own right, quite independent of *Jane Eyre*" (Wyndham 11). In fact, being influenced by Bronte's colonial discourse does not deny sense of originality to Rhys' work as she does not reproduce or quote the colonial discourse, but rather, she borrows scenes and characters and transforms them in a way that reveals her signature and her inventiveness.

The next chapter will discuss the levels of convergence and divergence in Naipaul's *BR* and Rhys' *WSS* in relation to their rewriting of the colonial narratives. It will spot light on the way each writer has tamed the colonial language and genre to their postcolonial context (novel) to highlight colonized culture and reconstruct colonized history. The chapter will also examine the divergence and convergence in the two selected novels regarding their interrogation of colonial narratives' basic assumption

through Homi K. Bhabha's mimicry and hybridity. It will also discuss the novels' originality through Kristeva's intertextuality to uncover the levels of influence of the colonial narratives in each novel.

## Chapter Four

### Themes of Convergence and Divergence in V.S Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*

*Originality lies more in what a writer makes of his or her borrowed material—the individual touch that an author can put on his or her inherited forms.*

Ode Ogede, *Intertextuality in Contemporary Literature, Looking Inward*

*I knew that newspapers in small colonial places told a special kind of truth.*

Naipaul, *A Bend in the River*

*He tells lies about us and he is sure that you will believe him and not listen to the other side... There is always the other side, always.*

Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

#### 4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to discuss in what way does Rhys' *WSS* converge and/or diverge, in its rewriting of the colonial narrative, with Naipaul's *BR*. The chapter sheds light on the different sites of overlapping and departure between Naipaul and Rhys' novels regarding the textual strategies of resistance to the colonial narratives. It spots light on how colonial language and western genre (novel) are appropriated and transformed to become adequate to the context of their postcolonial novels. The chapter also looks into how Naipaul's novel converges/diverges from Rhys' novel in its reconstruction of the colonized people's history and in its interrogation of the colonial discourses' basic assumptions to come up with another version of truth about the colonized people's experience with colonialism.

The chapter also examines the convergence and the divergence between the novels under study through Homi K. Bhabha's notions of mimicry and hybridity. It

explores their relevance in highlighting the other side of the story (truth) about the colonized people's experience in Africa and the West Indies and how this truth is presented by each writer through his/her work.

The chapter also sheds light on the theme of originality in the two selected novels which is suggested by their intertextual nature. It discusses the extent to which is the influence of the colonial narrative on the postcolonial novels of Naipaul and Rhys in order to lay bare the levels of convergence and divergence between the two novels.

#### **4.2 Counter Discursive Elements in V.S Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*: The Indigenization of the Colonial Language and the English Novel**

Ngugi Wa Thiongo'o argues that language has always occupied a central position in the struggle that characterized the relationship between conflicting forces (colonizer/colonized). For the colonizer, it was a powerful weapon in its manipulation of the colonized people's minds, the marginalization of their native culture and the imposition of colonial culture instead. As a result to this linguistic colonialism, postcolonial writers got recourse to language as the suitable means to define themselves in relation not only to their social world but also to the universe as a whole. However, before borrowing the colonizer's language, postcolonial writers occupied themselves by the best way to make colonial language carry the weight of their colonized experience (4, 7).

This interest in the transformation and appropriation of the colonial language is reflected through the novels of Naipaul and Rhys and it is manifested through different instances. In their rewriting of the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*, Naipaul and Rhys converge in their use of certain textual strategies to express their resistance to the colonial narrative while they diverge in some others.

In his counter-discourse *BR*, Naipaul's abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language is evident through various examples. In order to liberate the natives' culture in Africa from the restrictions of the colonial discourse, Naipaul follows a "linguistic deviation" (Teke 72) in which he manipulates the basic rules of Standard English and appropriates them to his postcolonial context. Instances of this case appear through his use of sentences without subject as in: "Hot and heavy." "Remember that." (Naipaul 23-24); "Just like that." "Or take it seriously." (Naipaul 32); "That was bad." (Naipaul 69); "But no." (Naipaul 132). Through these sentences, the colonial language is abrogated and appropriated in a way that the subject cannot be identified and this stands in opposition to the rules of English grammar. In addition to these examples, Naipaul integrates also one word sentence that departs from the common one-word sentence of Standard English. This appears through the following examples: "Two." (Naipaul 24); "Still." "So." (Naipaul 236). Through these instances of linguistic deviation, Naipaul deprives colonial language of its power and position as a superior language and transforms it into a new language that can convey the culture of the natives in Africa rather than colonial culture.

On the other side, in her counter-discourse *WSS*, Rhys' abrogation and appropriation of the colonial language diverge from Naipaul's in a variety of ways. While Naipaul's focus was much more on sentences, Rhys' manipulation of the conventions of Standard English is noticed at the level of verbs. This appears through the dropping of the "s" of the simple present with third person pronouns. Instances of this case in the novel include: "that's not what she hear...she hear all we poor like beggar...when it rain... Old Mr Luttrell spit in their face if he see how they look at you" (Rhys 22-23); "In the end he come to find out what you do...and if he see you fat and happy he want you back...Jo-jo my son coming to see me, if he catch you crying, he tell

everybody" (Rhys 100, 102). Contrary to Naipaul's novel, Rhys' novel marks also the unusual use of the auxiliary "to have" and "to do" with the third person pronouns in order to indigenize the colonial language and make it convenient to her postcolonial discourse. Instances of this case in the novel include: "she have eyes like Zombie...she have no money and she have no friends" (Rhys 45, 87); "He don't know how old he is, he don't think about it... she don't care for money" (Rhys 62, 138).

Through her counter discourse, Rhys manifests also other instances of the manipulation of the colonial language. This appears through the new words that she generates out of the transformation of the English language. In her novel, verbs are used like adjectives. She uses the verbs "provoke and satisfy" like adjectives instead of "satisfied and provoked" as it appears through the following example: "Look don't provoke me more than I provoke already...it's she won't be satisfy" (Rhys 136,143). In so doing, Rhys manages to transform the colonial language and to produce instead a "Caribbean english" that carries the natives' cultural identity as colonial language proved its ineffectiveness.

It is worth noting that, in his postcolonial novel, Naipaul makes unusual use of upper case letters to take the colonial language away from the centre. In order to highlight the thoughts of his postcolonial character Salim and his reaction toward the situation of Africa, Naipaul capitalizes the first letter after each colon. Instances of this case include: "I thought: That is the sound of war" (Naipaul 69); "I thought: This is too stupid" (Naipaul 70); "Or: This is 1963" (Naipaul 65); "I thought: Nothing stands still" (Naipaul 107). Naipaul's deviation from the conventions of Standard English lies in the abnormal use of capitalization. The examples discussed above deviate and do not fall under the usual cases of capital letter in Standard English.

In her novel, Rhys also makes unusual use of capitalization but for a

different purpose. Each part of her postcolonial narrative opens with a sentence written in capital letters in a way that draws the reader's attention and stands against the rules of English grammar. Instances of this case appear in part one "THEY SAY WHEN TROUBLE comes close ranks, and so the white people did" (Rhys 15); in part two "SO IT WAS ALL OVER, the advance and retreat, the doubts and hesitations" (Rhys 59) and even in part three "THEY NEW THAT HE WAS in Jamaica when his father and his brother died" (Rhys 159). By introducing each part with capital letters, Rhys seeks to make her reader aware that in each part there is a different narrator and other interesting events. This recurrence of capitalization confirms that the unusual use of capitalization is not accidental. Rather, it is meant to abrogate and appropriate the colonial language and make it convenient to the West Indian context of her novel.

In addition to this and contrary to Naipaul, Rhys' counter discourse uncovers the unusual use of italic type within the normal type of the novel. This appears in part two in which long paragraphs covering more than one page are written in italic. Instances of this are reflected through Mr Rochester's letter to his English father in which he divulges the accomplishment of their malicious plan in the West Indies (Rhys 68-69). Through italic, Rhys has abrogated and appropriated the colonial language and made it suitable for highlighting the hypocrisy and the cunning nature of the white man.

In his counter-discourse, Naipaul makes colonial language bear the weight of the natives' dialect by incorporating marks from their dialect in English sentences. In their local language, the natives in Africa use abbreviated titles and names when they speak. Instances of this are reflected through the name "Zabeth" which is abbreviated as "Beth" and the title "Mister" which is abbreviated as "Mis'". Speaking to the African woman Zabeth, Salim said: "One day, Beth, somebody will snatch your case". She reacts: "The day that happens, Mis' Salim, I will know the time has come to stay home"

(Naipaul 6). Through the incorporation of the colonial language with the natives' dialect, Naipaul indigenizes the former to come up with a new language that consists of different grammar and lexis. Without this transformation of the colonial language, it would have been impossible to convey the experience of the colonized people as Chinua Achebe opines "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be new English, still in full communication with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surrounding" (435).

While Naipaul integrates marks from the natives' dialect, Rhys appropriates the colonial language and uses it as "an ethnographic tool" (Ashcroft et al. *Post-colonial Studies Reader* 284). In her novel, she incorporates songs to highlight the oral tradition of the colonized. Through those songs, Rhys spots light on the natives' history and their suffering due to slavery. An instance of this is conveyed by Antoinette who asks her aunt to sing for her "*Before I was set free*" (Rhys 43). Through native songs, Rhys appropriates the colonial language and makes it feed upon the native's oral tradition and culture (Thiong'o 7). In so doing, she manages to master the colonial language so that it would no more master her (La Rocque xxvi).

Although Naipaul and Rhys diverge in the use of certain textual strategies of resistance, they converge in the incorporation of some others. Among the strategies that create such convergence are code switching, untranslated words and glossing. The latter are manifested in their novels in different ways in order to serve the postcolonial context of each novel.

In his counter-discourse, Naipaul mixes colonial language with the natives' local patois to indigenize it and make it suitable to convey the culture of the colonized. Instances of code-switching in the novel are reflected by Mahesh who addresses Salim in English, and then he switches codes to local patois when he speaks to Ildephonse



"I'm sending the boy down with the tennis shoes for you. Right, Salim!...*Phonse!*  
*Aoutchikong pour mis' Salim!*" (Naipaul 92). To highlight this shift, English is written in normal type while local patois is introduced in italic.

Another instance of this strategy is introduced through the speech of the African president. In this speech, he switches from French to English and through this shift the colonial language is abrogated and appropriated "*Citoyens-Citoyennes*...Money can talk, but he keep it quiet. Monkey know that if he talk in front of man, man going to catch him and beat him... *Citoyens! Citoyennes!*" (Naipaul 207-208). In this speech, English is no longer an imperial language but rather a postcolonial language. Once it is placed in the postcolonial context, colonial language becomes indigenized and this appears through the dropping of the "s" in verbs. The writer's resort to another language uncovers the insufficiency that exists in colonial language and which is compensated through the shift to French.

While Naipaul used code-switching in the African context to produce a new language and express the colonized experience, Rhys also uses this strategy in the context of the West Indies. Instances of this in the novel include the words of Antoinette's mother "*Qui est la? Qui est ta? Don't touch me. I'll kill you if you touch me. Coward. Hypocrite. I'll kill you*" (Rhys 42). In this example, the shift from local patois to English serves to deprive the colonial language of its prestigious position. Another instance is transmitted by Antoinette who tries to make her English husband familiar with her native culture "Ah yes, fireflies in Jamaica, here they call a firefly *La belle*" (Rhys 73). On another occasion, reacting to her husband's admiration of her wedding dress, Antoinette clarifies that the natives "call this fashion *à la Joséphine*" (Rhys 72). In so doing, Antoinette uncovers the cultural distinctiveness of the colonized from the centre.

In an attempt to indigenize the colonial language and liberate the colonized people's culture, Naipaul and Rhys use also untranslated words. In Naipaul's novel, this strategy is manifested through the words of Metty's wife Kareisha. She asks Salim in local patois "*Metty-ki là?*" (Naipaul 105). The effectiveness of this strategy lies in not providing English translation for the reader and leaving him/her deduces the meaning through the context. Another instance is reflected through the word "toto", a word uttered by Salim when he blamed Metty for leaving his wife Kareisha "How can you leave her?...Don't you think it's disgusting to have a little African child running about in somebody's yard, with its *toto* swinging from side to side? Aren't you ashamed, boy like you?" (Naipaul 106). The reader who is not familiar with African culture, finds himself obliged to search outside the text to find that the word "toto" refers to the male or female's privet parts. Through this strategy, the cultural uniqueness of the oppressed is foregrounded.

In Rhys' novel, this strategy is reflected through the Spanish word "sangoree". It was uttered by Antoinette's aunt when she threatened blacks of God's punishment after they burned their house "And never a drop of Sangoree to cool our burning tongue" (Rhys 40). No direct translation is provided for this word but the reader can deduce its meaning through the context which means a refreshing drink. Another instance in the novel is the word "ajoupa" which means in Caribbean culture a "thatched shelter" (Rhys 80). In addition to this, when the black servant Christophine exercises her obeah, she utters the word "soucriant". Again, the lack of familiarity with Caribbean folklore makes the reader extend his knowledge beyond the text to discover that the word refers to abnormal woman who sucks the blood of human beings (Anatol IX). In fact, the absence of immediate English translation in the novel creates a metonymic gap between

the natives' culture and colonial culture. Through this gap, the West Indian culture is highlighted.

In order to free the culture of the colonized from colonial control and make the reader familiar with it, Rhys and Naipaul orient also toward the use of glossing. Although an immediate English translation is provided for some cultural words, the latter are not devalued. On the contrary, they are foregrounded at the expense of the English word that serves only as a referent to it. In Naipaul's novel, this strategy is exposed through the word "popo" that appears in the speech of Metty's wife. In African culture, the reader understands that the word means "a baby" due to the immediate translation provided. Another instance is embodied in the name of "Metty". A name derived from the French word "*metis*" to refer to "someone of mixed race" (Naipaul 33). In addition to this, Naipaul uses also the word "boucané" to shed light on African tradition. When practising their trade, African women used to cook "boucané", a kind of African food "smoked in the way of the country" (Naipaul 7).

Along the same line of Naipaul, Rhys makes use of glossing to highlight her native culture. This strategy appears through the word "da", a Caribbean word said by Antoinette to refer to her "nurse" Christophine (Rhys 65). By preferring to use the Caribbean word first instead of the English one, Rhys indicates that the colonial language cannot transmit her culture. Another instance is conveyed through Christophine's word "bull's blood" (Rhys 77). In Caribbean culture, this word is used to refer to "coffee" (Rhys 77). Through the writer's translation of the word, the reader acquires new knowledge about this culture. In addition to this, Rhys uses also the Caribbean word "*Morn*" to refer to "a mountain". She explains that the natives prefer the Caribbean word instead of the English one because they believe that the latter is "an ugly word"(Rhys 151).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o uncovers the way the colonizer manipulated the minds of the colonized through the literature that was taught in colonial schools. As a result to this education, colonized people grew to define and look at the world around them according to "the European experience of history" (94). In order to liberate the minds of their people and transmit their world, Naipaul and Rhys wrote in a literary genre that suits such experience. Being aware that the truth regarding the colonized people's experience cannot be transmitted through the appropriation of the colonial language only, Naipaul and Rhys manipulated even the official genre that served colonial narratives. Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in the destabilization of the European genre in their counter-discourse, they diverge in their writing style. Each writer has adopted a writing style that goes hand in hand with the postcolonial context of his novel and that can contribute in the transmission of the colonized experience there.

In his counter-discourse *BR*, Naipaul adopts a unique writing style. In order to take the genre of the novel away from the confinements of the colonial narrative and its imperial interests, Naipaul privileges the margin in his novel. He grants the narrative to Salim to be a representative voice for the colonized in Africa. Through Salim, Naipaul creates a space through which he can interrogate the colonial narrative and provide another story regarding the colonized experience in Africa. While the colonial narrative is told by a single narrator who manipulates truth, Naipaul's postcolonial narrative is characterized by multiple narrators. This appears through the shift from the narrator Salim to other characters to express their voice. In so doing, Naipaul exposes his reader to multiple meanings (stories) about the world of the colonized. In addition to this, Naipaul appropriates also the setting of his novel in which he reverses the direction of the journey and makes it meet the requirements of the postcolonial context of his novel.

Contrary to Naipaul, Rhys gives a feminist dimension to her novel in which she privileges the margin by granting the narrative voice to the female character Antoinette. The borrowed genre of the English feminist novel is appropriated in which she relocates the events to the West Indies after the emancipation of slaves (Rhys 15). Similarly to Naipaul, Rhys' novel appropriates the conventional structure of the English novel by adopting a multiple narrative embodied in the shift from the narrator Antoinette to the nameless narrator then back to Antoinette. Through this multiplicity, the other side of the colonized story (truth) is exposed.

Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in the incoherence of their texts, they diverge in the way this incoherence is presented. In his novel, Naipaul uses short and sometimes fragmented paragraphs to highlight the disorder and destruction that characterizes Africa after independence. This disorder is reflected also through the illogical sequence of events in the novel. While the reader is following the narrative of a certain character, the logical sequence of this narrative is suddenly broken without preparing the reader for this shift.

In Rhys' novel, the text's incoherence is generated by the interior monologue of the characters. Rhys' innovation lies in the importance she gives to the inner world of her characters. In so doing, she opens her character's psychological makeup to the reader and gives him/her the opportunity to get access to the character's thoughts, feelings and internal conflicts. Most importantly, through this interior monologue, the reader discovers the truth regarding the colonized experience and their world. Due to the interior monologue of the characters, different stories intersect resulting in the illogical sequence of events and in the text's incoherence.

### **4.3 Counter Representation of the Colonized: An Interrogation of Colonial Dichotomies and Stereotypes**

Although Naipaul and Rhys diverge at certain levels in their novels, they reconverge in countering the representation of the colonized as it is manifested through the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*. In their counter-discourses, Naipaul and Rhys challenge the colonial claim that identity is something fixed in order to maintain its established dichotomy (superior and inferior) and justify its falsification of truth.

In his counter discourse *BR*, Naipaul breaks the stereotypes of a cannibalistic, uncivilized and nameless African established in the colonial narrative *HD* by granting names, voice and different traits to his colonized characters. In so doing, he changes the perception of the colonized as other (stereotype) and breaks the dichotomy of civilized/uncivilized which is established out of prejudice rather than truth. The once marginalized African is now able to speak and to tell his/her own story about his/her experience in Africa. Instances of this include the female character Zabeth who counters the stereotype of the African nameless woman in the colonial discourse. Naipaul portrays Zabeth as a strong independent woman whose people count on her for their living. She is depicted as a business woman and a model of an African who undergoes hardships and danger without fear (Naipaul 6, 9).

Naipaul sheds light on both the negative and the positive sides of his characters. Although Zabeth is illiterate, she has a conscious personality embodied in her desire to educate her son and provide a better life for him (Naipaul 35-36). Through her capacity of deep analysis, Zabeth could transmit the corrupted nature of the new political rulers in post independent Africa (Naipaul 168). It is through her analysis of the president's photograph and the big space that his photo occupied that this truth is reflected. In addition to Zabeth, Naipaul gives voice and space also to Ferdinand. He

portrays him as a model of a successful African who challenges the hard conditions of the town and evolves from nothing to become educated and obtain an administrative post. The narrator Salim expresses his admiration for Ferdinand's progress and his strong character "from a forest village to the polytechnic to an administrative cadetship...his passage hadn't always been easy; during the rebellion he had wanted to run away and hide. But he had since learned to accept all sides of himself and all sides of the country; he rejected nothing" (Naipaul 158). Through the image of Ferdinand, Naipaul interrogates the validity of colonial representation of the colonized and uncovers their falsity.

Naipaul follows another strategy in countering colonial stereotypes and dichotomies in which he places the colonizer (white woman) and the colonized (African woman) in equal status and thus proves that identity is never fixed. Just like some African women are known for being corrupted and having sexual affairs with men (Naipaul 39), the white woman Yvette engages in the same affair with Salim (Naipaul 220). Accordingly, through the corrupted image of Yvette, the colonial dichotomy is reversed in which the colonizer becomes "other".

In addition to the aforementioned characters, Naipaul gives voice and space also to the half-African character Metty. When they were on the East coast of Africa, the narrator Salim used to look at Metty as an unreliable person. However, when they moved to the centre of Africa and worked together, he changed his perception of him. He realised that Metty is a handsome and a distinctive person (Naipaul 30, 32) who is willing to improve and assert himself (Naipaul 33- 34). Through the change that appears in the narrator's perception of Metty, Naipaul challenges the colonial claim that identity is something fixed and uncover that it is rather in change.

In the same vein with Naipaul, Rhys challenges colonial stereotypes and

dichotomies through the voice and the traits that she grants to the colonized characters in her counter-discourse. However, she diverges from Naipaul in challenging the colonial narrative through a female voice while Naipaul challenges it through a male voice. In her novel, Rhys liberates the female character of Bertha from the limitations (stereotypes) imposed on her in the colonial discourse and gives her a position of empowerment in her novel. This appears through the new name she assigns to her and through the space she devotes to her in the novel. The character of Antoinette counters the character of Bertha in the colonial narrative in which Rhys empties Bertha from the bestial features that the colonial narrative associates to her as a fixed identity (truth). Instead, she portrays her (Antoinette) as a rebellious and beautiful West Indian girl who is now able to speak and tell the other side of her story (truth).

In fact, through her portrayal of Antoinette, Rhys does not only provide a counter representation of the colonized Bertha, but also transmits the nature of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized through Antoinette's marriage with the English man Mr Rochester. The latter, is portrayed as a cruel person with pragmatic and greedy objectives who seeks to improve his status in society out of his marriage with Antoinette (Rhys 63-64). Through this image, Rhys confirms that Mr Rochester's superiority as a white man is not hereditary but rather a mere creation of the colonizer. In fact, the image of Mr Rochester in her novel counters the one provided in the colonial discourse as a wealthy person who belongs to a superior race (Bronte 229). This serves to break the dichotomy of superior colonizer and inferior colonized.

Differently from Naipaul, Rhys employs a strategy of making the colonizer divulge truth through the English character of Mr Rochester. Although Mr Rochester was deprived at the beginning of the novel of his name, Rhys gives him voice in her novel. However, through this narrative voice, she does not give him power and



dominance. On the contrary, she makes him divulge the true nature of the colonizer who hates the natives and looks at them with a racist eye. This attitude is manifested through the overgeneralisations he makes about the natives in order to keep a gap between him and them (Rhys 59). It is by making the colonizer speak in her novel that Rhys counters the misrepresentations of the colonized in the colonial discourse and denounces them as nothings but a falsehood.

Once colonial stereotypes are reflected through the colonial figure Mr Rochester, Rhys counters them through the image of the Black servant Baptiste. The latter is portrayed as a civilized non-savage native who can speak his colonizer's language in a good way (Rhys 65). The black servant Christophine is another instance of a native who is able to speak English and French. Through those characters, Rhys questions the truthfulness of those repeated images in the colonial narrative *JE* and how they contributed in shaking its validity.

Through the representation of Antoinette and her voice, the reader's perception of the story and the stereotypes provided in the colonial discourse changes. Antoinette manages to uncover the way her English husband mistreats her in order to maintain a distance between them (Rhys 115), a distance that would guarantee the binary opposition created by the colonizer of never being equal. He refuses to treat her as his partner in order not to be considered as his equal. In this way, Rhys uncovers the truth regarding the colonial claim of being hereditary superior to other races and confirms the invalidity of its claim.

It is worth mentioning that Antoinette's narrative voice serves to uncover the missing piece in the story of the silenced colonized character Bertha in colonial narrative. Antoinette challenges Mr Rochester's claim that her family members are known for being mad and tricksters. She insists on him to hear her story as he did with

her half-brother Daniel who instilled those lies in his mind (Rhys 116-117). In so doing, Antoinette sends a message to her colonizer Mr Rochester that what he heard is just one-sided story of her family. Accordingly, the same thing can be applied to the story of Bertha who has been denied voice in the colonial narrative and whose misrepresentation cannot be taken for granted. Rather, it is only a one-sided portrayal of Bertha who was not given the chance to speak and defend herself against the accusations that were directed to her.

In addition to the aforementioned characters, Rhys also counters colonial stereotypes through the voice and space she gives to other female characters. This includes Antoinette's creole mother Annette. Through her voice, Annette corrects the stereotypes of being hereditary mad and lays bare the true reasons behind her mental breakdown. She explains how the loss of her son, her family's house and their wealth has affected her psyche (Rhys 16, 42). Besides to Annette, Christophine is portrayed as a strong woman who looks at the colonizer Mr Rochester with sharp eyes and confronts him with sharp words. Christophine breaks the stereotypes of a silent weak colonized and uncovers through her voice how Antoinette's accusation for being mad is the outcome of Mr Rochester's malicious plan with the doctor (Rhys 145). It is through Christophine's voice that another piece in the story of Antoinette is exposed (truth).

#### **4.4 The History of the Colonized as it Should Be Narrated: The Restoration of the Natives' Lost History**

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o argues that imperialism and colonial narratives have distorted the history of colonized people in which they have "turned reality upside down: the abnormal is viewed as normal and the normal is viewed as abnormal" (28). This distortion of truth was carried out through colonial language that was imposed on the colonized. As a result, the colonized was "made to see the world and where he

stands in it as seen and defined by or reflected in the culture of the language of imposition" (17). Truth was thus defined and shaped according to the colonizer's own parameters and objectives in which colonial domination of other lands was introduced as a glorious and a noble mission.

As a reaction to this manipulation of colonized history (truth) in the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*, Naipaul and Rhys devoted space for the rewriting of colonial history from the lens of the colonized. Once they have made a suitable vehicle (language) for the transmission of the postcolonial experience in their novels, Naipaul and Rhys used that language to challenge colonial narratives and recover the colonized's lost history. Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in the rewriting of colonized history, they diverge in the way they reconstruct that history. This divergence is generated by the specificity of each novel and the postcolonial world it transmits.

In his counter discourse *BR*, Naipaul uncovers the way the colonial narrative and imperialism manipulated the minds of native children in order to make them grow with the belief in its documents and in what they convey as the truth. His narrator Salim is among those colonized children who lived with the idea that all of what he knows about his native history is from books provided by Europeans. What reinforced this ideal image of Europe in his mind were the details mentioned in those books and the absence of books written by colonized people. To make its documents of history valid in the eyes of the colonized, the colonizer followed as strategy of praising the deeds of other races by including instances of famous Arab and Indian figures in its books. As a result to this manipulation of colonized people's minds, Salim developed an innocent impression about Europe as the creator of his history, an impression that did not last for long as he starts to question it afterwards (Naipaul 12), an interrogation that enabled him to begin a new page in the rewriting of colonized history.

This mental control of colonized children, which was highlighted by Naipaul, is further explained by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o who asserts that the worst side of colonialism is:

When the colonial child was exposed to images of his world as mirrored in the written languages of his colonizer. Where his own native languages were associated in his impressionable mind with low status, humiliation, corporal punishment, slow-footed intelligence...and barbarism this was reinforced by the world he met in the works of such geniuses of racism as Rider Haggard or a Nicholas Monsarrat. (18)

Through its colonial books and documents, the colonizer manipulated truth in which colonized languages and history were negatively introduced. Being exposed to colonial documents only, colonized children were confronted with images of inferiority regarding their native languages and history that made them grow to believe in the truthfulness of those images.

Through the incorporation of a European historian as a character in his counter discourse, Naipaul creates a powerful site through which he could question the validity of colonial history and divulge more truth. Raymond is the name of this historian, a white man who is deeply interested in African history and who has the intention to write a book about it. Salim thought that this man has deep knowledge regarding African history. However, he then realised that the source of his information were quotes from European archive and letters, a source in which truth had already been falsified. Discovering that Raymond has no true knowledge of Colonized history, Salim starts to cast doubt over his writings. What strengthens this fact is that Raymond does not provide reasons for the information he mentions because he never looked for it (Naipaul 182). He writes about events that happened in Africa without ever visiting the place

where these events took place or asking the people who went through them (Naipaul 18) which makes his writing invalid and the truth he conveys questionable.

Similarly to Naipaul, in her counter discourse *WSS*, Rhys interrogates the colonial narrative's manipulation of colonized history in the West Indies. Through her novel, she reconstructs colonial history reflected through the dominant discourse *JR* to inscribe her marginalized native history in which the exploitations and the sufferings of the colonized are divulged. While Naipaul's narrator Salim uncovers "the psychological violence" (Thiong'o 9) that colonialism exercised on colonized children in Africa, Rhys' female character Antoinette spots light on the issue of slavery in the West Indies.

At the beginning of the novel, Antoinette alludes to the emancipation act that has granted slaves their freedom but did not end their exploitation by whites. During colonialism, whites accumulated their wealth from the exploitation and the enslavement of blacks (Rhys 15). This exploitation exceeded to the use of black women as presents to be granted to their wives. The black servant Christophine is a victim of colonial strategies as she was granted as a gift to Antoinette's mother by her English husband in order to please her (Rhys 19). However, after the emancipation act was passed, whites lost their only source of wealth (Rhys 15) and thus their social position was threatened.

Through her narrative, Rhys reveals the colonial lie behind the emancipation act. Although the act was meant to put an end to slavery in the West Indies and free blacks, it did not bring anything new in the lives of former slaves. The conditions of blacks remained the same and no justice was applied in the society as the act promised. On the contrary, the former slave holders were replaced by other white men who proved to be worse than their predecessors (Rhys 24). Through the emancipation act, Rhys uncovers the way the colonizer got recourse to law in order to legitimize its outrageous deeds and reach its objectives.

On the other side, in Naipaul's novel, the change in his narrator's vision toward European books of history is reflected through his journey from the east coast to the centre of Africa. This shift from one place to another is accompanied with Salim's shift from innocence (ignorance of truth) to maturity (discovering truth). It is through this shift that Naipaul reconstructs the natives' history. Once he acquires knowledge of his surrounding, Salim starts to interrogate the validity of European documents of history in order to uncover the lies that the colonizer made him live with during his childhood:

If it was Europe that gave us on the coast some idea of our history, it was Europe, I feel, that also introduced us to the lie...the Europeans could do one thing and say something quite different... It was their great adventure over us. The Europeans wanted gold and slaves...but at the same time they wanted statues put up to themselves as people who had done good things for the slaves...they could express both sides of their civilization; and they got both the slaves and the statues. (Naipaul 16-17)

Through the above quote, Salim discovers the hypocrisy of European colonizer who manipulated truth in its books in order to give a brightened image for its presence in Africa. Through the statues that have been erected in Africa, the colonizer could hide the real materialistic objectives behind its presence there.

In their reconstruction of colonial history, Naipaul and Rhys converge in highlighting the same image of the European colonizer to confirm that its malicious intentions and plans were the same in all the colonies. Through the motto used by the colonizer in Africa and in the West Indies, Naipaul and Rhys reveal the lies and the hypocrisy behind those words and the invalidity of the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission.

In his counter discourse *BR*, the narrator Salim notices a motto written on a ruined monument erected by the colonizer during its presence in Africa. The motto was written in Latin and it consented the mingling of peoples in Africa. However, truth is revealed when Salim discover that this motto was taken from an old poem and its meaning is falsified by the colonizer to make it adequate to its aims. While in the original poem the mingling of people in Africa was not approved by the Roman god, in the motto written by the European colonizer on the monument it is approved. To justify and legitimize its presence in Africa, the European colonizer approved of a settlement there (Naipaul 62).

In Rhys' counter discourse *WSS*, the lie behind the colonizer's motto is revealed by the coloured character Daniel. The motto was written by his English father on a "white marble tablet" in one of the English churches in the West Indies. Through this motto, the colonizer (his father) historicizes and glorifies his deeds toward the natives. However, as he was familiar with his father's cunning and tricks, Daniel was not deceived and could reveal the truth behind those words. While his father claims that he has done good to the natives (civilizing mission), Daniel counters his motto and reveals how his father bought and sold the natives like cattle. For Daniel, to have the motto written in the church is ironic as it contradicts the real intentions behind it (Rhys 111).

Naipaul's interrogation of the civilizing mission that forms an essential part of colonial history is also expressed through the European character of Father Huismans. Naipaul incorporates a character who is the embodiment of colonial intentions in Africa in order to uncover truth. Father Huismans uses his position as a priest to hide his interest and desire to exploit the natives' land and treasures. Salim learns about Father Huismans's trips to explore Africa and how he collected African oldish carvings. His interest in African treasure comes out of his belief that "out of Africa there was 'always

something new' " (Naipaul 61). In addition to this, he also believes that the value of the things he collects lie in being original and part of African culture (Naipaul 61).

Accordingly, it is through this motto that Salim discovers the real intentions behind colonial presence in Africa; intentions that other Africans were ignorant of.

On the other side, Rhys also interrogates the colonial claim of having a missionary mission in the West Indies and uncovers the truth behind its presence there. She spots light on the way colonial exploitation of the natives' land continued even after independence. White men followed a plan of marrying women from the West Indies in order to get their wealth and to obtain estates that have become cheaper after the emancipation of slave. Antoinette's mother is among those women who have been exploited by the colonizer Mr Mason. The latter had the intention to carry on his exploitation of the natives by borrowing them to work with a contract but without wages (Rhys 27). Through her questioning of colonial history, Rhys reconstructs her native history and spots light on the endlessness of the colonizer's cunning toward her people.

Although Naipaul overlaps with Rhys at certain levels, he diverges from her in directing his sharp criticism not only toward European colonialism but also toward the new African rulers who carried on the colonizer's malicious deeds after independence. His narrator Salim starts to fear the new political system of post independent Africa to be just a replacement of European colonialism. He feared those rulers to be not much different from their colonizer in its lies, tricks and corruption "I feared the lies- black men assuming the lies of white men" (Naipaul 16). Indeed, Salim's expectations become a reality once tribal wars erupted in the centre of Africa. He was aware that the natives have been under pressure due to colonialism but their new rulers exercised more pressure on them until they have become unconscious of their violence. By spotting



light on the new African rulers, Naipaul divulges another side of truth regarding colonized history with colonialism.

Contrary to Naipaul, in her reconstruction of colonial history Rhys chooses to spot light on the aftermaths of colonialism in the West Indies. She uncovers the racial tensions that followed colonialism and that have divided the society into groups. She stresses on the way colonial enslavement of blacks has made them hate anyone with white skin even creoles. The latter, turned to be victim of colonial strategies that were long lasting. While in Naipaul's novel the colonized people's violence was the outcome of both the pressure of colonialism and their new African rulers, in Rhys' novel, blacks' violence is the outcome of the hatred that colonialism instilled in them toward creoles. Being the daughter of a former slave owner, Antoinette recalls the way blacks' hatred exceed the limits to the extent that made them attack and burn their house (Rhys 36). Although the colonized's reaction in both novels was the same (violence), the reasons behind this violence (truth) are differently transmitted by the two aforementioned writers.

#### **4.5 From Mimicry to Hybridity: Challenging Colonial Narratives' Basic Assumptions and Illuminating Truth**

In order to maintain its colonial domination and control over the colonized, European colonialism followed different strategies among which stands the strategy of mimicry. After it has taken control over the colonized people's lands, the European colonizer started its cultural colonization of the people. In so doing, it has sought to transform the natives' culture and to impose its colonial culture instead. Claiming that colonized culture is inferior and not coping with civilization, European colonizer could clear the way for its civilizing mission in the non-western world. Through its colonial strategy (mimicry), it has attempted to make the colonized mimic its superior culture,

manners and language in order to produce "a reformed, recognizable other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same but not quite*" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86). This colonial transformation of colonized culture was expanded through its colonial narratives among which are Joseph Conrad's *HD* and Charlotte Bronte's *JE*.

On the side of the colonized, the critic Homi K. Bhabha exploited the shortcomings and the ambivalence manifested through this colonial strategy and created a site of empowerment and resistance for the colonized. Through this site, the colonized (narrator) could challenge the colonial narrative's basic assumptions and reveal truth. This counter discursive position created by Bhabha is manifested through the novels of Naipaul and Rhys who address their colonizer and challenge its colonial discourse through the strategy of mimicry. In fact, both writers converge in the use of this strategy to uncover the ambivalence of the colonial discourse and to reveal truth regarding the colonized world in Africa and in the West Indies.

In his counter discourse *BR*, Naipaul utilizes the colonial strategy of mimicry as a counter strategy to challenge the colonial narrative and undermine its claim of having a civilizing mission in Africa. Instances of this in the novel are manifested through his colonized characters whose mimicry of their colonizer's manners, language and culture is not presented as a sign of weakness but rather as a sign of empowerment. Nazruddin is one of these characters who lived among European colonizers and practiced his business with them in Africa. Being exposed to Europeans, Nazruddin got influenced by this new culture to the extent that he mimicked their clothes and habits (Naipaul 20). Following colonial parlance of transforming the colonized into a civilized being by making him mimic his colonizer, the character of Nazruddin becomes civilized as a result of his mimicry. However, in colonial terms he is still different from his colonized and not his equal. Naipaul explores this shortcoming of resemblance and difference to

uncover the ambivalence within the colonial discourse *HD*. By looking for sameness (almost the same) in the colonized as well as difference (not quite the same), the colonial discourse becomes ambivalent and its civilizing mission invalid.

In her counter narrative *WSS*, Rhys overlaps with Naipaul in the way she challenges the colonial narrative through mimicry. Instances of this counter strategy in the novel are manifested through the female character Antoinette. The latter finds herself forced to mimic the appearance of an English girl in a picture to gain the love of her English husband (Rhys 32). In this scene, apparently, Antoinette's mimicry fulfils the colonial objective of making the colonized mimic his colonizer and become civilized. However, the colonizer is careful not to make the colonized his equal. It seeks to produce a civilized colonized who is at the same time different from his colonizer which makes the colonial discourse ambivalent and uncovers the falsity of its civilizing mission.

In addition to this, while the colonial narrative criticises the colonized Bertha (Antoinette) for being savage and uncivilized (Bronte 416), it claims that its objective for being in the West Indies is to civilize the colonized. It is this claim of trying to civilize "the savage colonized" and make him/her similar to his colonizer but not completely that makes Bronte's colonial discourse *JE* ambivalent. To produce a civilized being that is quite similar to his colonizer means to threaten the civilizing mission which is established over the claim of difference (superior/ inferior). Thus, in Naipaul and Rhys' counter discourses, the colonial strategy of mimicry contributes in uncovering the lie behind the civilizing mission and in breaking the gap established in the colonial narratives of a superior colonizer and an inferior colonized.

It is interesting to note that Naipaul and Rhys converge also in turning the colonial strategy of mimicry into mockery. In Naipaul's novel *BR*, Nazruddin's mimicry

of European manners is mocked at by people of his community as he looked strange in his new appearance (Naipaul 20). Through this distorted image of the colonizer provided by Nazruddin, mimicry of the colonizer's appearance and manners turns into a mockery. Nazruddin's inability to fully assimilate in the colonial culture makes his mimicry of the Europeans partial. Through this partial and incomplete vision of his colonizer, Nazruddin undermines the authority of the colonial discourse *HD* and uncovers the inauthenticity of its civilizing mission. The latter is conveyed through the partial presence of the colonizer who is no longer dominant and superior. Thus mimicry becomes "at once resemblance and menace" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86, 88) to the noble cause introduced in the colonial discourse.

On the other side, in Rhys' novel *WSS*, Antoinette's mimicry of the English girl is mocked at by her English husband who finds her appearance annoying (Rhys 115). In fact, such mockery does not distort the image of Antoinette, but rather the image of her colonizer embodied in the English girl. Accordingly, Antoinette's mimicry acts in the reverse of the colonial objectives introduced in the colonial narrative *JE*. Her difference as a colonized is reflected through the image of the English girl whom she mirrors. As a result to this mirrored difference, Antoinette provides a blurred image (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86) of her colonizer as she cannot fully assimilate in the colonial culture. This blurred image forms a threat to the colonial discourse's claim of having a civilizing mission. as it places it in "an area between mimicry and mockery" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86).

Another instance of mimicry in Naipaul's counter discourse *BR* is manifested through the character of Ferdinand. The latter mimics the appearance and the manners of his European teachers at school. He likes to wear the school uniform and to mimic their gestures to be identified like them (Naipaul 47). While the colonial strategy of

mimicry relies on repetition as a way to prove colonial superiority (Bhabha, *the Location of Culture* 88), in Naipaul's novel Ferdinand's repetition of his teacher's manners makes this colonial strategy (mimicry) work in the reverse. Instead of asserting colonial superiority through the colonized repetition of his colonizer's manners, Ferdinand's rehearsal (repetition) serves to destabilize the colonial narrative *HD* through the distorted image he provides of his colonizer (European teachers). In so doing, the colonizer is placed in the position of an "other", a position which he disavows.

While Naipaul uses mimicry as a powerful strategy in his transformation of the colonizer into "other", Rhys diverges from him in revealing the brutal nature of the colonizer. This brutality is manifested through her female character Antoinette when she mimics the speech of her English husband Mr Rochester. Once he informs her of his decision to expel the black servant Christophine from their house, Antoinette mimics his words in a mocking way to make him aware that she has discovered his real intentions toward blacks "You abused the planters and made up stories about them... You send the girl away quicker, and with no money or less money, and that's all the difference" (Rhys 132-133). Through her mockery, Antoinette conveys a distorted image of the colonizer. When her English husband justifies the enslavement of blacks as a matter of justice, she reacts to his words in a mocking way to uncover the cunning of the colonizer and its lies "Justice...I've heard that word. It's a cold word. I tried it out, I wrote it down. I wrote it down several times and always it looked like a damn cold lie to me. There is no justice" (Rhys 133).

It is worth mentioning that Naipaul overlap also with Rhys in spotting

light on the "flawed identity" (McClintock 62) that the colonized constructs from his mimicry of his colonizer. In Rhys' novel, being obliged to mimic the English girl's appearance to make her husband love her, Antoinette obtains a flawed identity instead. The latter makes Antoinette occupy "an inhabitable zone of ambivalence that grants [her] neither identity nor difference" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 90). She is neither fully similar to her colonizer (English girl) nor different from her. At this level, the effectiveness of mimicry as a colonial strategy fails. Similarly to Rhys' character, Naipaul's character Ferdinand also constructs a "flawed identity" (McClintock 62) once he finds himself obliged to mimic the new culture he is exposed to him through education. Becoming aware that this new identity places him in a position of not being fully identified as white man or as a native, Ferdinand gives up his European manners. In so doing, Ferdinand seeks to maintain his difference as a colonized, a difference defined according to his own terms rather than of his colonizer's. In fact, the zone inhabited by Antoinette and Ferdinand is a zone of empowerment for them and of weakness for the colonial strategy of mimicry that seeks to make the identity of the colonized fixed (inferior).

It is interesting to note that through Antoinette and Ferdinand's mimicry, colonial narratives are destabilized and their claim that identity is something fixed is subverted. This is because there is nothing as inherent superiority for the colonizer or inherent inferiority for the colonized, a realization that stands in opposition to colonial assumptions.

Being exposed to colonial culture through colonialism, European schools and business, the colonized started to mimic his colonizer. As a result to his mimicry, the colonized acquires a new identity embodied in a hybrid identity. Ferdinand's hybrid identity is manifested through his European school uniform and in the African greeting

that he exchanges with Salim. Ferdinand's in-between position is also manifested through his simultaneous use of English and French when he speaks to Salim and his use of local patois when speaking to Metty (Naipaul 38). Through Ferdinand's in-betweenness, the binary opposition (superior colonizer/inferior colonized) established in the colonial narrative *HD* is subverted.

The Indian novelist Salman Rushdie reflects on the notion of hybridity as a "Mélange, hotch-potch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world*" (qtd. in Guignery 3). Through this concept, the colonial myth of racial and cultural purity introduced through colonial narratives is interrogated and denounced as invalid. Naipaul and Rhys are among those postcolonial writers who challenge the colonial myth of purity through their counter discourses *BR* and *WSS*.

Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in the use of hybridity as a strategy to challenge the colonial myth of purity, they diverge in the way it is manifested through their novels. This divergence is produced by the particularity of the postcolonial context of each novel. In his counter discourse *BR*, Naipaul undermines the colonial discourse's claim of the racial purity of the white men through the incorporation of racially hybrid characters. Instances of racial hybridity are manifested through the character of the steward in the steamer, a "man of mixed race; his mother or father might have been a mulatto" (Naipaul 165). The word "mullato" highlights the racial mixedness between the colonizer and the colonized, a situation which is denied in the colonial narrative. Another instance of this case is reflected through Metty, a half-cast (Naipaul 165). Through this boy who is of a mixed racial descent, Naipaul challenges the colonial assumption of racial uniqueness, an assumption that forms the basis for the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission.

On the other side, in her counter discourse *WSS*, Rhys challenges the

colonial narrative's myth of racial purity through her creole character Antoinette. Creole is a word specific for those people of mixed ethnic origin in the Caribbean. It highlights the intermarriages between white men and black women in the West Indies as a result to colonialism. Antoinette's racial hybridity is the product of this kind of relationship as her mother got married to a white man. Through Antoinette's in-between position, Rhys creates a problematic for the colonial discourse that calls for purity and unmixedness of the two races. Being neither a purely native nor a purely white girl as her English husband remarks (Rhys 61), Antoinette subverts the colonial claim of a fixed identity. Another instance of the same case is reflected through the creole Annette who is a daughter of a former slave owner (Rhys 29), through the coloured men Sandi and Daniel. Through these hybrid characters, Rhys breaks the gap established by the colonial narrative that separates the coloniser and the colonized on account of racial origins.

In addition to racial hybridity, Naipaul and Rhys' novels manifest another form of inevitable mixedness between the colonizer and the colonized embodied in cultural hybridity. In Naipaul's novel *BR*, this form is highlighted through the African character Zabeth whose cultural hybridity appears through her African appearance (Naipaul 8) that intermingles with the modern means she uses in her life (Naipaul 6). Zabeth's use of the means provided by Europeans in her daily life indicates the unpreventable mixedness of the two cultures, a mixedness that undermines the existence of pure cultures. Another instance of cultural hybridity is reflected through the colonial characters Yvette and Raymond who lived in a European house furnished with African furniture (Naipaul 126). Through this scene, Naipaul subverts the colonial myth of cultural purity presented in the colonial narrative and confirms that cultures are impure and heterogeneous.



While in Naipaul's novel *BR*, cultural hybridity is highlighted through the life of the colonizer and the colonized, in Rhys' *WSS*, the colonial claim of cultural purity/superiority is subverted through colonized characters only. Bhabha argues that the colonizer's and the colonized's worlds meet in "the third space of enunciation" (*The Location of Culture* 37). The result of this contact is the mixedness of the two cultures. An instance of this in the novel is reflected through Antoinette's family life which is a mixture of her father's English culture (food) and their native culture of the West Indies (Rhys 32). This cultural hybridity places the two cultures in equal status and subverts the colonial claim of cultural superiority. Another instance is conveyed through the character of Daniel who lives a culturally hybrid life. Bhabha argues that cultures are in constant change and they are not fixed to a certain time period (*The Location of Culture* 37). Daniel's mode of life confirms Bhabha's idea as his cultural hybridity is the outcome of the contact between his native culture and the English culture that appears through the Bible he reads and the type of house he lives in (Rhys 109). Through the mingling of the two cultures, colonial culture loses its superiority as a result of its transformation in the third space.

#### **4.6 Postcolonial Rewriting and the Question of Originality in Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* and Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea***

Miloi argues that the rewriting of a colonial narrative is "more than just repolishing old texts, it becomes a strategy to subvert, underline and jam a discourse" (169). In their counter discourses, both Naipaul and Rhys establish intertextual connections with the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*. Through this intertextual relationship, they seek to challenge, interrogate and subvert the colonial narrative. Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in the integration of the colonial narratives in their novels, they diverge markedly in the way those colonial narratives are integrated in

their counter discourses. It is this variation in the integration of the colonial narrative that determines the extent to which Naipaul's and Rhys' novels can be original works of art.

#### **4.6.1 Intertextual Integration**

Christiane Achour and Amina Bekkat identify three ways in which a prior text can be integrated in an intertext. These include integration by allusion, integration by absorption and integration by suggestion (qtd. in Reguig Mouro 32).

In his counter discourse *BR*, Naipaul's integration of the colonial narrative *HD* is manifested through allusion. In order to establish an indirect reference to the colonial narrative in his novel, Naipaul alludes to the prior text through the scene of the journey undertaken by the protagonist Salim, a scene that brings to the reader's mind a similar journey undertaken by Marlow in the prior text *HD*. However, the way this borrowed text is integrated in Naipaul's intertext *BR* serves to determine its originality. In the prior text, Marlow's journey starts from England to Africa by sea (Conrad 7). However, in the intertext, the direction of the journey is reversed in which Salim starts from the east coast toward the centre of Africa by road (Naipaul 3). This change in the direction of the journey is not arbitrary, but rather deliberate. It seeks to uncover the real objective behind colonial presence in Africa and to clarify that Marlow's journey is not for adventures, but an embodiment of the civilizing mission.

In fact, it is not only the direction of the journey that has been appropriated in Naipaul's novel but also the objective behind it. Marlow's reason behind going to Africa was for adventure and afterwards (Conrad 11, 12) it became a desire to meet a man called Mr Kurtz. However, in Naipaul's intertext, the objective behind Salim's journey is to start a new life in the centre of Africa as a trader (Naipaul 3). Accordingly, the reader who is familiar with the prior text notices the way details from the prior text

are integrated in Naipaul's intertext. They are neither quoted directly nor reproduced. Rather, they are transformed in a way that makes his novel an original and independent work of art.

While Naipaul's integration of the prior text is introduced through allusion to a journey, in Rhys' *WSS* it is presented through allusion to gothic, a scene that brings to the reader's mind the prior text *JE*. In her novel, Rhys' protagonist Antoinette sees horrible things in the room of the black servant Christophine and she gets scared by this fearful scene (Rhys 28). The reader who is familiar with the prior text *JE* starts to recall a similar scene in which the female character Jane experienced the same feeling when she was imprisoned in an abandoned room (the red room) by her uncle's wife (Bronte 23). In fact, the intertextual allusion that Rhys establishes with the prior text is not explicit in which the reader who is not attentive and familiar with the prior text cannot observe it. Rather, he/she may pass through it as only a scene within the novel. Rhys has transformed the borrowed material until nothing remains of it. Nevertheless, in order to help the reader observe the intertextual dimension of her novel, she kept some intertextual markers like the strange room, the dead man and the red colour in her intertext *WSS*. It is her skilfulness in integrating the prior text *JE* that defines Rhys' novel as an independent work of art.

In addition to her allusion to gothic, Rhys diverges from Naipaul in her varied use of allusion. In her novel, Rhys alludes to the prior text *JE* in which she borrows the marker of the dream and integrates it in her intertext *WSS*. This borrowed marker appears through the dream of Antoinette who sees herself in the forest wearing a white dress and following a man whom she was afraid of (Rhys 54-55). This marker of the dream instigates the reader's memory to recall the prior text in which the female protagonist had the same dream. In the prior text *JE*, Jane dreams that the house of her

master is under fire and that she is holding a child in her arms trying to escape from fire. Then, she sees her master Mr Rochester leaving the house. She tries to follow his steps but she could not (Bronte 402). In fact, Rhys did not quote the scene as it is from the prior text, but rather has transformed it keeping only the marker of the dream. Through this latter, the reader could recognize the intertextual relationship that exists between the two texts and notice the signature of Rhys as the creator of the intertext.

Originality in Naipaul's and Rhys' novels is also reflected through their skilfulness in absorbing some scenes from the prior text. Although both writers implicitly integrate scenes from colonial narratives, they diverge in the way those scenes are manifested through their intertexts. In his novel *BR*, Naipaul establishes another intertextual dimension with the colonial narrative *HD* in which his narrator Salim gets attracted by a ruin of steamer monument constructed by the European colonizer in Africa (Naipaul 26). This steamer dates back to sixty years, a number that stops the reader and makes him think of the prior text *HD*. In the colonial narrative, the same number is used in which the narrator Marlow finds a sixty years old book in a hat owned by a white man (Conrad 39). Although no direct reference is made to the prior text, the reader's familiarity with it makes him depend on his own interpretation to deduce the intertextual dimension between the two texts.

Contrary to Naipaul, Rhys absorption of the prior text is manifested through the marker of the dream. Rhys borrows a real scene from the prior text and absorbs it as a dream in her intertext *WSS*. In the prior text *JE*, the narrator Jane goes back to her master's mansion to find only ruins after his lunatic wife Bertha has set fire to the place (Bronte 604). Jane learns that Bertha has managed to steal the keys and escape from her confinement when her guard lost consciousness (Bronte 605-606). This scene has been transformed by Rhys and absorbed in a way that makes her work an independent text

rather than a mere imitation of its former. This is manifested through the third dream that her female character Antoinette sees. Antoinette dreams that she could take the keys from her guard, escape from the confinement and walk in the house. She felt that a woman was following her and laughing, she was the ghost that haunts the house. Trying to escape from her, Antoinette entered a room. There, she found candles and knocked them down burning the house (Rhys 169-170). In fact, Rhys' absorption of what was real in the prior text and transforming it into a dream in her novel has contributed in changing the course of events and in providing another side of truth about the colonized Bertha. In so doing, Rhys could change the reader's perception of the hereditary madness of Bertha by spotting light on the anxieties and the inner conflicts of her female character that are the outcome of her husband's maltreatment.

In addition to the aforementioned ways of integrating the colonial narrative in their postcolonial novels, Naipaul and Rhys integrate also sentences or names of characters that serve to suggest the prior text. At the end of his intertext *BR*, Naipaul integrates a sentence said by Ferdinand in the day of his departure from Africa (Naipaul 273), a sentence that suggests the prior text *HD*. The reader gets stopped by this sentence thinking that the same number of people (four) mentioned by Ferdinand in his journey has been mentioned in the prior text (Conrad 7). However, this sentence is not quoted directly by Naipaul, but rather transformed in a way that only the attentive reader can observe it and deduce the intertextual dimension behind it.

While Naipaul's integration of the colonial narrative is manifested through a sentence that suggests the text in the reader's mind, Rhys diverges from him in suggesting the prior text through a character's name. In her intertext *WSS*, Rhys integrates the name of Grace Poole, a name that she has borrowed from the prior text *JE*. Being familiar with the colonial narrative, the reader gets interrupted by this name

in a way that he/she starts to recall the prior text. However, the reader notices that the name of Grace Poole is not quoted directly by the writer in the sense that the position she occupies in the intertext *WSS* is quite different from that of the prior text *JE*. In the prior text, Grace Poole is the servant in charge of guarding Mr Rochester's mad wife Bertha and who is supposed to keep her imprisonment and her existence in the house a secret (Bronte 158-159). In return of her silence, Grace Poole got a great amount of money (Bronte 440). After her integration in Rhys' intertext, Grace Poole's role changes into a servant who divulges the truth that has been concealed in the prior text regarding Bertha's madness (Rhys 162-163). Being skilful in borrowing a character from another text and integrating it in a creative way in her text has contributed greatly in making Rhys' novel an independent work of art.

#### **4.6.2 Intertextual Interfigurality**

In addition to integration as an intertextual dimension in Naipaul's and Rhys' novels, interfigurality is another significant technique used by the writers to establish their intertextual relationship. In their borrowing of characters from the colonial narratives, Naipaul and Rhys converge at certain levels in their intertexts and diverge in certain others.

In his intertext *BR*, Naipaul borrows the character of Marlow from the colonial narrative *HD* and identifies him as Salim. The latter corresponds with the former in having a journey toward Africa. However, before this borrowed character is incorporated in his intertext, Naipaul transforms him in a way that nothing remains of him only the idea of the journey. As a result to this transformation, Naipaul assigns to his borrowed character new qualities that remarkably distinguishes him from the one in the prior text. It is at this level that the originality of his novel lies, in not directly quoting the character from the prior text, but rather; in transforming him in a way that

he generates a new character for his intertext. In the prior text *HD*, Marlow is depicted as an Englishman who has great passion for adventure and for the sea (Conrad 9).

However, in the intertext *BR*, Salim is represented as a trader of Indian origin who was brought up in Africa, a country that he considers as his home and the home of his family (Naipaul 10-11). By inventing an Indian character living in Africa, Naipaul creates a representative for colonized people in Africa.

On the other side, in her intertext *WSS*, Rhys overlaps with Naipaul in borrowing the character of "Bertha" from the colonial narrative *JE* and in renaming her "Antoinette". As the name of the borrowed character is not identical to the one in the intertext, only the attentive reader can notice the relationship between the two characters. It is Rhys' creativity in completely altering the borrowed character that makes her work new and independent of its predecessor. In the prior text *JE*, Bertha is portrayed as a lunatic non-western woman with animalistic qualities (Bronte 301-404). However, in the intertext *WSS*, this character undergoes changes in which the writer assigns to her human qualities instead. In so doing, Rhys creates a character for her own text rather than directly quoting the character of the prior text. In addition to this, Rhys' female character does not resemble Bertha as she is portrayed as an independent beautiful lady. She develops from being isolated and sensitive to an insubordinate woman who confronts her husband's trials to deprive her of her identity (Rhys 103,122). Through the interfigural transformations that Rhys follows in her intertext, the reader who is not familiar with the prior text may not notice the intertextual relationship between the two texts. It is at this level that the innovation and originality of her novel lie.

While Naipaul and Rhys converge in borrowing some characters (Marlow and Bertha) from the colonial narratives and in renaming them in their intertexts, they

diverge in the way of dealing with some others. In order to reveal the hypocrisy of the European colonizer, Naipaul borrowed the character of Mr Kurtz and identified him as Father Huismans. Although Father Huismans is similar to Mr Kurtz in being a hypocrite and deceptive man, he is not a direct quotation of him. In the prior text *HD*, Mr Kurtz is portrayed as a European man who succeeds in deceiving the natives and gaining their trust by making them believe in his good intentions. However, his cunning nature is exposed through the heads of the natives that he keeps on sticks in front of his house, a scene that seems to be done for decorative purposes as Marlow comments (Conrad 57). In the intertext *BR*, Father Huismans is identified as a European man who is interested in African treasures (Naipaul 60). By transforming the borrowed character into a priest, Naipaul reveals the way the colonizer uses religion to hide his real intentions and attain his objectives in Africa. In so doing, Father Huismans could gain both the natives' trust in him as an admirer of their land and collect the masks that belong to the natives to display them on the shelves of the museum (Naipaul 64-65).

Although Naipaul borrows the European character of Mr Kurtz and assigns him a different name, Rhys diverges from him in borrowing a character and integrating him in her novel without a name. The character that fits to this case is Mr Rochester who is integrated in the first part of Rhys' novel *WSS* as a nameless character and deprived of his identity. In so doing, Rhys creates a new character for her intertext, a character that fulfils the objectives of her postcolonial novel and changes the reader's perception of the borrowed character. In the prior text *JE*, Mr Rochester is portrayed as a wealthy English man who is a victim of his marriage to a lunatic non-white woman (Bronte 415). However, in Rhys' intertext *WSS*, Mr Rochester is deprived of his mask of a victim and identified as charlatan who accepts to marry Antoinette (Bertha) and get her wealth. Through the new character that Rhys creates for her intertext, she uncovers his



imprisonment of his wife Bertha and his manipulation of the events in order to hide the truth (Rhys 63).

In addition to this, Rhys' intertext *WSS* diverges from Naipaul's *BR* in establishing another intertextual relationship with the colonial narrative through the character of Mr Mason. Although the name of the borrowed character is identical to the one in Rhys' intertext, the character is not quoted from the prior text. On the contrary, it is transformed by the writer to fit the postcolonial context of her novel. In the prior text *JE*, Mr Mason is introduced as a West Indian merchant who has a son (Richard) and a daughter (Bertha). He is a man with a great wealth that he decides to grant to his daughter. Learning of this man's property, Mr Rochester's father starts to arrange for a marriage between Bertha and his son in order to secure his status in their English society (Bronte 433). On the other hand, in Rhys' intertext *WSS*, Mr Mason is portrayed as an English man who got married to Antoinette's mother, a woman from the West Indies in order to get her properties (Rhys 25). Unlike Mr Mason of the colonial narrative who has a son named Richard and a daughter named Bertha, Mr Mason in Rhys' intertext has only a son (Richard) from his first marriage and Antoinette (Bertha) is introduced as his step-daughter "I was bridesmaid when my mother married Mr Mason in Spanish Town. Christophine curled my hair. I carried a bouquet and everything I wore was ne" (Rhys 25, 29).

Through the above instances of interfiguralty, Rhys marks her own touch as a creative writer who did not use the borrowed material of the colonial narrative as it is, but rather; transformed it in a way that she gave it a different meaning. Accordingly, she has produced an independent and original work of art and not an extended version of the colonial narrative.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

Despite their divergence in the use of the textual strategies to counter colonial narratives, Rhys and Naipaul converge in using them to indigenize the colonial language. Through this new language, Naipaul and Rhys could liberate the colonized people's culture in Africa and the West Indies. It is this powerful vehicle (language) that made the decolonization of the natives' culture possible because language is "a carrier of culture...language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history" (Thiong'o 13, 15). Through their counter discourses, Naipaul and Rhys have revealed that language and culture are indistinguishable elements and that language makes the transmission of culture from one generation to another possible (Thiong'o 13, 15). In fact, Naipaul's and Rhys' indigenization was not exclusive to colonial language only but also to the western genre of the novel in which both writers produced an appropriated genre that corresponds with the postcolonial world of the colonized in Africa and the West Indies.

In addition to this, Naipaul and Rhys converged in changing the misrepresentation of the colonized and in countering the dichotomies and stereotypes established in the colonial narratives. By granting voice to the formerly silenced and marginalized characters, they have contributed in stripping off the cover on the other side of the story regarding the colonized experience with their colonizer. By producing an appropriate vehicle (language) for their texts, Naipaul and Rhys used it to reconstruct the history of colonized people in Africa and the West Indies, a history that was marginalized and falsified in colonial narratives.

In fact, Naipaul and Rhys converge also in using the colonial strategy of mimicry as a counter strategy. Through this latter, they could challenge the colonial narratives' basic assumptions and uncover its ambivalence. On the other hand, they

diverge in the way they challenge the colonial myth of purity through the different instances of racial and cultural hybridity presented in their novels.

Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in establishing intertextual dimensions with colonial narratives, they diverge in the way this dimension is displayed through their counter discourses. Through the different instances of intertextuality presented in their novels, it is possible to conclude that Naipaul's and Rhys' novels are independent literatures rather than mere imitation of the colonial narratives. Accordingly, for Naipaul's and Rhys' counter-discourses, the colonial narrative serves only as a point of departure or inspiration (McLeod 168) but it does not determine their meaning or their originality.

## General Conclusion

British colonialism was not just a question of physical domination of other people's lands, but more importantly a matter of mental domination of their people. For the colonizer, the most important zone of domination was "the mental universe" (Thiong'o 16) of the colonized where colonial language and culture were used as powerful tools to control the colonized people's perception of themselves and of the world. Through this mental control, the colonizer sought to undervalue the culture and the history of colonized people and to elevate its colonial language and history instead (Thiong'o 16).

During the imperial period, the literary scene was monopolized by writers from the western world who have directed their literature to serve the interests of the existing ideology (colonialism). In those writings, the British presence in the colonies was introduced as a civilizing mission and a glorious affair that the colonizer sought to accomplish in the non-western world. In addition to this, in order to justify British colonialism, western writers got recourse to religion in which they claimed that God honoured the white men with a holy mission to fulfil in the dark parts of the world. Accordingly, the writings that emerged from the imperial centre were considered as the standard form for literature that provided the truth of colonized people. On account of this, no room was left for writings from the colonies to emerge and challenge this truth.

However, the post-colonial period was a period of upheaval in which a new wave of writers emerged from the former British colonies to break the silence that has been imposed on them and express their voice to the world. Those writers had a tendency toward the rewriting of English classic texts from a postcolonial perspective. Through their "canonical counter-discourse" (Tiffin 97), they sought to challenge and correct the misrepresentations of the colonized that were introduced as the truth. For

postcolonial writers, the best way to shed light on their colonized societies is to deconstruct the colonial narrative and appropriate its language to make it suitable for the realities of their postcolonial worlds. Among the writers who were engaged in this kind of literature (rewriting) and whose novels are the focus of the analysis in this research are V.S Naipaul and Jean Rhys.

This study investigates the rewriting of colonial narratives from a postcolonial perspective through the textual analysis of Naipaul's *BR* and Rhys' *WSS*. An eclectic approach has been adopted in which the rewriting approach, Homi K. Bhabha's theory and Julia Kristeva's intertextuality converge to investigate the ways Naipaul and Rhys rewrite Joseph Conrad's *HD* and Charlotte Brontë's *JE* respectively and how their rewritings display different versions of truth regarding the colonized people's experience with their colonizer. The research also aims to examine the extent to which the novels of the aforementioned writers can be considered as original and independent literary works or merely as extended discussion of their predecessors.

It is worth mentioning that the choice of a female writer and a male writer in this thesis is not arbitrary. It is rather done for the purpose of uncovering the differences between them in rewriting colonial narratives and in addressing issues related to colonized people. Unlike Naipaul, Rhys grants a narrative voice to a female character who acts as a reflection of her image. In so doing, she expresses herself as a writer who was denied a literary voice by her male counterpart.

The first research question in this study emphasizes the applicability of the approach of rewriting, Homi K. Bhabha's theory (Hybridity and mimicry) and Kristeva's intertextuality in the analysis of colonized people's experience with colonialism. In their counter discourses, Naipaul and Rhys converge in the use of some textual strategies to indigenize the colonial language and express their resistance to the

colonial narratives while they diverge in the use of some others. In his novel *BR*, Naipaul abrogates and appropriates the norms of Standard English as they are established in the colonial narrative *HD* and makes them adequate to his postcolonial context. Through the unusual use of capital letters, one-word sentence, sentences without subject, dialect, code-switching, glossing and untranslated words, Naipaul deviates from the Standard rules of English and produces instead a new version of "english" (with small "e"), a language that enables him to express his resistance to Conrad's dominant narrative and to highlight the cultural distinctiveness of the oppressed people in Africa.

On the other hand, in her novel *WSS*, Rhys deconstructs Charlotte Brontë's colonial narrative *JE* in which she follows a linguistic deviation (Teke 72) from the standard rules of the English language as they are established in Brontë's discourse. Through the textual strategies of abrogation and appropriation, Rhys indigenizes the colonizer's language and makes it convenient to address the truth about her postcolonial world. This manipulation of the imperial language appears through the unusual use of the auxiliary "to have" and "to do", the dropping of the "s" of the simple present, the unusual use of capital letters and italic, the use of oral tradition (songs), the creation of new words, code switching, untranslated words and glossing. Through those strategies, Rhys challenges the colonial discourse and subverts its claim that the colonial language is prestigious and superior. Instead of using the imperial language, Rhys produces a new language (Caribbean english) that could reflect the culture and the tradition of the West Indies.

Through the aforementioned textual strategies of resistance, Naipaul and Rhys have liberated the English language from the confines of the colonial discourse and relocated it in their postcolonial novels. In so doing, they managed to devoid the

imperial language of its power and to highlight its insufficiency to transmit the realities of their colonized world. Due to the insufficiency in the colonial language, Naipaul and Rhys produced a new language that reflects "a distinctive social world" (Ashcroft et.al, *The Empire Writes Back* 74). Through this language, they sent a message to their colonizer: "I am using your language so that you will understand my world, but you will also know by the differences in the way I use it that you cannot share my experience" (Ashcroft, *Post-colonial Transformation* 75).

It is worth noting that the new language produced by Naipaul and Rhys out of the indigenization of colonial language comprises "empowering functions" (Jonsson 212). The latter is manifested through the voice that Naipaul and Rhys granted to their colonized characters after they have been denied voice and space in the colonial narratives. As a reaction to the misrepresentation and marginalization of the colonized in *HD*, Naipaul privileges the margin in his novel. He grants voice, identity (names) and positive traits to the colonized characters Salim, Zabeth, Ferdinand, Nazruddin and Metty to interrogate and correct the stereotypes that have been associated to them as inferior and savage people in the colonial discourse. Through the stories that those characters recount, many harsh realities of colonialism are exposed.

In addition to this, Naipaul breaks the binary opposition established in the colonial discourse by placing the colonizer and the colonized in equal status. This is reflected through the image of African women who sleep with men and of the white woman Yvette who is corrupted by the same deed ("other"). In so doing, Naipaul reveals that the constant repetition of the stereotypes in Conrad's colonial narrative does not confirm the fixed nature of the colonized's identity. But rather, indicates the ambivalence of this discourse and the lack of confidence. The latter appear through the

colonizer's desire to convince itself of the validity of those stereotypes and thus to maintain its authority and superiority that depended on them.

In *WSS*, Rhys converges with Naipaul in challenging the "dichotomous relationship" (Burton 42) that the colonial discourse *JE* established between the colonized character Bertha and other white characters. However, she diverges from him in giving a feminist dimension to her novel through a female narrator rather than a male (Salim). In her novel *WSS*, Rhys gives voice and space to Antoinette, her mother (Annette) and to the black servant Christophine who challenges the malicious plans of the colonial figure Mr Rochester. By giving voice and a different name to her female narrator Antoinette, Rhys enables the previously silenced and marginalized Bertha to speak and to provide the missing piece in her story. Through Antoinette's story, Rhys changes the reader's perception of the colonized Bertha and subverts the stereotypes of her hereditary madness that was provided in the colonial discourse. Instead, she renames her Antoinette and portrays her as a rebellious, strong and civilized woman. In so doing, she uncovers the falsity of the binary oppositions that the colonizer presents as truth. Then, she denounces them as nothing but the creation of the colonizer.

Through their rewriting of the colonial narratives, Naipaul and Rhys converge in devoting space for the reconstruction of colonized history from the lens of the colonized to reveal truth. However, they diverge in the way this lost history is reconstructed. In *BR*, Naipaul interrogates western documents of history and uncovers their invalidity. Through his narrator Salim, Naipaul spots light on the "psychological violence" (Thiong'o 9) that colonialism exercised on colonized children to make them believe in colonial truth. He reveals the hypocrisy and the lies of the colonizer and the falsity of its so-called civilizing mission that Conrad's colonial narrative promoted. In those documents of western history, the truth was falsified and manipulated in a way



that justifies the European presence in Africa, glorifies its achievements there and preserves the myth of its superiority.

By reconstructing colonized history, Naipaul also criticizes the new rulers of the newly independent Africa who followed the path of their colonizer in being corrupted and skilful in telling lies. Thus, Naipaul's novel can be read as a prophecy of what would happen in newly independent nations if they are ruled by totalitarian rulers who contribute in destroying their nations rather than constructing them. Being an honest and a frank writer, his novel can be interpreted as a warning toward such situation as he prefers to expose the colonized to the truth rather than to cover up the sun (truth) with a sieve.

On the other side, in her counter discourse *WSS*, Rhys invents a "new creole literary space" (Raiskin 112) through which she interrogates the imperial history provided in the colonial discourse *JE*. Through her counter-discourse, Rhys incorporates the history of the colonized people of the West Indies that has been marginalized in the colonial narrative and uncovers how that discourse appropriated truth to serve the objectives of colonialism. As a reaction to this manipulation of truth, Rhys reconstructs her native history to shed light on the blind spots that the colonial discourse disregarded. She exposes the colonial exploitation of the natives through slavery and the lie behind the emancipation act that did not bring justice, but rather deteriorated the situation of blacks. She also reveals the racial tensions that colonialism has generated between blacks and creoles in the West Indies and that resulted in the division of the society. In so doing, Rhys uncovers the real plans of the European colonizer who claims to bring justice and civilization to the West Indies while in reality it has only exploited the land and its people.

Other substantial concepts in the analysis of Rhys and Naipaul's rewritings and that contributed in highlighting their resistance to the colonial discourse and in revealing truth are mimicry and hybridity. Through Homi K. Bhabha's mimicry and hybridity, Naipaul and Rhys developed a counter strategy to challenge the colonial narratives' myth of the immutability of their identity and the purity of their culture. In his counter-discourse *BR*, the colonial strategy of mimicry is stripped of its colonial objectives and used as a strategy of empowerment for the colonized. Through this strategy, Naipaul uncovers the ambivalence of the colonial discourse *HD* that criticizes the savagery of the natives and at the same time seeks to make them civilized, but not identical to their colonizer. It is this desire of achieving sameness as well as difference that makes that colonial narrative ambivalent. Through this ambivalence, Naipaul creates a site in which the colonized can resist his colonizer and weaken its authority.

Given the colonial narrative's claim of transforming the colonized into a civilized being through mimicry, this makes the gap that this discourse has previously established (superior/inferior) invalid and its mode of representation questionable. In *BR*, the colonial strategy of mimicry takes a different dimension as it turns into a mockery and a menace for the colonial discourse. Ferdinand and Nazruddin's mimicry of their colonizer provide a distorted image of it as they reflect their difference through this image, a difference that the colonial discourse denounces as "savagery". As a result, this partial presence of the colonizer (its distorted image) forms a threat to its claim of having a fixed identity (superior) that cannot be changed or influenced.

Rhys' novel *WSS*, on the other side, manifests also the resistive side in the colonial strategy of mimicry and reflects the ambivalence of the colonial discourse *JE*. In her postcolonial novel, the colonial strategy of mimicry is transformed into a mockery of the colonizer and thus turns into a source of empowerment for the

colonized. This is reflected through the distorted image provided by the colonized character Antoinette. By mimicking the appearance and the manners of the English girl in the picture to gain the love of her English husband, Antoinette reflects a distorted image of the colonizer as she cannot fully assimilate in that culture. Through this blurred image (mockery), Rhys uncovers the ambivalence of the colonial discourse that criticizes the colonized as a savage and at the same time seeks to make her civilized through its so-called civilizing mission. In so doing, Rhys reveals the falsity of the civilizing mission and confirms that there is nothing as inborn superiority or inferiority and that this binary is nothing but the colonizer's creation.

As a result to mimicry, Naipaul and Rhys' colonized characters Ferdinand, Nazruddin and Antoinette developed flawed identities in which they are neither fully similar to their colonizer nor completely different from him. Through the position occupied by their characters, Naipaul and Rhys challenge and subvert the colonial assumption that identity is something fixed.

It is worth noting that, the mimicry of the colonizer's manners and culture results in a hybrid identity and a hybrid culture. In their counter-discourses, Naipaul and Rhys converge in creating a problematic for the colonial narratives. They challenge the colonial myth of pure culture and pure identity through the racially hybrid characters and the culturally hybrid life they display. However, the way hybridity is manifested through their counter discourses differs.

In *BR*, Naipaul interrogates the authority of Conrad's dominant discourse *HD* that denounces the colonized and its culture as inferior while it presents colonial culture as superior and unique. Naipaul questions the colonial myth of racial purity through the mixed-race characters Metty and the steward of the steamer. These latter, are the outcome of the intermarriages between whites and colonized people when they were

exposed to displacement due to colonialism in Africa. In addition to this, Naipaul's work provides an image of a culturally hybrid African society in which the colonizer (whites) and the colonized people's worlds are brought together in a way that makes the contact and the mixed-ness between their cultures inevitable. This is reflected through the hybrid identity and the hybrid life of colonized characters and European characters as well.

In *WSS*, Rhys also incorporates racially hybrid characters to challenge the colonial myth of racial purity reflected through Charlotte Brontë's *JE*. However, she diverges from Naipaul in incorporating creole characters, a category limited to the context of the West Indies. In her novel, Rhys provides instances of racial hybridity through the creole character Antoinette whose racial hybridity is the result of being the daughter of a white man and a West Indian Woman. It is also reflected through her creole mother Annette, the half-cast Amelie and the coloured men Sandi and Daniel. Through the in-between position that her characters occupy, Rhys subverts the colonial narrative's claim of racial purity embodied in the character of Mr Rochester who claims that he belong to "a good race" (Brontë 434). In addition to this, Rhys provides other instances of cultural hybridity through the mixed-ness that characterizes Daniel's life and the life of Antoinette's family. As her mother got married to a white man, colonized culture mixes with the English culture in the third space resulting in a hybrid culture and a hybrid identity. This is shown through the English food the family eats making both cultures equal and depriving the colonial culture of its power.

Through Bhabha's hybridity, Naipaul and Rhys produce a new hybrid cultural identity out of the mixed-ness of the colonizer's and the colonized's cultures. In so doing, they create a space through which the colonized could enter the dominant

discourse and subvert its assumptions of white's uniqueness and the fixity of its identity. Accordingly, hybridity provides a position of empowerment for the colonized rather than of weakness in which the colonizer's claim of never being influenced by the colonized is subverted. In addition to this, the image of the colonized as "other" is subverted to prove that this gap (superior and inferior) is not the product of racial origin but rather the creation of the colonizer. Through the different instances of racial and cultural hybridity, Naipaul and Rhys bring the colonizer's so-called civilizing mission into question and prove its falsity.

In fact, Rhys' and Naipaul's rewritings of colonial discourses call into question the originality of their works. Two modes of intertextual dimensions (integration and interfigurality) have been discussed in the analysis of the two selected novels to highlight the extent to which those novels can be regarded as original and independent works of art. In *BR*, Naipaul integrates the source text *HD* in a creative way in which nothing remains of it except the sign of the journey whose direction is reversed and the objective behind it is appropriated. This intertextual dimension is presented as an allusion to the source text that Naipaul does not fully refer to, but rather provides only an indirect reference to it. While Naipaul alludes to a journey, Rhys diverges from him by alluding to gothic. In her intertext *WSS*, Rhys alludes to a gothic scene that provokes the reader's mind to recall Charlotte Bronte's *JE* in which a similar scene has been mentioned there. However, this gothic scene is not quoted directly but rather transformed in a way that gives it a different position and a different meaning in Rhys' intertext.

In addition to integration by allusion, Naipaul's intertext also implicitly absorbs details from the source text in a way that only the attentive and knowledgeable reader can notice this intertextual dimension. Contrary to Naipaul whose integration by

absorption of the colonial narrative is manifested through the marker of the number, Rhys' integration of details from the colonial narrative is manifested through the marker of the dream. In her intertext *WSS*, Rhys' creativity is reflected through the borrowing of a real scene experienced by the female English character Jane and the transformation of this scene into a dream seen by her creole female character Antoinette.

On other levels, Naipaul's intertext *BR* integrates also a sentence that suggests in the reader's mind the source text *HD*. However, the way he integrates this sentence cannot be regarded as a sign of reproduction of the source text but rather a sign of productivity for his novel. While Naipaul's suggestion of the colonial narrative is introduced through a sentence, Rhys suggests the colonial narrative through a character's name. In her intertext *WSS*, she integrates a name of a character that suggests the source text *JE*. Through the borrowed character of Grace Poole, Rhys deconstructs the colonial narrative and divulges the missing piece (truth) in the story of Antoinette and her hereditary madness.

In addition to integration, the originality of Naipaul's and Rhys' novels is examined also through another mode of intertextual dimension, namely interfigurality. Naipaul's intertext establishes an intertextual relationship with Conrad's *HD* through the characters that he borrowed from the source text. The originality of his novel appears through the "interfigural deviation" (Muller 104) he follows in which he renames the borrowed character (Marlow) Salim and he assigns to him different qualities. Similarly to Naipaul, Rhys borrows the character of Bertha and renames her Antoinette. She assigns to her different traits and transforms her completely in a way that only the reader who is familiar with the source text can notice this intertextual dimension.

Although Naipaul and Rhys converge in borrowing the characters of Marlow and Bertha from the colonial narratives and renaming them Salim and Antoinette respectively, they diverge in dealing with other borrowed characters. While Naipaul borrowed the European character of Mr Kurtz and transformed him into a priest and renamed him Father Huismans to reveal the hypocrisy of the colonizer, Rhys borrowed the English character of Mr Rochester, transformed him and integrated him without a name. In so doing, she has created a new character for her novel and revealed the true nature of the colonizer. In addition to this, Rhys borrowed the English character of Mr Masson who is integrated as a West Indian planter and merchant. She has transformed him in a way that nothing remains of him only his name. Through interfiguralty, Naipaul and Rhys' intertexts reveal that the characters they have borrowed from the colonial narratives are not quoted directly. Rather, they are transformed in a way that gives them different roles and positions in their intertexts.

Through this critical vision, the first research question is answered to confirm the applicability of the rewriting approach and Bhabha's theory in the analysis of the colonized experience; and Julia Kristeva's intertextuality in discussing the extent to which those novels can be regarded as original literary works. Simultaneously, the summary of arguments that has been provided above provides an answer for the second and the third research questions over the way each writer has rewritten the colonial narrative in his/her novel and the extent to which their novels are independent works of arts. It also provides an answer for the fourth research question over the levels of convergence and divergence between the two selected novels regarding their rewriting of the colonial narratives.

It is possible to conclude that Naipaul and Rhys' rewritings of the colonial discourses do not pay homage to the colonial narratives but rather challenge, interrogate

and correct their basic assumptions and stories. Instead of the one-sided representation of truth that has been provided in the colonial narratives *HD* and *JE*, Naipaul and Rhys' counter discourses provide the other side of the story and highlight truth regarding colonized experience in Africa and the West Indies. Accordingly, Naipaul and Rhys' novels cannot be regarded as extended discussions of Conrad and Charlotte Bronte's works, but rather, counter – discourses to them. In addition to this, Naipaul and Rhys' novels do not quote directly or reproduce the source texts, but rather transform them in a way that the source text "disappears after having been consumed" (Morey 58) and a new text with different characters, time and place is produced instead. Thus, *BR* and *WSS* can be considered as original and new literatures that carry new realities about their postcolonial societies and not mere imitations of their predecessors.

On the basis of the promising findings attained through this research, further studies might be conducted to extend the explanation of rewriting colonial narratives from postcolonial perspectives. A comparative study might be conducted between the rewriting of colonial texts by indigenous writers and non-indigenous writers to draw the similarities and the differences in the way they address the centre (the dominant discourse).



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