

**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ANKARA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY OF DEREK WALCOTT’S POETRY: IN-
BETWEENNESS, HYBRIDITY, AND MEMORY MAKING**

Master’s Thesis

Gülşah ÇETİNEL

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work. (20/12/2019..)

Gülşah ÇETİNEL



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INTRODUCTION

The Age of Discovery, which initially started in the early 15th Century as a means of finding new, cheap, and fast routes to provide for the ongoing trade, has changed its course in time with the exploration of new lands, such as the Caribbean, that were rich in resources and manpower and would further contribute to the expansion of the empires. The arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas in 1492 led Spaniards to Dominica, located in the Caribbean Sea, mainly with the prospect of gold and due to its strategic location, and the dominion continued until the early 16th Century when the area was noticed by the French around the 1630s succeeded by its ultimate conquest by Britain in 1761. The process of expansion occurred since most of the islands were rich in sugar cane fields, a product which was not only profitable but also easy to be shipped throughout transatlantic countries thanks to the islands' geographical location. However, the colonizers did not find an uninhabited island; on the contrary, the Caribbean was home to several indigenous groups including the Caribs - which were descendants of Arawaks - and also Ortoiroids. Even before the process of slavery began as a result of colonialism, where most of the natives were shipped overseas to be purchased through the Atlantic Slave Trade, which existed from the 16th to the 19th centuries, the indigenous had lost their lives not only in their attempt to defend their island against the foreigners, but also of diseases stemming from the arrival of the Spanish, French, and English, to which the inhabitants were not immune.

The initial idea of expansion gained a different meaning with the justification of colonization by the colonizers that the natives living on the colonized territories were backward and from "savage" societies because they were mostly hunter-gatherers and dwelling on "witchcraft", and therefore, needed to be educated and tamed to attain the "western", "modern", and "humane" level. Some of the works written in the colonial

period, whether they were written by British or slave poets, are seen as favouring this expansionist policy. Phillis Wheatley's renowned poem "On Being Brought from Africa to America" written in 1773, almost 250 years after the dawn of the Age of Discovery, depicting how this "sable race" was "saved" to be "equalized" with the "whites" to attain "human" status and Rudyard Kipling's celebrated poem "The White Man's Burden", written in 1899, corroborating and justifying that it is the "white man's duty" to educate and advance the natives to the level of "contemporary civilization" could be given as exemplary works representing the advocacy of colonial experiment.

The result of colonial oppression and policies of assimilation were social and cultural alienation, hybridity in language, stereotyping, and in-betweenness and although colonization has gradually given its place to the independent societies over time as a result of uprisings, some of which were brutally quashed sometimes, which finally resulted in the abolition of slavery in 1833, the identity and cultural crises that emerged as a result of this process have not completely disappeared. Therefore, most of these problems and incidents are addressed or voiced through art and literature in the post-colonial period which might be thought of as protests or rejections of the oppressive implementations of colonialism, and not only a means of voicing the suffering of the natives but also a way of proving the existence of the people that were othered, alienated, and silenced. Since post-colonial literature is about the consequences of colonialism as it is experienced by the colonized and the effects of this process are still prevalent in culture, language, and even education, post-colonial writers and poets like Derek Walcott make an effort to keep the traumatic memory of their past alive via their works in a way to prove their existence as hybrid presences and also with the intent of being the voice of their ancestries.

Born in the Caribbean island of St. Lucia, which experienced the process and outcomes of colonialism due to its natural resources and workforce, Derek Walcott, a

Caribbean Nobel laureate poet, in most of his works, aims to eternalize his self-identity and his own culture by heading from the “ever-bleeding wound” he proudly bears of not belonging anywhere and harnesses his sufferings to keep his traditional and individual values alive. In his aim of recreating the nostalgia, he seems to build up an individual atmosphere in which he uses his own suffering, his in-between state, and poetic voice with the purpose of giving out a sound to his ancestors’ silence and sometimes the sufferings of other nations experiencing similar oppressions. Being educated during the colonial times under the impositions of the colonizers, most of his poems embody the same kind of in-betweenness that he experienced throughout his life and this hybrid state of not belonging to a certain place and culture constitute the core of his writings. Walcott uses his eminent style, which he describes as being a blend of his colonial education and cultural heritage, by linking it to the social and individual outcomes of colonialism with the aim of creating an atmosphere where the reader could sympathize with his and his ancestors’ experiences and sufferings.

Although most of Walcott’s poems were written with the intent of proving the existence of the self and the nation in a wholly new world of traditions and language - which is a real dilemma of post-colonial societies - and with the need of narrating the untold past as a sufferer, it is undeniable that some of his works present the symbols of religious conversion, traces of the justifications of the civilizing burden, process and outcomes of othering which resulted in hybridity in language and culture, and the attitude of his ancestors against the act of civilizing and othering the natives in the colonial epoch. The aim of this study, in this sense, is to trace those significant symbols, historical incidents, figures, and even landscapes in Walcott’s selected poems in his aim of narrating the traumatic memory of his and his ancestors’ past in terms of alienation, hybridity, in-betweenness, creolization, and memory making. The poems analyzed in this study are chosen for the reason that they embody all those key concepts together to

fulfil Walcott's initial aim. Since the principal objective of this study is to show that Walcott recreates his personal and ancestral memories and sufferings in his works with the intent of generating a safe space for himself, and also for those who have gone through the ordeal of colonialism, with the purpose of being able to exist in a completely different atmosphere to their own since the colonial experience has almost completely annihilated their customs and culture, the poems employed in this study are chosen from different collections written in different periods to suggest that his aim remains the same through most of his poetic career. The poems in this study are analysed under three categories: othering and voicing the silent; hybridism, in-betweenness, creolization, and alienation; and last but not least memory making as a means of proving existence. It is obvious that almost all of Walcott's works embody the idea of the poet being torn off of his original culture and nation when single concepts and Walcott's historical, educational, and cultural background are taken into consideration. Nonetheless, the poems selected for this study comprise some of the key concepts together, further accentuating the poet's struggle in conveying the stories and experiences of the past that still haunt him and those who yet suffer the same state of dilemma of existence in a space which could be considered as alien.

In the first chapter of this study, the history of colonialism in the Caribbean along with the key concepts and theories of the post-colonial era with regard to Derek Walcott's life and poetry will be given for a better understanding of his works in terms of hybrid reflections. On the basis of Homi K. Bhabha's and Jahan Ramazani's widely-accepted term "hybridism", Edward Said's theory of "othering" and Gayatri C. Spivak's concept of "subaltern", this thesis will present an analysis of the "existential struggle" of an individual voicing the silent trauma of his sui generis nation, the effects of "colonialism" on races and societies which are thought as "inferior", and the creation of a totally hybrid style of poetry as a result of colonial implementations in culture and

education by delving into the stories, characters, symbols and the traces of creole language employed in his poetry.

In the second chapter, which consists of four sub-sections, the abovementioned terms will be linked thoroughly to Walcott's selected poems and associated with the issues considered as outcomes of colonialism in separate collections; but it is important to note that although the period of Walcott's writings changes, his attempt remains the same. In the first sub-chapter Derek Walcott's and his land's in-betweenness will be analyzed with regard to the post-colonial trauma of hybridity and marginalization. It is undeniable that Walcott, both as a poet and as an individual, has long suffered from the existential void emerging as a result of colonialism, and the anxiety he has experienced is clearly seen in all of his works. In almost all his poems, the reflections of the consequences of colonial trauma and the terms emerging in the post-colonial period such as hybridity, in-betweenness, and alienation are discernible. Therefore, the poems employed in this dissertation are chosen on the ground that they embody most of the terms and concepts which form the basis of this thesis and further provide an opportunity for a deeper analysis. In this study, the symbols ranging from street names or historical figures and incidents, landscapes, characters, customs, and cultures will be scrutinized in connection with the post-colonial terms, and the socio-cultural aftermath of the process of colonization.

In the second sub-section of the second chapter, the socio-cultural outcomes of the civilizing burden will be examined by delving into poems including depictions of the process of colonization. Because of the fact that the natives were seen, by the oppressors, as primitive-minded entities which needed to be civilized through the implementation of religious, social, and cultural oppression, the existence of the native traditions and culture, not to mention their identities, were annihilated and suppressed. However, Walcott, through his poetry, suggests that the wealth and welfare of the

colonizers have resulted from the natives' sweat and bloodshed, in other words, the humanizing process, which is one of the main justifications of colonization, is acquired via inhumane treatment. On the other hand, Walcott underlines that spiritual genocide also takes away the characteristics of the roots. By twisting the symbols of purity and innocence of the civilizing mission into warlike objects, Walcott criticizes the hypocrisy of the colonialist mindset while staying focused in his poems on the problems occurring within and after the process of colonization.

The third section of the second chapter mainly portrays the natives' reactions and feelings after the process of colonization, which has left people unable to feel attached to a certain place and culture. The lack of "pure blood" and culture, loss of ancestral and historical values result in a situation which could be called as "hybrid" and "in-between", and the colonial education and religious oppression condition the natives to see their own country and nation as "alien". Some of Walcott's characters in the poems employed in this section provide the reader with precise examples of the "subaltern", and the "in-between", lacking attachment and belonging whereas some others symbolizing the "white" and the "civilized" depict how colonial mindset stereotypes and alienates the natives. Similarly, the employment of colloquial language and creoles in the poems stand for the hybridity in language and oral traditions. Walcott also eloquently twists the metaphors in his aim of creating irony and criticism to provide oppositions in order to depict the hybrid state of the natives. Since the process is normalized for the natives through oppression and "taking-over-the-mind", to use Thiong'o's term (Thiong'o, 1994: 16), the results are seen as their destiny, and this is what Walcott tries to break down in his poetry. Most of the poems in this section portray the *fête* tradition, a significant trait of culture; however, even this rooted tradition shows the in-betweenness of islanders: they are taught to hate the wild and "heathenish" traditions yet cannot abandon their sui-generis characteristics.

In the fourth section of the second chapter, historical and real-life events are represented. The poems in this section embody the poet's personal attempt to create a hybrid style in poetry and tell the story through his art to eternize the past in order to exist in the present. Walcott, as an individual suffering from the process and results of colonial oppression, uses his eloquent style and tone which he partly acquired through colonial education to convey his ideas on how this oppression resulted in being unable to belong to a certain place and culture. As Rajeev S. Patke puts it: "Poetry and history share one burden: memory. Just as there can be no history without memory, poetry can come into being only when it remembers that languages have been lost, taken, and forgotten" (Patke, 2006: 36). That is to say, for Walcott, recreating the memory stands as a powerful means of conveying the burden of existence and history, and therefore memory will be examined in Walcott's effort of voicing the unknown and untold in his endeavour for substantiating the existence of his ancestral values.

With a meticulous scrutiny of his poems titled "Origins", "Ruins of a Great House" (from *In a Green Night: Poems, 1962-64*), "Air" (from *The Gulf and Other Poems, 1969*), "The Swamp", "Missing The Sea" (from *The Castaway and Other Poems, 1965-69*), and "Laventille" (from *The Gulf and Other Poems, 1969*) through socio-cultural outcomes of the civilizing burden of colonialism, othering, and voicing the silent; "A Far Cry from Africa" (from *In a Green Night: Poems, 1962-64*), "Homecoming: Anse La Raye" (from *The Gulf and Other Poems, 1969*), "The Schooner Flight" (from *The Star-Apple Kingdom, 1979*), "The Glory Trumpeter" (from *The Castaway and Other Poems, 1965-69*), and "Tales of the Islands" (from *In a Green Night: Poems, 1962-64*) in terms of hybridism, in-betweenness, alienation, and creolization; and "A City's Death by Fire" (from *In a Green Night: Poems, 1962-64*) and "The Castaway" (from *The Castaway and Other Poems, 1965-69*) with regard to memory making as a means of proving existence, Walcott's reflections on the social and

individual ordeal and consequences of colonialism will be delved into since all aforementioned poems may be regarded as key texts dealing with the concepts which could be considered as the outcomes of colonialism and, thus, explicitly illuminating his idiosyncratic poetics.

In his lifetime, Derek Walcott published twenty four poetry collections, twenty five plays, and eight books including many other essays, all ranging from 1948 to 2016. Much has been said and various studies have been done on his works as a Nobel laureate poet, however, most works written on Derek Walcott are based on his eminent style of recreating the epic in a contemporary way. Academicians, critics, and theorists have scrutinized his works in terms of post-colonial identity and nationality crises and other scholarly studies either analyze the places, characters, the Caribbean experience or the national identity or are mostly about Walcott's epic: *Omeros*, or his other plays which are comparatively studied with classical works in relation to Afro-Greek traditions, or include some poems of certain collections. However, this study presents an overall analysis since it includes both the colonial reflections and the post-colonial terms while embodying a wide range of poems from several collections. The poems in this study are chosen as they possess examples of the colonial reflections, traumas, sufferings, and portray examples of the post-colonial terms which reveal Walcott's individual endeavour of voicing the silence of his ancestry and his past, and prove his own existence as a "Third Space" poet whose voice can be heard. Although Walcott does not explicitly assert that he uses memories of the past traumas and agonized experiences in his poems, the places, characters, incidents, street names, or just reminders of the past with a scent or a flash of light are all employed since they are the proofs of his existence and tools for the cries of his ancestors to be heard. In this sense, the process of remembering and recreating the roots can be considered as a means of

reconciling with the past, an amendment of fragmented identities, and a way of proving existence for Walcott.

Walcott employs, in his works, a poetic pattern akin to the historical process from colonization all the way to decolonization. Historically, the process covers colonization, the outcomes of the colonial experiment which explicitly shows the current ordeal of societies affected by colonialism, and the process of decolonization which granted the societies the opportunity to rediscover their identities and break from the chains of imperialism. In a similar way, Walcott grounds his poems on the oppression and annihilation implemented upon his nation and the inevitable results of the colonial experience – amnesia, in-betweenness, hybridity, and creolization – and sees the current ordeal of societies as a powerful tool for voicing the untold history and reviving forgotten ancestral traits. It is fair to suggest that Walcott, in most of his works, openly rejects the oppression experienced by nations; yet, he also embraces the hybrid culture and creole language he bears as an in-between individual. In his poems, his major aim is to voice the “subaltern” who was othered, stereotyped, and neutralized. The “marginalized”, who lost their voice and therefore cannot protest against the oppression, is voiced in Walcott’s poems, since the poet does not want his personas to lose their sense of existence in the alien atmosphere of the post-colonial period. In this sense, Walcott tries to narrate the amnesia, in-betweenness, lack of belonging, identity, and existence – if not to cope with these problems –, all of which is merely possible to be voiced by a “Third-Space” poet in a space which Bhabha terms as “Third Space of enunciation” (Bhabha, 1994:37).

CHAPTER 1

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Post-colonialism

The term “post-colonial”, emerging as a result of the processes of decolonization after the World War II, has been commonly employed to refer to the “political, linguistic and cultural experience” of the people who were European colonies before (Ashcroft *et al.* 2007:168), and resistance, rebellion, or sometimes acceptance as a result of the engagement of colonialism. It can also be considered as a study of mutual interaction between the colonizing nations and the nations which were marginalized and oppressed for centuries.

Until post-colonial theories were established by intellectuals such as Edward Said, the reflection on colonized people was discussed through “barbarism”, “savagery” and “inferiority”, since it was seen through the colonizer's perspective. However, after the publication of post-colonial works that constituted the reflections and reactions of the colonized, a new way of understanding for the colonial era has occurred. That is to say, the emergence of post-colonial discourse has given voice to the “subaltern” who was incapable of conveying his own ideas since the subaltern was thought to have neither the right to speak nor his words could be heard in an atmosphere where he was seen as “inferior”: there were always some others who dominated the subaltern and thus considered to have the right to speak for the oppressed. Bhabha suggests that the refusal and upheaval of the colonized shifts the boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized, and challenges both history as well as the idea of the civilized man in relation to the civilizer (Bhabha, 1994: 41). This new way of understanding seems to have enabled the oppressed to feel individual rather than a part of an “inferior” group, and created yet another struggle for existence for the natives, since the colonized was taught to be a community defying their origins, the other ones, and not an individual, and,

nevertheless, post-colonialism tends to delve into the meaning of being an individual in a modern world. Existence seems to be a difficult situation for the alienated, renamed, and brain-whited, and although the “self” needs the “other” for existence, the dilemma is, in fact, in the very existence of the individual in the postcolonial period. The clash between identities and cultures, realization of belonging or non-belonging along with alienation make up the core of post-colonial writings and criticism. However, adapting to the situation once and for all seems quite impossible, as the “blackness” isolates the black and forces him to yield. Once a “black” adapts himself to live in a “white” society, justifying his existence upon the white and, in order to achieve morality, “vanishes from consciousness”, to use Fanon’s statement (Fanon, 2008: 150): it seems not easy to go back to his sui-generis culture and nation, therefore, he feels that he has to choose between living as an alien being to his own morals and language, and turning into an outcast for not complying with the culture and language that the colonizer imposes upon him.

The post-colonial writings, as Said suggests, can only be considered significant when the works become “critical of the abused rights of all oppressed classes” (Said, 1994: 218), and post-colonialism is mainly related to “cultural dislocation”, unlike the idea of “diaspora”, which is mainly concerned with “specific traumas of human displacement” (Gandhi, 1998: 131). Said also states that “to accept nativism is to accept the consequences of imperialism, the racial, religious, and political divisions imposed by imperialism itself” (Said, 1994: 264) and this can be thought as well-suited to what Walcott aims to achieve. Indeed, Walcott, as a bearer of the post-colonial wound, struggles to recover his existence and history by reconciling with the divisions, stereotypes, and even with the wound of colonial suffering while also criticising the implementations, moral and social structures, and consequences of colonialism in his works. In this sense, Walcott’s struggle is applicable to Fanon’s suggestion that “This

people that has lost its birthright, that is used to living in the narrow circle of feuds and rivalries, will now proceed in an atmosphere of solemnity to cleanse and purify the face of the nation” (Fanon, 2004: 83). This act of healing the wound of colonialism, for Walcott, is an act of stabilizing the ancestral roots and history by accepting yet not yielding, sounding for cultural mutism, and for reinventing the lost identities due to colonial oppression.

1.2. The Burden of Colonization: Civilization

The term colonialism is crucial in the struggle to define the exploitation of cultures and societies which came into existence with the expansionist policies of the “great powers” for over the last 600 years. Although the implementation of colonialism is said to have emerged with the foundation of empires, colonialism on a broader scale seems to have started with the Age of Discovery, a period when empires sought new means of trade, agriculture, and settlement. Edward Said, in *Culture and Imperialism*, points out that “imperialism” is generally used for the “practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory” whereas “colonialism”, which usually occurs as a result of imperialism, stands for “the implanting of settlements on distant territory” (Said, 1994: 9). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, who was one of the writers suffering the pain of colonialism, claims that defining colonialism is not easy since it bears a hidden meaning beyond expansion and bringing modernization. In *Decolonizing the Mind*, he states:

The real aim of colonialism was to control the people's wealth: what they produced, how they produced it, and how it was distributed; to control, in other words, the entire realm of the language of real life. Colonialism

imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. (Thiong'o, 1994: 16)

Although the apparent image of colonialism shows that countries were in the process of finding new opportunities to develop themselves and broaden their lands, what stood possibly uncovered then was that social and cultural values were part of the colonizers' mission in this process of "discoveries" which they justified as bringing "justice" but, unfortunately, resulting in "injustice". The colonizer defends the opinion that it is his "burden" to bring equality and justice for those who are not developed socially, culturally, or morally, sustaining a life in the lowest grade of social hierarchy. The task of "civilizing" according to the Oxford English Dictionary, similarly, is "to make civil, to bring to a stage of social development considered to be more advanced", in other words, the justified task of the colonizer seems to enlighten, cleanse, and mundify the barbarian, whom the colonizer sees as such. Bhabha suggests that the "English book" (namely the Bible) stands as the main representation of colonial rule and desire to take control and discipline the "uncivilized". The Bible, so to speak, is a "sign taken for wonders" and an idolized sign that eulogizes the centrality and stability of European dominance and asserts that the doctrines of the "English book" taught to the "uncivilized", establish a "civil authority" that would make the natives obedient, yielding and emulative (Bhabha, 1994: 107). Through religious, cultural, and educational oppression, the natives are forced to choose between two unpleasant options: "turn white, or disappear" to use Fanon's words (Fanon, 1967: 120). In this sense, it is not totally wrong to assume that the indigenous people had no right to be in charge of their own actions, as there was always some "masters" to educate, "normalize", and "moralize" them. Encountering and conquering the unknown was obviously an intriguing phenomenon for the settler societies, but what seems more intriguing is their justification of expansionist policies in the name of bringing

modernism, justice, and freedom. Brydon and Tiffin focus on the issue of economic exploitation by claiming that the justification was, in fact, unjustifiable since the task of “civilizing” caused the natives to be “outcasts” on their own territories (Brydon and Tiffin, 1993: 37), leaving them with no language, culture, or tradition to stay connected to. Thiong’o explains how colonialism affected the oppressed as follows:

But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. Economic and political control can, never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. For colonialism this involved two aspects of the same process: the destruction or the deliberate undervaluing of a people's culture, their art, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature, and the conscious elevation of the language of the coloniser. The domination of a people's language by the languages of the colonising nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised (Thiong’o, 1994: 16).

Overall, as Said suggests, colonialism is “fate with lasting, indeed grotesquely unfair results” (Said, 2002: 207). The outcomes of this justified mission of bringing peace and prosperity to the territories that the colonizer assumes as “inferior” builds up the ongoing dilemma of belonging and existence which constitutes the focal point of writings by post-colonial writers like Walcott since poetry is the perfect medium for “mediating and registering the contradictions of split cultural experience” (Ramazani, 2001: 6).

Derek Walcott, in his works, also suggests that the oppression, stereotyping, cultural and linguistic alienation, and hybridisation are not limited only to his nation,

but they bear an international aspect and the justification of colonial experiment seeks edict mostly through Biblical explanations. The pain and suffering are international concepts, and the places where the exploitation and annihilation take place do not have any difference for Walcott, the situation can still be narrated and voiced so as to attain a space of existence in which the othered could familiarize with his past and present. Fanon also asserts a similar approach in *Black Skin, White Masks* stating:

All forms of exploitation resemble one another. They all seek the source of their necessity in some edict of a Biblical nature. All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same “object”: man. When one tries to examine the structure of this or that form of exploitation from an abstract point of view, one simply turns one’s back on the major, basic problem, which is that of restoring man to his proper place. (Fanon, 2008: 65)

In this context, Walcott’s artistic endeavour for abandoning the imposed stereotypes and sets of belief can be considered as a deliberate attempt to “restore” his ancestors to their “proper place” (Fanon, 2008: 65), and release himself from the burden of non-belonging through locating his existence as a “Third Space” poet.

1.3. Dislocation, Othering, and Alienation

The reason behind colonial expansion after the Renaissance is said to be basically based upon “economic exchange” and plantations in colonized places, such as Martinique, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Croix, and Saint Lucia in the Caribbean, were generally founded in terms of providing “raw material” for the colonizer. The process of colonization is considered to be equal and justifiable for the colonizer since the action of

giving – civilizing, teaching, and modernizing – is equalized by taking the land and the sources it granted, along with its inhabitants. In the Atlantic slave trade through Atlantic Middle Passage, a triangular route widely used from the 16th Century to the 19th Century, people primarily from African countries were shipped to North and South America, either to be sold to slave owners or to join the workforce in the plantations there. Economies of the South Atlantic States and Caribbean Islands, especially, were built upon the cheap and sustained workforce provided by the ongoing slave trade. In the middle of the 17th Century, this process of dislocation started to be accepted as a social and racial rank when the slaves and their offspring were seen basically as properties valuable to be sold in slave markets either as workers in the plantations of sugar, cocoa, coffee, and tobacco again, or as servants at home. The ongoing “slave trade” in the Atlantic Middle Passage before the break of the seventeenth century, in this sense, seemingly provided the colonizer with another opportunity to justify the process of colonialism. However, “dislocation” resulted in the loss of cultural, social, and oral traditions of the natives, which left them in a situation that was mostly alien and quite hard to adapt to. As a result of dislocation which also caused alienation to the roots, social and cultural problems in recreating the past have emerged, leaving the natives in a situation in which they felt unable to belong to a certain place. As Yew writes:

One doesn't need to be physically removed from the 'homeland' in order to be exiled. Exile can take place in different cultural spaces, especially through processes like colonization and modernization. In this case by living in a place that has become culturally transformed through colonialism, it's possible for exile to occur particularly when one realizes that a traditional language, a way of life, religion, tribal practices can no longer be articulated or experienced without the mediation of modernity. This

sense causes a sense of loss and displacement from a traditional homeland. (“Exile”)

Culture and tradition of the colonizer were imposed via the education system in the plantations and colonized territories, and since the books the natives read at school depicted the natives in a very different way than they saw themselves, they became alien to their origins. In this sense, when the natives confront two different images of themselves at the same time, they unknowingly tend to distance themselves from their innate values and characteristics, and approach what is shown in the books written by the colonialist mindset. Hence, the link between the outside world - which is imposed - and the inner world - which is innate - collide with each other resulting in a kind of “colonial alienation” (Thiong’o, 1994: 17) and identity crisis for the natives. Bhabha asserts that cultural, social, and individual alienation stemming from colonial oppression results in “aggression, madness, self-hate, treason, and violence” and the subjects of colonialism are always identified as “alien presences, occlusions of historical progress, the ultimate misrecognition of Man” (Bhabha, 1994: 43). By alienation of the “other”, the possibility of existing as an individual is precluded for the colonized, and the colonized becomes unable to act or decide according to his own traditions or way of thinking, in other words, he becomes the “subaltern”.

Edward W. Said suggests that the term “othering” is commonly used for the act of creating an “other” which could be seen as “inferior”, “savage”, and “undeveloped both morally, culturally, and sociologically”, and the concept of “Orientalism” is therefore closely related to “othering”, since Orientalism is a Western way of thinking and “orientalising the Orient” so that it seems “different” and “othered” (Said, 1979: 65). Therefore, the notion that establishes and sustains the idea of the “other” is the existence of “an-other”, who by means of hierarchical or political power, or by individually inherited “right” to insult and disparage the “other”, creates the gap which

people are still struggling to fill. In this process of “orientalising the orient”, certain sets of rules and clichés are imposed upon the “subject” that could be labelled as “different”, and as a result of these disciplines, a new form of existence within the society is formed - docile and detached from the origins. This “other”, according to the Marxist philosophy, “cannot represent themselves” and thus, “must be represented” (qtd. in *Culture and Imperialism*, 277) and cannot exist without a superior power or master, which legitimizes and justifies the process of colonization. Gayatri C. Spivak, in her prominent essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” also suggests a similar idea that the people subjected to colonialism are marginalized, and cannot express themselves due to the oppression and alienation: their voices cannot be heard even if they manage to speak up, and therefore, must be represented through “others” who dominate them. This process of marginalisation emerges because the culture, language, and social characteristics of a country are repressed, and the culture and language of the colonizer dominate over the native culture and language. This “othered subject” which is muted and stereotyped in the colonial period reappears in Walcott’s poems, as well as in other works of the post-colonial period, both as the victim and as the representative, with the aim of self-discovery, proving existence, and recreation of a past for the colonial subject to cling on.

Furthermore, for Thiong’o, the process of “othering” was achieved through representations of false images of a degenerate society in settler colonies in which the colonized basically mimics and copies the behaviour of the colonizer, to achieve a higher status within the society. This happens because the oppressed people are forced to abandon not only their original characteristics but also their cultural traits, and these values are recreated again upon the request of the colonizer. In his essay titled “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”, Stuart Hall shares almost the same idea as Thiong’o by suggesting that “Colonisation is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip

and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (Hall, 1996: 224). To explain this situation better, Fanon shares his personal experience about a Caribbean schoolboy who considered himself as white, and tended to adopt the "white logic" because of the colonial education he was exposed to:

The black schoolboy in the Antilles, who in his lessons is forever talking about "our ancestors, the Gauls," identifies himself with the explorer, the bringer of civilization, the white man who carries truth to savages—an all-white truth. There is identification—that is, the young Negro subjectively adopts a white man's attitude. [...] Because the Antillean does not think of himself as a black man; he thinks of himself as an Antillean. The Negro lives in Africa. Subjectively, intellectually, the Antillean conducts himself like a white man. But he is a Negro. (Fanon, 2008: 114)

On the other hand, Edouard Glissant, who is considered as one of the most powerful figures in Caribbean ideology and culture, states that by "erasing the past" in a meticulous way through colonial oppression, the natives are alienated to themselves because their "collective memory" is eradicated, and this leaves them no other choice but to "mimic" what is shown to them (Glissant, 1999: 161). However, he also believes that there is a difference between those who are simply "transferred into other people" and who "maintained their original nature" and this seems no more than the fact that the first group fails to perpetuate "the methods of existence and survival", which, in other words, does not really exist even if he exists physically (Glissant, 1999: 15). The problems that Walcott and his ancestors experience, in this sense, are closely related to these outcomes of colonization. His works are important in portraying characters which,

in a way, “mimic” the oppressor and at the same time struggle to survive and cling on to the age-long traditions.

The process of alienation through dislocating the natives seems to have gotten worse with the emergence of the action of othering through “race” and “colour”, which are also commonly used as a means of justification for colonization. Within these periods and onwards the issue of race was not considered as an issue of difference in “skin colours” or “inferiority” because of lack of opportunities. On the contrary, race became an issue of “inferiority” apart from historical connotations, but in fact, race meant being “biologically inferior”. Frantz Fanon suggests that the most common form of mimicry is by teaching the colonized how to be a “negro” in their own eyes (Fanon, 2008: vi, 139). For the colonizer, the basic difference between “the civilized” and “the barbarian”, which does not need any other proof or justification, is the skin colour. Whiteness, as Fanon claims, stands for “truth”, “justice”, “virginity”, in addition to modernity and humanity whereas blackness suggests “ugliness”, “evil”, sin, and immorality, and therefore, there apparently occurs a vicious circle, a dilemma, since the “black man” struggles to be “white”, and “white man” enslaves the “black” to attain “the human level” (Fanon, 2008: vi, 139). The oppression of the colonizer over the colonized forces “the black man” to lose his “ego”, “self-esteem”, “self-motivation”, and cultural values, and hence, obliges the natives to internalize the idea of white man’s “superiority” (Fanon, 2008, 83). Due to objectification, the “black” sees the “white” as normal, “everyman”, thus, “the other” tries to become like “the ideal” to achieve a status in the society where he tries to exist, yet, is unable to do so. Through religious statements, the process of dehumanization through skin colour continues securing its position in the justification of colonial discourse: “We are the chosen people—look at the color of our skins. The others are black or yellow: That is because of their sins” which enables the “white” to see himself “a priori”: “the predestined master of this

world” (Fanon, 2008: xvi, 19). By convincing “the black” on their “inferiority” and “the white man’s” superiority via seeking approval in the edicts of religion and bestowing upon the black an “inborn complex”, to use Fanon’s words, colonialism seems to achieve what is intended (Fanon, 2008: 87). Fanon narrates his personal experience of detesting his own kin: “As I begin to recognize that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro” (Fanon, 2008: 197). In this sense, the indigenous are, forcibly or willingly, turned into mummified objects, hating their origins, traditions, and language, and the mission of “alienating from the essence”, to use Bhabha’s words, is achieved (Bhabha, 1994: 89). Fanon writes:

My body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recolored, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it’s cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother’s arms: Mama, the nigger’s going to eat me up. (Fanon, 2008: 86)

By convincing the “colonized” about the “inferiority” and “backwardness” of his race, the “subaltern” was “othered” and “silenced” by the socio-cultural, linguistic and educational oppression. The dilemma the “othered” encounters in terms of social norms and language results in the “in-betweenness” and “hybridity” of the individual, lacking the sense of belonging, common history, and cultural traits; hence, it is fair to suggest that dislocation of the people and othering, used as a means of marginalizing the natives and turning the natives into “obedient entities”, result in cultural, linguistic, and social alienation. In this sense, Walcott aims to break the chains and get rid of the stereotype

of the “other” created by colonialist thought. As a person with an unstable and impure history and ancestry, Walcott struggles to shape an-other self which is capable of existing in the altered world of post-colonialism and still feeling attached to the original roots.

1.4. Creolization

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin assert that “creole”, as an English term, is “derived from the Portuguese *Criolulu* (Spanish *criollo*) meaning ‘native’, via the French *créole*, meaning indigenous” which was originally used to describe people of “European descent” but “born and raised in a tropical colony” and, in the following periods was also used for “indigenous natives and others of non-European origin” (Ashcroft et al., 2007: 50). Apart from people, the term also connotes the “languages spoken by Creoles in and around the Caribbean and in West Africa”, and although it does not bear any reference of colour according to Oxford English Dictionary, it still continues to represent for Europeans a “threat of colonial miscegenation” (Ashcroft et al. 2007: 51). The emergence of creoles seems not surprising since “colonial education” is given through the language of “the master” and people are forced to define and accept themselves in terms of “imperialist imposition” (Thiong’o, 1994: 5). The perfection in the implementation of alienation and othering through colonial education seems to be achieved so smoothly that the colonized people suddenly find themselves in a “subaltern” position, in Gramsci’s term. They are taught how to hate and be ashamed of their sui-generis origins, and fall short of expressing themselves indigenously in their own languages, which is considered as the god-given right of every nation. In this sense, it seems that they are put into a position where they are seen as second class, slaves to

their masters, nothing without their “bringer of civilization”, and were conditioned to think that they would definitely revert back to the era of “barbarism, degradation and bestiality” without their bringer of justice (Fanon, “On National”, 37). Thiong’o expresses this process of alienation in language through oppression, humiliation, and the “colonial” way of education via his own experience:

Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu¹ in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given, corporal punishment - three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks - or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as *I AM STUPID* or *I AM A DONKEY*. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teachers catch the culprits? A button was initially given to one pupil who was supposed to hand it over to whoever was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. Thus children were turned into witch hunters and in the process were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community. (Thiong’o, 1994: 11)

Thiong’o suggests that no exculpating was granted to the “culprits”, contrarily, when students developed perfection in writing or speaking English, they were “highly rewarded; prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms”, since the language of the master was seen as “the measure of intelligence and ability” which paved the way for the students to elevate themselves to the status of “colonial elitedom” (Thiong’o, 1994: 12). Thiong’o states that language bears two crucial roles within: the “carrier of culture” and the “means of communication”. It is the carrier of cultures because it passes the traditions and origins through generations, creates a national link between

¹ A local language spoken by the largest ethnic group, the Kikuyu people, in Kenya.

generations, and it is the means of language because it allows the same group of people to interact with each other which is the “basis of evolving cultures” (Thiong’o, 1994: 14). Patke suggests that this process is achieved through the idea of “turning savages into evolved” (Patke, 2006: 107) beings through colonial discourse, which results in the emergence of a conscience “culturally alien” (Bhabha, 1994: 135). The language could be seen as a medium for the natives for getting higher social status, a medium for breaking the chains with their dark, unknown side as Fanon states:

Every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (Fanon, 2008: 9)

Thiong’o, however, notes that it is impossible for human beings to continue their existence as a nation bearing the same traits without using the same language for communication by stating that values, carried through language, are the “basis of a people’s identity, their sense of particularity as members of the human race”, and language in terms of a cultural phenomenon “is the collective memory bank of a people’s experience in history” (Thiong’o, 1994: 15). Thus, language stands for one of the most important elements in the creation of the self; the identity which is apparently aimed to be destroyed by the oppressor through colonial education, resulting in what Memmi calls as “cultural catastrophe” (Memmi, 2003: 151). Thiong’o goes further to explain that language, by carrying culture and culture carrying language, helps us discover “ourselves” and “our place” (Thiong’o, 1994: 16) in the world, and is as close as two coats of paint for a nation sharing the same traditional values, same culture, and

history that it is not possible for us to think otherwise. In this sense, it would not be wrong to assume that Walcott uses the oppressor's language as well as creoles in his writings, with the aim of recreating identity and culture which would not be alien to the readers of Caribbean descent, and the employment of creoles in his poems also serve a means of voicing the oppression and suffering experienced by the natives.

To speak is to exist in an alien atmosphere where one's body, past, and future seems insignificant, and the only way to exist is to speak out loud, to give voice to the sufferer to convey the misery unheard, ignored, and unaccepted. Despite the fact that the language of the civilizer is used as a means of gaining social status for "blacks" in the colonial period, it is mostly used as a tool of existence in post-colonial writings. As Glissant suggests:

[...] poetics, the implicit or explicit manipulation of self-expression, is at the same time the only weapon that memory has against this human waste and the only place to shed light on it, both in terms of an awareness of our place in the world and our reflection on the necessary and disalienated relationship with the Other. To declare one's own identity is to write the world into existence. (Glissant, 1999: 169)

Socio-cultural and educational systems were forcibly imposed on the people on the colonized territories result in the disappearance of common cultural characteristics and shared culture. However, the in-betweenness is also the only possible way out for the "subaltern" individual in his aim to create a meaningful history to feel familiar. It is quite interesting that the situation which results in the evanescence of the self, chokes the poet and his ancestry by causing a socio-cultural and linguistic dilemma is also the element that gives the post-colonial bearer of the "colonial wound" the power to survive and revive the past. Fanon states that language is one of the most important mediums

which “supports the weight of a civilization” (Fanon, 2008: 8) and even though the oppressed individual wants to write and speak in his own language in the postcolonial period, there seems to be no consistent group that he could address in that language, and that is why he again turns to “bow” to his master’s language. It is the same destruction that saves them from extinction as English fixes up “internal unity” (Patke, 2006: 55), amongst the people who have lost “deeper levels” of their selves (Patke, 2006: 68). In this sense, it will not be wrong to assert that some poets, writers as well as the people, after becoming independent, kept on using English to maintain affinity and to turn the marginalized image of the post-colonial identities back to the sui-generis characteristics to release from the burden of post-colonial trauma.

1.5. Hybridism and In-Betweenness

In Homi K. Bhabha’s work, *The Location of Culture* (1994), “hybridism” is defined as an outcome of colonial oppression and by means of hybridization, new identities and traditions are formed that are both resistant and docile, adopting values of the colonizer with the intention of constructing a third identity, an identity described by him as “third-space” or “in-between” (Bhabha, 1994: 217-219). He aims to suggest a proper position for the clash of two cultures in the post-colonial period and points out that this “in-between” space for the effect of two cultures is called “hybridism”. Bhabha states that in the contact space, a hybrid presence which basically mimics the oppressor’s characteristics and seems “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994: 86) emerges, and the existence and acceptance of this third-space is possible when the voices of these hybrid presences are heard. Bhabha states:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. (Bhabha, 1994: 38)

It is the hybrid individual that experiences, survives, and continues to live with the burden of colonialism and possesses the meaning of culture and origins; therefore, the idea that is carried through this third-space is quite significant. Bhabha's contact space, "Third Space", can be considered as a place where the voice of the "subaltern" can be heard, which stands as an answer to Spivak's question "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" in the post-colonial period. Spivak directs the question for those who have "no history and cannot speak" (Spivak, 1988: 82), who are oppressed, othered, and muted by colonialist mindset and comments on the conscience of subaltern as follows:

When we come to the concomitant question of the consciousness of the subaltern, the notion of what the work *cannot* say becomes important. In the semioses of the social text, elaborations of insurgency stand in the place of 'the utterance'. The sender, - 'the peasant' - is marked only as a pointer to an irretrievable consciousness. As for the receiver we must ask who is 'the real receiver' of an 'insurgency'? (Spivak, 1988: 82)

The colonial subject is forced to detach from the innate characteristics through colonial oppression and teachings, and therefore creates an "identity" which is alien to its original roots, cultures, and languages. However, this newly formed identity clashes with the innate identity, leaving the individual unable to feel familiar to the world around him: it is the state of being "surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty", to use Fanon's phrase (Fanon, 2008: 83). Edward Said states that the post-

colonial individual is indeed “the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, between languages” (Said, 1994: 332), and the process of hybridity is achieved by “depersonalization of the collective sphere” which results in the emergence of the question of “Who am I?” (Fanon, 2004: 182, 219). The process of stereotyping the natives creates a division in the personality and a “deep psychic uncertainty” since the “black soul” is the product of the “white man” (Fanon, 2008: 6). The “black” exists only via the qualifications of existence that the “white” granted him, the place, time, and presence are all identified by the “other”, therefore, the state of in-betweenness emerges as a result of the disturbing distance between “the white man’s artifice” and “black man’s body” and real existence (Bhabha, 1994: 45). Nevertheless, the true identity of existence could be acquired through delving into the past, using the contact space of “Third Space”, in which the in-between, or the hybridised, could reconcile with the differences and find similarities and connections with the present existence. Fanon describes this phenomenon as:

a continued agony than a total disappearance of the pre-existing culture. This culture, once living and open to the future, becomes closed, fixed in the colonial status, caught in the yoke of oppression. Both present and mummified, it testifies against its members. It defines them in fact without appeal. The cultural mummification leads to a mummification of individual thinking. The apathy so universally noted among colonial peoples is but the logical consequence of this operation. The reproach of inertia constantly directed at "the native" is utterly dishonest. As though it were possible for a man to evolve otherwise than within the framework of a culture that recognizes him and that he decides to assume. (Fanon, 1994: 34)

Although the aim of colonial oppression is not to annihilate the pre-existing culture but to leave the natives “suffer” lifetime so that they could be “obedient and docile”,

hybridity caused by colonial oppression, at the end, shakes the foundations of colonial thought and makes colonialist authority lose power as the individual becomes aware of the fact that the imposed characteristics are not of his origins. The emergence and avowal of hybridism in language, culture, and blood are important since it constitutes the core of the post-colonial writings in which the writers like Walcott use their hybrid state and language to narrate the untold with the aim of raising awareness, justifying existence, and sometimes as a tool for protesting. As for post-colonial Caribbean discourse, the aim is to give voice to this repressed hybrid presences as a means of regaining existence, and reconciling with the in-betweenness that the natives experience as P. S. Chauhan states:

Shielded by European security and lulled by their national achievements, the Western writers remained oblivious of the ruthless political rivalries, the brutal slave trade, and the blind exploitation that had been let loose into the Caribbean basin by the European colonizers. But the natives, who had tasted the whip and suffered inhuman dignities, remembered the degradation of their ancestors at the hands of planters and their overseers. The modern Caribbean discourse is, therefore, generated by a dialectical interaction between a pastoral nostalgia and a national nightmare. (Chauhan, 1996: 45)

It is clear that, for Walcott, the Caribbean discourse of is the recreation of nostalgia of the “ghastly” memories of the past. Bhabha’s clarification of the aim of the book in the foreword to *Black Skin, White Masks* also sheds light to the “in-between” situation of the natives and paves the way for a better understanding for the readers. Fanon suggests that being a “hybrid” is not something that we can call as normal and simple, on the contrary, it seems like a compilation of different branches entangled yet still makes sense in its sophistication. Bhabha states that this state of in-betweenness:

[...] is not a neat division; it is a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once which makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable *evolué* (an abandonment neurotic, Fanon claims) to accept the colonizer's invitation to identity: "You're a doctor, a writer, a student, you're *different* you're one of *us*." It is precisely in that ambivalent use of "different"—to be different from those that are different makes you the same—that the Unconscious speaks of the form of Otherness, the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement. It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness—the White man's artifice inscribed on the black man's body. (Bhabha, Foreword to the 1986 Edition, p. xxviii)

In this sense, it is the hybridity that pushes Walcott's pencil to narrate the suffering and the sense of in-betweenness his people experience, the hybridity in which Walcott tries to find his existence, and by doing so, discover the hidden past waiting to be unearthed for the post-colonial presences to break free from the trauma of the colonial experiment.

1.6. Memory Making

The past is one of the fundamental features that shape human beings, and since man cannot survive in an unnatural atmosphere to his own, memory creation stands as a way of creating a "natural sphere" (Memmi, 2003: 70). According to Locke, the true identity of the existence of a person is acquired through delving into the past (qtd. in Bhabha, 1994: 48), yet, Bhabha claims that the act of remembering the past is painful, but still, it is achieved for making sense of the present sufferings; suggesting that

remembering and reconstructing the past is bringing together the “dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present” (Bhabha, 1994: 63). However, memory making, because of the effects of colonial education, alienates the colonized people from their original memory and traditions since their original forms are either “petrified or dead”. In this sense, memory making becomes shameful and ridiculous and, as a result, the only possible path of resistance seems to be accepting “assimilation” or “petrification” (Memmi, 2003: 146-7). To take shelter and feel safe in a remote community, the “totally” colonized attempts to hide his past either by totally assimilating to the original forms or forgetting to have forgotten the past. The role of the poets, like Derek Walcott, in this sense, is to remind the natives and the reader about their culture and memory, and show that recreation of the past is not a disgraceful experience, on the contrary, it is an act which could be recognized as brave and prideful. As Marlene Phillip puts it, “Poetry and history share one burden: memory. Just as there can be no history without memory, poetry can come into being only when it remembers that languages have been lost, taken, and forgotten”, nevertheless, sometimes the memory is jeopardized not by “forgetfulness”, instead, by the past itself (qtd. in Patke, 2006: 26, 77), since the present shaped by the oppression and trauma of the past halts the way for a return to the forgotten and undervalued cultural elements.

Fanon claims that delving into personality, having a deeper look at the characteristics of the self, is the only way of gaining existence in an atmosphere which does not let one survive on its own; therefore, both African and Caribbean poets like Walcott choose different ways of scrutinizing their “selves”, and to take the “genuine” connotation as it is suggested by Bhabha, it is possible that the works created by these “Third Space” writers would include traits and effects of both traditions and cultures. Through blending these cultures in their writings, they would create a “hybrid” literature on its own, since this state of in-betweenness is the carrier of cultural traits

through generations (2008:181). However, Michael Rothberg, in “Remembering Back: Cultural Memory, Colonial Legacies, and Postcolonial Studies”, claims that although works written in the post-colonial era do not explicitly employ the term “memory”, the term “remembrance” is obvious amongst them (2013: 361). Rothberg states that memory creation is crucial since the process also generates an atmosphere for the individual to exist where no trace of “collective memory”, to use M. Halbwachs’ term, is discernible as a result of colonialism. As Halbwachs suggests, the individuals are modelled through social norms and language which are linked to a common past, and they dwell in correlative societies such as “families”, “religions”, and “regions” that shape their individual and correlative identities and create a common background, and eventually establish a “cultural memory” (see Assmann, 2008) by the process of representation of memory “through images, symbols, rituals, and landmarks” (qtd in Rothberg, 2013: 362-3). Indeed, to develop and resurrect cultural consciousness and collective memory Derek Walcott, in his works, uses the landmarks, images, symbols, and even historical figures that would seem familiar to the individuals in search for a common history, and thus constitute a self-exploration-space for the post-colonial individual to prove existence: a process which Breslin calls an “imaginative recovery of the past, breaking through the amnesia of diaspora and enslavement” (Breslin, 2001: 251). Rothberg also states that the endeavour against “colonialism” suggests a “struggle over collective memory” (Rothberg, 2013: 365) since colonialism “ruptures both the past-present continuities embedded in the practices of everyday living and the larger symbolic systems that give shape, continuity, and coherence to cultures over time”, therefore, he asserts that the anti-colonial process has evolved memory into a “tool in the struggle against the ‘colonial machine’ that results in the evanescence of cultural traits (Rothberg, 2013: 365-6).

The social and therefore individual trauma experienced as a result of colonialism destroys the prevalent cultural traits and forms a gap in memory, a wound that needs to be reconciled. As Leila Gandhi suggests, the aim of post-colonial and subaltern studies is to “allow the ‘people’ finally to speak within the jealous pages of elitist historiography and, in so doing, to speak for, or to sound the muted voices of, the truly oppressed” (Gandhi, 1998: 2). Although it seems impossible to go back to a stage in history where the post-colonial individual or sufferer could find himself in the purity and intactness of the pre-colonial period, memory creation emerges as the most crucial medium between the colonial suffering and search for existence in the post-colonial era. For this act of recovery in the post-colonial period, L. Gandhi states that “the colonial aftermath calls for an ameliorative and therapeutic theory which is responsive to the task of remembering and recalling the colonial past” (Gandhi, 1998: 8), and rewriting the history, culture, and identities could be seen as an act of “disinterment of unpalatable memories” in order to divulge the “overwhelming and lasting violence of colonisation” (Gandhi, 1998: 10).

For Ralph R. Premdas, it seems logical to think that a human is considered to be a “boundary-bound animal” that exists within a society. He suggests that the creation of “the other” is sometimes the only solution in the pursuit of the creation of “the self” and, “belonging” seems to be a crucial element in the struggle for existence (Premdas, 1996: 3). Belonging is thus important because it is one of the outcomes of cultural consciousness that binds together the differences in a community. For the post-colonial people who suffered and left with “no surviving languages and civilizations”, to use Premdas’ phrase, the process of recreation is quite difficult. However, Derek Walcott states that “The sigh of history rises over ruins, not over landscapes, and in the Antilles, there are few ruins to sigh over, apart from the ruins of sugar estates and abandoned forts” (qtd. in Premdas, 1996:13). In this sense, the only solution is recreating a

homeland, reinventing a “space” for themselves and their memory of history to exist, and this seems exactly what Walcott aims to achieve: to put it simply by using Cathy Caruth’s explanation, it is “the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available” (Caruth, 1996: 4).

In the poems scrutinized in this thesis, the aim of Derek Walcott’s writings, which are mostly used as a means of giving voice to the unheard, narrating the continual pain passed down through generations, and rebuilding one’s heritage despite being in an in-between state can explicitly be seen. The loss of voice, the trauma of slavery, the detachment from one’s ancestral heritage, the nostalgia for the past, and amnesia as a result of colonial oppression are skilfully and meticulously conveyed through elements and references in his poems, which are generally seen as results of his colonial education and hybrid state.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF DEREK WALCOTT'S SELECTED POEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF IN-BETWEENNESS, HYBRIDITY, AND MEMORY MAKING

2.1. Derek Walcott's In-Betweenness

"I have crossed an ocean
I have lost my tongue
from the root of the old one
a new one has sprung."

Grace Nichols

The Caribbean, which is considered as one of the main supply sources of raw material for the process of colonialism, has suffered from the economic, social, and political outcomes of colonialism as an island chain. The natives of the Caribbean have suffered the exploitation and bloodshed during the colonial experiment, as well as social and cultural outcomes. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin suggest that the "Caribbean" and "West Indian" are mostly reciprocally employed in literary texts as well as geographical fields as an attribution to the people inhabiting the islands of the Caribbean Sea and further neighbouring places in South and Central America. However, it would be essential to understand some differences between the "Caribbean" and "West Indian" as the former involves the communities of the island living in the regions such as Guyana and Belize, and the latter is relevant solely to the societies which were ex-colonies of Britain such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, and St. Lucia. The word "Caribbean" seems to have originated from the Spanish word "caribal", which is also thought as an Amerindian word heard incorrectly by the settlers, whereas "West Indies" is used as a correspondence to "East Indies" - the "spice islands of Asia" - which Columbus struggled to find, yet, discovered the Caribbean instead in 1492 (Ashcroft et al., 2007:

27). Therefore, as Chris Bongie states, the Caribbean is “a place with no stable cultural origin” (Bongie, 1998: 23), which does not seem incorrect when we consider the instability and hybrid state of its population.

The common idea that the colonized societies tend to “mirror” and “mimic” the imposed cultures are discernible in the Caribbean, since the island chain has considerably suffered from the socio-cultural outcomes of colonialism. Fanon suggests:

Every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country.
(Fanon, 2008: 9)

The Caribbean, which was subjected to cultural, linguistic, and social oppression, lost its original cultural characteristics in the colonial process, and the people of the Caribbean were forcibly made submissive by the act of “othering”, which left the people with a dilemma of belonging and existence, as well as creolization. The culture, which is a blend of the local and the imposed, and the language, which has been hybridised via colonial education, beyond doubt contribute to the styles of writings which are created by the “Third World” writers. In a similar way, Walcott explains that the majority of people living on the colonized places “have nothing to lose” because of “their history of slavery, colonialism, famine, economic exploitation, patronage, contempt” adding that:

[...] powerlessness leaves the Third World, the ex-colonial world, no alternative but to imitate those systems offered to or forced on it by the major powers, their political systems which must alter their common life, their art, their language, their philosophy. (Walcott, 1974: 5)

There are still cultural and linguistic traits which exist untouched or unforgotten in this post-colonial space, however, these characteristics need to be unearthed with the help of the writers that belong to the literary space referred as the “Third Space” and create the post-colonial “Third Space” writings in literature, and although those traits are not intact, their existence lessens the agony and the trauma of slavery and colonialism in general. Hall suggests two definitions of the “national identity” of the Caribbean: the first is that the culture is made up of a collective culture that is familiar to the people sharing a common past existing within enforced sets of rules and disciplines, and these identities:

[...] reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. This 'oneness', underlying all the other, more superficial differences, is the truth, the essence, of 'Caribbeanness', of the black experience. It is this identity which a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express through ... representation. (Hall, 1994: 223)

The second definition of “national identity”, according to Hall, is that it does not only refer to the past, yet is also about the future and does not exist as a mere means of “recovery of the past” suggesting an eternal sense of belonging and existence in the present and the future when the past is unearthed. These “identities”, Hall states, “are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (Hall, 1994: 225). Either way, Walcott’s aim seems to be relevant to both definitions Hall suggests, since Walcott’s works reflect the “common shared past” subsisting within an alien present and presence, and seek a

“recovery of the past” (Hall, 1994: 225) by an indefatigable attempt of revisiting the past to secure the present and future.

Born in the Caribbean island of St. Lucia in 1930, Derek Walcott had a mixed origin of English, Dutch, and African descendants. His father was a British civil servant, watercolourist, and poet, and his mother was a West Indian schoolteacher with a deep interest in arts and poetry. The family was a member of the minority Methodist community, which was influenced by the Catholicism of the French colonial rule long-established on the island. Since both his mother and father took a close interest in education, arts, and poetry, they placed a great emphasis on the education and improvement of their children. Therefore, it is not surprising that their children, Roderick, twin brother of Derek Walcott, became a playwright who worked hard in the creation of an idiosyncratic theatre in the Caribbean, and Walcott himself became a Nobel Prize-winning poet and playwright of his island. Being a citizen of the ex-colonial island of Saint Lucia and a descendant of mixed heritage, Walcott’s personal interest in the issues of hybridism and in-betweenness in the creation of his poetry is understandable. Nevertheless, what is also praiseworthy is his tireless efforts in voicing the unheard, unknown, and unspoken; the pain of his ancestors as well as his island.

As a person living in this region with “no stable origin”, Derek Walcott’s life and works convey this instability of differences, which in a way suggests his existential struggle, and instability of the land and people itself historically, which he describes as “deprived of what we cannot remember, or what, when we visit its origins never existed the way we imagined” (qtd. in Griffith, 2010: 4). As a result of the process of othering, detachment from roots, and alienation, in the places Walcott travels with the hope of finding traits of his origins, he mostly comes across the remnants of his past which seem unfamiliarly familiar. This dilemma is clearly depicted through vivid examples in his poems which will be dealt with in the following chapter. It is interesting, still, how

Walcott is so aware of his divided existence when it comes to describing it. In an interview with Luigi Sampietro, Walcott states that the islands of the Caribbean have encountered a variety of divisions including historical, cultural, and even geographical. Additionally, the natives living on the islands have also experienced racial, linguistic, and ancestral divisions. His aim in narrating all these divisions is to form a unity where people may stitch up their wounds and feel alive once again. It is this “diversity” which paves the way for the creativity of the poets and writers in the post-colonial era, and because a total return to the origins may not be possible, historically at least, Walcott recreates the atmosphere where imagination is able to create and revive racial memory with the aim of liberating from the “historical burden” (Breslin, 2001: 249). Patricia Ismond in *Abandoning Dead Metaphors* similarly states that Walcott disavows the burden and the argued reality of having no history and discloses and re-establishes “a denied Caribbean selfhood in terms that achieve a transvaluation of the traditional idea of history” (Ismond, 2001: 10).

Derek Walcott uses the oral traditions of his people and also the acquired “English” traditions in his poetry, which is why he mostly refers to his Afro-Caribbean and European sides as “schizophrenic,” “mongrel,” and “mulatto of style”. Because of the fact that he had been educated by the disciplines of colonial education, it seems not surprising that he felt an intimacy with Irish writers such as W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, and J. M. Synge, —“They were the niggers of Britain”—with the same paradoxical hatred for the British Empire and worship of the English language” (Walcott, 2001: 49). Ramazani asserts Walcott’s affinity with the Irish writers as follows:

Passionately identifying with Yeats, Joyce, Synge, and other Irish writers, Walcott shared especially in their conflicted response to the cultural inheritances of the British Empire — its literature, religion, and language. At school, Walcott recalls, Joyce’s Stephen Dedalus was his

“hero”: “Like him, I was a knot of paradoxes,” among other things “learning to hate England as I worshipped her language.” (Ramazani, 2001: 49).

In this sense, it is obvious that Walcott’s attempt seems to be paying the colonialist mindset back in its own coin by means of using the language and doctrines of the “English Book” which stands as a means of “civilization” as well as accepting the results such as the English language which had granted him with the opportunity to reach large masses worldwide for his purpose of voicing the silent side of his ancestry. Nevertheless, he was also successful in protesting against the “destruction” it has brought to his native land. He admits that he has a mixture of blood and culture, which left him with nothing but paradoxes, enabling him to create a hybrid tradition in poetry.

Walcott studied at St. Mary’s College in Saint Lucia and at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. His interest in poetry started at an early age and he became an honoured, eminent and highly productive poet who eagerly used English, being deeply impressed by modernist poets such as T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. He also felt himself responsible for narrating, and sometimes protesting against, the pains and sufferings brought to his “island childhood” by the colonial powers whose aim was to rule, to use Bhabha’s words, the “dark unruly spaces” (Bhabha, 1994: 107) which were not touched by religion or civilization:

Forty years gone, in my island childhood, I felt that
the gift of poetry had made me one of the chosen,
that all experience was kindling to the fire of the Muse
(Walcott, *Collected Poems*, 494).

Exploring the Caribbean and its history in a colonialist and post-colonialist context, his collection *In a Green Night: Poems 1948-1960* (1962) helped him gain international recognition as a post-colonial poet and writer. His poetry aims to disclose the paradoxes and multiplicities of his heritage. Besides, Methodism, which is a result

of the “English book” and religious doctrines which were originally alien to his own culture, has had a considerable importance in his writings from the beginning. On receiving the Nobel Prize in literature in 1992, Walcott talks about his idea of poetry as a way to scrutinize his past suggesting that:

Poetry, which is perfection's sweat but which must seem as fresh as the raindrops on a statue's brow, combines the natural and the marmoreal; it conjugates both tenses simultaneously: the past and the present, if the past is the sculpture and the present the beads of dew or rain on the forehead of the past. There is the buried language and there is the individual vocabulary, and the process of poetry is one of excavation and of self-discovery (from the Nobel Lecture, 1992).

While giving his Nobel Lecture, Walcott gives tangible clues on the points paving the way for his achievement: a buried ancestry with all its traits and a new, formed heritage. This lecture is important especially because it enables a clear understanding of how his poetry has emerged. Baugh comments on the understanding of Walcott's writings by stating that it provides a clear framework for Walcott's ideas as follows: “This interest is by no means parochial or limiting. For Walcott, to define himself as a Caribbean man is to delineate a view of the world and to locate himself in the world.” (Baugh, 2006: 1). He was objective in his views and writings, and his aim was to prove his and his nation's existence in a space which is referred to as “Third Space” where he really felt familiar suggesting a sense of belonging to a certain past. In other words, he was trying to get rid of the chains of in-betweenness by using the same in-betweenness in his poetry.

The following chapter of this study delves into Walcott's poetry, employing different aspects and themes, and centres around the issue of in-betweenness in his

endeavour of voicing the trauma of his ancestry. When a thorough analysis is conducted, it can be seen that almost all his works deal with the trauma of hybridity and in-betweenness, and his aim to reconstruct his identity through memory making. Nevertheless, the other concepts which can be detected in his works such as creolization, subalternity, and alienation add up to the concepts of in-betweenness and hybridity since all are considered as interrelated results of colonial oppression.

The works Walcott wrote in his lifetime were written with the purpose of proving the existence of his “self” in search of his roots and national identity. Almost all of his works include the problems that his nation has encountered, ranging from colonialism to the contemporary identity crisis that the Caribbean people suffer. The movements taking place after the decolonization process of the Caribbean, which started in the late 18th and lasted until early mid-19th centuries, were shaped with the aim of creating a national identity which would comply with the original Caribbean identity. In this sense, the writers of the post-colonial period such as Walcott have committed themselves to the “the task of re/creating new myths about their newly independent countries, to *caribbeanize* what was considered purely European” (Mohanram and Rajan, 1996: 11).

As a hybrid poet with a blend of various cultures, the reality that Walcott’s works revolve around the problems and consequences of the colonial period is not surprising. The poet James Dickey asserts his view on Walcott as such:

Here he is, a twentieth century man, living in the West Indies and in Boston, poised between the blue sea and its real fish... and the rockets and the warheads, between a lapsed colonial culture and the industrial North, between Africa and the West, between slavery and intellectualism, between the native Caribbean tongue and the English learned from books, between the black and white of his

own body, between the sound of the home ocean and the lure of European culture. (qtd. in *The New York Times*, 1986)

Indeed, James Dickey's definition could be considered as an exact definition if Walcott were to describe himself. As a poet reflecting his own duality of ancestral roots, Walcott was also trying to find out what it meant to love the English language yet detest English imperialism in many of his poems. It is obvious that Walcott was able to draw parallels between his native language and history, and the English tradition forced upon his nation through literature, which stood as the only alternative to express his reactions and thoughts on imperialism. Through combining the Homeric style with his native tradition and traditional figures, he achieved the creation of a "hybrid" poetry rich in sources and understanding. Most of his poems, in this sense, seem to be written firstly because of his need to voice the silenced part of his heritage which was annihilated through colonial education, slavery, hybridity in language as well as in religion, and estrangement resulted by the collective trauma of hybridity of his nation.

The poems analyzed in this chapter are categorized in different terms which are commonly discussed in the post-colonial era. The sub-chapters of this section can be seen as bearing a chronological pattern starting from the colonization process to decolonization since the first sub-chapter consists of the themes of the early colonization period, the second chapter basically talks about the ever-lasting outcomes of colonization – hybridity and in-betweenness –, and the last chapter portrays a hybrid poet's struggle to recreate memories so that his and his ancestors' existence could be proven in the post-colonial period. Although the themes vary, Walcott's attempt on giving voice to the silent side of his ancestry and creating a national identity by using the outcomes of the colonial oppression remain unchanged. Every single motif or theme Walcott uses in his poems that constitute the basis of this study paves the way for his

effort for reviving the historical reality and trauma of colonialism to create a safe space in the post-colonial period to free the “colonialism-stricken” entities from the burden of existence in an alien atmosphere.

2. 2. Civilizing Burden, Othering, and Voicing The Silence

This sub-chapter scrutinizes several poems from different collections, including *In a Green Night: Poems* (1962-64), *The Castaway and Other Poems* (1965-69), *The Gulf and Other Poems* (1969), thereby revealing that Walcott uses the same concepts through most of his poetic career. The sub-chapter discloses how the mission of colonialism was justified by the colonialist mindset and unveils the socio-cultural outcomes of colonial oppression in a broader sense. The chapter further analyzes the concept of othering in terms of how the natives were treated and “othered” through colonial oppression, and the poet’s effort in voicing the silence of his ancestry as a post-colonial individual suffering from the trauma of subalternity. Walcott’s effective use of the landscapes, historical figures, and symbols in the poems embodied in this sub-chapter portrays how the natives were put in a subaltern position. Ismond asserts:

The many, complex sources of the negation that troubles Walcott during this phase come together in what he experiences primarily as the desolation of the native landscape. Behind the peculiar destitution it presents is the ever-imminent spectre of the region's past. Slavery, the true beginning of its history, left only a legacy of degradation and inferiority; to be followed by the experience of colonialism - Walcott's immediate background - which entrenched a virtual tradition of

dependence upon and subservience to an alien "mother" culture. (Ismond, 2001: 58)

The discovery of the Caribbean by Christopher Columbus in 1492 started the process of colonialism and slave trade in the Caribbean, and resulted in several outcomes which left the inhabitants in an "inferior" situation. The "white" colonizers justified this process of colonization as bringing justice and equality to the inhabitants whom they enslaved and forced to work on sugar plantations to satisfy the need for cheap workforce. Before the "discovery" of this land, the native people living on the islands led a simple life without a "master" and did not see the resources of this land as highly profitable and extraordinary. However, for the colonizers, the natural resources meant a means of elevating their economic situation. Furthermore, with the implementation of colonialism, the masses dwelling on the islands were aimed to be brought under control by religious, social, and cultural oppressions which the colonizers saw as their "burden", and this act of exploitation was justified as "elevating the savages into human status", and also helped the colonizers achieve cheap workforce in their intention for economic progress.

The poem titled "Origins" written in 1964 can be considered as one of the finest works of Walcott where the act of othering, stereotyping, and annihilation of the natives stemming from colonial oppression are apparent. The poem also stands as an example in which Walcott meticulously uses his poetic language in his aim of giving voice to the silent sufferings of his ancestors. "Origins" depicts the story of the arrival of Christopher Columbus, and through his arrival, narrates the arrival of the colonialists into the island and the intact existence of native people before the arrival of their oppressors. The persona claims that after the arrival of the white man, which is conveyed through the reference to "Colon", standing for Columbus, the white man

destroys the original characteristics of the islanders by enforcing new doctrines during colonialism. It reads:

Clouds, log of Colon,
I learnt your annals of ocean,
Of Hector, bridler of horses
Achilles, Aeneas, Ulysses,
But "Of that fine race of people which came off the mainland
To greet Christobal as he rounded Icacos,"
Blank pages turn in the wind. (*CP*, 11)

The "blank pages" (i:7) here strengthens the idea of annihilation of cultures and customs as well as history itself, which would seem unfamiliar to the natives after colonization since new teachings and cultures would be imposed on the natives to make them obedient and docile. The greeting of Columbus, symbolizing "the fine race people's" (i:5) submission to the white man's principles, creates a void in the entity of the islanders and a meaningless history for the natives emerges. It reads:

They possessed, by Bulbrook
"No knowledge whatever of metals, not even of gold,
They recognized the seasons, the first risings of the Pleiades
By which signs they cultivate, assisted by magic...
Primitive minds cannot grasp infinity". (*CP*, 11)

These lines portray how the natives dwelling on the island of Icacos were othered and put into a subaltern position, a state where they would not be able to make their words heard since they had "no knowledge" (i:13) acceptable to the colonizers. Further, it states that the people of the mainland had only instinctive knowledge of the nature surrounding them, understood the natural cycles through experience, and had no interest in the gems that the colonizers thought to be precious. The persona directly reports the colonizer's point of view, stereotyping the native people as "primitive-minded" having no insight of possible opportunities ahead. In other words, what the natives considered as valid and accepted had no importance or validity for the colonizers. Since everything

the natives thought as their essence of lifestyles were defined as perverted by the colonizers and therefore reversed into an unfamiliar sense. It also reveals how the colonizers see the act of colonizing new territories through oppression as an expedition of “infinity” (i:16), a grace bestowed upon the white man in his mission of “humanizing” the “primitive-minded” (i:16), since those backward societies fell short of realizing the “real” value of things. The third stanza similarly depicts the act of “white-washing” the natives, which could be seen as a result of the oppressions after the arrival of the colonizers. It reads:

Nuages, nuages, in lazy volumes, rolled,
Swallowed in the surf of changing cumulus,
Their skulls of crackling shells crunched underfoot.
Now, when the mind would pierce infinity.
A gap in history closes, like a cloud. (CP, 11)

The persona states that after the arrival of the white man, the “shells” (i:19) and “skulls” (i:19) representing the natives’ culture and customs - the backbone of their societies – were made insignificant and wiped off, and thus, the act of crunching the “skulls” (i:19) here may be seen as a symbol of annihilation - the action of “taking-over-the-mind” - to use Thiong’o’s words (Thiong’o, 1994: 16), implemented in the process of colonialism. The act of “crunching the skulls” (i:19) creates a “blank page” because the oppression experienced during colonization erases the past cultures and languages. The white man forces the natives to leave aside their own culture and language, and adopt his own, so that it will be easier for him to control them. The natives were suppressed through colonialist doctrines, leaving the nation without a shared history that they could feel attached to. The annihilation of local cultures, lifestyles, and even education styles suggested by the employment of the act of “crunching shells” makes the natives feel obliged to internalize the teachings of the colonial mindset, and gradually estranges them from their sui-generis characteristics as a nation. It also

represents the destruction of the naivety of the islanders, as the word “shells” connotes a shield protecting the cultural values. Although the arrival of the outlanders into the land and their walk on the shore seem a simple action, the sound of “crackling shells” (i:19) would unfortunately strangle the voices of the natives, both by colonial impositions which would leave the natives in a state of not belonging to a certain culture and language, and because the natives would also be fewer both in number and in efficacy when compared to the colonizers since the plantations on these places needed “white” masters. Either way, the intact and pure land transforms into an alien atmosphere for the natives, resulting in the deindividualization of the indigenous through cultural and educational suppression, turning them into “subaltern” identities on their own lands. The reason for the loss of identity and shift from the individual to the “subaltern” emerges as a result of the effort of the colonizers to turn the natives into “mummified objects” or, in Bhabha’s definition, the natives are “alienated from the essence” (Bhabha, 1994: 89) just because it strengthens the natives’ state of non-resistance.

Colonialism in such pagan lands is mostly achieved through religious oppression and conversion since the colonizer saw himself as a “master” to educate and “humanize” the natives. The main intention of the colonizer was to effortlessly control the natives using the edict of God, commanding the “others” to obey their “white masters”. In “Origins”, the outcomes of this religious detachment can also be detected. In the second part of the poem, the persona defines himself as “Moses” (ii:25), and the scene seems to be narrated through the perspective of a “white-washed” native, since “Moses”, symbolizing the natives, dreams himself in a “malarial bush-bath” (ii:24). The use of the adjective “malarial” in this line depicts that the land was seen as dirty and infectious, a definition which turns the natives into a detester of the native land and traditions due to religious oppression. This process, what Fanon calls as “vanishing

from consciousness” (Fanon, 2008: 150), in other words, the state of turning “white” or “perishing” in order to regain recognition in an alien atmosphere, seems to be achieved through the depiction of the native land as something abhorrent in a native’s eyes. The persona, seemingly, refers to his own land in a similar vein to the colonial mindset, so, it seems that he has learnt how to be a “negro” in his own eyes as Fanon suggests. The persona depicts his dream in which he dies and is sent to heaven, however, what is interesting is that, even this heaven seems to reflect the poet’s in-between religious state: “Between the Greek and African pantheon, / Lost animist, I rechristened trees [...]” (ii:28-29), asserting that the people of the land were once pagans, believing in nature, however were forced to embrace an alien religion during colonization. The persona entitles himself as a “lost animist”, suggesting that he is lost between the teachings of his ancestors and the principles of the imposed religion. The act of “rechristening trees” shows that he gets lost between two religions and does not feel familiar to either of them. The memory he possesses now and the old names he utters stand for the suffering of the people who once lived on this lost archipelago - which is different from what he remembers in his childhood. The religious teachings with the implementation of colonialism brought pain, blood, and suffering to the pagan people of the land as it reads:

Dorade, their golden, mythological dolphin,
 Leapt, flaking light, as once for Arion,
 For the broken archipelago of wave-browed gods.
 Now, the sibyl I honour, mother of memory,
 Bears in her black hand a white frangipani, with berries of blood,
 She gibbers with the cries
 Of the Guinean odyssey. (*CP*,12)

The land here is depicted as “broken” and the persona suggests that it mourns over the bygone glamour that was devastated through colonization. Walcott’s aim of reviving

and reconciling with the colonial past and the “colonialism-stricken” situation of his people to create a Caribbean existence in the post-colonial era are worth considering in the poem. Paul Griffith suggests that Walcott acts as a priest holding a religious ceremony in order to resurrect the dead history, culture, and land and adds that the poem:

[...] celebrates this sublimating initiative of the aesthetic imagination— the new Adamic capacity to name the world that Walcott regards as visionary principle of Caribbeanness. The poem celebrates the self-constitutive toil of those who “sow the grain of Guinea in the mouths of the dead.” Represented as “hurling” “bone-needed nets over the cave mouth,” the folk whom the poet imitates, harvest “ancestral voices” from the “surf”. (Griffith, 2010: 48)

The persona seeks justification to ease his ancestral pain by saying that people should take nature as an example, since nature remembers the origins; the intact rivers, animals, and lands. Forgetting and remembering are human actions, nature weeps behind losing its origins to make them alive, while the human gets lost in his silence. Therefore, Walcott stands there to be the voice of his ancestors’ silence to revive their lost past. He states that he tries to find himself in the lost origins and the dead land, yet, he feels that he cannot find a way while he is trapped and cannot go forward because of his own in-between state, which is also an outcome of his mixed heritage. It reads:

The mind, among sea-wrack, sees its mythopoeic coast,
Seeks, like the polyp, to take root in itself.
Here, in the rattle of receding shoal,
Among these shallows I seek my own name and a man.
As the crab’s claws move backwards through the surf,
Blind memory grips the putrefying flesh. (*CP*, 14)

The persona states that his current memory which is shattered due to colonialism now recedes “among sea-wrack”, and the deracinated “mind” is in a running battle for refinding its roots. Due to the persona’s in-between situation, reclaiming the identity seems difficult; nevertheless, the only thing that the persona could hold on to is also the corrupted self. Griffith suggests that Walcott’s conscious self steps in the “subconscious self to anchor the soul adrift”, in other words, with the aim of rising from the ashes of the nostalgia of the bitter past to create a “new vital loam of self-confident being” (Griffith, 2010: 196). For Walcott, the act of reenergizing the lost is not an act of rejecting the past and the results it brings. On the contrary, the revival of the memory through poetry in search of lost origins stands as a means of recreation of individual existence. The recreated fully conscious individuals are, thus, aimed not to get lost in the blank pages or the silence resulted by the process of colonialism. In this sense, Walcott aims to establish a safe-space, a “Third Space”, where he himself as a “Third Space” writer could make his voice heard as opposed to the silence of his ancestry. Griffith suggests that in the poem Walcott revives the “mythogenetic vitalism” by scrutinizing the “subconscious depth of self” in order to recover from the “psychospiritual shipwreck” which is the result of the history itself (Griffith, 2010: 196). The final lines of the poem read:

We praise those whose back on hillsides buckles on the wind
 To sow the grain of Guinea in the mouths of the dead,
 [...]
 Whose sweat, touching earth, multiplies in crystals of sugar
 Those who conceive the birth of white cities in a raindrop
 And the annihilation of races in the prism of the dew. (*CP*, 16)

As these last lines of the poem suggest, the persona again states his endeavour of giving voice to his ancestors’ sufferings, and wholeheartedly comments on what this process of “killing” and “taking over the land” means to him, as he states that the act of colonization fills the land with the “dead” (vii: 14). The seeds which the natives plant on

“the mouths of the dead” are nourished and raised by their suffering. The persona suggests that the modern civilizations of the “whites” are created with the “sweat” and labour of the natives whom the colonizer sees as “inferior” and “non-human”, and it is the natives which are “annihilated”, both physically and mentally, for the sake of founding new colonies.

In this sense, the poem titled “Origins” portrays the agonizing history, if not the lack of history, of the poet and his ancestry which he delves into by way of reviving and recreating a common past that could be acknowledged by those suffering from the outcomes of colonial oppression. The poet, especially by using the symbols of the trampled down “shells” (i:19), “broken archipelago”(ii:12), and the “sea-wrack” (iv:12), aims to portray the annihilation of his culture and the othering of his ancestors and his land. Moreover, Walcott depicts his individual state of being “othered” as a poet since he presents the persona, seemingly referring to himself, as a “nameless” (i:3) being in search of his “own name and a man” (iv:15) by enabling the voice of his subaltern ancestors to be heard. “Origins”, as the title suggests, in this regard, is a return to the lost origins and unearthing the buried, it is a return which Walcott states as a phase of “what we have never been” (Walcott, 1974: 7), since the poem portrays how the process of colonialism left the cities and its inhabitants in a petrified situation in which they were forced to be in-between yet fail to revive their roots and identities. The poem also reflects how these in-between/subaltern identities could be given voice through revisiting the nostalgia, despite being a painful experience, and remaking the history of the annihilated nations using the means within which the results of the colonial experiment enabled the othered.

In a similar sense, the poem titled “Air” is significant since it portrays the annihilation of races through colonization and points out the poet’s struggle for narrating the pain and suffering that was caused due to the othering of his ancestors.

Considering the persecution implemented in the early periods of colonialism, it is not surprising that people of many races were forced to obey their masters; otherwise, they were annihilated for their disobedience. Even when the natives complied with the norms, the destruction, both physically and mentally, would still break out as the natives were subjected to social and individual othering during colonization as a means of creating obedient presences that would accept their “inferiority” when compared to the colonizers’ “superiority” in the process of colonization. The poem opens with a quote from Froude’s *Bow of Ulysses*, a seemingly deliberate attempt to convey the hidden message of Walcott’s poem:

There has been romance, but it has been the romance of
pirates and outlaws. The natural graces of life do not show
themselves under such conditions. There are no people
there in the true sense of the word, with a character and a
purpose of their own. (qtd. in *CP*, 113)

By citing this, Walcott shows his aims as scrutinizing the annihilation that has taken place due to the implementation of colonialism, resulting in the death of his ancestors as well as their customs and heritage. Although colonialism is justified on the grounds that it is to bring justice and elevating - from the perspective of the colonizers - the natives to human level, the process mostly included violence and destruction. Therefore, this “humanizing” process is ironically achieved through “inhumane” behaviour, which in fact fails to elevate the natives to human level. On the contrary, it results in their derogation. The symbols and imagery employed in this poem reflect the belittlement, and even worse, the decimation of the races which were considered as “savages” and “sinners” by the colonialists. Besides, the last stanza of the poem stands as a protest of the poet in search of his roots against the annihilation of his ancestors and culture. Ismond states that this process of neutralizing the natives still exists in the

consciousness of Walcott and therefore Walcott uses the inanimation of the land to convey the “absence of ancestral memory” and adds:

Froude's ethnocentric verdict - that the region was therefore a place which would never amount to anything - has been treated with the opprobrium it deserves. This verdict, however, incites Walcott to probe the deeper, human dimensions of this nothingness in the denials and pain of a people. (Ismond, 2001: 61)

Walcott's purpose of depicting the land as a lifeless and rootless place can be considered as an outcome of colonization that uprooted the inhabitants of the land of their sui-generis characteristics as a nation. In a similar way, the annihilation of the islanders leaves the land stagnant and hinders it from flourishing. It reads:

The unheard, omnivorous
jaws of this rain forest
not merely devour all,
but allow nothing vain;
they never rest,
grinding their disavowal
of human pain. (*CP*, 113)

Indeed, the overall picture of the land is conveyed through the imagery of the “forest” (2) which kept its silence against the catastrophe that occurred around it. The rainforest portrayed at the beginning of the poem is like a fiend grinder “devouring” (3) what is alive around it without “resting” (5), leaving nothing but emptiness in the end. It even seems as not having mercy on the suffering and “pain” (7) of those whom it annihilates. In this sense, Walcott seems to draw similarities between the forest and the colonizers, both of which seem indifferent to human suffering for the sake of acquiring more land. Just like the colonizers, the forest “devours” everything around it, which leaves the natives in a petrified situation, or “alienated from the essence” to use Bhabha's words (Bhabha, 1994: 89). It reads:

Long, long before us,
those hot jaws like an oven
steaming, were open
to genocide; they devoured
two minor yellow races, and
half of a black;
in the word made flesh of God
all entered that gross, un-
discriminating stomach; (*CP*, 113)

In an interview with Edward Hirsch, Walcott states that “There are always images of erasure in the Caribbean” (Hirsch, 1985); an idea which is emphatically revealed in this poem. Harold Bloom supports this idea by suggesting that Walcott uses the real historical events, the bitter side of the past, to assail the very bedrocks of “Western Civilizations” (Bloom, 2003: 59). The characteristics of the islanders, which were nullified through colonial oppression, spawned a social and an individual state of emptiness and meaninglessness for the descendants of “colonialism-stricken” societies. This void represents the annihilation of cultural and social values and thus is commonly employed as a tool for reviving the nostalgia of the past for the present to make sense by the “Third Space”. As a hybrid poet, Walcott struggles to fill the void of the past by narrating the historical phenomena, the reality which was justified by the colonialist mindset as elevating the status of the natives, yet, resulted in the natives’ ethnocide. Walcott seemingly aims to draw the readers’ attention to the universality of the act of colonizing the territories by stating that the annihilation that took place was not only of his race, but that of “those hot jaws” (9) of the forest, and hence colonialism, were waiting for its prey, and finally “devoured two minor yellow races, and / half of a black” (11-12). In this sense, it seems that the races lingering in this forest have easily fallen prey to colonization and slavery. More surprisingly, the races that were destroyed by this forest were of different origins, but they all found themselves gulped in the same

“undiscriminating stomach” (16). Ismond clarifies these diverse races that have been devoured as follows:

The Caribs and Arawaks, and the African Maroons who repaired to the Guyanese forest in their refusal to succumb to white oppression, were all consumed in "the hot jaws" and "undiscriminating stomach" of savage, unreclaimed nature - a fate that conversion to Christianity was powerless to avert. (Ismond, 2001: 63)

Walcott also refers to Christianization which is one of the motives used for the justification of colonialism. Since most of the natives were non-believers, othering the natives for their impiety and destroying commonly shared values by imposing the colonizers' systems of belief would mean restraining the natives from a possible return to their original cultures and norms. The religious oppression led the natives to detach from their original beliefs and this detachment also added up to the existing sense of emptiness and meaninglessness in the social life. Religion is also a bond that interlocks the communities as a whole, and when this bond is broken through force and oppression, the lack of belonging to a common ancestry and society emerges. It reads:

the forest is unconverted,
because that shell-like noise
which roars like silence, or
ocean's surplined choirs
entering its nave, to a censer
of swung mist, is not
the rustling of prayer
but nothing; milling air,
a faith, infested cannibal,
which eats gods, which devoured
the god-refusing Carib, petal (*CP*, 114)

As opposed to the notion of the colonizer that religious and spiritual othering would create docile beings unable to establish a connection to their sui-generis traits, the forest

in the poem still stands “unconverted” (17), which, in a way, refers to the failure of the original justification of colonialism and slavery, that of Christianization. Here, the forest is likened to a church when viewed from the outside with the employment of words such as “surpliced choirs” (20), “nave” (21), and “censer” (21). Nevertheless, the noise surrounding it is not “the rustling of prayer / but nothing” (22-23), which illustrates that the imposed religion actually does not fit the natives’ belief codes and make sense for the natives. In this sense, Walcott’s aim here seems to narrate the emptiness and meaninglessness that his ancestors experienced after they were converted into Christianity further suggesting the meaninglessness of colonialism from his perspective. Likewise, the forest is portrayed as “god-eating” (26) but still does not spare devouring “god-refusing Carib” (27), and then leaves Carib and Arawak, the indigenous people of the Caribbean, in such a state that no trace of their past is visible. The adjective “god-refusing” here points out the original religious state of the indigenous since the islanders were mostly pagans and did not believe in the same god that colonizers did. Conversely, “the god-eating” signifies the common idea that the religion of the oppressor was considered as the only valid religion, and the beliefs of other religions, when compared to Christianity, were of no importance. Therefore, the colonizer takes the act of colonialism for granted and justifies the process as the conversion of “savage heathens” to “faithful believers”. As a result of the religious oppression, the persona in the poem is unable to see any trait of his ancestors because the “genocide” experienced via colonialism, both physical and spiritual, put an end to it all, leaving nothing behind. It reads:

but only the rusting cries
of a rain bird, like a hoarse
warrior summoning his race
from vaporous air
between this mountain ridge
and the vague sea

where the lost exodus
of corials sunk without trace—
there is too much nothing here. (*CP*, 114)

This final stanza of the poem pictures a “rain bird” (34) which is, in fact, free to fly anywhere it wishes, yet is stuck between the “mountain” (37) and the “sea” (38). The rain bird here resembles the poet, just like the Carib and Arawak, who were left in an inimical atmosphere to their own, so unable to fly away to the boundlessness. Instead, it weeps and shrieks “to summon his race” (35), yet finds nothing and the cries vanish in thin air, suggesting that the poet falls short of narrating the lack of history and memory of his ancestors. The reason for his inadequacy is because of his lack of belonging as a “Third Space” poet and his subalterned ancestral identity which still prevails in the post-colonial period. Just like the rain bird, Walcott is in search of his ancestral roots, and tries to make his voice heard through his poems. There is also an allusion to the “Middle Passage”, where most of the natives lost their lives, with the use of the phrase “lost exodus of corials sunk without trace” (39-40), which also reminds the reader of how this civilizing mission of colonialism resulted in loss and destruction as most of the islanders were shipped to other colonized lands to join the workforce there or become servants for their white masters. Overall, Ismond states that Walcott clearly shows his “apprehension of the deep alienation and confounding effects of the void of landscape” (Ismond, 2001: 65) through his last words in the poem: “there is too much nothing here” (41). Indeed, the poem titled “Air” portrays the emptiness and meaninglessness of the colonized territories since the land is also exploited along with its inhabitants. The void that the persona describes here symbolizes the resultant rootlessness of the natives due to religious and social othering.

To conclude, “Air” portrays how the process of colonization and forced social and religious assimilation affected the natives in the process of colonization. The annihilation of cultures, customs, and people transformed the lands into empty zones

and created a void over its inhabitants. It also reveals a “marginalized” poet’s struggle for existence and voicing the history – if not the lack of history – of his ancestors by narrating the annihilation and othering that were inflicted upon his people who were forcibly made submissive through oppression and religious implementations.

Walcott’s “The Swamp”, in a similar sense, aims to show how the act of othering, cultural obliteration, and educational suppression imposed on the natives throughout the colonial experiment leave the cities with nothing but absence. The poem is significant in terms of providing clear evidence of the colonizer’s perspective for the native’s “inferiority” as a race. It also emphasizes how these “othered” souls defy their origins and were taught to hate their sui-generis characteristics.

Baugh states that “The Swamp” portrays “the fearful fascination of the dark places of the psyche” (Baugh, 2006: 47) and, in this poem, the situation of the country is likened to a swamp. The swamp represents the void emerging as a result of colonization, since while the indigenous are trying to be saved from the emptiness of post-colonial existence, the amnesia caused by the erasure of common values and history swallow the natives. Likewise, Ismond suggests that the swamp stands for “the scene of a proliferation of life-forms (plant, reptile, amphibian) in a habitat that reeks of degenerative rot” and signifies “the chaos of the aboriginal life-force” (Ismond, 2001: 59). The feeling of detachment from the roots and straddling as a result of colonial teachings which would make the natives obedient and docile can clearly be detected in the opening lines of the poem where it states: “Gnawing the highway’s edges, its black mouth / Hums quietly: ‘ Home, come home . . . ’ ” (CP, 59). These lines suggest that the people are taken away from their homes, culturally and mentally if not physically, but the yearning for their homes (or cultures) does not leave them as the voice of its “black mouth” (1) always rings in their ears, telling them to turn back home, to their origins. It reads:

Behind its viscous breath the very word “growth”
Grows fungi, rot;
White mottling its root.
More dreaded
Than canebrake, quarry, or sun-shocked gully-bed
Its horrors held Hemingway's hero rooted
To sure, clear shallows. (*CP*, 59)

The yearning of the people here is also the poets' longing, and the gabbling sound represents Walcott's aim to utter the longing of his ancestors for their communal past. Here, the colonial experiment is likened to “fungi” which radicates and infects all around it. What is more, the choice of the word “growth” (3) in the second stanza suggests that the colonial expansion implemented by the white people results in corruption; destroys - like an epidemic - the original state of the land and its inhabitants, as well as the social values and origins, and poisons all those around it. The use of the phrase “white mottling its root” (5) is therefore significant, referring to the devastating results of colonialism on cultural and social values of the natives. Here, the perfect order of nature, also symbolizing the origins of the natives, seems to be worn out and exploited, and unable to be productive as it is meant to be. Similarly, the fourth and fifth stanzas represent the deprivation of the natives of what they saw as their original values and traditions as well as religions, thus, they cannot have hope for the future. It reads:

It begins nothing. Limbo of cracker convicts, Negroes.
Its black mood
Each sunset takes a smear of your life's blood.
Fearful, original sinuosities! Each mangrove sapling
Serpentlike, its roots obscene
As a six-fingered hand, (*CP*, 59)

Seeing the land in such an infertile state, just like the inanimation of the natives, leaves the persona in “limbo” (10), unable to move forward, and the intense humiliation that was experienced by the natives is portrayed with the use of the same type of

stereotyping implemented in the process of colonization. The result of being stereotyped as “Negroes” (10) creates a deadly atmosphere for the natives of the land, since it removes hope along with the purity of social and cultural traits on each passing day, and the people are unable to take the bit between their teeth. The employment of the words such as “fearful, original sinuosities”, and “serpentlike” suggests how the “Negro”, as it is considered by the colonial mindset, was othered and left in limbo, and “alienated from the essence”, in Bhabha’s term (Bhabha, 1994: 89). Making the natives obedient by seizing the “mind” and culture and teaching them how to hate their origins, the natives are put in a “subaltern” state; the words they enunciate do not belong to their mindset, yet mimic the acquired, imposed, and exemplified as the “superior” being.

The last two stanzas of the poem also assert that the present situation of the road the persona chooses to clear and walk along seems chaotic just like the situation of its roots and society after being destroyed by the process of colonialism. Nevertheless, the suppressed voices, stagnation and rootlessness of the natives can only be heard when this chaos and dilemma is voiced by the “othered” self, the poet himself. The historical stigma of blackness affects the persona, swallowing him “deeper than sleep” (22) and gets him too close to “death” (23). It reads:

Backward to darkness, go black
With widening amnesia, take the edge
Of nothing to them slowly, merge
Limb, tongue, and sinew into a knot
Like chaos, like the road
Ahead. (*CP*, 60)

In this sense, it is obvious that colonialism here is likened to a dark swamp that swallows people and their values and builds up a chaotic atmosphere where the people suffering from colonialism can bear no hope for their survival since they are marginalized and detached from their original characteristics as a nation. The persona

suggests that the “road” (32) he decides to walk is a labyrinth and the past memories he will encounter are agonizing, yet he defines himself as a “Hemingway hero”, suggesting both his educational blend resulted by the process of colonialism and his determination as a “Third Space” poet that he will endure and persevere no matter how painful the past becomes. Thus, Walcott, in this poem, clearly depicts this embroiled situation of absence and amnesia his ancestors have experienced as a result of colonialism and underlines that the voices of his predecessors need to be proclaimed by delving into the same mutism created by subalternity and othering.

“Missing the Sea” is another eminent example of Walcott’s poems employing the feeling of estrangement and alienation from one’s culture as a result of colonialism. It also pictures the “subalterned” individuals’ acquiescence towards the oppression experienced in the colonial period and the effort of an “othered” presence in narrating the void of his past. Even in the first stanza, the readers are left alone to familiarize themselves with the current state of the persona, and are able to feel the dullness of the atmosphere which changed because of the process of colonialism. For Ismond, the poem presents the “psychological impact of this stasis on Walcott’s consciousness” (Ismond, 2001: 67). Indeed, the poem reflects Walcott’s and thereby his ancestors’ spiritual and mental detachment, ambivalence, and identity confusion stemming from the oppression in the colonial period. It reads:

Something removed roars in the ears of this house,
Hangs its drapes windless, stuns mirrors
Till reflections lack substance.
Some sound like the gnashing of windmills ground
To a dead halt;
A deafening absence, a blow. (*CP*, 63)

The present situation of this “house” (1), possibly referring to the homeland of the poet, lacks the earlier energy and liveliness. The land is depicted as having lost its rhythm, so

the persona cannot hear the old, harmonic music, but is left with a “deafening absence” (6), which rings in the ears of the natives living on the island, and, according to Ismond, enacts “the loudness of the silence, the visceral strain of the emptiness and, at the same time, the echo of violent energies clamouring to break through to some release” (Ismond, 2001: 67). Enouncing the unheard and unheeded, for Walcott, emerges not as a means of acceptance or surrender but a way of salvation from the burden of colonial coercion which resulted in the loss of consciousness for the natives. The current state of this atmosphere is a result of “something removed” (1), which refers to the origins of the persona, and the poet as well, which are forcibly taken away through colonial oppression and education. Here, the loudness of silence seems to surpass the scream of the persona in his attempt to give out sound to the suffering of his people, and results in the evanescence of his self and his origins. Ismond states that Walcott, via this poem, reflects the weight of emptiness and voidness as the “inability to hear the sounds from which his verse takes its rhythms” (Ismond, 2001: 67) and tries to discover and remember the original rhythms of his cultural heritage for the present to make sense. Ismond also suggests that the “deafening absence” dwelling in the poem literally portrays Walcott’s feelings for detachment from the sea and the landscape he belongs, and in a broader sense, stands for the detachment from the original culture and “vital energies” (Ismond, 2001: 67).

A similar effort can clearly be seen in the poet’s attempt to tell his story in his poems, which he thinks will give voice to the silent self and to his ancestors’ suffering. However, the persona asserts that the “deafening absence” (6) “pushes this pencil through a thick nothing now” (8), suggesting that he is unable to create something noteworthy to give voice to his longing for the past values and absence he experiences now, and that all he writes is nothing when compared to what is gone and lost. His voicelessness fills all that is in the house and the absence of his roots and past makes

him mourn for the things that are taken from him. In a sense, the present existential struggle and the void created by the process of “othering” and “silencing” the natives hinders the poet’s attempt to resurrect the lost past. Nevertheless, he still hopelessly wishes for something that would compensate for his losses and silence as a “Third Space” poet in his endeavour in being the voice of his ancestors’ suffering. It reads:

Freights cupboards with silence, folds sour laundry
Like the clothes of the dead left exactly
As the dead behaved by the beloved,
Incredulous, expecting occupancy. (*CP*, 63)

Walcott suggests that what he experiences now and the bitter truth that causes pain constitute the remaining space and emptiness he is trying hard to fill because he sees that the unbearable burden is his ancestral duty to tell the untold, gone, and lost to keep the past values alive and cherish the memory of his ancestors. For Walcott, voicing the silent past is an act of gaining acceptance of an “othered” conscience by defying the “subalterned” existence. “Missing the Sea” is thus worth underlining since it draws an overall picture of the emergence of the absence and meaninglessness arising from the cultural detachment and othering the natives. Besides, it is an attempt of an otherized poet’s mission of “rehumanizing” the “dehumanized” through narrating the lack of history of his “colonialism-stricken” ancestry.

“Ruins of a Great House”, on the other hand, is probably one of the most striking poems in which Walcott uses strong imagery and references to history as well as literature to convey the suffering and amnesia created by the process of colonialism. The poem is also of importance since it portrays the void of consciousness and rootless existence of a poet as the descendant of an “otherized” ancestry. Walcott quotes from Thomas Browne’s *Urn Burial* deliberately to emphasize the main theme of the poem which is death and decay, an inevitable ending of all creatures and constructions in the world. In this sense, the quote suggests that even the process which demolished the

customs and cultures, and annihilated the people is condemned to perish. Nevertheless, it represents the poet's quest for his own identity and his nation's suppressed existence by declaring the forgotten past that is waiting to be relit and rise from its ashes. It reads:

“though our longest sun sets at right declensions and
makes but winter arches, it cannot be long before we lie
down in darkness, and have our light in ashes . . .” (*CP*, 19)

The quote is important since the work of Browne is written on the urns found in some graves in Norfolk, and shares similarity to Walcott's poem titled “Ruins of a Great House” because the poet stands in front of the remnants of the past glory of colonialism, if not his own ancestors' glory. Ismond states that this poem can be read as a biographical memento of Walcott and portrays “the violations and injustices of the slave past” and “is provoked to strong outrage, and to condemnation of its surviving ills” (Ismond, 2001: 40). Indeed, the poem enacts Walcott's first confrontation with the bitter history and its remnants upon seeing one of the houses which was used by the slave masters during colonization while he was studying in Jamaica. Since Jamaica is one of the places where colonial experiment was intensively carried out, witnessing “the physical memorials of the depredations of the slave past” must have been a shocking experience for Walcott (Ismond, 2001: 40). It reads:

Stones only, the disjecta membra of this Great House,
Whose moth-like girls are mixed with candledust,
Remain to file the lizard's dragonish claws.
The mouths of those gate cherubs shriek with stain; (*CP*, 19)

The poet describes a once-glorious colonial mansion, remembering its past grandeur, the girls working in it, and its lively atmosphere which is gone, leaving its place to “stones” (1) and “shrieking doors”(4). The use of the phrase “disjecta membra” (1) represents the current shattered situation of the place and nation which were considered “great” before. The poet underlines his loss of roots and amnesia stemming from the

colonial oppression of detaching the inhabitants from their sui-generis characteristics. The employment of the word “cherubs” in the fourth line signifies the purity and intactness of this “Great House” which was demolished and trivialized through colonial oppression. The doorstep where the poet stands right now, in this sense, seems to be wrecked suggesting the feeling of estrangement and dilemma of recognizing the past because of its corruptness as a result of colonialism. Here, the poet either remembers the past grandeur and joy of his society that was destroyed by the implementation of colonialism, or depicts the vivacity of the colonial times that are thought of as endless and refers to the empire on which the sun never sets. Either way, the current situation of the place is a ruin, and the only thing to be seen are “dead limes” (9) that clearly depict the “leprosy of empire” (10) which show that the decay and destruction do not stay in the past, but rather continue to affect the future with its remnants. Similarly, the outcome of the process of colonialism is likened to “dead limes” (9) of the “leprosy of empire” (10) and this destruction is caused by the “ulcerous crime” (34), further suggesting the act of colonialism that left the natives with nothing but pain. As a person in search of his roots and ancestral glory, Walcott’s aim is also to describe the pain and suffering which resulted in the current destruction of the place. It reads:

Marble like Greece, like Faulkner's South in stone,
Deciduous beauty prospered and is gone,
But where the lawn breaks in a rash of trees
A spade below dead leaves will ring the bone
Of some dead animal or human thing
Fallen from evil days, from evil times. (*CP*, 19)

Walcott suggests that if one takes a chance to dredge the fallen leaves up, which is actually acquired by Walcott’s attempt of narrating the history of his ancestors, he will possibly find the remnants of people or other species which were destroyed at these “evil times” (18). The phrase “evil times” (18) here also clarifies how the natives and survivors of colonialism see this “civilizing process”. Therefore, what is dead and gone

because of colonialism does not remain in the past but somehow seems to pass through generations just like traditions and culture, and the person who digs up the land to uncover what is hidden seems to be the poet himself. With the help of this action of remembering the past glory, Walcott seems to put his ancestors' sufferings into words. The persona also gives concrete examples of how his ancestors were annihilated not only by killing but also by colonial education:

And when a wind shook in the limes I heard
What Kipling heard, the death of a great empire, the abuse
Of ignorance by Bible and by sword.
A green lawn, broken by low walls of stone,
Dipped to the rivulet, and pacing, I thought next
Of men like Hawkins, Walter Raleigh, Drake,
Ancestral murderers and poets, more perplexed
In memory now by every ulcerous crime. (*CP*, 20)

Similar to what Thiong'o emphasizes, the natives are exploited and alienated from their sui-generis cultures and religions by oppression and force through "sword" and conversion into another religion through the "Bible". The othering of the orient to create individuals which would be obedient and docile resulted in the existence of individuals lacking the ability to "represent" themselves. It is through Hawkins, Walter Raleigh, Drake, and many others that Walcott's ancestral heritage was taken apart. By referring to those poets, Walcott clearly underlines that he knows the history of these men, as they were the people suffering from colonialism in England, namely Albion, and they could still serve this devastating process, and feels angry at the bitter truth. It reads:

Ablaze with rage I thought,
Some slave is rotting in this manorial lake,
But still the coal of my compassion fought
That Albion too was once
A colony like ours, 'part of the continent, piece of the main', (*CP*, 20)

Walcott's disappointment in these poets for not voicing the suffering of other nations, let alone their own, seems to make up the core of his attempt in narrating the untold. He protests against the fact that the works of art and the devastation of an empire were created by the same people since these writers had a significant role in the development of English literature. At the same time, these litterateurs were widely known as "the Sea Dogs", a group of privateers who actively took part in the colonial experiment and the ongoing slave trade in the Atlantic Middle Passage. On this basis, Ismond asserts that Walcott, as a poet suffering from the outcomes of colonial oppression and annihilation, "wrestles" with his individual wound and the bewilderment with the attempt "to reconcile the great ethos of humanistic idealism" that shaped the 17th century with "extreme violations of its colonizing venture" (Ismond, 2001: 41). Walcott further suggests that the pain and suffering inflicted upon the natives during expansion does not fade and the "rot remains" (37), referring to the stain upon "cherubs" in the first stanza, although the "men", representing the colonizers and the end of colonialism, are "gone" (37).

In this sense, "Ruins of a Great House" presents the havoc – both physical and social – and loss of consciousness resulted by the colonial expedition and mindset. Walcott, via this poem, aims to make his subalterned ancestors' voice heard, and makes use of some of the prominent literary figures of English literature while achieving his goal. He also emphasizes the everlasting consequences of the process of colonialism by narrating the "ever-bleeding wound" of being "othered" and oppressed.

With the implementation of commercial slavery, "low-rank" people are forcibly and cruelly shipped to "civilized" countries to "provide the dominant work-force of entire economies" (Ashcroft et al. 2007: 195). Brydon and Tiffin state that solely between 1680 and 1786, almost two millions of Africans were shipped ashore to be subjects to harsh working conditions in the plantation and the Africans' "work power"

was in this sense exploited (Brydon and Tiffin, 1993: 38). In the poem titled “Laventille”, Walcott critically examines the dreadful memories of the Middle Passage, where some of his ancestors were “fished” (66), and seems that he still feels the overwhelming pain for him and the others who survived. Throughout the poem, the persona, by looking at the current situation of the place he dwells, tries to retell the history of what had existed but gone beyond the present he observes now with the aim of voicing the silent cries of his ancestors. The publication date of the poem is also noteworthy since 1970 is the year when Black Power Movement took place in Trinidad and Tobago. Baugh clarifies Walcott’s attempt asserting that “Laventille” is “about the bleakest, most disconsolate picture of the West Indian condition that Walcott has ever painted” (Baugh, 2006: 48). Although the persona seems so disheartened by the present status of the place he lives and suggests there is almost no possibility to go back to the past glory of his ancestors’ time, the first lines of the poem allude to the poet’s triggered eagerness to convey hope for the future. It reads:

It huddled there
steel tinkling its blue painted metal air,
tempered in violence, like Rio's favelas, (*CP*, 85)

The opening lines refer to the Black Power Revolution and imply the possibility for rebirth and reanimation of the cultural values which were destroyed through “violence” (3). Just like the poet’s attempt for a revival of the lost past and the amnesia from which he is trying to awake, the people of Trinidad and Tobago protest against the chains and for social change. In this sense, the poem could also be read as an upheaval for giving out sound to the pain and suffering of the poet’s ancestors. The wound and anxiety his ancestors experienced through the Middle Passage still haunt the poet, yet, the only way for a rebirth as a nation is to voice the suffering and annihilation which also haunt him. The persona states that the divinity and highness of his past have been demolished and

cities have been underprivileged, if not destroyed, along with its inhabitants. By referencing the cities of the Port of Spain including “Belmont” (9), “Woodbrook” (9), and Laventille throughout the poem, Walcott attributes the poem to V. S. Naipaul, another eminent poet bearing the same wound, whose ancestors have immigrated to the Caribbean to work in cocoa plantations. Walcott’s aim in his attribution to V. S. Naipaul seems not surprising when similar sufferings throughout history are taken into consideration. For him, the pain caused by colonialism seems to have no religion, no colour, or nationality; since the catastrophe it brings is the same for all.

Although the poem narrates the story of a christening ceremony that takes place on the hills, which originally suggest height and superiority, the atmosphere of the land becomes inferior as the persona climbs up. Here, the persona celebrating the ceremony as a “godfather” suggests the poet’s endless quest in renaming and revitalizing the history and the identity of his ancestry and shows “the upside-downness” of Walcott’s heritage as well as the land itself (Ismond, 2001: 70). On this hill which “the inheritors of the Middle Passage” (19) live in the cycle of “prison, graveyard, church” (22), the only thing to be seen is the loss and amnesia of their past, which also hinders a possible good future. In this sense, even the act of christening – purification – does not make any difference, not for their sins, but for their suffering, suggesting that each newborn is born with this ancestral pain. Here, the poet emphasizes that this religion is brought to the pagan lands with the aim of purifying and humanizing the blacks, however, the process left an indelible mark on people’s lives. It states:

The middle passage never guessed its end.
This is the height of poverty
for the desperate and black;
climbing, we could look back
with widening memory
on the hot, corrugated-iron sea
whose horrors we all

shared. The salt blood knew it well,
you, me, Samuel's daughter, Samuel,
and those ancestors clamped below its grate. (CP, 86)

The persona asserts that the memory of his past is still “widening” (32), suggesting that instead of lessening, it continues to thicken as a cloud above the hill of “poverty” (29). Those haunting memories they all have in common are recalled by every act of looking at the “hot, corrugated-iron sea” (33), which further intensifies their amnesia and suffering stemming from the annihilation of people in the Middle Passage. The idea of bearing no possible future is enhanced with the use of explicit details of the Middle Passage as the persona goes up the hill. He feels that the breeze “shrills” (39) the pain who “suffered” (40) and “were killed” (40), and also “survived” (41), the only legacy that will be given to the child who is about to be christened.

The sermon of the priest, where he possibly wishes well-being upon the baby “across the troubled waters of this life...” (63), forces the persona to question the aim of living in such a terrible world of waters in which their “souls were fished” (66), and the “stones planted on alien earth” (69) always remind him of the presence of death and loss even in an event of celebrating birth. Here, the preying on the “souls” (66) refers to the wasted lives of the natives who were forcibly shipped to join the workforce in other plantations, including V. S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott’s forefathers. It also alludes to the idea that is commonly accepted by the white man as his burden to “humanize” the “heathen” to “join the Angelic train”². Nevertheless, the phrase “stones planted on alien earth” (69) refers to both the burial grounds of his ancestors who were killed and to the monuments such as the church which were built after the obtrusion of Christianity. Either way, the persona feels detached and experiences the void of this marginalized

² Wheatley, Phillis, “On Being Brought from Africa to America”, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, 1773.

culture and religion. The poet depicts the ongoing collective trauma and ancestral and cultural amnesia caused by colonialism by employing these lines:

We left
somewhere a life we never found,
customs and gods that are not born again,
some crib, some grille of light
clanged shut on us in bondage, and withheld
us from that world below us and beyond,
and in its swaddling cerements we're still bound. (*CP*, 88)

Here, the persona states that even birth and recalling the past is not enough for the revival of the “customs and gods” (85), and the use of the oxymoron “swaddling cerements” (89) shows the intermingling of life and death and birth and loss while people attempt to cling on to the memories and the reality of life. All in all, as Ismond states, the void in memory that occurs due to Middle Passage is clearly portrayed through the sea and the silence of the hill and Walcott:

[...] comes to bear on the historical middle passage, drawing his gaze to the sea, the original site of that journey. An inescapable presence from his position on the hill, the open, empty expanse of the sea is the concrete, tangible image of the severance of the descendants of the slave ancestors from their ancestral worlds, and the consequent toll on them as a people. It represents the hiatus in memory which is, for Walcott, the most critical damage of the middle passage. (Ismond, 2001: 71)

All in all, “Laventille” pictures the cultural and religious alienation caused by the process of colonization. It also lays the trans-generational trauma and suffering of the Middle Passage, which Walcott considers as his wound, and portrays the endeavour of a poet in reviving the past history by revisiting the communal memory and collective consciousness of the loss of history. Patricia Ismond also asserts that Derek Walcott

voices the agony not only of his ethnic group, but also of the other people who have suffered more or less from the same trauma of colonialism, and this is why he attributes the poem to V.S. Naipaul. She suggests that Walcott expresses his “alertness and sensitivity to events and crises on the worldwide scene” as well as empathizing with “the despair of racial oppression” of the people around the world (Ismond, 2001: 120).

It seems clear that Walcott employs the justifications of colonialism together with the outcomes and sufferings experienced as a result of the implementation of colonialism in his poems basically to give voice to the oppressions and misery that his ancestors have gone through. Because the natives are seen by the colonizers as “barbarians” and “sinners” who need to be “tamed” and made “devout”, in other words, because of their “inferior” status, the colonizers seemingly take this civilizing process for granted. Hence, the action of forcing and oppressing the natives for the colonizers’ needs and beliefs seems justifiable for the colonizers, yet it is still unjust for the native people as they lose their authentic characteristics.

2. 3. Hybridism, In-Betweenness, Alienation, and Creolization

This sub-chapter includes poems from the collections titled *In a Green Night* (1962-64), *The Castaway and Other Poems* (1965-69), *The Gulf and Other Poems* (1969), and *The Star-Apple Kingdom* (1979). The aim of this sub-chapter is to delve into some of Walcott’s poems from the afore-mentioned collections to provide an overall understanding of how Walcott voices the major, most evident, and most devastating outcomes of the colonization process. As it is known, the process of colonization resulted in immediate aftereffects, which were examined in the previous chapter, and the issues which form the basis of this sub-chapter are considered as the gradual but

substantial consequences affecting the colonized societies even in the post-colonial period. One of the most striking results is the emergence of hybrid presences in societies, lacking a sense of belonging to certain cultures, lands, and nations. In the post-colonial period, these hybridized presences are in a ceaseless effort of locating their identities, and therefore, speaking out the untold becomes crucial especially when the stories are narrated by “Third Space” writers such as Walcott. Walcott’s never-ending struggle in healing what Bloom calls the “spiritual and cultural schizophrenia” (Bloom, 2003: 58) can be considered as a “subaltern” and an “itemized” individual’s endeavour to make his words heard: a means to show that the subaltern also can speak.

One of the justifications for colonization is that it is said to educate the “inferior” races and this is done by implementing the oppressor’s language, willingly or by force, which ultimately resulted in the emergence of Creole languages. Although Walcott received his education in Standard English which is the official language of Saint Lucia, he was also brought up speaking French Creole, which is the mother tongue of everyday life in Saint Lucia. Similarly, Walcott had a mixed heritage of English, Dutch, and African ancestors, thus, Walcott’s biological hybridity in addition to his spiritual and cultural hybridity also counts here. In “A Far Cry from Africa”, this cross-cultural ancestry and education can be seen as the source of suffering and uncertainty, as well as a reference to hybridity and being a creole, since he refers to himself as being “poisoned with the blood of both” (26) languages and cultures. Even the title suggests Walcott’s detachment and alienation as a hybrid poet since it includes the phrase “a far cry”. Ramazani states that Walcott, via “A Far Cry from Africa”, reacts against the Mau Mau rebellion of 1952–1960 with a range of unanswered questions, in which the people of Kikuyu, Kenya, led a guerrilla war against the British colonizers, who came to their land with the aim of dividing and ruling, and against the local militia consisting of white settlers in Kenya, known as the Kenya Regiment (Ramazani, 2001: 49). Although the

place where Walcott was born and Kikuyu are quite far away from each other, Walcott's aim in narrating this phenomenon is to emphasize the similarity of sufferings among the natives of Africa. Breslin suggests that Walcott's meticulous use of the colonizer's language to narrate the story of Kikuyu seems contradictory, however, it is also impossible for Walcott to give up either his English or African identities, since it would mean to "cancel his own existence" (Breslin, 2001: 62) forasmuch as the hybridity enables the development of his poetic career. Walcott himself explains in his essay titled "Muse of History" the reason why he uses the English language as such:

The language I used did not bother me. I had given it, and it was irretrievably given; I could no more give it back than they could claim it. But I feared the cathedrals, the music, the weight of history, not because I was alien, but because I felt history to be the burden of others. [...] Yet the older and more assured I grew, the stronger my isolation as a poet, the more I needed to become omnivorous about the art and literature of Europe to understand my own world. (Walcott, 1974: 63)

Walcott states that the language which was obtruded on him and his ancestors is the only means of reaching the masses in his attempt to narrate his lost history. He suggests that there is no possibility to give up the language that was imposed on him, since it is the substance which created his hybrid and creole identity not only as a poet, but also as an individual. The in-between state of the poet, which could be seen as a result of religious, social, and linguistic restraint, does not hinder him from delving into the depths of the bitter side of history to unearth it so that the past would make sense for the hybridized subaltern presences. The English and African identity that he bears at the same time seems quite natural to him, since it is the reason that pushes his pencil to tell the untold. Fanon states that the employment of the language is to acquire the "culture" of the colonizer for the "black" in his desire to become "whiter as he gains greater

mastery of the cultural tool that language is" (Fanon, 2008: 25). However, Walcott's struggle here is not for being whiter to gain "honorary citizenship" or to get access to the realms which "were barred" before (Fanon, 2008: 25) as Fanon suggests; on the contrary, it is a means of acceptance of the hybridized and creolized identity, and a tool for voicing the silence of his ancestry.

The poem, "A Far Cry from Africa", similarly reflects the duality and ambivalence of Walcott as a subaltern poet, and it is also hard to define whether he praises or mocks the events and results of the process of colonialism, therefore, it portrays Walcott's contest against his divided identity: an identity which Bloom defines as an "irreconcilable and pluralistic cultural situation as a transplanted African in a colonial English society" (Bloom, 2003: 45). Walcott depicts this struggle by portraying the intenseness of violence as a wind "ruffling the tawny pelt" (1) of the island, and he parallels the people of Kikuyu to "flies" (2) eating up Africa's "bloodstreams" (3). Breslin comments on the animistic metaphors by saying that the employment of the comparison to a "disease-carrying insect" does not really glorify Kikuyu (Breslin, 2001: 61); however, the image portrays the destruction of vivacity and energies as a result of colonial alienation. Walcott suggests that the natives are alienated from their original characteristics as a result of colonialism and the hybridism they experience eats up their social and ancestral values. The overall reaction against the British rule seen in the poem suggests Walcott's idea on the process of colonialism as a "bloody" hunt on the natives, however, the aim of this sub-chapter is to provide Walcott's wound as a hybrid poet, not to discover his notion about the "violence of beast on beast" (15). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to underline that although Walcott feels in between his African and English identities, he responds and protests against the ferocious act of annihilation of his ancestors. It reads:

Only the worm, colonel of carrion, cries:
"Waste no compassion on these separate dead!"

Statistics justify and scholars seize
The salients of colonial policy.
What is that to the white child hacked in bed?
To savages, expendable as Jews? (*CP*, 17)

By stating that the colonizers mercilessly hunt the natives to execute them, Walcott criticizes the intellectuals, who were actually expected to object to the situation, for their attempt to justify the process. Walcott, as an intellectual of the post-colonial period, comments on his hybridity through the phrase “the gorilla wrestles with the supermen” (25), which depicts his individual dilemma of existence as “non-human” and “humanized” at the same time. It reads:

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have cursed
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?
Betray them both, or give back what they give?
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?
How can I turn from Africa and live? (*CP*, 17)

While maintaining a negative view of his hybridism, he seems to feel torn between the two horrific options of a bloodied victim, Africa, and the victimizer that is England. It seems that Walcott feels distant from both cultures because of his lack of “pure blood” and culture since he was of mixed heritage and he could be seen as an individual suffering from the transgenerational trauma. Thus, the persona's cross-cultural inheritance keeps him down from precisely identifying himself with a specific culture and forms a kind of in-betweenness, a state of non-belonging. Walcott refers to his mixed heritage that divides him “to the vein”. The suffering divides the poet in half and defiles his own “lifeblood”. Thus, it is obvious that the natives find themselves in a position of not belonging to a specific place, of being rootless. Walcott similarly feels unable to choose between the languages and teachings he is close to, which stand as

outcomes of his colonial education, and at the same time feels guilty for being in-between, culturally and linguistically.

In this sense, “A Far Cry from Africa” clearly depicts a colonial poet’s dilemma of non-belonging and non-existence in the post-colonial period. Walcott atavistically protests against the oppression during the colonial period and the subsequent alienation from the roots as a result of cultural annihilation. In addition to his effort for giving sound to his ancestors’ suffering and execution, his hybridity accentuates that he cannot choose between his Englishness and Africanness. In this sense, Walcott draws the vicious circle of in-betweenness by employing the same sense of hybridity in his poem, and reaches the space which Bhabha calls as the “Third Space of enunciation” as a “subalterned” poet (Bhabha, 1994:37).

Just like “A Far Cry from Africa”, the poem titled “Homecoming: Anse La Raye” represents one’s alienation from original culture as well as from the whole world due to colonization. Both poems allude to the current in-between situation created through colonial oppression in social life and education enforced on natives by the colonial mentality. Although most of Walcott’s personas in his poems can be considered as a compilation of portraits of the sufferers of the in-betweenness, alienation, and lack of history as a result of the colonial experiment, the personas in the aforementioned poems evidently symbolize the poet himself in search of his origins and reflecting his own hybridity. In this sense, both poems can be regarded as biographical sketches of Walcott in his dilemma of existence.

“Homecoming: Anse La Raye” clearly reflects the sense of non-belonging of a castaway and his aim for relocating himself back to his origins. Besides, the poem portrays the struggle of the native poet for gaining recognition on his native land and how this attempt was nullified upon being unrecognized by his kin. At the beginning of the poem, there is a man returning to the village of Anse la Raye on the Caribbean

Island of St. Lucia with the hope of reliving and reviving his past, however, what the persona encounters in this village is the void and inertness of the once-lively atmosphere. This inertia of the land and its people can be considered as the catastrophic effects of colonial education which resulted in cultural hybridity and alienation. The poem seems like an inner monologue of the speaker and the persona gives examples of his “borrowed ancestry” (4) by referring to his colonial education which gave rise to his and his nation’s in-betweenness :

Whatever else we learned
at school, like solemn Afro-Greeks eager for grades,
of Helen and the shades
of borrowed ancestors,
there are no rites
for those who have returned, (CP, 127).

The speaker asserts that there is no warm welcome, since the people dwelling on the island are taught by the values of the colonial mindset and have long since forgotten their indigenous values. As a person coming back to his own homeland, he seems to feel agonized over the things he encounters and becomes unsatisfied with his condition as a mulatto. Besides, the reaction - if not the petrification - of the natives to the home comers who are seen as detached from their ancestral heritage deeply affects him. His cross-cultural education and therefore his hybrid identity places him in an “in-between” situation, and therefore, he employs the term “borrowed ancestors” (4), underlining his estrangement due to colonialism. Even the use of “Afro-Greeks” (2) suggests the hybridity of his nation caused through colonial education yet which, at the same time, forms the basis of the poet’s cultural identification in the post-colonial era. It reads:

Suffer them to come,
entering their needle's eye
knowing whether they live or die,
what others make of life will pass them by
like that far silvery freighter

threading the horizon like a toy; (*CP*, 128)

The poet narrates the reasons resulting in his artistic exile from which he returns but is recognized as a “tourist” (23) strangely strolling around his own homeland, which further emphasizes his in-between state. Breslin suggests that the “starving” sons of Anse La Raye “cluster round the disgusted poet” (Breslin, 2005: 78), which disappoints the poet and wastes his effort to gain acceptance as a native son of the island. Indeed, the children of the island run towards him to get anything they can since they assume that he is a tourist. The persona feels sad about the indifference of children as well as the other people of the island, who do not recognize him and his efforts for them. The reference to the “silvery freighter” (30) that has ripped lots of people from their mother island causing in-betweenness is significant, as it seems far away just like the persona’s hope to be recognized. It reads:

but hoped it would mean something to declare
today, I am your poet, yours,
all this you knew,
but never guessed you'd come
to know there are homecomings without home.

You give them nothing.
Their curses melt in air. (*CP*, 128)

His wish emerges as a result of his abnegation and obligation to leave his own country for his people’s welfare, to have “something to declare” (36) and to say “I am your poet, yours,” (37), however, he has never thought that there would be “homecomings without home” (40). Baugh suggests that Walcott’s estrangement and in-betweenness in the poem “Homecoming: Anse la Raye” includes “a variant of the Caribbean person’s problematic relationship to home” (Baugh, 2006: 54) to which he returns and where he finds no attachment or affinity, and thus, becomes stranded. His attempt to voice his

nations' sufferings as a member of this oppressed nation collapses and the poet accuses himself of being unrecognized and unable to relieve their pain.

“Homecoming: Anse La Raye” is also significant for employing a highly critical tone against political and imperial abuse. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o suggests, colonizers also carefully manipulate the process of colonization by “[...] continuously press-ganging the African hand to the plough to turn the soil over and putting blinkers on him to make him view the path ahead only as determined for him by the master armed with the bible and the sword” (Thiong’o, 1994: 4). This act of dominance as it is considered to be determined by destiny both for the colonizer and the colonized results in the emergence of marginalized individuals who are detached from their roots and therefore become obedient. It reads:

under whose palms, dead
fishermen move their draughts in shade,
crossing, eating their islands,
and one, with a politician's
ignorant, sweet smile, nods
as if all fate
swayed in his lifted hand. (*CP*, 129)

These “obedient” individuals are marginalized by the colonialist mindset, since it is the common idea that the white man is the master all others should obey. As a result of the othering for imperial dominance, the original traits necessary for the vivacity of the natives and the land are destroyed, which transforms the islanders into petrified objects unable to speak and make their ideas heard. These “subalterned” presences, in Spivak’s term, cannot represent their ideas and tend to abide by the disciplines and thoughts of their “masters”. In this sense, the natives are alienated on such a scale that they fall short of recognizing an individual struggling to break the chains of subalternity and finally managing to narrate their own suffering for themselves.

This dilemma of non-belonging, detachment, and subalternity are also prevalent in the first section of the poem titled “The Schooner *Flight*”. This poem is one of Walcott's best-known poems, especially notable for being his first rooted and cultivated employment of the West Indian Creole voice in his attempt of narrating the marginalization of individuals due to colonial oppression in culture and education.

In his long narrative poem, *Shabine*, the “red nigger” protagonist, unfolds the story of his fleeing Trinidad “to ship as a seaman on the schooner *Flight*” (5). The reason for his escape is that he cannot tolerate living in a society corrupted by the disciplines of colonial empires. His exile, unlike the artistic exile of the poet, in the poem titled “Homecoming: Anse La Raye”, is somewhat personal, since he leaves everything behind including his family to free himself from the chains of imperial oppression and hybridity. The acceptance of subalternity of his beloved wife and children disturbs his presence as an individual longing for a proof of existence. It reads:

In idle August, while the sea soft,
and leaves of brown islands stick to the rim
of this Caribbean, I blow out the light
by the dreamless face of Maria Concepcion
to ship as a seaman on the schooner *Flight* (CP, 345).

The persona's “flight” is symbolic, representing the escape from a degenerate society to be cleansed from his in-betweenness (Ismond, 2001: 229). *Shabine*'s journey to the sea serves a double purpose: with the help of it, Walcott brings his inner troubles and pains together to emphasize the devastation of political and social corruption, as well as pointing the way back to the possibility of recovery and becoming “whole” again as a nation. The name of his wife, Maria Concepcion, seems to be chosen intentionally to show that she seems different from the people of his society, since the name allegorically refers to the “Immaculate Conception” of Virgin Mary. However, this

biblical reference shows that their society is converted to Christianity after colonialism, which is totally alien for the protagonist's origins and, as a result, it is not possible for the persona to familiarize with the situation. In this sense, Maria's "dreamless face" (4) suggests that this new religion leaves her in a situation where she can neither free herself from the chains of religious teachings nor become perfect and pure as it is aimed by the implementation of this new religion. She cannot become as pure and innocent as Virgin Mary because she is originally a native, born as a sinner and faithless, and she cannot continue as if she is a Christian by forgetting her religious origins. It is obvious that the speaker is not satisfied with the natives' situation as these lines depict the extent of his disgust:

But they had started to poison my soul
with their big house, big car, big-time bohbohl³,
coolie, nigger, Syrian, and French Creole,
so I leave it for them and their carnival [...] (CP, 346)

Here, similar to "A Far Cry from Africa", the speaker experiences a kind of alienation from his sui-generis culture, as well as feeling poisoned by the oppression of the colonizing forces. The intentional employment of the creole word "bohbohl" (31) emphasizes the speaker's reaction against or even hatred for the colonizers, who are responsible for creating his hybrid existence: a coolie, nigger, Syrian, and French altogether. It reads:

and I look in the rearview and see a man
exactly like me, and the man was weeping
for the houses, the streets, that whole fucking island.
[...]
if loving these islands must be my load,
out of corruption my soul takes wings. (CP, 345-6)

³An Eastern Caribbean creole word for bribery, fraud and corruption.

Considering Shabine's steadfast, stone-like posture to flee his native land, one may clearly realize that his departure may stand for a type of death, as indicated by the neighbour's stare at him as if he were not there and the possible double meaning of the taxi driver's sentence "This time, Sabine, like you really gone!" (17), and by his own view of his reflection "in the rear view" (22) seems like *another* man. The man, who does not belong to his former existence anymore, cries for the destiny sealed upon his island and people. Shabine's tears "for that whole fucking island" (24) turn the issue from his personal confusion to his discontent with the dilemma of existence in the post-colonial Trinidad. These lines suggest that the speaker seems to refuse to love and caress the "colonialism-stricken" island. In this sense, it is obvious that the persona feels alienated and lacks a sense of belonging to the island which was once a place that he called home. Shabine harbours bearing a resentment for his home with a hybrid presence due to his racially mixed heritage and the "corruption", since he also remembers the times "when these slums of empire was paradise" (39). The most explicit indication of the oppression he felt and his ambition to take away with him all that he has left behind is conveyed with his well-known words:

I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,
I had a sound colonial education,
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation (CP, 346).

Because of the fact that he was schooled in a colonial education system, he feels detached from his original values and traditions, which now consist of "Dutch, nigger, and English" (42). Therefore, rather than enduring the suffering caused by the imperial oppression, he decides to run away—if not to end his life—to be purified with a "sea bath" (34). Breslin states that Shabine, by his rejection of hybrid presences, "sees himself as both extremes at once: precisely by his inchoate lack of identity" and he stands for the existence of his marginalized ancestors as well as representing the

nationality as an individual (Breslin, 2001: 1). In addition, he is well aware that even if he abandons his beloved wife and country, there will “be no forgetting” (52). He even swears that he has given up on caring for the family he left: “I loved them, my children, my wife, my home; / I loved them as poets love the poetry / That kills them, as drowned sailors the sea” (*CP*, 347). The reason for the poet’s departure, what he tries to preserve and get rid of as well, ultimately destroys him, just as the sea “drowns the sailor” in the end. In this sense, with all his dilemmas and determination to leave his island, he clearly symbolizes the characteristics of his people in terms of not being able to defy or stand against the present situation, in other words, he symbolizes the in-between.

In the same way as Shabine, Eddie in “The Glory Trumpeter” represents the story of a worldly, wise man who left his country after witnessing the suffering of colonialism and experiencing the in-betweenness but unlike Shabine, returned to his land upon a worse attitude shown towards his kin in other places. Just like the persona of the poem titled “Homecoming: Anse la Raye”, Eddie in “The Glory Trumpeter” is described as a man who became a castaway as a result of colonial oppression and went overseas in search of better opportunities so that he could improve his own country. However, the bitter reality that life does not always welcome those who are in need leaves him stuck between two different cultures and societies, similar to what the persona of “Homecoming: Anse la Raye”, who was not recognized even by his people after returning to his own homeland.

The persona of this poem is a young boy who finds himself in a “fête” where the old man, Eddie, plays a musical instrument that takes him to his past. The “fête” tradition is important since it is a symbol of a shared past and a part of the common culture for the natives. However, Eddie, who left his homeland to make it a better place, now faces the burden of existing in two different cultures while being unable to feel attached to a certain one. Even in an atmosphere that links him to his past, he does not

feel completely a descendant of his original culture. In the first stanza of the poem, the persona emphasizes the transformation of Eddie into a different person lacking his sui-generis culture. This transformation is the reason why Eddie feels like an outcast in his own land, and emphasizes his hybrid existence. It reads:

Old Eddie's face, wrinkled with river lights,
Looked like a Mississippi man's. The eyes,
Derisive and avuncular at once,
Swivelling, fixed me. They'd seen
Too many wakes, too many cathouse nights.
The bony, idle fingers on the valves
Of his knee-cradled horn could tear
Through "Georgia on My Mind" or "Jesus Saves"
With the same fury of indifference,
If what propelled such frenzy was despair. (*CP*, 63)

While playing his horn at a traditional Caribbean fête, he seems like he wants to play "Georgia on My Mind" (8) or "Jesus Saves" (8) by the American singers "with the same fury of indifference" (9). Since music is an important part and a parcel of local and shared cultures, the cultural and spiritual void and hybridity are apparent in Eddie's unsteadiness. The songs in his mind are also symbols of his hybridity since "Georgia on My Mind" is a representative of the local culture with its rhythm of blues originating from jazz. African-American folk songs which were performed by the slaves constitute the basis of the emergence of jazz music and were mostly used as tools of voicing the desire for freedom and were also used as cultural elements which were transferred from generation to generation during colonialism. The lyrics of "Georgia on My Mind" are also noteworthy in portraying the yearning for origins and the nostalgia of the past as it reads: "Still in peaceful dreams I see / The road leads back to you" (1957). On the other hand, the song "Jesus Saves" alludes to the salvation of the people of which the white man thinks as the sinner. By referring to these songs, Walcott aims to narrate the

hybridity which would also act as a shared cultural characteristic to bring his people together. Walcott's employment of the musical heritage of his culture and ancestry could be understood by William C. Banfield's definition:

Consider the following elements found in African American music which are based on African roots: the music is communally based; it reflects collective and individual improvisation; it is spirit led; it exhibits rhythmic dynamism; it features the "sound" of the Black voice or uses the horn as an extension of the Black voice; it includes social commentary and employs inexhaustible variations of repetition and metric layering, which includes guttural expression (moans, groans, screams, shrills) as beautiful; it encourages active listener participation and reaction; and the expressions incorporate physical movement as part of the performance practice. (Banfield, 2010: 95)

In this sense, Walcott portrays through music the cultural in-betweenness that causes Eddie to have a dilemma of not exactly belonging to a certain tradition. Eddie, just like the people suffering from colonial marginalization, seems to be torn between two different cultures and cannot prefer one over the other. Antonia MacDonald-Smythe asserts that Eddie is a representative of the people who were unable to choose between their original cultures and the cultures which were imposed upon the natives during the process of colonialism and adds that according to Walcott "not choosing was itself a choice, one that offered the Caribbean man, necessarily hybrid because of his diasporic experiences, full access to all existing artistic traditions" (MacDonald-Smythe, 2005: 92). Being aware of the pain and experience his people have suffered, Eddie stands as a reminder of the ancestral bond, a teacher for the young persona as Walcott is for the reader. In fact, Eddie resembles Walcott more than Shabine, in his artistic and cultural dilemma at least, since both cultures appeal to him more or less in the same level. In his

aim to enhance his original culture, Eddie unintentionally eulogizes the culture which he was subjected to. This subconscious act undoubtedly accentuates his in-between existence, and further refers to the inhumane behaviour that the natives encountered in other states. Walcott himself states in a reading session in Italy in 2001 that Eddie, as an erudite black man who returned to Barbados after staying in America, “must have felt the experience of racism in America” and adds that “the highest expression of tragedy can be in music, just as the blues comes out of that suffering” (qtd. in Loreto, 2009: 130). The persona of “The Glory Trumpeter” gives details of these men who recently returned from America “in their funeral serge” (26) feeling detached from their culture yet not belonging to the American culture either. The music Eddie plays feels more like “jazz” or “blues” (24) for those men, however, the persona states that it was a requiem for their fate. It reads:

A jesus-ragtime or gut-bucket blues
To the bowed heads of the lean, compliant men
Back from the states in their funereal serge,
Black, rusty Homburgs and limp waiters' ties
With honey accents and lard-coloured eyes
Was Joshua's ram's horn wailing for the Jews
Of patient bitterness or bitter siege. (*CP*, 65)

Besides turning the natives into “compliant” people, the hybridity that estranges them from their original culture also results in the emergence of “mimicry” (Bhabha, 1994: 85). The natives are stated as having “honey accents” and “lard-coloured eyes” (28), however, the mimicry here does not serve as an attempt for the black to become whiter to gain acceptance as it was commonly thought during colonization. It is an idolization of the decency which seems askew and provokes the detachment from origins. Eddie turns his back to his American side but still cannot find relief in his own kin, since he also feels alienated from them. His ambivalence haunts him, makes him lonely and hopeless, and the distance between his innate culture and the acquired culture seems

impossible to shorten. However, the in-betweenness of the people is what unites them now, and the trumpet that Eddie holds in his hand resembles “Joshua’s horn” (29), a symbol of the rebirth of the nostalgia and the common past for Eddie’s people. This is shown with a flash of light coming from the horn, which causes the persona to remember some vision from his past, his ancestral pain, and a melody, that is long forgotten and silenced, of the buried and muted past. He cannot do anything but split half of his drink into his horn, which he directs to the faraway places he dreamed of, and drink from both, symbolizing his hybridity.

The last poem to be analyzed in this section is “Tales of the Island” which appeared in the collection titled *“In a Green Night”*. The sonnet sequence consists of ten sonnets, titled as chapters, which picture a variety of aspects ranging from cultural and traditional motifs to portrayals of hybridity and in-betweenness emerging as a result of colonialism. Each sonnet unfolds a different story and, through the characters, narrates the dilemma of hybridity and being a creole in a society which is, in itself, in-between. Baugh states his idea on the “Tales of the Island” as follows:

Through all of these portraits and scenes, Walcott draws some of the ‘sociological contours’ (CP, 148) of the island, sharpening them with the irony in various types of contrast: between appearance and reality, inherited social status and actual degeneration, intellectual enlightenment and ‘backward’ practices, spirituality and sexual promiscuity, official religion and ‘primitive’ superstition. (Baugh, 2006: 39)

Indeed, some of the personas, such as Cosimo de Chrétien and Le Brun, in the sonnets are representatives of the colonial mindset since their lifestyles and beliefs give glimpses of how the individuals belonging to nobility labelled the natives as “inferior” and “wicked”. These characters are chosen deliberately to give voice to the othering and stereotyping of the natives, a situation which gave rise to the feelings of detachment and

alienation for the colonized. The titles of the sonnets are also of vital importance since they transparently show Walcott's aim in alluding to his ancestors' creole voice.

The first chapter subtitled as "*La rivière dorée*", meaning "the golden river", mainly covers religious teachings and colonial education, and the effects of these teachings on the natives which left them in a hybridized situation. It is important since the colonizer saw the civilizing process via religion and education a proper way to turn "savage" natives into "morally justified" individuals, yet the experiment resulted in the loss of culture and hybridity since it led to a clash between the innate and imposed cultures and religions. The river in the poem is described as flowing "through gorges of green cedars" (2), reminiscent of the hope and the enthusiasm of young children from the "Mission School" (3), which is a symbol of colonial education. It reads:

The marl white road, the Dorée rushing cool
Through gorges of green cedars, like the sound
Of infant voices from the Mission School,
Like leaves like dim seas in the mind; *ici* Choiseul. (CP, 22)

The definitions of the river and the land give glimpses of the desire for expansion for the colonizers, one of the reasons which paved the way for the colonial experiment. Since the Caribbean was rich in gold and marl, it made the island an important profit centre for the colonizers. The opening lines of the poem show how the intact nature of the land was destroyed through colonization, and the solemnity of the river was turned into "dim seas" (4) due to colonial oppression in culture and education system. In this sense, the harmony of the island was shattered by a touch of colonization, and the hopeful "voices" (3) of the children who were educated in "the Mission School" (3) gave way to the destruction of culture and silence of post-colonial identities which were mostly regarded as being subaltern and hybrid presences. It reads:

Touring its Via Dolorosa I tried to keep
That chill flesh from my memory when I found

A Sancta Teresa in her nest of light;
[...]
Teach our philosophy the strength to reach
Above the navel; black bodies, wet with light,
Rolled in the spray as I strolled up the beach. (*CP*, 22)

Here, the persona tells the story of how native people, who were considered as “heathen sinners” by the colonizers, were washed and baptised by the “light” (13) of religious philosophy with the aim of making them “stronger” and “purer”, however, it caused only in-betweenness. The original belief systems of the natives were demolished by the oppressors with the aim of turning the heretics into obedient believers of Christianity, which would later be used by the colonizers in the justification of colonialism, and cause the natives to see themselves as subjects to be tamed. Nevertheless, the trauma of the civilizing process does not allow the persona to see the teachings as the white man sees them. Even the stories of religious teachings such as the suffering of Jesus on his way to be crucified through “Via Dolorosa” (7) remind him of another road of sorrow known as “The Middle Passage”, where his ancestors were killed, and therefore, makes them feel in-between in terms of religious faith. In this sense, the link between the outside world and the inner world seems to be broken, resulting in hybridity and in-betweenness. On the other hand, the reference to Jesus via “Via Dolorosa” (7) suggests that the poet identifies with the suffering of Jesus, which also contributes to his sense of in-betweenness since “The Middle Passage” stands in front of his eyes as a relic that does not vanish. Nevertheless, just like Jesus, who suffered the pain for the salvation of his people, the poet is in a never-ending endeavour to set his ancestral burden free, and to save his people from being stereotyped as the other. The path that the poet decides to walk can also be seen as a way of sorrow, since it serves as a reminder, a memento for the suffering of his ancestors caused by oppression in the colonial period.

The second chapter similarly tells the story of how natives are exposed to “colonial alienation” (Thiong’o, 1994: 17) through the act of othering. This chapter is important since it explicitly reflects the white race’s attitude towards the black races, which does not change even if the natives are educated through colonial doctrines and elevated to what the white man terms as human level. The persona of the poem is a French nobleman trying to keep himself away from being stained by the black race. The sonnet, by describing the mindset of the persona who seemingly belongs to a higher class, shows how the natives were seen, by the nobility, “inferior”, “uncivilized”, and “of bad stock”. The persona, Cosimo de Chrétien, makes a strong endeavour to maintain the “purity” of his blood that has been, in his opinion, successfully transferred through generations. Since the oppressor sees the native as of a “bad stock”, he tries to keep away from the “inferior” so as not to “bring disgrace” (10) to his own family. It reads:

Cosimo de Chrétien controlled a boardinghouse.
His maman managed him. No. 13.
Rue St. Louis. It had a court, with rails,
A perroquet, a curio-shop where you
Saw black dolls and an old French barquentine
Anchored in glass. Upstairs, the family sword, (CP, 22)

The second name “Chrétien” symbolizes, for Cosimo at least, the purity and innocence of his blood and ancestry since he is a member of Christianity as the name suggests. The common belief that proselytization creates individuals who are obedient also applies here. Walcott’s use of foreign words and phrases such as “barquentine” (5), “perroquet” (4), and “maman” (2) to convey Cosimo’s story is also noteworthy, revealing his attempt to draw attention to how native languages of the islands are invalidated as a result of colonial oppression. The use of a standard language seems to be deliberate in order to clarify the status and nobility of Cosimo de Chrétien for the readers to have a broader understanding, since language is also seen as a medium to show the

“inferiority” of the natives. By Cosimo, Walcott presents a vivid picture of how Western imperialism marginalized the Orient since the colonial mindset stereotypes the people other than themselves as “impure subjects” who needed to be “avoided”.

In the fourth chapter, however, one may recognize a shift from the use of standard language to dialects which explicitly reveals the creolization as a result of colonization. The opening lines of the chapter suggest that the male characters of the poem are of mixed background and possibly taught by colonial education as a means of turning them into human beings. Breslin suggests that the persona’s use of colloquial language signifies a “refusal to be intimidated by European high culture” (Breslin, 2001: 69), and for the poet it also stands as a protest against the imposed culture which was thought by the colonials a tool to “humanize” and “moralize” the natives. Making the master’s language obligatory for the oppressed and the prohibition of the use of native languages resulted in the detachment from original cultures since language is the most important medium as the carrier of cultures. Joseph Brodsky, in his essay titled “The Sound of the Tide”, suggests that Walcott’s intention behind employing the patois in his works was not a result of his wish to be heard by more people or as a means of showing his artistic skills in creating poetry as a bilingual person. Instead, Walcott seems to find some kind of relief and freedom through the use of creoles, and therefore, his aim could be considered as “a homage to what he spoke as a child”, a reminiscence of the past nostalgia (qtd. in *Less Than One*, 1986: 164). Walcott comments on his affinity towards patois as follows:

The dialects of my archipelago seem as fresh to me as those raindrops on the statue’s forehead, not the sweat made from the classic exertion of frowning marble, but the condensations of a refreshing element, rain and salt. (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992)

Indeed, the local languages are of importance for Walcott in his process of creating a safe space to exist in the post-colonial trauma of hybridity and subalternity. The dialects he employs and the places he mentions in his works can be considered as bricks of the wall he builds to save himself from the chaos of being unidentified as an individual and as a nation. It reads:

Outside I said, 'He's a damned epileptic,
Your boy, El Greco! Goya, he don't lie.'
Doc laughed: 'Let's join the real epileptics.' (CP, 23)

The reference to well-known artists stands as a result of colonial education, while the usage error in the sentence underlines his hybridity. Breslin asserts that the use of the informal speech can be considered as “a sense of familiarity with these masters” and the persona’s disavowal to be appalled by “European high culture” (Breslin, 2001: 69) and at the same time lays emphasis on the character’s in-between situation. It reads:

[...] 'Our mother earth'
I said. 'The great republic in whose womb
The dead outvote the quick.' (CP, 24)

In these lines, the persona’s in-betweenness is still apparent and as time passes, the persona, who seemingly suffered from the devastation and annihilation experienced in the process of colonialism, starts to reveal the sufferings of his motherland which went through great losses, and states that the annihilation the natives faced was massive in his motherland. This statement clearly shows the state of the land as well as the sufferings experienced by its inhabitants on a large scale. Towards the end of the chapter, the outcome of religious teachings is shown, when the Doc says “the wages of sin is birth” (14), either implying that they are born as sinners as is the common belief in Christianity, and the persona’s indecisiveness is neutralized again by the use of religious confirmation. It may also refer to the artistic creativity which paved the way for Walcott’s success as a hybrid writer, that the emergence of his poetry is because of the

suffering his people experienced, and the way for the rebirth of the nation is through his attempt to give sound to the dark side of his past.

Walcott portrays, in the fifth chapter, the hybridity in religion as a result of colonization. Although the expansion was allegedly thought as a process of civilizing the Orient to bring welfare and modernity to its inhabitants, Christianizing which was implemented during enslavement and colonialism resulted in the emergence of religiously hybrid identities that lack belonging to certain belief systems. Ismond states that colonialism “left only a legacy of degradation and inferiority” and when Walcott and his ancestors’ history is taken into consideration, this subalternity anchored “a virtual tradition of dependence upon and subservience to an alien ‘mother’ culture (Ismond, 2001: 58). The chapter discloses the “Kélé” tradition of St. Lucia, which was considered as a ritual of sacrifice for African gods and forefathers. However, this ancestral ritual seems alien for the natives now due to religious oppression, since it was basically a pagan worship. Even in the first lines of the chapter, titled as “*moeurs anciennes*” suggesting the ancient traditions, the alienation of the persona and his kin in a society formed by non-traditional teachings can be seen clearly. It reads:

The fête took place one morning in the heights
For the approval of some anthropologist.
The priests objected to such savage rites
In a Catholic country; but there was a twist
As one of the fathers was himself a student
Of black customs; it was quite ironic. (CP, 24)

The “fête” (1) tradition of the islanders is uncovered, asserting that an “anthropologist” (2) is there to observe the religious rituals once celebrated in the area. As a result of Catholic teachings, this ritual of sacrificing the animals is seen as “savage” (3) by the religious men, since the land has already been converted to Catholicism. However, one

of the priests is of mixed religious heritage, taught by “black customs” (6), and therefore, the persona suggests that the situation was “quite ironic” (6). It reads:

The whole thing was more like a bloody picnic.
Bottles of white rum and a brawling booth.
They tie the lamb up, then chop off the head,
And ritualists take turns drinking the blood.
Great stuff, old boy: sacrifice, moments of truth. (*CP*, 24)

The rejection of the imposed religion and remembrance of his ancestors’ past can be seen in which the persona states that “they danced with natural grace” (8) and “remembered from the dark past” (9) from which they have come, therefore, the tradition seems like a “reminder of its disturbing origins” to use Breslin’s words (Breslin, 2001: 71). Here, the persona suggests that the ancestral traditions are not forgotten but that people are divided and torn between two different religions as a result of colonialism. Because of the use of such critical tone through the persona of the poem, Ismond suggests that Walcott has a different aim than showing the persona’s astonishment:

Walcott, showing his early scepticism about the meaningful survival of African religions in the region, expresses his sense of the fraudulence of its rites of animal sacrifice and drumming: ‘The whole thing was more like a bloody picnic.’ He makes use, in this tale, of a select vocabulary, diction and syntax specially calculated to achieve his tone of sceptical rejection. (Ismond, 2001: 33)

However, Walcott’s apparent rejection of the ancestral religion seems as a deliberate attempt of underlining the hybridity in religion which left the natives in a dilemma of internalizing the original religions due to marginalization and mimicry. In fact, the rejection of the ancestral bond is a refusal to accept the norms and doctrines which forced the natives to mimic the colonizer; it is a protest against the religious stereotyping practised on the natives. He continues to report this “bloody” (10) festival,

in which the natives behead the lamb and put its blood into “white bottles of rum” (11) and then drink it one by one. The use of the word “white” in this line and drinking the blood of the sheep through this bottle may symbolize the annihilation of the natives by the “white” races with a reference to killing as a sacrifice for the sake of colonization and turning the natives into “human” beings. On the other hand, the intricacy of the action itself is interesting, since sacrificing the animals and drinking their blood are considered as “uncivilized” actions, yet, in this sonnet, performed by people who are considered as civilized. By doing this, Walcott seemingly tries to accentuate the in-betweenness of the personas, who were “alienated from their essence” (Bhabha, 1994: 89) in such a way that they defy their origins and cannot see themselves as practitioners of their ancestral rituals.

The “fête” tradition continues to exist in *Chapter VI* along with the use of colloquial language and creoles. However, this “fête” is not bloody as it was in the previous chapter, but rather entertaining and celebratory. Paul Breslin suggests that although the chapter seems to portray a joyful experience, it has an unpleasant historical origin suggesting that Walcott refers to:

[...] a murder case of 1902 in rural St. Lucia, near Monchy. One Montoute Edmond, who had come to St. Lucia from Haiti, found that his crops were failing. He believed that a human sacrifice would regenerate the land, and with the help of two accomplices, he kidnapped and killed a twelve- or thirteen-year-old boy. (Breslin, 2001: 72)

Here, the vivacity of the ritual is shattered by a real event of human sacrifice. The action alludes to the demolition of the purity of local religions after being tainted by religious oppression during colonialism, since the killing of a young and innocent boy for the sake of prosperity resembles the annihilation of races, cultures, and religions for

the sake of expansion which was also justified as a mission to civilize the uncivilized. The first lines of the chapter clearly picture an atmosphere of great joy during the festival in which people drink and have fun accompanied by the sound of the beating drums, which reminds the reader of the atmosphere in “The Glory Trumpeter”. It reads:

Poopa. da' was a fête! I mean it had
Free rum free whisky and some fellars beating
Pan from one of them band in Trinidad
And everywhere you turn was people eating (*CP*, 24-25)

In fact, the vitality of the atmosphere suggests the possibility of a return to origins, just like in “The Glory Trumpeter”. It also portrays the nostalgia of the past and alludes to the past glory of the traditions which were annihilated by the Western imperialism. The use of colloquial language, reminding the reader of a mixed educational background, can be seen in colloquial words such as “da” (1) for “that”, and “fellars” (2) for “fellows”. This attempt continues as lines unfold the story of a married lady who has been seen with some other “tests” (6), meaning “men”, on the seashore, while her husband, who has newly graduated from “Oxbridge” (7) gives quotations from Shelley. The Oxbridge man quoting Shelley in creole is important since it portrays the ongoing dilemma of in-betweenness in culture, language, and education. It reads:

They catch his wife with two tests up the beach
While he drunk quoting Shelley with ‘Each
Generation has its angst, but we has none’
And wouldn't let a comma in edgewise,
(Black writer chap, one of them Oxbridge guys). (*CP*, 25)

Seemingly, the teachings imposed upon the persona by the colonial mindset is not enough to oppress the innate knowledge since the persona in the poem loses his proper grammar after he gets drunk, which releases his unconscious mind and triggers the ancestral heritage to become unearthed since he is freed from the oppression of subalternity through his drink. That is to say, the past from which the persona tries to

escape seems to be always there, waiting to be unveiled, and is unearthed when his suppressed consciousness is released.

In *Chapter VII* titled “*Lotus Eater...*”, the poet portrays the ongoing desperate situation of the islands after the colonial expansion. The title of the poem is rather noteworthy, since it refers to the lotus flower which is seen as a symbol of fertility, creation, and rebirth. Seemingly, the bad fate of the island, since the colonialist experiment was implemented there, devours the rich and plentiful lands, nature, animals, and people along with their memories of good times. It is possible to see the result of almost a biotic crisis that took place on the island even by reading the first part of the poem. It reads:

“Maingot,” the fisherman called that pool blocked by
Increasing filth that piled between ocean
And jungle, with a sighing grove
Of dry bamboo, its roots freckled with light
Like feathers fallen from a migratory sky. (*CP*, 25)

It is clearly stated that there lies a compilation of “filth” (2) between the sea and the island, showing the recent situation of the island which may seem “malarial” (11) and infected. The filth is connected to the sea and the island; therefore, this might be a reference to the unexpected results of colonialism in the eyes of the islanders. The pile “blocks” (1) the way from inland to offshore, and it seems as if it stands there as a symbol of decay and destruction brought on the islands by outlanders, halting the way to their opportunity for freedom and salvation. The lands, which were once rich and fertile, seem to have lost their fruitful presence, and have stopped bearing life for humans as well as the fauna. Symbolically, the filth represents the detachment of the natives from their roots, and it rests between the native land and the outside world, and further signifies their in-between situation. Walcott’s enviable wordplay is worth praising in the lines where he depicts the bamboo’s roots as “like feathers fallen from a

migratory sky” (5). Interestingly, Paul Breslin states that the word “feathers” (5) suggests the “bird of passage”, a West Indian expression meaning an outlander who stays in a place temporarily (Breslin, 2001: 73). In this sense, the feathers symbolize the natives being outlanders on their own territory. It reads:

Of dry bamboo, its roots freckled with light
Like feathers fallen from a migratory sky.
Beyond that, the village. Through urine-stunted trees
A mud path wriggled like a snake in flight.
Franklin gripped the bridge-stanchions with a hand
Trembling with fever. Each spring, memories
Of his own country where he could not die
Assaulted him. He watched the malarial light (*CP*, 25)

A similar situation can be seen here in the in-between condition of the persona: Franklin is struggling to stay up, and yet is pulled deeper due to “urine-stunted trees” (6), “malarial light” (11) and “memories of his own country where he could not die” (10). Breslin asserts that Franklin represents the “stagnation” of a “malaria-ridden expatriate” who cannot find his way out of the dilemma he feels, and the nostalgia of his stolen past besieges him (Breslin, 2001: 72). In fact, there seems to be no hope for the persona to return to his country and die peacefully, because the serenity and safety are lost there forever, and the persona cannot feel familiar with the current situation of his own country. Towards the end of the chapter, the point of view switches from the persona to the colonizers’ perspective. It reads:

In the tea-coloured pool, tadpoles
Seemed happy in their element. Poor, black souls.
He shook himself. Must breed, drink, rot with motion. (*CP*, 25)

It seems that the persona is reluctant to believe what the colonizer thinks about his race, and by shaking himself, turns back to the reality of his own survival, a survival in which he needs to become numb to avoid his in-betweenness. Although the nature is

inanimate, the “poor black souls” (13), who are seen as servants on their own island, are depicted as being happy and grateful for their life. In this sense, what Thiong’o states as “taking-over-the-mind” as well as “taking-over-the-land” (Thiong’o, 1994: 16) is achieved in such a perfect order that the natives believe the path ahead is their fate, and the stereotyping of the natives as “happy in their element” (13), for Breslin, underlines the “blind animality” of the islanders (Breslin, 2001: 73).

Chapter VIII of the “Tales of the Islands” pictures the Spanish Civil War, which took place from 1936 to 1939, killing more than 500.000 people. Apparently, Walcott uses this phenomenon to show how a seemingly heroic event results in pain and detachment from one’s origins. One of the soldiers fighting against the “Falangists”, a group supporting Franco, the king of Spain, is revealed in the first line. The Falangists had an ideology which can be considered as anti-communist, anti-democratic, and anti-liberal, and pro-extremist Catholic beliefs as well. It is possible that the main character of the poem is a Jew whose ancestors were expelled from Spain during the Reconquista in 1492. Almost 450 years later, the Falangists incite the Spanish Civil War by using the Reconquista as an excuse and defeat the others. It reads:

In the Hotel Miranda, 10 Grass St., who fought
The Falangists en la guerra civil, at the hour
Of bleeding light and beads of crimson dew,
This exile, with the wry face of a Jew,
Lets dust powder his pamphlets; crook’t
Fingers clutch a journal to his shirt. (*CP*, 26)

Just like the persona of the poem, who suffers from exile and amnesia, the people of Walcott’s islands bear the pain and loss of the lands they call “home”. It seems that Walcott tries to find a similar link between his and his ancestors’ sufferings and a real historical event. The persona’s eyes are also “glacial and mountainous” (7) suggesting

that he is longing for his lands and feels detached from his roots, which intensifies the connection between Walcott's and the persona's ancestors' suffering. It reads:

As pious fleas explore a seam of dirt,
The sunwashed body, past the age of sweat,
Sprawls like a hero, curiously inert. (CP, 26)

Here, the persona refers to another reason for the incidents that shook the lives of both the persona of the poem and the poet himself. The use of the word "pious" (9) possibly refers to the religious justifications of the colonizers in their act of colonization which also leave the persona and the poet in a religiously hybrid situation. The persona states that "the pious fleas explore a seam of dirt" (9), showing that the outcomes and scars of such a devastating event can still be seen and felt, and affect the existence of the poet and the persona alike in a place which does not resemble their own.

Chapter IX titled "*Le Loupgarou*" connotes the widespread folkloric tradition of the "werewolf", which is generally linked with Christian beliefs and oral tradition. For Breslin, the employment of the folkloric traditions here signifies that "the terrors hidden beneath the gaiety of the fête have not faded entirely from modern island life" (Breslin, 2001: 73). The poem portrays an age-old tradition of conveying oral culture and social values through myths and legends, which constitute the basis of societies. In this chapter, the story of "*Le Loupgarou*" is told by elderly women, underlining how the tradition of telling stories to future generations still exists on the island as a cultural value. The story of the main character named "Le Brun" is important since it brings catastrophic results over his life. Just like Faust, who bargains his soul to Mephistopheles in search of wisdom and worldly pleasures, Le Brun is overwhelmed by his avarice and desires, and thus, sells his soul to devilish beings. Although Le Brun is described as well-dressed and elegant, it is obvious that people who have heard the rumours are afraid of him. It reads:

Greeted by slowly shutting jealousies
When he approached them in white linen suit,
Pink glasses, cork hat and tap-tapping cane,
A dying man licensed to sell sick fruit,
Ruined by fiends with whom he'd made a bargain. (CP, 26)

It may be concluded that the main character, Le Brun, possibly symbolizing the people who support and implement colonialism, seems elegant, impeccable, and prosperous, yet in the end turns into “sick fruit” (7), and possibly brings the end to those who eat his sick fruit. Here, the use of the word “white” (5) for his outfit represents purity and cleanliness and creates a strong contrast with his dark and evil character. In this sense, the juxtaposition of “white” and “evil” turns the situation upside down and underlines the purity of the natives compared to the colonizers, and is in a way, a resistance to the oppression and stereotyping done by the colonizers. The legend is also strongly linked to “witchcraft” and “spiritual forces”, which are seen as the traits of “savages” and “non-believers”. In the second part of the poem, it is stated that the storytellers called “Christian witches” (9) see Le Brun turn into a werewolf which is later “wounded” by “his own watchman” (12) and barely escaped. The use of the oxymoron, “Christian witches” is also noteworthy here, since non-believers are considered to be evil witches, which may connote the people who once were thought of as “savages” and “heathens” but were converted to Christianity through colonization for “purification”, but rather resulted in hybridization.

The last chapter of the “Tales of The Islands” possibly portrays the poet’s own experience of the time when he leaves his beloved island. Interestingly, of the ten chapters, only the last chapter includes the persona “I”, which makes it feel more personal. The sub-title of the chapter “*Adieu, foulard*” alludes to a traditional song in Martinique Creole, which was generally sung on farewells. The employment of this reference in the last chapter is significant since it underlines the allegiance of the poet to

his sui-generis language and culture. Nevertheless, Breslin states that Walcott's parting was "necessary for him to write these 'tales' which end by narrating the departure that made them possible" (Breslin, 2001: 74). Indeed, it is the burden of detachment and exile that pushes his pen to voice the suffering of his kin, and a means of proving his artistic creativity as a hybrid poet. It reads:

The silver glinting on the fuselage, each mile
Dividing us and all fidelity strained
Till space would snap it. Then, after a while
I thought of nothing; nothing, I prayed, would change (*CP*, 27)

Although the miles set the poet and his island people apart, the poet still bears the hope that "nothing would change" (14). The poet always has a longing for his island, and he feels that nothing is so powerful to change his history and experiences. In this sense, the longing here seems like a protest against the poet's in-betweenness and not belonging to the learned traditions and the place he currently dwells, yet he asserts that he feels far away from his sui-generis culture as well. The persona's detachment from the roots reminds the reader of the "feathers" (7) in *Chapter VII*, symbolizing the "bird of passage", and underlines the longing of the poet for his island which considers him as an outlander and makes him feel as a castaway on his own land due to the dilemma of existence caused by colonialism.

All in all, Walcott uses different characters and places to narrate his common ancestral heritage as well as the shared experience which resulted in his and his ancestor's hybridity. All the personas in the chapters (Cosimo, Le Brun, Franklin) and well-known places of the islands (La rivière dorée, No. 13, Rue St. Louis, Hotel Miranda, lazaretto) are used intentionally by the poet to create a shared historical background along with the shared languages of the people of the island, including French, Spanish, and English creoles to emphasize the in-between state of the islands historically and linguistically. As Walcott suggests, cities, languages, and the real

people are the representatives of a common culture (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992), and are of great importance when the struggle is to locate the culture and its bearers to a certain safe space in which their voices could be heard. In this sense, the sonnet sequence titled “Tales of the Islands” is substantial since the sonnets serve as autobiographical sketches of Walcott’s life, representing his and his ancestors’ dilemma of hybridity, subalternity, and marginalization stemming from the trauma of colonialism.

2.4. Memory Making as a Means of Proving Existence

This sub-chapter encloses Walcott’s artistic endeavour and his personal attempt in creating poetry in order to tell the story of his ancestry. Although all the works Walcott produces could be considered as products of his artistic skills and a means of conveying his story, if not rewriting history, the poems employed in this sub-chapter are important in terms of portraying the poet’s aim in creating pieces of the communal memory to eternize his past and present existence. It is obvious that Walcott uses his art to substantiate his and his ancestors’ existence in the post-colonial period, and to break the common belief that the subaltern can never be heard. The sub-chapter includes two poems - “A City’s Death by Fire” and “The Castaway” - from the collections titled *In a Green Night* (1962-64) and *The Castaway* (1965-69) with the purpose of analyzing how historical and real life events are employed in the poems, since they reflect the making of memory, to add up to Walcott’s search for individual and national identity.

The struggle for existence in an alien society, and, furthermore, the conflict between the real identity and the enforced identity both result from the imposition of the colonizers; the construction of “civility” in which the “Negro” is seen not as a real

individual who bears and shares a past, but as an “image” that does not actually exist individually. To prove the existence of hybrid identities in a society which is totally alien, the post-colonial individuals’, and similarly the poets’, role is to regenerate the memories of the past over and over again in a never-ending endeavour to go back to “lost origins”, to borrow Hall’s term (Hall, 1996: 235). However, since a total return to the past is impossible, poets use their imagination and memory-making as a means of proving their individual existence which would add up to the creation of a familiar atmosphere where their ancestors’ values could exist. Walcott, in this sense, successfully blends the current hybrid situation with historical events to be able to create this safe space for himself to exist individually. As Laurence Breiner in his “Lyric and Autobiography in West Indian Literature” puts it, the use of autobiographical elements to narrate a common story is not surprising since it:

[...] moves beyond mere self-assertion to produce representative texts, witnessed to a shared experience. Writers who might elsewhere be inclined to define their own individuality *against* their surroundings here tend to link their personal development with that of their society. (Breiner, 1989: 3)

Despite the common idea that amnesia and hybridity have shaken the very basis of civilizations, Walcott actually sees this in-betweenness and void as a tool to reconstruct his nation’s identity. The languages which were annihilated by the colonial oppression and the cultures which were petrified by the marginalization of the natives stand, for Walcott, as instruments to remake and revitalize the communal existence of his nation. In his essay titled “Culture or Mimicry?”, Walcott states that language is one of the most effective mediums and serve as a carrier of culture:

The Old World, whether it is represented by the light of Europe or of Asia or of Africa, is the rhythm by which we

remember. What we have carried over, apart from a few desultorily performed customs, is language. When language itself is condemned as mimicry, then the condition is hopeless and men are no more than jackdaws, parrots, myna birds, apes. (Walcott, 1974: 7)

In this sense, Walcott sees the shared languages as the most powerful element for narrating the “ever-bleeding wound” of marginalization and subalternity. However, he does not claim a kind of total acceptance of the languages imposed on him, he suggests that the creolization, the blend of the local and external languages in time, makes it possible to give voice to the unheard and underestimated. For him, the Caribbean is still accepted as a place which is “illegitimate, rootless, and mongrelized” and his purpose is to speak, in the language of the oppressor in Walcott’s case, as a “Third Space” writer, so that the memory lacking the origins could coalesce again (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992). Walcott, as a poet of his land, struggles to echo his people, who were actually seen as “no people”, in Froude’s words (qtd. in *CP*, 113), and recreate the communal memory by using the shattered images and rituals of the past since he sees poetry not as a process of “making”, but as a meticulous act of “remaking the fragmented memory, the armature that frames the god, even the rite that surrenders it to a final pyre” (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992). In this sense, the act of remembering the rituals and the creation of poetry out of the hidden past is a way of giving sound to his ancestral silence for Walcott. The references to real cities and characters of his past, therefore, can be seen as the musical notes and rhythms to create his music so that people could rediscover their roots, and the chaos of subalternity and hybridity could be acknowledged and endured. Spivak suggests in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* that the return and recreation of memory is an “escape from the oppression of an image” (Spivak, 1999: 151) which objectifies the individuals and defies their existence, yet, in Walcott’s case, the process of recreation is not a way of

avoidance, instead, it is a way of reconciliation of the forgotten past and the present dilemma of subalternity.

In this context, the poem “A City’s Death by Fire” can be considered as a perfect example on Walcott’s aim of remaking the history. The poem originally refers to the Great Fire of 1948 in Castries, in St. Lucia, that burnt down almost the whole town, leaving 2,000 people homeless, and a majority of them with merely the clothes they had on their backs. The deliberate reference to a real city suggests the revival of customs and cultures along with its inhabitants since Walcott thinks that cultures are “made by its cities”(from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992). However, the fire in this city, the representative of a culture, also strongly connotes the annihilation of Walcott’s ancestors’ society and culture. It reads:

After that hot gossamer has levelled all but the church sky,
I wrote the tale by tallow of a city's death by fire;
Under a candle's eye, that smoked in tears, I
Wanted to tell, in more than wax, of faiths that were snapped
like wire. (*CP*, 6)

In this poem, Walcott seems to have taken on the role of a storyteller, clearly asserting that he writes “the tale by tallow of a city’s death by fire” (2) just in the opening line of the poem. It is not the city’s, but a nation’s, a culture and its bearers’ death, since the “fire” here suggests the devastating experiences that occurred and caused not only the people but also their beliefs to vanish. In the poem, the persona finds himself walking amongst the remnants of the disaster, which burnt the city down, and seemingly tries to rebuild by remembering and rewriting the lost and gone by the ongoing suffering caused by the remaining uncertainty. In this sense, the persona’s attempt resembles the poet’s process of creation since both seem in search of their lost past by heading from the present ruins. It reads:

Loud was the bird-rocked sky, and all the clouds were bales.
Torn open by looting, and white, in spite of the fire.
By the smoking sea, where Christ walked, I asked, why
Should a man wax tears, when his wooden world fails?
In town, leaves were paper, but the hills were a flock of faiths;
To a boy who walked all day, each leaf was a green breath
Rebuilding a love I thought was dead as nails,
Blessing the death and the baptism by fire. (*CP*, 6)

The persona suggests that the action of reconstructing what has been lost is arduous since the action is described as dead “as nails” (14). On the other hand, the persona alludes to the natives’ forced conversion to Christianity by the use of the phrase “the death and the baptism by fire” (15). Here, the meticulous choice of the word “baptism” (15) suggests how this act of conversion was seen by the colonialist mindset, while “the fire” (15) underlines the destructiveness of the act for the natives. Nonetheless, the persona proposes that the past values can only be retrieved by the act of remembering and remaking the past through what has turned to ashes. Although the general tone of the poem is full of pessimism, sadness, and destruction of the past, enounced by the fact that their beliefs were “snapped like wire” (5), the closing line of the poem suggests that the persona still feels optimistic that he can recreate and rebuild what is lost of his ancestry, culture, and beliefs. Walcott opposes the idea that what happened can be accepted as fate and argues that the marginalized could also make a difference to continue to exist. Ismond asserts that Walcott:

[...] is here inspired to rise beyond the shock and trauma of the holocaust to the hope and prayer of a possibility of renewal. In that hope, the fire becomes an earnest of his own incipient ideal and faith in the emergence of a new and better society. (Ismond, 2001: 28)

In fact, Walcott suggests that yearning for what is gone, and shedding tears like a “candle” (3) is not the solution and the “wooden world” (11), possibly alluding to the

construction of cities, may evanesce, yet, the survivors should stand like a wall, and face reality to rebuild and eternize the memory of their heritage. The reference to the “wooden world” (11), on the other hand, strengthens the idea that what is materially lost is not important when compared to the spiritual losses. The sky, which was pictured as “loud” and “bird-rocked” (8), intensifies the chaotic atmosphere of the process of elimination implemented on the land in which the hope of freedom was “torn open by looting” (9), thus leaving the natives in a state of non-belonging. Nevertheless, the determination of the persona suggested by the employment of the question “why / Should a man wax tears” (10-11) highlights the idea that despite the annihilation of cities which left the inhabitants with an unfamiliar atmosphere full of ruins, the cultures and customs, for Walcott, cannot be lost forever as long as humanity finds a way to remember them. For Walcott, his act of remembrance and remaking, needless to say, is through letting the voices of his ancestors be heard in his poems.

In the poem titled “The Castaway”, Walcott similarly portrays his dilemma of existence and nostalgia for the past with vivid biblical imagery and historical references. The annihilation of cultures and customs caused the natives to feel as outcasts in their own lands and although Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin suggest that revitalization of an “absolute pre-colonial cultural purity” is impossible (Ashcroft et al., 2001: 221), Walcott uses his eminent style of writing poetry to mitigate the amnesia and void of the past, since post-colonial experience alludes to the memory “that has not passed away” and which exhaustively “invades the present” (LaCapra, 2004: 55). It reads:

The starved eye devours the seascape for the morsel
Of a sail.
The horizon threads it infinitely.
Action breeds frenzy. I lie,
Sailing the ribbed shadow of a palm,
Afraid lest my own footprints multiply. (*CP*, 57)

The persona of the poem feels like a shipwreck, alone on an island like Crusoe, and wants to tell the story of his past and present, yet no one is there to listen. The lack of his ancestors' presence, further symbolizing the lack of his ancestral heritage, results in his personal sense of non-existence and the only option for the persona is to create something in the present to retrieve a past where he could exist. Breslin asserts that having the memory loss, in general, means having "the same subjective lack of a past" yet, in Walcott's situation as a hybrid poet, amnesia does not suggest "having no past to remember", but rather alludes to "the sign of a trauma, a psychic wound" (Breslin, 2001: 6). Besides, Walcott states that the colonial experiment that the islands have undergone is not enough to annihilate the age-long traditions which had existed before colonialism:

It is not that History is obliterated by this sunrise. It is there in Antillean geography, in the vegetation itself. The sea sighs with the drowned from the Middle Passage, the butchery of its aborigines, Carib and Aruac and Taino, bleeds in the scarlet of the immortelle, and even the actions of surf on sand cannot erase the African memory [...] (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992)

Walcott's personal concern for not being able to achieve existence is shown in the usage of the line where he states that he is "afraid lest" his "own footprints multiply" (6). As a poet suffering from in-betweenness, Walcott's anxiety for not being understood and recognized by the othered individuals in the post-colonial period and his concern for not being able to revitalize his ancestors' heritage deeply affects him. In an interview with Edward Hirsch, Walcott clarifies his aim of creating for existence and for employing the image of shipwreck as follows:

I wrote a poem called *The Castaway*. [...] I had an image of the West Indian artist as someone who was in a shipwrecked position ... The beaches around here are

generally very empty – just you, the sea, and the vegetation around you, and you’re very much by yourself. [...] One of the more positive aspects of the Crusoe theme is that in a sense every race that has come to the Caribbean has been brought here under conditions of servitude or rejection, and that is the metaphor of the shipwreck, I think. Then you look around you and you have to make your own tools. Whether that tool is a pen or a hammer, you are building in a situation that’s Adamic; you are rebuilding not only from necessity but also with some idea that you will be here for a long time and with a sense of proprietorship as well. (*The Paris Review*, I. 101, 1986)

As Walcott states, he is the only person on this abandoned island and the situation offers him a “Godlike” presence (22), a way of proving existence through artistic creation. Since Walcott himself is a hybrid presence in the post-colonial period, the only way for his hidden past to be unearthed and his ancestors’ sufferings to be heard is through the process of remaking the history and recreating the cultural characteristics by heading from the old traditions and lifestyles. In this process of reemployment of the stories of the past, Walcott serves as a creator and holds a godlike power to reinvent the forms of existence for his ancestors. The persona says that he feels and hears even the smallest occurrence around him, and also he assumes that he creates the natural cycles. It reads:

If I listen I can hear the polyp build.
The silence thwanged by two waves of the sea.
Cracking a sea-louse, I make thunder split.

Godlike, annihilating godhead, art
And self, I abandon
Dead metaphors: the almond's leaf-like heart (*CP*, 58)

Here, the persona and the poet are shown alike, holding the power of creating something in a way that has never been accepted by the colonial mindset before, like his “art” and

himself (23). Therefore, it seems that the possibility of survival and existence depends on the attempt of the poet's creation, like a God. The persona states that he should "abandon dead metaphors" (24), meaning that the only way to make rebirth possible is leaving behind the stereotypes that have been labelled on the marginalized, and rewrite the history for better or worse, since it is the same hybridity in language that grants him the power of voicing the suffering of his ancestors. However, it does not mean that Walcott revives his past by accepting what he has been doomed to; on the contrary, he achieves it by remembering and remaking even the process of "genesis" (19), the beginning, before everything. Baugh asserts that Walcott definitely does not abnegate the past; instead, he is in a never-ending struggle to dig up the remnants of the past, which survived the suffering of its people and the demolition of the cultures and the rituals, to reconstruct the present that would serve as a means of confirming the existence of the marginalized (Baugh, 2006: 10). As Walcott himself states:

Antillean experience, this shipwreck of fragments, these echoes, these shards of a huge tribal vocabulary, these partially remembered customs, and they are not decayed but strong. They survived the Middle Passage and the Fatel Rozack, [...] (from his Nobel Lecture, December 7, 1992)

In this sense, Walcott's attempt for revitalizing the past to survive the post-colonial existential crisis through memory making stands as a way of creating the self for the poet, both to prove existence in an alien territory and to be free from the stereotyped and othered image. Creation of a "safe space", thus, serves as an imaginary place where the poet and his ancestral heritage could survive without experiencing the trauma of in-betweenness, alienation, and colonialism. In almost all his works, whether they are seen as protests against colonial oppression or acceptance of the imposed moral values and language, his aim remains the same: Walcott, by blending his eminent style of creation

with the void and nostalgia of the past, tries to unify the shattered and fragmented memory to remake the history for his ancestry.



CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore Derek Walcott's attempt, as a hybridised and marginalized bearer of the colonial suffering, to give voice to his ancestral heritage and locate himself and his ancestry in a safe space of enunciation where they could exist without getting lost in the dilemma of non-belonging in the post-colonial period. By probing the historical references, real personas, the oppression implemented in the colonial period, and the resultant hybridity, amnesia, and creolization, this study intended to show how all these post-colonial terms were employed and the after-effects of colonialism contributed to the development of Derek Walcott's poetry in his aim to voice his ancestral silence. Walcott suggests, via his works, that voicing the silent side of the past, epitomizing the in-between situation of the post-colonial individuals, and narrating the current ordeal of the societies suffering from the lack of history and belonging through the remaking of memory are crucial in order to understand the effects of the colonial experiment. The poems employed in this study were examined with respect to the symbols, historical references, and characters beginning with the early colonization process all the way to the decolonization, hence, it is fair to suggest that the study includes an overall view of the process and aftermath of colonization. The remaking of memory, which underpins this study, is of special importance when the post-colonial dilemma and struggle for existence of the individuals are taken into consideration. Therefore, the recreation of memory and remaking of the past through voicing the silence of the ancestral heritage can be considered as the focal point of this study.

By undervaluing the cultural traits of a nation, individuals, the functioning members of societies, are oppressed and objectified by the colonizers, which resulted in the loss of identities, voices, and sense of communal memory and history. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o states, "to control a nation's culture is to control their tools of self-definition

in relationship to others” (Thiong’o, 1994: 16). The indigenous were detached from their roots and lands by the colonizers, with a view to create intimidated and obedient groups of people, hence, the possibility to be acknowledged and accepted by the “other” is nullified. The detachment and alienation as a consequence led to mutism which made it impossible for the natives to speak and make their words heard; in other words, they could not find the means to represent themselves and therefore needed to be represented by the others who were dominating them (Marx, 1852). However, apart from the absence of a political representation, there emerges the problem of individual enunciation in the post-colonial period. The common idea that the individual needs the others to prove his existence is therefore prevalent when the struggle is to locate the natives in their original characteristics. The necessity to voice the hidden past obliges the post-colonial individual to find ways to close the distance between the original self and the marginalized other, hence, the othered self becomes dependent upon the original one, as well as the original characteristics are to the imposed one as Salman Rushdie states:

The effect of mass migrations has been the creation of radically new types of human being: people who root themselves in ideas rather than places, in memories as much as in material things; people who have been obliged to define themselves – because they are so defined by others – by their otherness; people in whose deepest selves strange fusions occur, unprecedented unions between what they were and where they find themselves. (Rushdie, “The Location of *Brazil*”, 1985: 124-25)

Glissant suggests that the marginalized individual does not have any options other than to mimic the oppressor since the “erasure of collective memory” shatters the possibility to exist as a native individual (Glissant, 1999: 161). However, Walcott’s personas do not imitate their oppressors; rather, out of the hybridity, Walcott creates

completely unique identities which are closely attached to their ancestral heritage. The personas that seem to mimic the colonialist mindset are actually tools for Walcott to show the effects of non-belonging and non-existence in his attempt to recreate the past and revive the ancestral traditions. In fact, it would not be wrong to assert that Walcott is fully aware of the reality that the hybridity and in-betweenness of the personas are necessary to narrate and re-establish the undervalued history and traditions. Fanon states:

When the colonized intellectual writing for his people uses the past he must do so with the intention of opening up the future, of spurring them into action and fostering hope. But in order to secure hope, in order to give it substance, he must take part in the action and commit himself body and soul to the national struggle. (Fanon, 2004: 167)

Without the post-colonial trauma of hybridity, returning to the communal history, remaking the communal memory, and unifying the fragmented identity would not be possible since a total mimicry would also mean detachment from the roots. The state of in-betweenness has, at one end at least, the connection to the past waiting to be unearthed. In this sense, Walcott's poetic creation can be seen as a validation of the colonial heritage of the Caribbean societies in order to make the return to the origins possible for the post-colonial individuals.

The first chapter of this study revealed the attitudes and the act of oppression of the colonizers during colonization and delved into the concomitant results caused by the process of civilizing, which resulted in the natives' lack of a sense of belonging and existence. The chapter disclosed the justified reasons of the civilizing process, from the colonizers' point of view, ranging from the necessity to elevate the natives to the human level – since they were considered by the colonizers as “evil” and “impure” not only because of their skin colour but also due to their disavowal of Christianity – to the

entitlement of the colonizer as the master of the indigenous having the right to exploit and even annihilate if need be.

The process of expansion and colonization implemented by the Western civilizations which was initially started with the aim of discovering new territories, elevating the life standards of the natives to the civilized nations, and modernizing the people who were, to the colonialist mindset, living primitively in those lands resulted in the emergence of undesirable outcomes for the natives. The identity crisis and the lack of a shared past created a dilemma of existence and belonging in the post-colonial period for the individuals who were still suffering from the trauma of the colonial experience. Unfortunately, it is not possible to say that the traces of colonial oppression have disappeared in the post-colonial era, since the process has inflicted a deep wound on the national and individual identity, history, culture, and mental state of the people who have long-suffered from this wound of being unidentified and silenced.

Besides, the idea that the natives should be converted to Christianity through forced proselytization, since the indigenous people were considered as “heathen sinners”, resulted in hybridity in religion, which increased the intensity of the in-betweenness, and turned the situation into a point of no return for the colonized. The linguistic alienation and creolization stemming from the imposition of the language of the colonizer left the natives in a deeper dilemma of being unable to express themselves, since the creoles resemble neither to their original languages nor to the imposed one. Creolization also became a contributing factor to the silence of the natives, since the imposed language stopped them from communicating and even handing down the traditions to the next generations. Therefore, the religious and linguistic trauma prevalent in the existence of the post-colonial identities stopped the natives from creating a rapport with their sui-generis cultural characteristics and provoked a sense of non-belonging.

This first chapter, all in all, provided the reader with a theoretical framework on post colonial terms and concepts, and presented the emergent consequences of the stereotyping, othering, prohibition of native languages, and proselytization which were intensively and sometimes forcedly carried out during the colonizing process. The chapter additionally uncovered a hybrid poet's endeavour to find proper means to voice the silence of his ancestors' suffering and his subaltern situation. Walcott is, in this sense, fully aware of the fact that the voice of his ancestors can merely be heard when the chaotic and painful experiences and the dilemma become unearthed by the marginalized poet himself and sees the production of poetry as a process of digging up the buried traditions and the forgotten past.

The second chapter aimed to illustrate the in-betweenness of the Caribbean and, by the same token, Derek Walcott's inherited hybridity due to the colonial experience and suffering. It is undeniable that the Caribbean, home to not only natural beauties and rich resources, was also of considerable importance due to its strategic position and manpower that would highly satisfy the need during the colonial period. Therefore, the process left the land and its inhabitants deprived of the past vivacity and traditions to feel attached to. In this respect, Walcott, by portraying the in-betweenness of his motherland, his ancestors, and himself at the same time, created a hybrid style in his works that would help him in his aim of reproducing the safe space of existence for his ancestors and himself. Walcott's awareness of his hybridity is a crystal-clear fact, since he asserts that without the in-betweenness he suffered in the post-colonial era, the emergence of his poetry would not be possible. Walcott in his prominent essay "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" states:

In the case of my own identity, or my realness if you like, it is an absurdity that I can live with; being both American and West Indian is an ambiguity without a crisis, for I find

that the more West Indian I become, the more I can accept my dependence on America as professional writer, not because America owes me a living from historical guilt, nor that it needs my presence, but because we share this part of the world, and have shared it for centuries now, even as conqueror and victim, as exploiter and exploited. (Walcott, 1974: 3)

Therefore, in a space which is termed by Bhabha as the “Third Space”, Walcott’s struggle for enunciating the lost and making use of the memory to recreate the communal heritage can be seen as a way of easing the trauma of the post-colonial in-between existence and a means of locating himself, and accordingly his ancestors, in an atmosphere where marginalization and subalternity would not deter the natives from existing as individual beings.

This chapter also provided a thorough analysis of Derek Walcott’s selected poems with an eye to presenting tangible examples of the employment of his creole voice and hybridity, as well as his successful narration of the colonial suffering of his people. This chapter itself can be seen as a process starting from the implementation of colonization to a state which could be considered, at least for Walcott, as a tool for cultural decolonization which would help create a safe space of existence for Walcott and his ancestral customs and languages. Walcott’s meticulous employment of the images of his motherland and depiction of its people, with the purpose of delineating an overall picture of the “colonialism-stricken” lands and societies, gain importance when the struggle is to define the post-colonial existence of the individuals suffering from the dilemma of non-belonging.

As it is seen in the second part of Chapter 2, Walcott made use of the justifications of the colonizers in the colonial experiment. The poems scrutinized in this section were chosen from collections titled *In a Green Night: Poems* (1962-64), *The*

Castaway and Other Poems (1965-69), *The Gulf and Other Poems* (1969) and provided the reader with the socio-cultural outcomes of colonial oppression in Walcott's aim of voicing his ancestors' suffering during the colonial period. The stereotyping that had been implemented on the natives such as "primitive-minded" ("Origins", i:16), "god-refusing" ("Air", 27), "serpentlike Negroes" ("The Swamp", 10-14) clearly represented the mindset of the colonizer, and provided the reader with tangible examples on how the process of othering was legitimized by the colonizers. The employment of such stereotypes in the poems underlined how the colonial mindset otherized the natives with the purpose of creating obedient and docile individuals who would eventually lose their original characteristics and remain, for the rest of their lives, incapable of representing and substantiating themselves as individuals. Walcott also discusses the colonial experiment which was considered, by the colonizers, as a means of creating a level playing field for the uncivilized and illiterate so that the natives living on backward territories could become equal to the civilized ones. The references to the "bones fallen from evil days, from evil times" ("Ruins of a Great House", 18) exemplified how the natives saw this civilizing process due to their alienation from roots. Those evil traits, from the colonizer's perspective, were nullified by teaching the natives with the help of "Bible" ("Ruins of a Great House", 29), and through "Mission School" ("Tales of the Island", 3). All in all, it is fair to assert that Walcott's allusions and word choices epitomized his aim of narrating the silent side of his ancestry which the Western imperialism aimed to obliterate.

In the third part of Chapter 2, on the other hand, Walcott explicitly presented the emergent hybridity, in-betweenness, and creolization stemming from the colonizing process in the poems titled "A Far Cry from Africa" (from *In a Green Night: Poems*, 1962-64), "Homecoming: Anse La Raye" (from *The Gulf and Other Poems*, 1969), "The Schooner *Flight*" (from *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, 1979), "The Glory Trumpeter"

(from *The Castaway and Other Poems*, 1965-69), and “Tales of the Islands” (from *In a Green Night: Poems*, 1962-64). The aforementioned poems can be considered as the foremost examples of portraying the most evident and most overwhelming results of the colonial experiment. Walcott, as a hybrid poet taught by colonial education, referred to his own in-betweenness, which could be seen as a result of the “sound colonial education” (“The Schooner *Flight*”, 41) he had, and narrated the prevalent dilemma of belonging and existence his ancestors experienced. Almost all the personas in the abovementioned poems such as Shabine (in “The Schooner *Flight*”), Eddie (in “The Glory Trumpeter”), and Franklin (in “Tales of the Islands”) suffered from the emergent in-betweenness and could not feel intimacy with their sui-generis cultures and traditions.

The cultural and religious estrangement caused Shabine (in “The Schooner *Flight*”) to leave his beloved wife and children to free himself from the burden of living in this “whole fucking island” (“The Schooner *Flight*”, 24), since surviving in an alien atmosphere became impossible for him. Shabine’s declaration of his hybrid self through the statement “I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me” (The Schooner *Flight*”, 42) accentuated the hybridity of his nation resulted by the annihilation of cultures and languages, reminding the reader of the dilemma of belonging in “A Far Cry from Africa”, where the persona felt “poisoned and divided to the vein” (“A Far Cry from Africa”, 26-27) due to the colonial education and was depicted as being unable to choose between the his Africanness and Englishness. Eddie’s in-betweenness, on the other hand, was presented through a local tradition called “fête”, with which the persona could not familiarize since being a castaway somewhat engulfed him. The “fête” tradition, standing there as a bridge to link the common past and the fragmented present, was not sufficient for Eddie to commune with his sui-generis culture, since one side of him dreamed of playing “Georgia on My Mind” while his other half yearned for “Jesus

Saves” (“The Glory Trumpeter”, 8), suggesting his cultural and artistic hybridity. Besides, Franklin was depicted as a “malaria-ridden expatriate” who suffers from the quiescence resulted by colonialism. The nostalgia of the past and the amnesia caused by the colonial experiment besiege him and therewithal restrain him even from dying in his own country. (“Tales of the Islands”, “*Lotus Eater...*”, 10).

The third part of Chapter 2 also revealed Walcott’s use of the creole voice which increases the feeling of estrangement and in-betweenness the indigenous experienced within and after the process of colonization. Walcott skilfully insinuates the existence of the local languages through the titles of the poems. The sub-titles of “Tales of the Islands” give glimpses of the traditional songs and folktales of the island. While “*Adieu, foulard*” refers to a traditional folk song in Martinique Creole, generally sung on farewells, “*Le Loupgarou*” alludes to a local legend of the Caribbean. Similarly, the use of the words such as “bohbohl” (“The Schooner *Flight*”, 31) and “Poopa” (“Tales of the Islands”, Chapter VI, 1) suggests the creolization in the native languages while the grammatical inaccuracy in the phrase “he don’t lie” (“Tales of the Islands”, “*Dance of Death...*”, 2) underlines the creolization on local dialects.

In this sense, it is obvious that Walcott’s meticulous employment of creole words and his ingenious presentation of the hybridized personas contribute to his aim of creating a hybrid style of poetry in itself. Besides, it would not be wrong to assert that Walcott’s personas reflect the “subaltern”, “othered”, and “creolized”, all of whom were created with the purpose of giving out sound to the marginalized due to the cultural, social, and linguistic oppression in the colonial period.

The last part of Chapter 2, which can also be seen as the focal point of this study, scrutinized into Walcott’s recreation of memory and integration of the fragmented past in order to avoid the existential crisis and amnesia experienced by the post-colonial

individuals. However, Walcott's remaking of the past was not an "escape from the oppression of an image" (Spivak, 1999: 151), on the contrary, it was a reconciliation of the colonized self and the innate consciousness with the aim of providing a meaningful space of existence in which the ancestral heritage and the marginalized self could unify to survive the post-colonial trauma of existence.

As Walcott suggested, the void emerging as a result of the oppression, marginalization, and careful erasure of the past led to the evanescence of the "self"; however, it is the same emptiness that would serve as a means of liberation for the post-colonial existences. Guyanese writer Wilson Harris similarly asserts that the emptiness present within the post-colonial individuals can be considered a way out to regain cultural consciousness:

And if indeed therefore any real sense is to be made of material change it can only occur with an acceptance of a concurrent void and with a willingness to descend into that void wherein, as it were, one may begin to come into confrontation with a spectre of invocation whose freedom to participate in an alien territory and wilderness has become a necessity for one's reason or salvation. (qtd. in *The Location of Culture*, 1994:38)

The distance between the "white man's artifice" and the "black man's body" (Bhabha, 1994: 45) is, therefore, aimed to be ruled out through delving into the memories and rituals of the shared past with the help of the contact space which Bhabha terms the "Third Space". In this context, attachment to a certain language seems quite impossible for the poets who have a hybrid existence, just like Derek Walcott. Irene Martyniuk asserts that Walcott:

[...] encourages his readers and viewers to live in a joyful present; a present only possible because of the past, no

matter what that past is. And this past is knowable through retellings. (Martyniuk, 2005: 197)

Indeed, Walcott, through his works, tried to fill the gap which seemed to be irreducible between the marginalized and the original self. However, not only the use of the “master’s language” in their quest for existence, but also identity, ancestral heritage, and the dilemma of not being able to retrieve the past are important in conveying their ideas to a larger group. Although almost all his works deal with the issue of hybridity and in-betweenness, how and why Walcott uses his nation’s hybridity becomes important. Despite the fact that some of his poems may seem to be merely personal stories, they have a deeper hidden meaning in terms of social phenomena. In this sense, it is fair to suggest that Walcott occasionally aims to touch upon what has been lost and annihilated in his society and, by doing so; he undertakes the role of a social critic in search of his own origins at the same time. Hybridity and in-betweenness emerging as a result of colonialism clearly create traumas in society, and the poets and writers try to make their people’s voices heard through these traumas their ancestors have undergone. The personas Walcott created portray the in-betweenness of his ancestry and thereby could be considered as reflections of people suffering from the outcomes of the colonial expression: the “ever-bleeding wound” of being unidentified. Walcott’s aim, in this regard, is to identify the unidentified through recreation of memory and employing the dilemma experienced by the natives in his works. Though Walcott does not always see himself successful in conveying the feeling of loss and amnesia in some of his poems, he still seems to cling on to poetry as a tool for narrating both social and personal stories. In this sense, the creation of poetry, for Walcott, is not always a way of protesting against the hybridity that “divides him to the vein” as he suggests in the poem titled “A Far Cry from Africa”, on the contrary, the “divided vein” is the only possible departure point from which the remaking and revitalization of memory through the

personas and images in his poetry could reach the long gone traditions, similar to what Said states in *Orientalism*:

History is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and re-written, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated, so that “our” East, “our” Orient becomes “ours” to possess and direct. (Said, 1977: xiv)

In this regard, the aim of this study was to show that Walcott, through skillfully blending his hybridity and in-betweenness with the suffering and destruction of his ancestral heritage, formed a hybrid style of poetry which would enable him and the other marginalized individuals to survive the trauma of non-belonging and existence in the post-colonial period. Via the poems employed in this study, the messages, deliberately intended to be conveyed to the reader by the poet, were scrutinized. Besides, the reflections of real experiences and the social conditions of the natives were taken into consideration in Walcott’s aim of voicing the silent past, and the creation of a collective past and memory is emphasized. This study is aimed to be a comprehensive study focusing on the post-colonial theories in post-colonial English poetry since it is not limited to one of Walcott’s collections only, but includes a variety of works from several collections to underline his aim. This study is intended to be a contribution for further studies that can be done in this field, especially for those aiming to delve into more interdisciplinary studies on “trauma” and “memory”, since both cover a vast field of study when postcolonial studies are taken into consideration.

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ÖZET

Bu tez çalışması, Derek Walcott'un, halkının sömürgecilik sonucu yaşadığı ikilemleri ve adaletsizlikleri dile getirerek, atalarının çektiği acılara ses vermek amacıyla melez bir şiir tarzı oluşturması üzerinde durmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Walcott, eserlerinde bölünmüş kimlik sorununu ve kendisinin ve diğer adalıların yaşadığı ortak geçmiş ile kültür yoksunluğunu konu edinmektedir. Sömürgecilik faaliyetlerinin yoğun olarak gerçekleştiği Karayip Adaları'nda doğup büyüyen Derek Walcott, ötekileştirilmiş ve baskılanmış atalarının yaşadığı zulüm ve acıları ve ayrıca toplumunun kolonileşme sonrası dönemde muzdarip olduğu dertleri titizlikle dile getirerek, geçmişî hatırlamanın ve hatırasını canlı tutmanın, kolonileşme sonrası dönem toplumlarının yaşadığı aidiyet sorununu anlamakta büyük önem taşıdığının altını çizmektedir. Sömürgecilik sürecinin, sömürgelerin kuruluşunun yüzyıllar öncesinden süregelen ve kültürel yapıları, dilleri ve yaşam tarzlarını baltaladığı ve sömürgeleştirilen toplumlardaki insanları sömürgecilerin sahip olduğu kültür, dil ve yaşam tarzlarını kabul etmeye zorladığı inkâr edilemez. Walcott'un eserleri, bu sürecin bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan melezlik, arada kalmışlık ve yabancılaşmayı yansıtmaktadır. Bu tez, Homi K. Bhabha ve Jahan Ramazani'nin yaygın olarak kabul edilen “*melezlik*” teorisi, Edward Said'in “*ötekileştirme*” ve Gayatri C. Spivak'ın “*madun*” kavramları çerçevesinde, kendi ulusunun sindirilmiş travmasını şiirleri aracılığıyla dile getirmeye çalışan bir bireyin yaşadığı varoluşsal kaygıyı, kolonileşme sürecinin “aşağı” olarak kabul edilen ırk ve toplumlar üzerindeki etkilerini ve sömürgeleşme döneminde sosyo-kültürel alanda ve eğitim alanında uygulanan baskıların doğal bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan melez şiir tarzını, şiirde konu edilen hikayeler, karakterler, simgeler ve “*kreol*” dil yapısının incelenmesi yoluyla ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sömürgecilik, Sömürgecilik Sonrası Dönem, Sömürge Sonrası Şiir, Arada Kalmışlık, Melezlik, Derek Walcott

ABSTRACT

This study explores Derek Walcott's creation of a hybrid style of poetry with the purpose of giving voice to the suffering of his kin by expressing the injustice and the dilemmas that his people have experienced as a result of colonialism. To achieve this, Walcott articulates in his works the problem of split identity, the common past and culture in which he and other islanders went through. Born and raised in the Caribbean Islands where colonialist activities were intensively carried out, Derek Walcott meticulously speaks out the suffering of his silent ancestors and portrays what his people were left with in the post-colonial period by underlining that remembering the past and keeping its memory alive is crucial in order to understand the current ordeal of the post-colonial societies which has left them with a loss of sense of belonging. It is undeniable that the process of colonization has undermined the cultural structures, languages and lifestyles that had been going on for centuries prior to the foundation of the colonies and forced people to accept the culture, language and ways of living of the colonizers. Walcott's works reflect the inferential hybridity, in-betweenness, and alienation people have experienced as a result of this process. On the basis of Homi K. Bhabha's and Jahan Ramazani's widely-accepted term "hybridism", Edward Said's theory of "othering" and Gayatri C. Spivak's concept of the "subaltern", this study will present an analysis of the "existential struggle" of an individual voicing the silent trauma of his sui generis nation, the effects of "colonialism" on races and societies which are thought as "inferior", and the creation of a totally hybrid style of poetry as a result of colonial implementations in culture and education by delving into the stories, characters, symbols and the traces of creole language employed in his poetry.

Key Words: Colonialism, Post-colonialism, Post-Colonial Poetry, In-betweenness, Hybridity, Derek Walcott