

Tribhuvan University

Ambivalence in Derek Walcott's Selected Poetry

This Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and
Social Sciences, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Kathmandu, in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for Degree of Master of Arts in English

by

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June 2018

Declaration

I here declare that the thesis entitled,
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Is my own original work carried out as a master student at the Department of
English at Rajya Laxmi Campus except to the extent that
assistance from others in the thesis design and
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All resources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no
material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the
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June 9, 2018

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Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled "Ambivalence in Derek Walcott's selected Poetry" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, by Saraswoti Lamichhane, has been approved by the undersigned member of the Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

This present thesis has been prepared with the guidance by respected teacher Yadab Adhikari, so I wish to express my sincere heartfelt guidance to my supervisor Yadab Adhikari, lecturer of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Kathmandu.

My special thanks go to my respected teacher Pradip Sharma, Head of Department of English for his guidance and co- operation. I am also thankful to all my friends and relatives who helped me in carrying out this research work.

Finally I would like to express my deep gratitude to my parents Mr. Diwakar Lamichhane and Mrs. Debaki Lamichhane and all family for their timely and robust encouragement and supportive role during the proposal writing and thesis writing phase.

June 2018

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Abstract

Walcott has been a melting pot of ambivalence, hybridity and identity crisis. Walcott's ambivalence is evident in his themes, choice of language and rhetorical devices etc. As he is the son of both Anglo-European and the Afro-Caribbean heritage he is divided in his own identity. We find both attraction and revulsion towards the English culture and language all through his poems. His dedicated love for Caribbean land, its people and language has been frequently expressed through his emotional voice in his poems. At the same time, he possesses a divided societal position living overseas with appreciation for Western society and love for universal appeal of English language. However, he criticizes the brutality of the colonizers for their imperialistic attitude and torture. This has thrown him into ambivalence of choice and disapproval, acceptance and rejection, and love and hatred. Ambivalence is, thus, ever-present a spectra in his poems as well as in his divided self. This thesis aims at exploring Walcott's expression of ambivalence, duality, and hybridity.

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Introduction: Ambivalence and Walcott's Poetry

This paper explores the ambivalence in the poetry of Walcott. Walcott presents postcolonial and multicultural ambivalence in his poetry; that is, his poetry demonstrates the Caribbean people's love and hate of the colonizer's culture. As he is the son of both Anglo-European and the Afro-Caribbean heritage he is divided in his own identity. We find both attraction and revulsion towards the English culture and language all through his poems. There is common style in his poetry that he tries to reduce the gap between the colonizers and colonized. It is true that sometimes he articulates his misery as a divided self but this is not to attack the colonizer but to reveal his crisis and his recommendation is to universalize the ideas. An endeavor is made below to discover Walcott's ambivalent in his poetry.

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines ambivalence as: "having mixed feelings about something" (13). Similarly *Encyclopedia Britannica* writes: "A Swiss psychologist named Eugen Bleuler coined the German word *Ambivalenz* in the early twentieth century and it was soon imported into English. Bleuler combined the Latin prefix *ambi-*, meaning "both," with *valentia*, "strength" (134). This point's clarifies that if you're ambivalent you're being pulled by two equally strong things and culture. Ambivalence refers to the coexistence within an individual of positive and negative feelings toward the same person, object, or action, simultaneously drawing him or her in opposite directions.

Ambivalence, a key concept in postcolonial studies, refers to a simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person or action. According to H. K. Bhabha "The relation between the colonizers and the colonized is ambivalent" (266). Furthermore Bhabha says:

The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never

simply and completely opposed to the colonizer. Rather than assuming that some colonized subjects are 'complicit' and some 'resistant' ambivalence suggests that complicity and resistance exist in a fluctuating relation within the colonial subject (266).

Walcott Born on the island of St. Lucia in the British West Indies, once educated in Jamaica, having lived in Trinidad, having been poet-in-residence at several American colleges and universities, Derek Walcott understands best the Caribbean people's identity-in-crisis and personally experiences the wrestling of different cultures.

Derek Walcott's poems depict a split consciousness formed and developed in the hybrid culture of the West Indian region. Therefore, Walcott's poems verbalize the diversity of the hybridity and ambivalence Caribbean experiences at different historical moments because of its encounter with African and European cultures, behavioral patterns, and ideologies. As David Richards opines the Caribbean culture reflects a "wider global population within the confines of a small geographical area, and Amerindians, African, Indian and, European cultures have all contributed to the West Indian identity" (158). Richard clears West Indies as the melting pot of different cultures.

Present day West Indians have become ambivalent because of the amalgamation of different cultures and societies during the time of imperial occupation. After the amalgamation, the hybrid generation continued, and it remains as one of the most prominent trait in the poems of Walcott, but the awakening and awareness intensified by 1950s and 60s in the colonies against the politics of exploitation and expansionism culminated in the political independence of the most of the then colonial countries but the colonial hangover kept on dazzling the people. The

nature of independence was so nebulous that, instead of healing the agony and cultural chaos, it rendered the formally colonized world in confusion, bewilderment and political instability nurtured by corruption, and various malpractices. The aura of independence was too ephemeral to bring about significant changes. Considering the historical circumstances, it appears merely to be the transformation of power, the power with which Britain dominated the world history shifted to America and consequently new ideologies were formulated to hegemonize the world. The world politics after World War Second opened up a new corridor for America to establish hegemonic power over the economy, bureaucracy, and cultures of the whole world. For this reason, “all postcolonial societies are still subject in one way or the another to overt or subtle forms of neocolonial political dominations, and independence has not solved this problem.

The people of the region are historically hybrid, and Walcott represents a generation of artists who inherit the hybrid identity from their Caribbean ancestors. And as general people with hybrid inheritance, Walcott profoundly feels the lack of his own cultural heritage. This lack makes him unable to locate himself in one place or culture. Walcott’s imagination, informed by the complex admixture of cultures, transcends the frontiers of space and time. So, he draws images, symbols and metaphors from European and African cultural heritages, Caribbean landscapes and seascapes, myths and legends, and nature and the cosmos in order to create poetic forms.

In such a context, this research is particularly centered on examining the ambivalence and bicultural tension in Walcott's poems that works as a creative force in most of his poems. These kinds of ambivalence tropes in his poems depict a complex way of his identity formation. For this purpose, the first attempt will be to

unravel the metaphoric web that covers Walcott's poems. The unraveling of the metaphoric web, which is all the time, consisted of hybrid and ambivalent images and metaphors will show that Walcott's poems suffer from his own hybrid identity. After examining the diverse dimensions of such images and metaphors, this research will be focused on to reveal how Walcott's imagination depends on both the concrete and subtle in-between spaces to resolve tension brought about by the cultural tension. His images and metaphors show the conflict between his essential Caribbean self and his outer hybrid self that distances and alienates him from his own place, culture and time. But this very attempt to resolve the conflict and the perpetual feeling of being inside and out of his culture at the same time creates a bi-cultural tension in his poems. And this very tension felt in most of his poems is the creative space that is an incentive to the poetic creativity of Walcott's poetic imagination. He presents all such diversities in a compressed manner and while compressing them together by force he brings compact metaphors compact with meaning.

Subsequent to these considerations, a remarkably wider space will be given to examine how Walcott establishes association between art, life and artist through the use of poetic tropes with which he seems to be preoccupied from the early days of his career. Finally, the question of belongingness that Walcott's poems conjure up will be a vital issue of this research. The "in-between" phenomenon that is identical with postcolonial mix of culture and its textual expressions, which recur in Walcott's poems in spatio-temporal images, will provide a textual platform for the analysis of above-mentioned issues.

By the time Walcott began his poetic career, the pillars of colonial power had already begun to shake. Colonialism, nearly four centuries long in affect the people across the world inflicting people with hybridization, displacement, exile and other

possible maltreatments causing cultural fragmentation. It was an epidemic for the colonized world and its effects on humanity were cancerous. The entire world overtly felt the hazards of imperialism. However, considering the historical context, it could be said that Caribbean region bore the evils of colonialism more intensely and pervasively than any others. "The testimony of the history of Saint Lucia, which was colonized for fourteen times, as well as the histories of other Caribbean states made up of the intriguing relations between European entrepreneurs, Indian indentured labors and African slaves show how a tragic history of the colonial Caribbean region was" (Sonar 13). Though the writers like Walcott did not witness directly the formative days of bloody and dislocated history of the Caribbean caused by empirical ambition of establishing economic and political hegemony of Europe, its disastrous effects were still haunting them, reminder of which are the texts produced in the region that articulate people's sense of nostalgia, xenophobia, schizophrenia and other problems of adjustment and identity.

Colonialism, in its heydays, not only disintegrated cultures of the people under its control but also produced host of Anglophiles whose disposition displays the influence of European culture and education in the native blood. Postcolonial writing carried forward mostly by such Anglophiles, is the manifestation of their love and hate relation toward their master culture, which have often been exposed in ambivalent expressions. Sometimes the Anglophone writing displays writer's love and respect towards the culture in which he or she grew and got education. At other times, such writings show hatred towards the culture of the colonizers and show the writers fantasizing the cultural root of their own blood. Even Walcott's early poems swing between love and hatred toward the English culture. But in his postcolonial spaces, the articulations of such ambivalence have often been regarded as the different forms

of resistance strategies. In his poems, he explores the racial, colonial, and cultural tensions inherent in the Caribbean history and identity. Through his poems, he attempts to rewrite the history of the Caribbean people from a subaltern perspective. He celebrates the hybridity and cosmopolitanism of Caribbean culture, but he never loses sight of its colonial past and remains critical of the forces shaping its future.

Derek Walcott's poems have invited many critical responses from the early days of their publication. Critics have observed the stylistic and thematic aspects of his poetry with an especial focus on the shifts appeared in metrical patterns and language, and the thematic aspect paying special attention to Walcott's sense of time, space, home and history. "Walcott followed the Standard English and the verse form developed and practiced by writers like Edmund Spenser, John Donne" (Ashcrot 12) "Walcott's creativity to manipulate English language has provoked Robert Graves to appreciate him as a great craftsman of language who handles English with closer understanding of its inner magic than most of his English born contemporaries" (Mambrol 96). He claims that the style of writing of Walcott was influenced by English writer.

Walcott's poems are distinct from both his canonical and non-canonical contemporaries. It is especially his techniques, the choice of diction and metrical pattern that make Walcott's poetry remarkably distinct. While adopting the styles and techniques of writers like Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, John Milton and John Donne, Walcott does not imitate them slavishly but develops his own voice as well as cadence suitable to the West Indian themes. One of the critics who have dictated his poems along this line is Bill Ashcrot who surveys the shift in Walcott's rhetoric from iambic pentameter to verse libre more flexible and free verse:

In his hands the line is deliberately slowed, heightened and left open

the paragraph displacing the couplet or end stopped lines as the unit of the thought. In Walcott's poems often as not, the definite article is displaced by the demonstrative 'that', particularizing its object and slowing speech; and the sense of the indefinite is heightened (and dramatized) by its replacement by the throwaway 'some' which likewise slows the line. (12)

According to Ashcrot, the bulk of Walcott's verse composed in iambic pentameter stands in opposition to the trend developed by its major architects like Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Yeats. Ashcrot writes that his poems, written in the pentameter have intended in recent times to reflect the irony and epigrammatic mischief of its 18th century adherents.

The world politics after World War Second opened up a new corridor for America to establish hegemonic power over the economy, bureaucracy, and cultures of the whole world. For this reason, all postcolonial societies are still subject in one way or the another to overt or subtle forms of neocolonial political dominations, and independence has not solved this problem. Walcott's poetic career encompassed this era of great political and cultural upheavals which is marked as Leela Gandhi seems: "By a range of ambivalent cultural moods and formations," which accompany the "periods of transition and translations and the rhetoric of independence and the creative euphoria of self invention" (5). Thus Walcott's movement with both static and dynamic images of diverse field illustrates his entanglement with the twists and turns that the postcolonial world saw both in politics and discursive practices.

Colonialism, in its heydays, not only disintegrated cultures of the people under its control but also produced host of Anglophiles whose disposition displays the influence of European culture and education in the native blood. Postcolonial writing

carried forward mostly by such Anglophiles, is the manifestation of their love and hate relation toward their master culture, which have often been exposed in ambivalent expressions. Sometimes the Anglophone writing displays writer's love and respect towards the culture in which he or she grew and got education. At other times, such writings show hatred towards the culture of the colonizers and show the writers fantasizing the cultural root of their own blood. Even Walcott's poems swing between love and hatred toward the English culture, but in his postcolonial spaces, the articulations of such ambivalence have often been regarded as the different forms of resistance strategies.

In fact the era of political turmoil saw the emergence of a host of writers and critics who in their writings vividly articulated the deep sense of cultural anxiety, rootlessness, and agony of displacement, dislocation, exile as well as diasporic and hybrid experiences. Literatures of the time characterize the dispossessed people's nostalgia to the lost home, endeavors for the quest of identity, ambivalence and antagonism towards imperialists as well as their discursive practices, Rei Tereda asserts:

The immensely prestigious and powerful imperial culture found itself appropriated in process of counter colonial resistance which drew upon the many indigenous local and hybrid process of self determination of defy, erode and sometimes supplant the prodigious power of imperial cultural knowledge. (13)

In postcolonial writing, to resist is not to reject but to write back the colonialists from the position of the margin in the same language the colonizers used while creating the colonial discourse of domination and discrimination. The writings that have been produced from the beginning of colonialism resisting and subverting the colonial

discourses, ideologies and derogatory identities of the so-called marginalized people represent a part or resistance literature, of which mimicry complicity, indigenization and assimilation are some of the outcomes.

Walcott's poetic expression has opened up a new way to the history of Caribbean literature. Although his poetic journey was begun from the place where there was no literary tradition and the time when writers had to follow European canons to get a slightest degree of recognition, Walcott has been able to give a distinct stature to Caribbean literature Paula Burnett argues:

Walcott is not an exception among those writers who, having exposed to amorphous postcolonial culture suffer from the deep angst of cultural fragmentation. But this pain does not seem to depress him. Because for Walcott, 'Muse of History should enable not enslave the writer's imagination. (58)

Implied in the statement is Walcott's conviction that historical movements are always circular but not progressive. But it does not seem to depress him. In the fact of creation he envisions the possibility of regeneration. He is a great humanitarian poet, who, like Salman Rushdie sees the facts of "boring across the cultures" in positive light and believes in creative renewal of what has been considered to be old and obsolete.

Walcott's poems encompass multifarious themes and issues. Firstly, his poems are related with his contemplation on his own life, society, and family and the role played by these factors to make him a poet, Padmini Mongia claims:

His attempts to understand his own life and position through poetry make his poems autobiographical. Moreover, he is very critical of the corrupt political practices and racial hatred, which have invited

anarchy in the Caribbean region. Subsequent to this, his poems record his relationship to time, death and God. Apart from the poems about family, friends and love, his poems are also about his estrangement from the black patois-speaking French culture of Saint Lucia in the West Indies. (123)

Most importantly the texts and poems of Walcott attempt to explore his relation to history, culture, society, and poet's life in Caribbean. But the language he uses and the poetic tradition in which he works are European and because of his engagement with the literary traditions, which are foreign to him, he is alienated from the local community he would celebrate.

The thesis hypothesis is explored in terms of postcolonial theory of Homi Bhabha's *Ambivalence of colonial discourse* and Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* as theoretical framework. Bhabha's postcolonial theory Ambivalence hypothesizes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized. Ambivalence also characterizes the way in which colonial discourse relates to the colonized subject, for it may be both exploitative and nurturing, or represent itself as nurturing, at the same time. Cultural hybridity is a central theme applied to reflect the notion of temporality and third spaces. Cultural hybridity also enables conceptualization of identities as non-coherent, less unified and less directed. This very research paper endeavors to interpret and explore the identity crisis of people living in double identity. While keeping in mind the contemporary postcolonial, globalized multicultural and hybrid world, with the lenses offered by the Postcolonial theory.

Most importantly in Bhabha's theory, however, ambivalence disrupts the clear-cut authority of colonial domination because it disturbs the simple relationship

between colonizer and colonized Nasrullah Mambrolargues:

Ambivalence describes this fluctuating relationship between mimicry and mockery, an ambivalence that is fundamentally unsettling to colonial dominance. In this respect, it is not necessarily disempowering for the colonial subject; but rather can be seen to be ambi-valent or 'two-powered'. The effect of this ambivalence (the simultaneous attraction and repulsion) is to produce a profound disturbance of the authority of colonial discourse. (96)

Ambivalence is therefore an unwelcome aspect of colonial discourse for the colonizer. The problem for colonial discourse is that it wants to produce compliant subjects who reproduce its assumptions, habits and values that is, 'mimic' the colonizer. But instead it produces ambivalent subjects whose mimicry is never very far from mockery.

Ambivalence is the outcome of the acceptance or rejection of new cultural forms. There is always a power relation between the cultures. The culture that is in the dominant social position always makes the dominated culture accept the powerful culture's norms and rules. In this process of copying another culture's beliefs the dominated or colonial cultures become hybrid as the colonized people leave their culture and go to adapt a new one. At the same time the mimicry becomes creative for it makes a rebellion against the colonized cutlery. When the colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizers cultural habits, assumption, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather the result is always a blurred copy of the colonizer that can be quite threatening. That is because the mimicry is never far from mockery, for it can appear to parody what it mimics. Mimicry therefore locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its colonial dominance, an

uncertainty in its control of the behavior of the colonized. Mimicry has become a medium for the colonizers to implement their rules and dominance, as they wanted to impart the European dominance by imposing their education, language and culture. Because of the implementations of their education and language in the colonized territory, they have made the colonial culture hybrid. And yet they became unsuccessful to make colonized people mimic exactly the same behaviors of the colonizers as the mimicry was almost the same but not quite. Bhabha says:

Mimicry reveals something in so far as it is distinct from what might be called an itself that is behind. The effect of mimicry is camouflage....

It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background, of becoming mottled— exactly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare. (267)

Bhabha's analysis of mimicry in his essay "Of Mimicry and Man" is largely based on the Lacanian vision of mimicry as camouflage resulting in colonial ambivalence. He sees the colonizer as a snake in the grass who, speaks in "a tongue that is forked," and produces a mimetic representation that "... emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" (267). In postcolonial studies 'mimicry' is considered as unsettling imitations that are characteristic of postcolonial cultures. It is a desire to sever the ties with 'self' in order to move towards 'other.'

Bicultural Tension, Creativity and Walcott

Ambivalence in the colonial discourse functions as a significant and the most powerful discursive strategy for power. The ambivalence of the colonial discourse offers complex feelings of hatred and love on the behalf of the both the subject and the object. Walcott has an attraction for the western ways in spite of his feelings of subjugation in the hands of the dominant and remains loyal to the West.

Ambivalent nature of colonial discourse and the connection between the colonizer and the colonized is not unambiguous and simply binary relationship in nature. It is not always the colonizer who classifies the colonized as the other, the black, the savage, the orient, etc. and labels the colonized as voiceless by occupying the position of delineator of the destiny and identity of the colonized object. However, this link between the East and the West is not as smooth and simple as it seems to be. The apparently indomitable West depends upon the East for the achievement of its identity as superior authority. Bhabha dismantles the very idea of simple binary connection between the powerful and powerless and articulates that it is 'ambivalent'

Ambivalence and hybridity often produces a mixed sense of blessing and curse. As used in Horticulture, the term refers to the cross breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form, a third hybrid species. And in the context of postcolonial literature and discourse, it suggests the cultural as well as biological hybridity caused by the contact and cross co-habitation between cultures and people have the colonized and colonizers. The idea of ambivalence sees culture as consisting of opposing perceptions and dimensions. Bhabha says about the position of ambivalence:

This duality that presents a split in the identity of the colonized other allows for beings who are a hybrid of their own cultural identity and the colonizer's cultural identity. Ambivalence contributes to the reason why colonial power is characterized by its belatedness. Colonial signifiers of authority only acquire their meanings after the "traumatic scenario of colonial difference, cultural or racial, returns the eye of power to some prior archaic image or identity. Paradoxically, however, such an image can neither be 'original'—by virtue of the act of

repetition that constructs it—nor identical—by virtue of the difference that defines it. (267)

Bhabha says ambivalence presents the split identity of colonizers and colonized people. He further describes ambivalence as an ambiguous relationship between colonizer and colonized. Ambivalence seen in Walcott's writing is because of his double identity. He was born in Africa but he grew up in England. It is reality that colonizer often regards the colonized as both inferior yet unusually beside it colonized regards the colonizer as both fortunate yet corrupt.

In the poem "A Far Cry from Africa" Walcott presents his ambivalent feelings. This poem deals with the theme of split identity and anxiety caused by it in the face of the struggle in which the poet could side with neither party. It is, in short, about the poet's ambivalent feelings towards the Kenyan terrorists and the counter-terrorist white colonial government, both of which were 'inhuman', during the independence struggle of the country in the 1950s. The persona, probably the poet himself, can take favor of none of them since both bloods circulate along his veins. Furthermore the poet's ambivalent feelings in facing cultural identity are clearly presented through this poem. It is true that while colonizing Africa, the white people fought against Africans and massacred many people there, whom they took as savages. The white people's treatment of Africans makes Walcott believe that the whites are even crueler than the beast. As well he gives reliability to whites for civilizing black Caribbean people. Living in the space between European civilization and African origin, an interstice made even more complicated by being the offspring of both European and African ancestors, Walcott experiences identity in-crisis. "Of Africa. Kikuyu, quick as flies/Batten upon the bloodstreams of the veldt" (2-3). Here Walcott uses contradictory statements to determine his state of ambivalence. He first describes the Kikuyu

natives as "quick as flies" not only to uphold the perspective of the British towards the native Kikuyu but also to justify the beneficial nature of the British rule in Africa.

Literary critics such as Bruce King have pointed out "this poem confronts the ambivalent anguished responses to African struggle for interdependence in particular the Kikuyu insurrection in 1950's Kenya" (16). This ambivalence feeling that tears Walcott because of his mixed race. But at the very next line he contradicts the image of the British, as the principal cause of the suffering of the natives in equally ugly terms. "Only the worm, colonel of carrion, cries/Waste no compassion on these separate dead" (5-6). Here Walcott opens the reader's eyes through the cruelty imposed by the colonizers upon the innocent Caribbean people. Walcott's attitude towards the natives is of compassion, absolute love and heartfelt patriotism. These contradictory statements expose the ambivalent feeling of Derek Walcott. As Robert Young says these ambivalent feelings occurs due to "continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite. It also refers to a simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person or action (161). In order to share ambivalent feelings Walcott presents both negative and positive aspects of colonizer and colonial countries. Walcott states:

Again brutish necessity wipes its hands
A waste of our compassion, as with Spain,
The gorilla wrestles with the superman." (22-24)

Walcott portrays Africa and Britain in the standard roles of the overpowered and the conqueror, although he portrays the cruel imperialistic exploits of the British without creating sympathy for the African tribesmen. This objectivity allows Walcott to contemplate the faults of each culture without reverting to the bias created by attention to moral considerations.

This poem is not only a brilliant exposition of the imbalance relationship between the colonizer and the colonized but also a depiction of the pain of a man who stands in-between two cultures. The poem reinforces the tension of merged identities and mixed feelings. The poem exposes the conflict of the identity he goes through due to his state of in-betweenness. While dealing with the identity of his own Walcott writes:

I am a kind of split writer; I have one tradition inside me going in one way, and another going another. The mimetic, the narrative, and dance element is strong on one side, and the literary, the classical tradition is strong on the other. (48)

Walcott's situation is more complex because he is not only one of the colonized people but also the descendent of the migrants. He is in the condition of alienation and displacement from both a native and adopted land. With both English and African blood in his body, it is hard for him to choose between these two origins. He hates the British Empire because it colonized other people, changed their life, imposed its own culture on other people, and even killed lots of people to achieve its own purpose as well he cannot ignore them So Walcott says: "How can I face such slaughter and be cool?/How can I turn from Africa and live?" (26-27). These 'cries' illustrate the ambivalent of Derek Walcott and other postcolonial hybrid subject. Walcott's divided loyalties engender in him a sense for not being able to adopt the culture of his origin. For the citizen of postcolonial illustrates the dilemma of the postcolonial hybrid subjects for the citizen of postcolonial nations regularly finds themselves caught between incompatible cultures. Walcott for instance cannot for instance, lay claim to a singular unambiguous and unmixed identity. Such a split reality has various consequences for the ways in which the colonized self can think of itself, particularly

for Walcott, whose mixed racial heritage highlights the historical dilemma between races. In his poem, "A Far Cry from Africa" he grapples with the issue of conflicting loyalties and asks:

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,

Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?

I who have cursed. (29-30)

This severely pessimistic and divided image illustrates a consequence of displacement and queer isolation. It seems that Walcott feels foreign in both cultures due to his lack of "pure" blood. Mixed blood, is unable to identify his own culture. The result of which is the poet's indecisive state of mind regarding his own identity. In other words, the poet's hybrid heritages do not enables him to identify his own culture and thereby putting him in state of isolation. Walcott's skeptic look towards both cultures provides him the scope to acknowledge Africa and Britain in the standard roles of the vanquished and the conqueror. It is true that he criticizes the cruel imperialistic exploits of the British but at the same time does not even try to draw sympathy for the African tribesmen. This suggests the fact Walcott tries to uphold the fault of both cultures without showing any kind biasness either towards Africa or towards British.

Too often Bhabha, postcolonial writing is always at the crossroads of two or more cultures and traditions. This cross road in Bhabha's language is "in-between space" which means "neither one nor the other but something else besides, In between" (19). Adapted into colonial discourse theory by Homi K Bhabha describes the in-between position of hybrid existence as the "Third Space" which emerges in-between the traits of two mixed cultures. It is the space that very aptly incorporates the complexities of postcolonial realities. Bhabha describes this space as a creative space because it enables us to address both colonial and postcolonial issues at the

same time:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this tired space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into the alien territory may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing and international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. To that end, we should remember that it is the "inter"- cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space-that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. . . . And by exploring this "Third Space," we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the other of ourselves. (38)

The "Third Space" culture that Bhabha advocates is the postcolonial culture that is of hybridized nature. This space is the space of negotiation and connections between cultures. So, it is a multicultural and multinational space, which could be called the universal culture. This space, which is neither the one nor the other, "in-between," provides a terrain for postcolonial hybrid writers to define their own selves. This theme can be found in the concluding part of the poem of "A Far Cry From Africa:" "Between this Africa and the English tongue I love/ Betray them both, or give back what they give" (31-32). Here speaker is in ambivalent situation he cannot accept both culture or ignore it because he is in a deep bond with the Africa and at the same time the language and literary cultures of England. The magnetic appeal with each culture brings the tension in speaker. Walcott reveals manifold features like love for his own language, culture and people. At the same time, he has been applauding English language and culture. However, he is tormented by the English colonizers and

Western domination over timid and vulnerable black people. He is in constant dilemma of reception and rejection, love and hatred, and acceptance and betrayal. Walcott seems like a bridge between two African and British cultures in Bhabha's voice it is called 'third space' which can acknowledge both cultures colonial and colonizer.

Ambivalence is regular in his poems with a juxtaposition of appraisal and criticism that reveals ever-present hybridized state of the people identity and thoughts. His feeling encompasses deep love as well as agonizing pains. Thus, he is torn, divided and ambivalent in his attitude that makes him unique as well as universal in postcolonial authors especially through his poems.

One of the prominent features of the postcolonial writings is their anxiety with the themes as constant back and forth movement of time, sense of belonging and displacement, inconstancy of location and the resultant "crisis of identity into being" (Ashcroft 9). The Inheritance of Loss gives an insight to these postcolonial issues and challenges. The theme of identity crisis is presented by the persona of Walcott's poem "The Schooner Flight." Persona is in ambivalent due identity crisis. He is neither pure black nor pure white. Therefore his rejection by both the white Europeans and black Negroes intensifies his isolation and his reality of being an outcast in his own birthplace. It exhibits the sufferings and turmoil of Persona that is entangled into a conflict between multiple identities and cultures; regional and the Western:

I had a sound colonial education,
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation, (18-19)

Despite having 'a sound colonial education' he is considered inferior both by the whites and his own countrymen because he wasn't black enough for their pride

Born on the island of St. Lucia in the British West Indies, educated in Jamaica and lived in Trinidad. He understands best the Caribbean people's identity-in-crisis and personally has experienced the wrestling of different cultures. Walcott presents postcolonial and multicultural ambivalence through the given stanza. Walcott presents the speaker of unknown identity. Who is the speaker of "The Schooner flight" Is he Dutch? English? African is he all three. This hybrid form of identity can the poetic voice indicates result in conflicting loyalties and identity crisis. It can lead to alienation situation in which crossbred subject is always outside of belonging.

The persona in the poem is face to face with the most crucial difficulty of his life due to his identity crisis. The problem of having to deal with the strong feelings of displacement, alienation, guilt and exile within his own homeland is nerve-wrecking. The potential tension in the poem is introduced when it opens with the protagonist feeling torn between boundless love and terrible pain for his island country. He weeps bitterly: "for the houses, the streets, the whole fucking island" (24). Like most of the postcolonial texts in the *Inheritance of Loss*, the protagonist of the poem confronts a struggle to achieve a stable identity; entangles in a difficult situation of simultaneous attraction and repulsion for the colonial authority. Finally, he finds himself moving between two identities/cultures: one is his own native cultural identity and the other is the foreign cultural self. Through this poem Walcott presents significant theme is the transformation of the indigenous self into the other foreign self; the protagonist is mostly in a conflict between the desire to submit and stick to the new cultural identity and his commitment and loyalty for the native self. Erickson, E. H states that "identity crisis is the failure of an individual to get ego identity, which leads towards confusion of roles" (64). Ultimately, this confusion leads a person towards a distant and isolated place where he becomes alienated and stranger.

"The Schooner Flight" can suitably be called a voice of powerlessness of an alienated man who is the victim of the assaults of the dominant authority. It speaks about the disappointment, grim and alienation of man. Especially the given lines speak about the dejection and helplessness of persona of the poem: "I had no nation now but the imagination" (34). This line expresses the miserable condition and feelings of the people who are swaying back and forth like a pendulum between different cultures and lands. This movement back and forth is quite similar to the Derek Walcott himself. The poem reflects the feelings of an alienated of man in his own motherland. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, persona suffers from alienation that has become permanent and inescapable for him.

The persona suffered humiliation and disgrace because of his identity crisis and he eventually became alienated and cut off from the society when the power swings in the side of native people. "After the white man, the niggers didn't want me/ when the power swing to their side" (35-36). Persona opens on the furious note of unhappiness on account of his experience and memories of alienation. Here Persona honestly takes into account their collective failure as a nation in the bond of love, sacrifice and duty to the motherland by freely spoiling in corruption, nepotism, abuse of power, exploitation of their own land and its resources in the post- independent era. The upheavals in the personal, emotional, psychological and national life of the persona have been expressed through the given lines.

Colonialism and forced migration in the Caribbean Islands resulted into the existence of different ethnic groups which include remnant natives, a large number of Africans, a small number of European settlers and a substantial number of Indians and Chinese. The people of the region have no other way but to accept their multi-ethnic, multi-cultural heritage. Caribbean writings basically focuses on personal anxiety of

their fragmented identity, cultural diversity and their strive to resolve the paradox of their hybrid inheritance. Walcott was reared up in such a very complex schizophrenic situation of the Caribbean society with its cultural fusion of African and European elements.

Language is another quite important in forming a culture since it is the most important system of representation and concerns with the communication of shared meanings. People of the same language forms a cultural group. The colonizers change the language of the colonized and at the same time change their way of life; consequently, the culture of the colonized people is changed. Yet, as Bhabha always insists: "there is always ambivalence in mimicry, since mimicry is always repetition with difference" (266). In the poem "Names" Walcott shows how the marginalized culture claims its right to signify and how Caribbean people make mimicry of European language a kind of mockery. At the very beginning of the first section, Walcott says:

My race began as the sea began
with no nouns, and with no horizon
with pebbles under my tongue, (1-3)

Through these lines, Walcott seems to provide his race a kind of spatial and temporal limitlessness quite different from the European tradition which holds the idea of proceeding and chronological historicity and in which "the mind was carve up by a horizon." Later in the poem, the poet says:

A sea-eagle screams from the rock,
and my race began like the osprey
with that cry, that terrible vowel, that I. (16-19)

In English the capitalized "I" represents the subject "I", which helps to distinguish self

from other. Whereas, the Caribbean people consider that important word to be only a terrible vowel just like the cry of the osprey. Since they began that terrible vowel, that I that is, since they began to adopt the English language, they started to lose their own history and their names will be just written on the sand, which will be erased soon by the sea and what is ironic is that this is done to their indifference:

Behind us all the sky folded,
 as history folds over a fishline,
 and the foam foreclosed
 with nothing in our hands. (28-31)

So, the history of the colonized will thus be erased and buried. Besides, they do not care so much about the names as the Europeans do. Naming is no doubt a very important system of representation in European culture and in their colony they ask the colonized to follow their naming system. To those Europeans naming is part of their life; it is the way to differentiate self from other. Through The poem Walcott argues that Caribbean people do not have the glory or prosperity of Castile, Versailles, and Corinth; yet, they have their own life style. To Walcott, it is ridiculous to impose the colonizers naming system, and consequently life style, on those Caribbean people.

"The Sea is History" is another poem of Walcott. Through the poem he has presents the Diasporic memory of Caribbean people's history. Diaspora, in the postcolonial experience, means a paradoxical state of being both at home and displaced a sense of belonging and alienation. According to Sonar, Mudita : "African diaspora can be explained as double Diaspora which is a condition specific to the generation of Atlantic Slave Trade victims like the Afro- Caribbean's suffering since the sixteenth century" (17). Regarding the suffering of African firstly they are displaced far away from their land. Secondly on account of suffering from years of displacement, descendants of African slaves have lost and forgotten their African

heritage, culture, traditions, the whole African way of life. This double loss of their land and roots both deprives them of a secure sense of home as well as justly motivates them to reinvent a new home and identity as in the poem:

Where are your monuments,
 your battles, martyrs?
 Where is your tribal memory?
 The sea has locked them up.
 The sea is History (5-9).

In the contemporary world, these Africans are caught up in double Diaspora in which they are born and brought up in West Indies both a foreign land and a home to them, living their former master's i.e., the British way of life. Therefore, they have to take into account the perilous journey of dispossession and self-doubt to embrace and repossess the land of their torture, rejection and humiliation as their home.

The most obvious dissimilarity after the colonization in the condition of the Africans in Africa and in West Indies is that the Africans in Africa were made to feel alien to their homeland through systematic strategies of psycho-physical violence and abuse of the natives. Whereas the generations of Afro-Caribbeans suffered from an even worse fate far away from their homeland. Not only were they physically removed from their homeland, they were also made to suffer from the pain of self-doubt and exile not only from self but land too. The slave owners did not allow them to feel at home in the West-Indies by making it the land of their persecution and exploitation. Therefore the Afro-Caribbeans faced the double diasporic situation to their own land.

Walcott, in his poems, explores the racial, colonial, and cultural pressures inherent in the Caribbean history and identity. Through his poems, he attempts to

celebrate the hybridity and cosmopolitanism of Caribbean culture, but he never loses sight of its colonial past and remains critical of the forces shaping its future. In diaspora in the States, Walcott depicts his own personal experience of being discriminated against as a member of a minority. In a word, Walcott's poetry is the personification of the postcolonial and multicultural ambivalence of the colonized.

Conclusion: In-between Images and Celebration of Hybridity

Walcott's poetry definitely reveals manifold features like love for his own language, culture and people. At the same time, he has been applauding English language and culture. However, he is tormented by the brutal English colonizers and Western domination over timid and helpless black people. He is in constant dilemma of reception and rejection, love and hatred, and acceptance and betrayal of his culture. Ambivalence is regular in his poems with a juxtaposition of appraisal and criticism that reveals ever-present hybridized state of the people identity and thoughts. His feeling encompasses deep love as well as agonizing pains. Thus, he is torn, divided and ambivalent in his attitude that makes him unique as well as universal in postcolonial authors especially through his poems.

It is almost impossible to arrive at a conclusion in any literary work in general and especially with widely acclaimed poet Derek Walcott. Caribbean poet and dramatist Derek Walcott's poems provide an interesting and megalomaniac look to acknowledge the recent expressions of hybrid existence in the postcolonial world. Walcott suffers from hybridity exactly in the way it is with other postcolonial writers but the resulting effects of the pain appear differently with Walcott. To conclude it must be admitted that Walcott's poem exposes the conflict of the identity he goes through due to his state of in-betweenness. This space, which Bhabha calls the "Third Space," is the space of contestation and negotiation. It is a space of contest because it

provides the writers (postcolonial) with a new situation and reality to write back, sometimes biting back, the colonists. It is the space of negotiation because the people of Postcolonial World have no negotiation to adjust in the postcolonial mosaic culture. Since most of the Postcolonial cultures bear the legacy of hybridity, it is the fundamental reality of the space and its inhabitants. When a culture gets hybridized it turns to be a contact zone as well as a space in-between two cultures. In this sense the in-between spaces and the hybrid cultures of the postcolonial world are the realities of the space.

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