

An Exploration of Displacement and Alienation in Post-Colonial
Context: A Close Study of V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* and
Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

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Bachelors of Arts in English

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Abstract

The term post-colonialism implies the freedom and political emancipation of the colonized from the colonizers and examines the cultural activities used by the imperial powers to overpower the body and mind of the colonized people. It is the colonial mind that otherizes the colonized natives and has strangled their voice as inferior over the years. As a result of the politics of colonization, the natives were not only exploited economically, politically and culturally, but also lost their land to satisfy the thirst of dominant for aggressive aggrandizement. However, with decolonization, the movements of people increased either through forced migration or voluntary reason and thus a large scale of displacement or dispersal takes place and people scatter over various parts of the world. In the first part of my thesis, I will show the theoretical aspect of post-colonial literature including hybridity, mimicry, diaspora and study of orientalism. Will show how these notions of hybridity, mimicry, diaspora is playing a crucial role in the history of different displaced communities. This concept of hybridity is associated with the work of Homi Bhaba whose analysis of colonizer/colonized relations traces their interdependency and mutual construction of subjectivities. Cultural hybridity makes a person rootless because at some point culturally hybrid person feels that he does not belong to any of the culture. It makes him to mimic a particular culture, specially the culture in power. Then another ambivalence occurs when he tries to mimic another culture. Essentially by copying them, a person who goes under the process of mimicry evidences how hollow they are. Thus, in my paper, I attempt to show the effect of mimicry and hybridity in two post-colonial novels *The Mimic Men* and *The Lonely Londoners*. In both of the novel, the authors show the effect of colonial mimicry and hybridity among the characters, who cannot fit in any identity and becomes utterly displaced. My aim of this paper is to depict how the effect of colonialism is still present in post-colonial literature. In second chapter, I will show how a post-colonial protagonist in the novel *The Mimic Men*, in spite of having all the privilege

to flourish becomes utterly displaced due to his failure of searching for self. In the third chapter, I will depict the disillusionment of the black immigrants caused by the disturbing racial discrimination by the West in the novel *The Lonely Londoners*.

Chapter One

Introduction

Postcolonial literature is broadly related to the discourse of third world countries which were directly colonized by Western Empires before 1960A.D. Homi Bhaba (1994) in his text *The Location of Culture* mentions, “postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of third world countries and the discourse of minorities within the geopolitical division of East and West and the North and South...” (Bhaba, 63). Literally, the term ‘post-colonial’ refers to the period after colonial time, but ‘post-colonial’ refers to the study of texts both of during and after colonial period. The main point of studying post-colonial literature is to depict the influence of colonizer upon the colonized. Post-colonial study analyses the influence of colonizer in matters of politics, culture, language, lifestyle and economy. That is why, post-colonial study is also known as cultural study. Lois Tyson in his text *Critical Theory Today* states that, “Post-colonial theory offers us a framework for examining the similarities among all critical theories that deal with human oppression, such as Marxism, Feminist, gay, Lesbian and queer theories and African-American theory” (Tyson, 418). Post-colonial theory seeks to understand the operation politically, socially, culturally, psychologically colonialist and anti-colonialist ideologies. Post-colonial African literature emerged as a reaction to colonialism as theory and practice. It also comes under the banner of colonialism, a theory that encapsulates the totality of practices that characterize the third world nations, especially in Africa from the inception of colonialism to present day. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, a school of thought considers post-colonialism “as designating an amorphous set of discursive practices, akin to post-modernism” (p.117). This statement is to some extent true because like post-modernism and post-structuralism, post-colonialism has subversive and interrogative tendencies, as L. Hutcheon states, “It

questions, rather than confirms, the process of history” (p. 133). R.A. Sheldon corroborates that post-colonialism is associated with “a set of concerns marked by the indeterminacies and decenteredness...associated with deconstruction” (p. 188). Not only that, Post-colonialism deals with the issue of power relations among western cultures, which are presumed to be the center of human culture by the European ethnocentric philosophy, and the culture of third world nations, which have been relegated to the margins by the European ethos. Thus, unlike post-modernism, it attempts to interrogate history and also it has political consideration. Hutcheon says, “post-colonialism has distinct political agenda and often a theory of agency that allows it to go beyond post-modern limits of deconstructing existing orthodoxies into the realms of social and political action” (p. 130). With the rise of American super power and the decline of the British Empire in the twentieth century, the world has experienced mass migration, expatriation and verities of exiles, which have given different shapes to the individual and national cultures. Third world literature written by the expatriates employs the predicament of the ‘diaspora’ with its marked features. In the Post-colonial era, several expert expatriates have contributed in expatriate literature by depicting their exiled status, nomadic travels, displacement, alienation and homelessness and their social and cultural void of exile. V.S. Naipaul is one of those expatriates who has created a landmark with his contribution to the post-colonial literature. Paul Theroux endorses Naipaul the rhetoric of displacement: “he ranks among transplanted people who can claim no country as their own. They travel because they belong nowhere; they cannot settle, they are constantly moving...rootlessness is their condition; ... their homelessness is a source of particular pain, for as with all travelers, they asked “where are you from?” and no simple answer is possible: all landscapes are alien” (p.). In a way, Naipaul is known as a writer of self-exile because he was separated emotionally and physically from his homeland. He says, when he talks about, he does not say this metaphorically, rather literally. The account of his expatriate sensibility, he exposes the pain

of alienation and displacement in his writing and this sense of rootlessness makes him cynical about other culture including India. According to Chandra B. Joshi, “the theme of exile and alienation is so pervasive in twentieth century literature therefore, it may be called the literature of exile. It reflects the disillusionment that beset the two post-war generations and deep spiritual isolation felt by man in a universe in which he left himself to be inconsequential and stranger. Not surprisingly, many of great literary names of this century are those of actual exiles. In fiction alone, one thinks immediately of Conrad, Joyce, Beckett, Solzhenitsyn, Nabokov and of course, V.S. Naipaul” (p. 9). Naipaul’s autobiographical account *The Mimic Men* explores the displacement, alienation and exile in the colonial and post-colonial scenario. It also deals with the theme of migration and its aftermath which involves the question of identity, rootlessness, displacement, cultural differences, alienation, assimilation, exile and futility. The novel begins the forty years old protagonist who is fatigued by disillusionment rather than failure. He belongs to such generation where he can only mimic the authenticity of selfhood. This is how he becomes the representative of the displaced and disillusioned colonial individual and in this novel colonization is described as a process that takes away people’s identity, culture, history and sense of place. Homi Bhaba explains Naipaul’s *The Mimic Men* is authorized version of otherness: “part-objects of a metonym of colonial desire, end up emerging as inappropriate colonial subjects...[who], by now producing a partial vision of the colonizer’s presence” (Bhaba, 88). In *Mimic Men*, Naipaul represents such character, Ralph Singh who is Bhaba’s ‘partial version’, and a menace and rupture rather than a resemblance and consolidation. This rupture of colonizer’s culture and his own culture makes him a ‘mimic man’ and this rupture of identity lead him in displacement and alienation.

Displacement and alienation have become a universal aspect of literature. In this modern world, disillusionment is common theme of literature. Sometimes this

disillusionment occurs for the very modern lifestyle caused by capitalism, or sometimes this disillusionment results from the very personal experience as in existential crisis and so on.

When we talk about Caribbean literature, this disillusion is found in a broader aspect because Caribbean literature has a long history and unfortunately that history is directly or indirectly connected to alienation and disillusionment. When we talk about Caribbean literature, we cannot deny the history of slavery, the disturbing history of middle passage and a struggling history of immigration. In my thesis, I will also try to explore the issue of Caribbean immigration to Great Britain. The connection between the West Indies and Britain has a long history and immigration of Afro-Caribbean to their “mother country” occurred from the 9th century, however, it was not significant enough until after the Second World War. Since then, the relationship between Afro-Caribbean immigrants in Britain with British people is not praiseworthy rather it becomes complicated. West Indian people considered Britain as their ‘mother country’ because during Second World War, West-Indian people were convinced to fight for Britain and they will get a great life there. After the war, a lot of Caribbean people migrated to Britain in order to get a better life, but the reality was somewhat different. In my thesis, I will try to examine the issue from the historical perspective, dealing with the history of the Caribbean migration to the United Kingdom and also British immigration law and policy. Besides, I will try to depict the British people’s attitude towards the immigrants, the immigrant’s expectation from them and their struggle. In order to show the relationship between the White Britishers and the Caribbean people, I will analyze the Samuel Selvon’s novel *The Lonely Londoners*. My study scrutinizes the theatrical perspectives that explains the reconfiguration of immigrant identity, focusing mainly on Homi Bhaba’s theory on hybridity who in *The Location of Culture* demonstrates the possibility of assuming a fluid identity in post-colonial context. I will employ Samuel Selvon’s text *The Lonely Londoners* as a representative sample of post-colonial literature, in order to demonstrate the instances of

border crossing, the reassessment of space perception, ambivalence of selfhood that contribute to the construction of hybrid identity and how this hybrid identity results in alienation and displacement.

1.1 Caribbean Migration to the United Kingdom

A very little is known, let alone documented about Afro-Caribbean immigrants before the Second World War. Before the 19th century, slaves captured in Africa were shipped to the British colonies in the Caribbean to work on cotton and sugar plantations. This journey from Africa to Caribbean island was painful and Edward Kamau Braithwaite has explained this painful journey in his poem “Limbo.” The voyage from Africa to the new world of America was known as Middle Passage. Slave ships usually took six to eleven weeks to complete the voyage. Slaves were chained in a deck and their movements were limited. A lot of slave could not survive due to this cramped situation. The slave women were mistreated by the crew, they were sexually harassed, and even some slaves became suicidal in order to get rid of that hour of trial. After the abolition of slavery in 1833, some of former slaves migrated to Britain. They prevalingly worked as footmen, coachmen or in the army, and in the merchant navy there (Phillips).

At the time of First World War, around five hundred Afro-Caribbean were recruited into the British West Indies regiment and were sent for military services in Palestine, Egypt, France or Italy. After the war, most of the survived soldiers returned to their jobs in the merchant navy.

The Second World War brought many Afro-Caribbean to Britain, in particular to work in the army hospitals, also as skilled craftsmen to work in different factories in Britain. According to Butterfield, 1000 Afro-Caribbean technicians were recruited for service in munitions factories in Merseyside and Lancashire. During Second World War, a lot of British

civilians had to join in the war. Due to the mobilization of people in army, Britain had to deal with labor shortage and thus, a lot of Afro-Caribbean people joined in factory on that very time. Even after the war, many immigrants started staying in Britain permanently. As a lot of Afro-Caribbean fought for Britain During Second World War, they considered Britain as their “mother country” and some thought they will get a better life there. Thus, in order to get a better life, immigration wave occurred after 1995.

1.2 Immigration Wave after 1945

As I have mentioned before, due to Second World War, Britain faced severe labor shortage. In order to fill up those labor in factories, immigrants arriving in Britain considerably increased. According to Abercrombie, “Commonwealth were encouraged to come to Britain not only by government agencies, but also by large employers (247). Immigration of the Caribbean initially thought they are getting advantages from United Kingdom because of being a commonwealth citizen because they did not face any legal restrictions in entering and working in the United Kingdom. This was confirmed by the 1948 British Nationality Act which made a formal distinction between British subjects who were citizens of the United Kingdom and its colonies and those who were Commonwealth Citizens, however both groups had the right to enter, settle and work in Britain (Butterfield). Besides, being the colony of Britain, they thought they will not face any language barrier, because most of them knew broken language.

The most significant flow of Afro-Caribbean immigrants was marked during the arrival of the SS Empire Windrush on 22 June 1948 (CSIB). This ship first brought the highest number of immigrants for the very first time. More the five hundred immigrants were brought to United Kingdom through that ship. Most of the immigrants were lured by better

job, and some planned to work for few years, and after earning some money they will go back to Caribbean, however, later on most of them decided to stay for good.

Newly arrived immigrants worked in semi-skilled or unskilled categories of jobs. Industries such as transport (British Rail, London Transport) recruited almost exclusively from the Caribbean, mostly from Jamaica and Barbados (CSIB). Women were brought to United Kingdom when their husbands or sons were established there. According to Phillips, Afro-Caribbean women predominantly worked in National Health Service as nurse after moving in Britain.

The arrival of the Afro-Caribbean immigrants remarkably increased every year. For example, 2000 immigrants arrived in 1953, 29800 in 1956 and 66300 in 1961 (Butterfield). This increased number of immigrants becomes burdensome for the British government. As there were no legal restrictions, Britain government found this arrival of immigrants really problematic and thought the necessity to have some restrictions over there. As a result, Britain government passed the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962.

As post-colonial literature deals with power relationship with the colonizer and colonized, in my paper, I will take help from Edward Said's seminal text *Orientalism* to depict how the Caribbean people were reified by the colonizer's and turns into alienated 'other' in their mother country England.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The post-colonial criticism of Homi Bhaba has been extremely influential in the movement to redefine post-colonial and minority culture. Bhaba thinks, colonialism is an ongoing process. In the introduction of his book *The Location of Culture* Bhaba demands that, we as members of society and literary critics, should try to understand the cultural differences as being based on hybridity created in moments of historical transformation. We should no longer classify groups of people based on “organic”, pre-existing traits attributed to ethnic groups. Instead, we should locate the differences created “in-between” time and space spanning different cultures. People’s characteristics are not limited to their ethnic heritage, rather are subject to change and modification through experience. Bhaba discusses the interstitial relationships formed between cultures as well as those formed in the public and private spheres. Thus, Bhaba’s work emphasizes the active “agency” of the colonized.

Bhaba thinks the “psychic survival” of culture has yet to be attained. He appropriates his concept of hybridity as an in between third space, synthesizing cultural differences within the post-colonial condition. His concept of “hybridity” can be discussed within three distinct parameters: the colonial stereotype, the mimic and the implicit power of written texts. Instead of seeing colonialism as something locked in the past, Bhaba shows how its histories and cultures constantly intrude in the present, demanding that we transform our understanding of cross-cultural relations. The authority of dominant nations is never complete because it is run by anxiety and this anxiety makes the dominated to fight back. To demonstrate this anxiety, Bhaba looks back to the history of colonialism. This colonial history was never simple domination thus, we should not think that the colonial situation as one of straightforward oppression of the colonized by the colonizer. Bhaba’s close textual analysis finds the hidden

gaps and anxieties present in the colonial situation. In a nutshell, Bhaba's work demonstrates the active agency of colonized where they become rebellious against the colonizers. Bhaba thinks, culture is not simply imposed by the colonizer, rather when, colonizer and colonized come together, there is an element of 'negotiation' in cultural meaning. This is how, colonizer and colonized become dependent to each other. This is how a complex doubling is created where the West is constantly troubled by its "doubles" in particular the East. Bhaba transforms the study of colonialism by applying post-structuralist methodologies to colonial texts. Thus, he takes inspiration from Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. The aspect of Derrida's work is important to Bhaba who finds that the oppositions of colonizer/ colonized or metropolis/colony are complicated and interwoven. Derrida's thinking is concerned with the "absolutely other" with what is beyond thought. His *of Grammatology* argues that the opposition between speech and writing has been central to western thoughts: where speech is alive, flexible and has the speaker present, writing is dead, concrete, only existing because speaker cannot be everywhere to state his or her message. This assumption goes hand in hand with a rejection of 'other'. However, Derrida argues that, speech and writing are in fact more similar than different: essentially, he sees traditional characteristics of writing operating in speech as well. Bhaba situates the Derridean idea of iteration where Derrida claims that a text is defined by its iterability and that there is nothing outside text. In Derrida's *Signature Event Context*, he argues that, "a context is never absolutely determinable" (Derrida, 3). He admits that, a mark is, in part, defined by the ways in which it is different from its surrounding marks, but the context is never totalizing because, a mark can be read always out of context. Bhaba follows this concept where he admits text does not say what they initially seem to say. Cultural difference resembles with this which is implicitly seem and can be discussed explicitly. Bhaba explores and expands this relevance of post-structuralism for cultural difference.

Bhaba's concept of 'mimicry' is another important aspect discussed in his book *Location of culture*. This concept of 'mimicry' is discussed in his essay "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." This concept of mimicry is more complex than it seems at first instance. In his article, Bhaba shows mimicry did not just operated during the colonial era, rather it has crept in the post-colonial time when all the colonized countries become independent. The post-colonial thinker Frantz Fanon has been influential in the work of post-colonial critics and Bhaba takes inspiration from Fanon's work in order to understand the layers of marginalization which exist in the society especially amongst the black. Fanon deals with the psychological effects of colonial domination and disempowerment in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1954). Bhaba takes much more from Fanon and he says that "Fanon is the purveyor of the transgressive and transitional truth. He may yearn for the total transformation of Man and society, but he speaks most effectively from the uncertain interstices of historical change (LC, 40). Not only that, Bhaba has been influenced by French thinkers Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. He borrows the idea of 'mimicry' from Jacques Lacan and writes "[t]he effects 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" (Bhaba, 85). Bhaba defines 'mimicry' and says "...colonial mimicry is the desire for reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (86). According to Bhaba, 'mimicry' is one of the most effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge. 'Mimicry' in colonial and post-colonial discourse, is defined as when the colonized countries start imitating the behavior, attitude, language and culture of colonizers. This imitating tendency comes from the colonized people's inferiority complex and gradually they start to think that the West is more 'educated', 'civilized', 'reformed', and 'knowledgeable' while the East is barbaric, uncivilized, primitive and ignorant. Thus 'mimicry' is a method of imitating the person in power. This imitation

process is never complete thus it suppresses one's own cultural identity and leaves that person in ambivalent state of mind. Thus, Bhaba says that "...the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence" (Bhaba, 86). Bhaba explores that the concept of 'mimicry' is not merely the imitation of the human behavior but the attitude and temperament come into play. Mimicry does not cultivate a positive and creative approach among natives rather it hampers his mental growth which creates ambivalence. In this regard, Bhaba says 'mimicry repeats rather than re-presents.' This process of 'mimicry' is never complete rather it creates a cultural, historical and racial differences which creates confusion and ambivalence and this interwoven state affects one's own identity. Thus, Bhaba says, "The effect of mimicry on the authority on colonial discourse is profound and disturbing" (Bhaba, 1994: 86). Not only that, Bhaba takes the idea of "stereotype" from Edward Said and says just as the "colonial stereotype" had been "ambivalent" so is 'mimicry'. In order to show how colonizers would rule, Bhaba gives two examples just like Edward Said did. In his first example, Bhaba writes about Charles Grant. In 1972, Grant wrote that he had a dream about reforming the native Indians' in such a way that they can appear to be a colonizer 'sense of identity'. What is paradoxical about this approach is that Grant tried to make a 'colonial subjectivity' with some essence of Christianity and a bit of morality. He caught up between his desire for religious reformation and his fear of that Indians might become 'turbulent for liberty'. Grant thought that, with this partial reform the Indians will be able to imitate English manners and which will help them to stay under their 'protection'. Bhaba argues that by doing this, Grant mocked his moral project and broke a central missionary rule, because no heathen faith was allowed for them to tolerate. Bhaba cites his second example of colonial mimicry by saying "the absurd extravagance of Macaulay's 'Minute' (1835). (Bhaba, 1994" 87). Macaulay wanted to start a project that will produce "a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern- class of persons Indian in Blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." (Macaulay, 1995:

430). Bhaba argues that the result is a “mimic man”, raised through the English school, “whose line of decent can be traced through the works of Kipling, Foster, Orwell, Naipaul (...)” this person is “the effect of a flawed colonial mimesis, in which to be Anglicized is empathically not to be English.” (Bhaba, 87).

Apart from mimicry and ambivalence, post-colonial study of Homi Bhaba is incomplete without the concept of hybridity. According to Bhaba, hybridity is the synthesis of two conflicted cultural identities that results in the formation of a third, transcendent identity. In *The Location of Culture* Bhaba attempts to provide a holistic and universal definition of the concept “hybridity”. According to Bhaba, “Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities... the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (Bhaba, 159). He thinks, colonial hybridity is not a problem of genealogy or identity between two different cultures. Besides, it indicates that, the difference of culture can no longer be identified or evaluated as objects of epistemological or moral contemplation (114). Contemporary culture is hybrid just like colonial culture. According to David Huddart, the idea of hybridity usefully characterizes the mechanisms of the colonial psychic economy. In the same way, colonial identity can be found in contemporary context and the structure of hybridity is also found in contemporary cultures. Culture is always retrospective constructions because every culture is a consequence of different historical process. In an interview for the journal *Art in America*, Bhaba, opposed the generalization of culture. He questions the “traditional liberal attempt” to negotiate the minority cultures based on what those cultures have in common and consensual (Bhaba, 82). He also argues that we just cannot merely put together many cultures in a “pretty mosaic” harmoniously to produce some “brave new cultural totality” (82). In his interview, Bhaba refuses totalizing explanatory schemes and here he associates such schemes directly with one version of multiculturalism, which attempts to weld disparate cultures into harmonious wholes. In fact, those disparate cultures are not pre-existing,

rather it is the consequence of history, specifically of colonialism and post-colonialism. Bhaba says, the current phase of economic and social history makes us aware of cultural difference. This difference is not the “celebratory level of diversity” but the point of “conflict and crisis”. Cultural hybridity is not then absolutely general. His theory of hybridity is associated with mimicry and sly civility. The underpinning of the colonial condition is predicated upon the fixed identity of the colonized and the colonizer, and in return cultural differences thus created. This is an important idea to explore as the articulation of fixed and impermanent identities within this cultural difference provide the underlying justifications for Bhaba’s concept of hybridization. However, this was not until the publication of Edward Said’s seminal work *Orientalism*. Said argued that, a true understanding of western culture and identity could not be achieved until recognition was made of its dependency and predication against the colonized “orient” as a “contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (Said’2). Rather than solely encompassing the physical territorializing of land, Edward Said re-imagined the colonial condition not as exclusively singular, but as mutual anti-essentialist process of physical and temporal exchange. This idea is explained by cultural theorist Ashis Nandy, who suggests that the relationship between the self and the other needs to be re-considered not in opposition, but rather as “intimate enemies” (Nandy,15). For Bhaba, the power dynamics of colonial condition are contingent upon this assertion of cultural difference; the division between the self and other; the colonizer and the colonized. Bhaba states that, “the construction of the colonial subject demands an articulation of form of difference” while simultaneously “the enunciation of culture is as knowledgeable, authoritative” (Bhaba, 37-67). This cultural difference according to cultural theorist Benita Parry, is “momentary extinction of the recognizable object of culture in the disturbed artifice of its signification, at the edge of experience” (Parry, 14). It is from this signification that Bhaba appropriates colonial identities as “neither the one...nor the other...but something else besides” (Bhaba, 28). He justifies this construction of colonial

identities in his appropriation of philosopher Frantz Fanon's "psychoanalytic language of demand and desire" (Bhaba, 48). The way Bhaba reads Fanon is literary. He pays close attention to the interplay and juxtaposition of different rhetorical forms in Fanon's text. Fanon in his 1968 work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, proclaims that "the Negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (Fanon, 43). The fetishism inherent within these fixed identities, according to Bhaba, creates an intervening space of "beyond...where 'presencing' begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of relocation" (Bhaba, 9). It is an ambivalent space that fulfills Bhaba's "precondition for the articulation of cultural difference" (Bhaba, 38) and it becomes the precursor for these fixed colonial identities of self and other to become inversed within the process of hybridity. Bhaba's concept of hybridity is itself a paradox; while Bhaba maintains that hybridity is dependent upon two fixed and pure cultural localities, he also dismisses the material concept of pure culture.

Colonial and post-colonial sphere of literature is incomplete without Edward Said because post-colonial literature reflects the different effects in British colonialism. In order to show the effect of colonialism, Said's *Orientalism* is an integral part of post-colonial literature. In a documentary called *Edward Said: The Last Interview*, Said explains that, there are three stages of Orientalism: By the end of 9th century, the Orient became associated with Islam, due to the rise of Islam. In addition, Orientalism emerged as the Christian World's approach towards Islam. The second stage of Orientalism corresponds to the end of 18th century. In this stage, Orientalism became a scientific study. During the time following Napoleon's rise, Paris became the center of Oriental learning and in this second stage, Orientalism became more and more institutionalized. This second stage was called the Anglo-French Orientalism. "This instrumental attitude is seen to have taken different forms in British and French Orientalism in the twentieth century, more specifically prior to and after World War I (Kennedy, 18-19). And

the third stage of Orientalism is “American Orientalism”. My main focus would be the second stage of orientalism. *Orientalism* is a contrapuntal reading of imperial discourse about the non-Western Other. It indicates that the Western intellectual is in the service of hegemonic culture. *Orientalism* is an essential text of understanding post-colonial aspect of literature. According to Homi Bhaba, “*Orientalism* inaugurated the postcolonial field.” After publishing his book *Orientalism* in 1978, Said laid the ground for the theory of post-colonialism, sparking a storm of controversy, which did not end with Said’s decease. Said’s *Orientalism* is a Canonical text of cultural studies in which he has challenged the concept of orientalism or the difference between East and West. His concept of ‘orientalism’ is divided into three different parts. In chapter one, Edward Said explains how the science of orientalism developed and how the people of west started considering the people of East as non-human being. Said’s theory of post-colonialism is mainly based on what he considers the false image of orient or the East that has been fabricated for years after years by the Western philosophers, scholars, poets, novelists, political theorists, economist and imperial administrators since Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt in 1798. According to Said, they have always shown the orient as primitive, uncivilized “other” in an attempt to contrast to the civilized West. In his highly influential work *Orientalism*, Said considers that “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘orient’ and most of the time ‘the occident’”. So, the first chapter of *Orientalism* is the depiction of Orient in the eyes of the Western scholars which was highly biased and the East was exoticized by the West. In this chapter, Said says, “Europeans are impatient in using their new instruments of power” (Said, 29). This power is an uncontrollable psychologically manipulative addiction. This power abides with racism and injustice. In this chapter, Said explains the speech of Balfour where Said says “British knowledge of Egypt is Egypt for Balfour and the burden of knowledge makes such questions as superiority and inferiority seem petty one. Balfour nowhere denies British superiority” (Said,

45). It clearly shows that the knowledge of imperialist about the East was indifferent and Said highly criticized this. Said also says, the 'Oriental' was "contained and represented by dominating frameworks" (Said, 40). The inferior was identified, as the west provided a corrective study of "Western superiority" over "Oriental inferiority" (Said, 40). This false notion of superiority and inferiority is applicable in any post-colonial literary text although Said focuses mainly East as Middle east. In second chapter, Said says, modern orientalism became an "aspect of imperialism and colonialism", with a systematic discipline of accumulation, where "science could prepare the way for what armies, administrations, and bureaucracies could do in the Orient" (Said, 123). In this following section, Edward Said reports on the academic works of Silvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan, who are samples of the "Rational Anthropology and Philological Laboratory. They think, everything of the Orient had to be properly transformed through a scientific and technological method, to prove the aforementioned strangeness of the people, their differences in social and climatic and historical conditions. Sacy's work canonizes the Orient, it begets a canon of textual objects passed on from one generation of the students to the next. Said portrays Silvester de Sacy, a rational anthropologist by claiming his work, "as having uncovered, brought to light, rescued a vast amount of obscure matter. Why? In order to place it before the student? (Said, 127). He also claims, Renan was a "devout racist". Within this forefront, he systemizes Orientalism in his philology, the "scientific, oriental philology" (Said, 139). Although the scholarly gave Oriental greater visibility but Renan used the laboratories, libraries, museums as a means of analysis to exhibit the "inverse, eccentric, quasi-monstrous phenomenon of the Semites" (Said, 141). In other words, Renan's research was not based on his experience. Said also says, Renan contained a "notorious race prejudice against the very Orient Semites whose study had made his professional name- a harsh divider of men into superior and inferior races" (Said, 143). Said also claims that Renan used the encoded language of a new prestigious science to belittle the

Orient. Said in this section affirms with Nietzsche who questioned the scientific aspects of modern philology, and entices a creative approach in language. Nietzsche, for Said, employs the “exceptional spiritual insight into ‘language’ and veritable aesthetic and historical power” (Said, 131). Said continues with his reference to Foucault on the origins of language. Said thinks, the ontological basis for human nature has been overridden with scientific discovery. Said says, “a secular event that displaced a religious conception of how God delivered the language to man in Eden” (Said, 135). Language is changed through the route of imperial power and colonization. Both Foucault and Nietzsche subside the difficulties of philological interest back into the origin of language, instead of creating deviant divisions.

At chapter three, “Orientalism Now”, Said makes distinction of the dogma of “latent Orientalism” the typically accepted view from the 19th century of “unconscious positivity” and “manifest Orientalism” from the 20th century, where Oriental knowledge and its scholarly work is more to the “contemporary observations, in language and terminology, whose cultural validity derived from other sciences and systems of thought” (Said, 205-206). The differences Said pertains, are evident, yet they retain the “stability, unanimity and durability of the latent Orientalism” (Said, 206). Said thinks, Orient is an “incorporated weak partner of the West” (Said, 208). To elaborate this idea, Said takes Heideggerian notion of the simultaneous nature of presence and absence. Said says “...in discussing the Orient, the Orient is all absence, whereas one feels the Orientalist and what he says as presence; yet we must not forget that the Orientalist’s presence is enabled by the Orient’s effective absence” (Said, 208). Although, Said did not elaborate this claim but maybe he wanted to convey that the actuality of the discussion of Orient, in its presence is the absence of truth or the true Orient is absent. Said states that, the usual description of Western view of the Orient is “as weaker or under developed regions” and the West having “intellectual supremacy” that justifies the expansion of colonialism in old and new vestiges (Said, 219). Because of this supremacy of West, the tension between “latent

standards” and “new manifest” Orient has developed. In the next section, Said revealed the racial distinction in Western education. Said says, the color of their skin gave them a “superior ontological status plus great power over much of the inhabited world” (Said, 226-227). He adds “White Man” spoke in a certain way, responding to a code of laws and regulations, which is a form of power where the white men ruled “a way of taking hold of reality, language and thought” (Said, 227). Language played an important role to designate “former” over the “latter” by imposing the idea of language of “ours” and language of “theirs”.

Post-colonialism as an intellectual discourse is inextricably tagged to the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism. Apart from hybridity, mimicry and Orientalism, another key concept of post-colonial literature is diaspora. ‘Diaspora’ is a concept that owes its origin to the ‘dispersion’ or exile of the Jews from their homeland (Israel). Originating from the idea of displacement from a homeland, diaspora points to those “communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movement of migration, immigration or exile” (Brazier and Mannur, 2003: 1). Literally, it indicates dispersion or spreading of the people from a particular culture or nation. The *Webster Dictionary* defines diaspora as ‘dispersion from’. Hence the term diaspora implies the notion of a center, a home from where the dispersion occurs. Thus, the word necessarily invokes images of journey and displacement, wherein diasporic journey essentially implies putting down roots in other home. The concept of ‘Diaspora’ has overlapped with many changes throughout the centuries. Now the term addresses the migration, people’s various sense of belongings and loyalties beyond the national boundaries. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin consider diaspora as the central historical fact and define it as a “voluntary or forcible movement of people from their homeland into new regions. They consider colonialism as the diasporic movement, dispersion and settlement of Europeans all over the world” (2006:68).

Chapter Three

Alienation and Displacement in V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men*

V.S. Naipaul, a Trinidadian writer of Indian descent is widely considered one of the greatest and most controversial writers in English language. Although, imperialism has passed, but the destruction made by the colonizers remains as stain in the mind of the colonized that speaks in volume. In most of his works, V.S. Naipaul discusses the major themes like displacement, alienation of immigrants, identity crisis, the paradox of freedom and the problem of neo-colonialism. In his novel *The Mimic Men*, Naipaul shows how the protagonist of the novel Ralph Singh caught up in the adversities of life in the post-colonial era, who fails to create his own identity, thus he loses his sense of belongings which causes displacement and alienation.

Most of the third world critics concentrate mainly on how Naipaul depicted the Third world affairs, but his works mainly shed light on the Post-colonial and Post-imperial realities that have shaped the contemporary societies and it provides as an insight relating to them. Naipaul's novel gives us a better understanding of the problems faced by the post-imperial generations. In his novel *The Mimic Men*, the characters and situation can be depicted through Bhaba's "ambivalent approach." The large emphasis, however, has been seen to be laid on the protagonist Ralph Singh's attitude creates "ambivalence" identity crisis by emphasizing his seesaw relationship to Isabella island and London. This ambivalence is prominent from the very beginning of the novel. For instance, in the attic scene, Singh has been observed to vacillate between the "magic" and the "forlornness" of "the city", which is London, "the heart of Empire." In the next scene, Ralph Singh in one hand criticizes his colonial island for being a "transitional" and "makeshift" society that "lacks order", and on the other hand, he describes London as "the greater disorder" and the "final emptiness."

Although, he finds the natural elements of London gorgeous. Such as, snow and the light of dusk, he detests London's darkness and lack of color. Singh left Isabella island with the intention of never to return, after coming to London he feels rootless and states that London has "gone sour" and then he longs for the "certainties" of his island. Once he wanted to escape from Isabella island, and after coming to London, he is criticizing London and Isabella island suddenly became significant to him. This ambivalence is the result of his displaced identity.

Franz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Mask* use the term "psychic alienation" to describe the crisis of personal identity and the selfhood of the colored man in colonial society. Fanon says, "At the risk of my colored brothers, I will say the black is not a man" (Fanon, 10). In the novel *The Mimic Men*, Naipaul explores the mimic dependency of colonial societies that later on results in "psychic alienation." In this novel, the protagonist of the novel Ralph Singh writes his memories from the perspective of exile in London, having been forced out of politics in his native Caribbean island of Isabella. This novel shows Singh's obsession with the condition of imitative dependency in colonial society according to which nothing is original, leading to profound sense of psychic alienation where colonial subjects are not real or not real men.

According to Frantz Fanon, "The colonial world is divided into two compartments...the colonial world is a world cut in two" (Fanon,31). Historically, the compartmentalization of the colonial world has been systematically divided into a dichotomous milieu, befittingly placing one group superior over another. Alienation is initially a Marxian (i.e. Karl Marx) theatrical concept which was predicted on socio-economic dynamics but on the other hand "Fanon sees the alienation of the Negro, the colonized, as essentially socio-economic(socio-political) alienation that has profound

psychological effect” says Onwuanibe in his text *The Critique of Revolutionary Humanism: Frantz Fanon*. Fanon gives a new fixity of alienation. L. Adele Jinadu points out that to a certain extent, “psychological violence then becomes a form of cultural imperialism in the context of the colonial situation...its victim is an alienated person, in the strong Marxian sense of man becoming a stranger to himself” (Adele, 48). In a similar disposition, the alienation of the native may take the form of assimilation, the loss of cultural identity or its disruption, through which the social group imitate the oppressor (Onwuanibe, 32). Within this context, Fanon writes in his text *Toward the African Revolution*, “the oppressor, through the inclusive and frightening character of his authority, manages to impose on the native new ways of seeing, and in particular, a pejorative judgement with respect to his original forms of existing” (Fanon, 38). This statement can be explained by Jean-Paul Sartre who says “Oppression means, first of all, the oppressor’s hatred for the oppressed” (Sartre, 27). In *The Mimic Men*, the protagonist of the novel Ranjeet Kripal Singh becomes the victim of colonial society and gradually becomes stranger to himself. Even he becomes an alienated other person who tries to mimic the oppressor’s culture and changes his name to Ralph Singh from Ranjeet Kripal Singh. Ralph Singh gradually becomes a ‘mimic man’. Ralph Kripal Singh, the ambivalent hero of *The Mimic Men* remarks: “we pretend to be real, to be learning, to be preparing ourselves for life, we mimic men of the New World, one unknown corner of it, with all its reminder of the corruption that came so quickly to the new” (Naipaul, 416). Singh is thus a typical colonial figure, lost in the world of oblivion because he serves his ties with his root in the process of mimicking “other”. Bhaba states that, “Mimicry is thus the sign of double articulation...The effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is profound and disturbing...It is as if the very emergence of the ‘colonial’ is dependent for its representation upon some strategic limitation or prohibition within the authoritative discourse itself...so that mimicry is at one resemblance and menace (Bhaba,122-3). From the very

beginning of the novel *The Mimic Men*, we came to know that Singh suffers from “genetic” dislocation which refers to the condition of the East Indians in the Caribbean who crossed the kala pani, black water and thus lost their Indianness. Singh also went through same educational process. As a victim of the colonial education system and curriculum, Singh has always been encouraged to imitate the empire and to become a “mimic man”. Singh says, “My first memory of school is of taking an apple to the teacher. This puzzles me. We had no apples on Isabella. It must have been an orange; yet my memory insists on the apple. The editing is clearly at fault, but the edited version is all I have (Naipaul, 90). Singh’s colonial education taught him that his “mother country” England is the symbol of order, but when he studies English culture and history, he feels that his own culture is made inferior by the colonizers. This colonial education has caused him to become a homeless man having no self-image. He keeps on asking whether he is the product of colonial education. Singh identifies and criticizes the colonial mimicry, but unfortunately, he knows that he cannot help being a ‘mimic man’. Selwyn R. Cudjoe in his article “V.S. Naipaul: A Materialist Reading” says Ralph Singh is “a specific product of a particular socioeconomic formation called colonialism” (100). The idea of mimicry gets further complicated for Ralph Singh as an inhabitant of Isabella island because of the experience of “ethnic displacement” which refers to Singh’s status as Indian in Isabella Island. In response to this, Singh idealizes his past and wants to reconstructs history to establish his identity. When he realizes that his identity cannot be created in this way, he becomes disillusioned. Singh starts dreaming of India in his attempt to reconstruct the past, the land of his origin and he reads books of Asiatic and Persian Aryans and dreams of horsemen who look for their leader (Naipaul, 98). Singh says, “China was the subject of Hok’s secret reading. Mine was Rajput and Aryans, stories of Knights, horsemen and wanderers. I had even read Tod’s difficult volumes. I had read of the homeland of the Asiatic and Persian Aryans, which some put as far away as the North

Pole...And I would dream that all over the Central Asian plains the horsemen looked for their leader” (Naipaul, 98). Singh is also troubled by his Indianness in the New World. Although he idealized his past and desires to go back to his Indian past, he attempts to Anglicize himself by saying “My reaction to my incompetence and inadequacy had been not to simplify but to complicate. For instance, I gave myself a new name” (Naipaul,93). Although Singh spends more time with his mother, he was so much into the idealized India, in other words, he was much into his father and heroic idealized past. He says, “I must explain, I cherished my mother’s family and their Bella Bella Bottling works. But in my secret life I was the son of my father, and a Singh” (98). Although he was born in the Caribbean Island of Isabella, he finds his Indian identity more heroic and meaningful. Unfortunately, his pride of being a Singh collapsed when his father goes away to choosing a life of “sanyasi” living with another woman. His father wants to use religion as a tool to secure a place of power to himself and to retain Hinduism. Singh becomes shocked when his father sacrifices Tamango, the racing horse which according to Hindu religion is the act of sacrifice to secure prosperity and fertility. Although Ralph Singh idealizes his Hindu past and Indian culture, he is in fact unable to understand Hinduism and thus, as John Thieme has observed “when the horse is killed, the ideal past collapses and the concrete experience shocks the child” (133). Hindu rituals have lost its connection with Isabella. Singh’s heroic thoughts about India crumbled and his own culture became meaningless to him. Singh could clearly understand that an island full of viciousness cannot be the epitome for anyone to search for history or have a productive future. This feeling of suffocation makes him even more alienated from the Island of Isabella. Thus, his urge for leaving the island becomes stronger. He says, “I wished to fly, to begin afresh, lucidity” (Naipaul, 169).

The Mimic Men continues to explore the subject of mimicry as the protagonist assumes his identity in “the society that goes from colonialism to formal independence”

(Cudjoe, 92). It is the story of a forty years old post-colonial politician, Ralph Singh, living in exile in the London suburbs and writing memories “to clarify and order his life and to repair his abiding sense of loss and inauthenticity” (McSweeney, 162). He attempts to grasp the past and present, the life of London and colonial world of Isabella, examining why his journey of self-discovery ends in “the greater shipwreck that had come to me already” (Naipaul, 214). The novel opens with the protagonist looking out the window of his London streets. According to Lindorth, the window is a “symbolic proscenium through which Singh enters the theatrical space of his past” (519). His writing by window is not only a sign of being an artist but it becomes a “miniature stage” for his performance. Singh’s intention to write a book does not remain constant, rather it changes with his life and the writing itself becomes his “existence, mimicry of life, and a mimicry of a writer’s life” (King, 74). Being a mimic man, Ralph Singh plays different roles including student, lover, politician and writer. James Lindorth suggests that above all stands the figure of Singh’s father, Gurudeva, whose creation of “a meta theatre defines and refines the figure of Ralph Singh as secular performer” (519). Throughout the novel, we find that Ralph Singh is in the search for belonging, being a “castaway” in between two worlds, a world of limbo where he is neither Indian, nor Caribbean, neither into Hinduism nor into the iconic “city of order” the English. His only “real hope for finding the security...would appear to lie in Hindu Background” (Thieme, 514) which he attempts to reject. As I have stated before, Singh has changed his name from Ranjit Kripal Singh to Ralph Singh, his new name becomes very significant to him because he can impress both his teachers and friends, it also masks his “secret name and private self” that helps him to avoid torment and ridicule of his fellow students. Although, he was politically benefited for his Hindu identity, he experiences fear by losing his racial and cultural identity which leads him to “attitudes of superiority...a dandyism, and the cultivation of disdain for that which is flawed and imperfect” (King, 72). He feels ‘contaminated’ by his

Hindu past, yearning for the ideal Aryan past, which is just a part of idealism. However, his “Hindu self proves inescapable” (Thieme, 516) and his origin remains with him throughout his political career: as people begin to listen to him and regard him as a leader, his “dream of Aryan chieftaincy is almost achieved” (Thieme, 516). When people call for his protection, Ralph Singh refuses to lead them, “distancing the actual world” (King, 70).

According to John Thieme, Ralph in the act of self-dramatization, puts on various identities: he has been a “dandy and a poseur” in his college days, a politician who fails people’s needs, a “householder who has failed to put down roots in any of the numerous houses he occupies” (Thieme, 517). In reality, Ralph Singh is the product of colonial mimicry, his life has never been real, he has always imitated various roles. This act of mimicry is prominent when he says “the world I was born in was never real” (Naipaul, 271). He is one of the “mimic men” of the New World “who pretended to be real, to be learning, to be preparing...for life” (Naipaul, 175). Ralph Singh wishes to “have cleared the deck, and...prepared myself for fresh action” (Naipaul, 300), positioning himself as a “free man” however he is a “self-deceived...fraud” (Thieme, 517). He lacks “identity and authenticity, that leads to his posturing, dandyism and flights into exile” (King, 78). His writing about memories is nothing more than artificial sense of reality and this experience of his multiple journey to the self-discovery leads him annihilated, alienated and displaced from his actual self. In this novel *The Mimic Men*, Naipaul explores the power of colonial mimicry that destroys people’s past and defrauds them of their identities. According to Derek Walcott, “to mimic, one needs a mirror...our pantomime is conducted before a projection of ourselves which in its smallest gesture is based on metropolitan references” (Walcott, 6). When a person become a mimic man, his every gesture and words become uncreative, unauthentic and less of himself because he is reduced to the level of colonial parrots. Thus, Jacques Lacan states that mimicry is “like camouflage, not a question of harmonizing with the background,

but against the mottled background, of becoming mottled..." (85). Ralph Singh, according to Derek Walcott has entered the mirror "where there can only be simulation of self-discovery" (7).

Ralph Singh's ancestors emigrated from India to Caribbean many years ago and he was born in Caribbean Island of Isabella, he feels displaced in Isabella because he becomes the victim of colonial mimicry and thus, he fails to discover his actual self. His sense of belongingness can be depicted through the way he describes his childhood. He says, "I could scarcely wait for my childhood to be over and done with. I have no especial hardship or deprivation to record. But childhood was for me a period of incompetence, bewilderment, solitude and shameful fantasies. It was a period of burdensome secrets" (Naipaul, 90). For him, it is the sense of displacement that makes him nonentity. Because of this disillusionment and his failure as a politician, he decides to leave Isabella. He says, "I wished to make a fresh, clean start. And it was now that I resolved to abandon the shipwrecked island and all on it..." (Naipaul, 118). He resolves to seek his identity in London, being the product of the colonial education. He says, "Coming to London, the great city, seeking order, seeking the flowering, the extension of myself that ought to have come in a city of such miraculous light, I had tried to hasten a process which had seemed elusive. I had tried to give myself a personality" (26). As an immigrant student in London, living along with a group of displaced people on the fringe of London's reality, Ralph Singh is wanting hopelessly to make contact with the city, but unfortunately, he fails to do so. Gradually he realizes he does not belong to the mother city too and his identity is at stake. Singh says, "In the great city, so three dimensional, so rooted in its soil, drawing color from such depths, only the city was real. Those of us who came to it lost some of our solidity; we were trapped into fixed, flat postures. And in this growing disassociation between ourselves and the city in which we walked, scores of separate meetings, not linked even by ourselves, who became nothing more than perceivers: everyone

reduced, reciprocally, to a succession of such meetings, so that first experience and then the personality divided bewilderingly into compartments” (Naipaul, 27). This sense of bewilderment is Bhaba’s “third space” which made the protagonist an ambivalent personality, a mimic man. Regarding the above quotation, it is clear that Singh fails to accomplish his autonomous identity in London. His continuous search for his real identity makes him displaced and alienated because he has created a false identity with the act of mimicry that has reduced his actual self to a self-made colonial parrot. He has turned into a mimic man and the mimic men of the New World have no other choices but self-annihilation, alienation and displacement, migration and exile.

Another reason of displacement and alienation of the protagonist of the novel *The Mimic Men* is hybridity. Naipaul has shown how Ralph Singh upholds the concept of hybridity and ambivalence posited by Bhaba. According to Bhaba, hybridity is the synthesis of two conflicted cultural identities that has results in the formation of a third, transcendent identity. The protagonist of the novel Ralph Singh is the result of this conflicted transcendent identity who fails to connect with any physical landscape. This transcendent identity makes him alienated which creates a situation called Bhaba’s “third space” or in betweenness. In spite of having an affluent background, Singh experiences loss of belongingness. He roams around with his sense of in betweenness in Europe, Isabella and his birthplace. Being unable to feel at home, Singh starts to live in an imaginative world. Even the narrative technique of the novel is disjointed which reflects Singh’s fragmented psychological condition, who tries to write his book in perfect order but fails because he lacks order in his real life. He says, “in that dream of writing I was attracted less by the act and the labor than by the calm and the order which the act would have implied” (Naipaul, 32). He becomes a hybrid personality which causes the lack of order in his life. For instance, his colonial education system. He was inclined to this colonial education system which later on encouraged him to be alienated and

it was deeply rooted inside him and could never escape from it. Singh says “we denied the landscape and the people we could see out of open doors and windows, we who took apples to the teacher and wrote essays about visit to temperate farms” (Naipaul, 95). Education is supposed to be familiar with someone’s own culture, but the colonial education system makes him a hybrid personality. Many of the students become afraid to face reality, in order to express what they really are. For example, Hok, one of the students of Isabella Imperial School, is ashamed to greet his Negro mother as she passes by. When his teacher tells him to do so, he breaks down and starts crying. In this regard, Naipaul says, “It was not only that the mother was black and of the people, though that was a point; it was that he had been expelled from that private hemisphere of fantasy where lay his true life. The last book he had been reading was *The Heroes*. What a difference between the mother of Perseus and that mother!” (ibid, 97). Singh finds his similarity with Hok in this situation: “Hok has dreams like mine, was probably also marked, and lived in imagination far from us, far from the island which he, like my father, like myself, had been shipwrecked” (ibid, 97). Most of the boys of Isabella island remain in different psychological state and want to be isolated from reality. They remain in an imaginative world where Hok is in ancient China, Eden is Lord Jim, Browne is in Africa, Deschampsneufs paints on the Laurentian slopes and Singh thinks of him as a leader of Aryan Warriors in central Asia. It proves that, the students of “Isabella Imperial” never really think that land of Isabella of their own. For them, this land lacks authenticity. It makes them feel the lack of belongingness and lead them to live in an imaginative world. This lack of belongingness is depicted when Singh visits Browne. He says, “it was more than an interior I had entered. I felt I had had a glimpse of the prison of the spirit in which Brown lived, to which he awakened everyday” (Naipaul, 150). It is from the similar prison Singh wants to run away. He says, “to abandon the shipwrecked island and all on it, and to seek my chieftainship in that real world... I was consciously holding myself back for the reality which

lay elsewhere” (Naipaul, 118). The most striking aspect of “Isabella Imperial” is that, most of the student thinks the purpose of their education is to get scholarship, leave Isabella and enter into the ‘real world’, “this meant studies abroad, a profession, independence, the past wiped out” (Naipaul, 148). Singh realizes the fact that, wiping the past does not make one superior and he says “how could anyone, wishing only to abolish himself, go beyond a statement of distress?” (Naipaul, 151). Ironically, this realization does not make him different from Eden and Bowne because he himself is the product of colonial education. All the time he refers to himself ‘picturesque Asiatic’ and nothing was up to the scale for him in Isabella, thus, he goes to London where to him, everything seems genuine and real initially. Within a short period of time, London seems ‘greater disorder’ to him. He finds that, all the people of London are living in “a conglomeration of private cells” (ibid, 18). After observing Lieni, a single mother, Singh says “we become what we see of ourselves in the eyes of others” (Naipaul, 20). As Lieni sees takes Singh as ‘the dandy, the extravagant colonial’ he starts playing the role of dandy happily. But this does not make him find the order he was looking for. Singh explains, the search for order and the ‘flowering extension of myself’ does not stop in Isabella.’ He continues searching this order in different place. He says, ‘from room to room I moved, from district to district” (Naipaul, 30). This sheer feelings of homelessness and alienation does not let him feel any satisfaction anywhere. He cannot control this feeling of utter rootlessness rather he was controlled by this feeling. He finds no solace although he continuously changes his landscapes. He says, “The crash was coming; but I could see this only when the crash had been abandoned for something more immediate and more reassuring. And the need for reassurance was constant” (Naipaul, 28). It indicates, what he constantly search is never found and it leaves him in utter despair. This psychological rootlessness cannot be overcome by changing physical landscapes and it makes him displaced from every physical landscape he came across. Singh starts to write a book where he

expresses all his pain by saying “To give expression to the restlessness, the overthrow in three continents of established social organizations, the unnatural bringing together of people who could achieve fulfillment only within the security of their own societies and the landscapes hymned by their ancestors, it was my hope to give partial expression to the restlessness which this great upheaval has brought about...but this work will now be written by me; I am too much a victim of that restlessness which was to have been my subject” (Naipaul, 32). This feeling of rootlessness is inherited from the history of colonization. His account is more vivid and it shows that physical and cultural dislocation of the people can lead to cultural and psychological rootlessness. Being alienated and displaced all his life, Singh ends up in “sanitarium”. He says, “We are people for one reason of another have withdrawn, from our respective countries, from city where we find ourselves, from our families...it comforts me to think that in this city alone there must be hundreds and thousands like ourselves” (Naipaul, 247). At the end of this novel, the feeling of alienation and displacement increases and Singh becomes the embodiment of all the people who do not belong to any of the culture.

Chapter Four

Displacement and Alienation in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

Post-colonial literature is a discourse that reflects on the differences between the colonized and decolonized periods of a country and its people. It depicts the problems caused by colonialism and shows the effects of colonialism in post-colonial discourse. Post-colonial literature does not deal only with economic and political consequences, it also deals with sociological and psychological issues. According to Theo D'haen "In the early 1990s the well-known post-colonial critic Homi K. Bhaba proposed that post-colonial literature might be the new world literature. For him the literature of displaced, the exiled, the uprooted, the marginalized, more accurately reflected the state of the present-day world than the postmodern literature produced by so called mainstream literatures in the West" (D'haen, 133). Bhaba's argument is very much applicable in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. This novel examines the plight of the Caribbean migrants who travelled to "mother country" England hoping that they will get a better life. My study will consider the predicament that these migrants went to their colonizers homeland where they felt despised and alienated against their immense hope of having a better future in England.

Black British novel is always a story about the suffering of immigrants in Britain from West Indians. Selvon expresses his anger and disappointment against the sufferings that the Caribbean immigrants encountered in England. It triggers a diasporic milieu and develops the possibility of forming a hybrid identity that bears the marks of both the ancestral and the metropolitan cultures. When the immigrants do not fit in any of the cultures, they face utter disillusionment and alienation and displacement. The identity hybridization in the diasporic space is illustrated in the novel *The Lonely Londoners*. According to Bhaba, "the name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along

the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative.” (Bhaba, 159). Cultural identity is a person’s essential attribute, if this attribute becomes hybridize, it creates an ambivalent identity of a person who is neither in one culture, nor in another. This hybrid identity makes that person alienated from both of the culture. In *The Lonely Londoners*, this hybridization occurs mostly in terms of language and identity among the immigrants. Samuel Selvon is the first Caribbean author who has written an entire text using his own literary dialect. S. Nasta claims that Selvon felt that “this idiom is so much a part of the people ...that you cannot separate a language from the experience” (Nasta, 4). From the very beginning of the novel, Selvon uses his creole language in such a way that people of his community can relate it as a language of their own because Selvon could not separate his language from his experience. This creolized language has played as a key factor of being subjugated by the white people of England. In the novel, Moses says “Nobody in London does really accept you. They tolerate you, yes but you can’t go in their house and eat or sit down or talk. It ain’t have no sort of family life for us here. (Selvon, 126). In an interview, Selvon says “I wrote a modified dialect which could be understood by European readers, yet retain the flavor and essence of Trinidadian speech” (Fabre “Interview” 66). Selvon has applied few techniques in term of language in order to depict the alienation felt by the black immigrants of London. For example, he uses lack of punctuation which reparents the immediacy of the character’s thoughts. In *The Lonely Londoners* Selvon says, “listen to this ballad what happened to Moses one summer night one splendid summer night with the sky brilliant with stars like in the tropics he was liming in green park when a English fellar come up to him and say you are just the man I am looking for who mw Moses say yes the man say come with me Moses went wondering what the test want and the test take him to a blonde who was standing up under a tree and talk a little so Moses couldn’t hear but Blondie shake her head then he take Moses to another one who was sitting on a bench and she say yes so the test come back to Moses and

want to pay Moses to go with the woman” (Selvon, 106-7). This technique of not using any punctuation shows the solitary thoughts of an isolated individual. The mode of address “listen to this ballad” shows the collective address of black immigrants and it alienates Moses because it shows the political representation of black individuals as collective experience. This mode of address always reminds Moses that they are not part of London, rather they all are Caribbean. This generalization makes him an alienated individual in a metropolitan city like London.

The fictional world created by Selvon describes the emergence of hybrid diasporic Black British community that exploits the immigrant experience in order to reinterpret the attributes of European metropolis. It also depicts the emotional turmoil of the immigrants who have experienced loneliness, anxiety, resentment in London due to their identity. Avta Brah argues, “diasporic journeys are essentially about settling down, about putting roots elsewhere” (Brah, 443). Therefore, Selvon’s immigrants seem to crave a secure and stable place to settle in, searching for a sense of belongings and home that fluctuates between reification of the Caribbean and the proximity of the metropolitan reality. Although these immigrants are subject to the London, yet they retain original values from their homeland. In Edward Said’s opinion, “they exemplify at best the condition of exile, the state of never being fully adjusted, always feeling outside the familiar world inhabited by the natives” (Said, 373). This perspective can be placed in terms of Selvon’s immigrants who negotiate their identity in the “liminal space” from where they are neither able to return to their homeland which is their real identity, nor can they fully access to the condition of new home. People of hybrid identity continuously search for home and thus, the protagonists of *The Lonely Londoners* are often in search of home “with the intention of settling once more and making the new locality as meaningful site for daily life” (Bonisch-Brednich and Trundle, 96). Being able to get a dwelling place or not, sometimes indicates what in Said’s discourse represents the

immigrant's position inside or outside the world inhabited by the natives (Said, 373). As a veteran in London, Moses acts as a self-appointed social worker for the Caribbean community helping the boys to "settle down, leading them to a minimum shelter, food and welfare assistance of some kind" (Roldan-Santiago, 121). His basement works as a transit and initiation institution from where "Moses send the boys to different addresses...scattering them all around London" (Selvon,3). This settlement in a new house represents powerful image for negotiating the affiliation to the new homeland and sometimes this procedure proves to be an intricate, as the hostile Landlords most of the time refuse to rent home to these black immigrants. This binary division of the British society on the outside or inside fault line which Said described, condition that forces the immigrants in the "in between" space of identity designation. Moses denounces the absurdity of racism which hinders black immigrants to acquire a dwelling and establishing roots in the metropolis: "Black, you see what you cause to happen yesterday? I went to look at a room in the Gate, and as soon as the lady see you, she says the room let already" (Selvon, 77). Because of these miserable experiences, the immigrants do not find home anywhere and becomes alienated from the metropolis. John Berger disconnects the concept of home from the physical space of the house by claiming that, "home has little to do with a building. The roof over the head, the four walls, have become, as it were, secular: independent from what is kept in the heart and is sacred" (Berger, 63). This indicates that home is inextricably linked to the sense of belonging to a cultural apace of identity comfort, which for Selvon's immigrants is often situated in-between the idea of original home that they take alone and try to reproduce, and that of the metropolitan home that they try to access through mimicry. Harris is a quick mimicker who sees himself as "some Englishman, bowler and umbrella, and briefcase tuck under the arm, with the times fold out in the pocket so the name would show" (Selvon, 103) is dancing with his "very special guest", conspicuously refuting any connection to the homeland. When Tanty

greet him enthusiastically, Haris pretends as if he does not know her. Not only that, he even refused to dance with Tanty. It shows the liminal position of male immigrants in relation to both homeland and adoptive land, where Haris is emblematic to a mimic man who is a product of hybrid identity. The dance floor thus shows a cultural ambivalence where a black immigrant refuses another black woman to dance together and tries to mimic the metropolitan culture. This cultural tension is caused by the immigrant's hybrid identity and like Fanon, Harris may feel a psychological burden of his blackness and thus masks him as a white man. This can be explained by Frantz Fanon: "I wished to be acknowledged not as black but as white...loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man. I am a white man. Her love takes me on the noble road that leads to total realization... I marry white culture, white beauty, white whiteness. When my restless hands care those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine" (Fanon, 63). This statement parallels with Harris, where having a white girlfriend, having a white dance partner makes him feel superior. Harris tries to mimic the metropolitan culture which makes him feel he is white too.

Throughout the novel, the protagonist Moses narrates different characters and different personalities. All these people are immigrants from different Caribbean countries including Trinidad, Grenada, Barbados, Jamaica and Antigua. The most-captivating thing about these immigrants is all of them are from different countries, similar yet different backgrounds. People of England do not bother to differentiate all these different nationalities, however, Moses cares to differentiate between different cultures and nationalities of the West-Indies by saying "All I wish I was like all you Jamaican, Moses say, I can't save a cent out of my pay" (Selvon, 26). This expression challenges the Western gaze that imagines the West Indies as a whole. This generalization of West-Indian nationality is mocked in the novel when a reporter asks Moses about the condition of Jamaica: "Now Moses don't know a damn

thing about Jamaica-Moses come from Trinidad, which is a thousand miles from Jamaica, but the English people believe that everybody who comes from the West Indies comes from Jamaica” (Selvon, 28). Narrator’s mocking about the Western reification of West-Indian nations indicates that there is diversity in the West-Indies too. This misconception goes parallel with the seminal post-colonial author Edward W. Said. In an interview, Said says, “All representation is misrepresentation of one sort or another, but I argue in *Orientalism* that the interests at work in the representation of the Orient by the West were those of imperial control and were the prerogatives of power. I tried to show that the invasion of the Orient beginning with Napoleon at the end of the nineteenth century but continuing as Britain and French spread into the Orient, colored and indeed shaped the representation (Viswanath, 237-238). Selvon’s novel *The Lonely Londoners* can be explained with Said’s second stage of Orientalism where Said refers the Anglo-French Orientalism. It corresponds to the end of 18th century where Orientalism becomes scientific study. This second stage of Orientalism criticizes the Western study about the Orient which is not based on experience rather than scientific that derives from reading books about the Orient or information gathered from the museum. This second stage of Orientalism creates a racial segregation between the West and Orient. This racial segregation is depicted in *The Lonely Londoners* through a naïve soliloquy by Galahad. When he wants to talk to a white child, his mother acts like she is embarrassed because she was surrounded by white people. Galahad says, “if they was alone, she might have talked a little, and ask Galahad what part of the world he come from, but instead she pulled the child alone and she look at Galahad and give a sickly sort of smile, and the old Galahad, knowing how it is, smile back and walk on” (Selvon, 88). After that, Galahad looks at his body and talks to the color of his skin as if his skin color is a person. He says, “Colour, is you that causing all this, you know... I ain’t do anything to infuriate the people and them, is you!... Is not we the people don’t like the colour Black?” (Selvon, 88-89). This racial

segregation is well explained by Frantz Fanon in his famous text *Black Skin, White Mask*, where he says, “The torturer is the black man, Satan is black, one talks of shadows, when one is dirty one is black-whether one is thinking of physical dirtiness or of moral dirtiness... Blackness, darkness, shadow, shades, night, the labyrinths of the earth, abysmal depths, blacken someone’s reputation; and, on the other side, the bright look of innocence, the white dove of peace, magical, heavenly light. A magnificent blond child-how much peace there is in that phrase, how much joy, and above all how much hope! There is no comparison with a magnificent black child...” (Fanon, 189). This inequality is causing years after years and this racial discrimination created by the West causes disillusionment among the colored people. Galahad is one of the representatives who becomes the victim of color in his ‘mother country’ London. In Fanon’s book *Black Skin, White mask*, there is a scene which is very similar to the “Galahad with a child and mother scene.” Homi K. Bhaba paraphrases this scene in his “The Other Question”:

“On one occasion a white girl fixes Fanon in a look and word as she turns to identify with her mother. It is a scene which echoes endlessly through his essay *The Fact of Blackness*: ‘Look, a Negro... Mamma, see the Negro! I’m frightened. Frightened. Frightened.’ ‘What else could it be for me’, Fanon concludes, ‘but an amputation, an excision, a hemorrhage that spattered my whole body with black blood’...Such dramas are enacted in every day in colonial societies, says Fanon, employing a theatrical metaphor-the scene- which emphasizes the visible-the seen...I each of them the subject turns around the pivot of the ‘stereotype’ to return to a point of total identification. The girl’s gaze returns to her mother in her recognition and disavowal of the Negroid type; the black child turns away from himself, his race, in his total identification with the positivity of whiteness which is at once colour and no colour. In the act of disavowal and fixation is returned to the narcissism of the imaginary and its identification of an ideal ego that is white and whole” (Bhaba, 45-

46). Bhaba points out that this “total identification” of a whole race is problematic. In *The Lonely Londoners*, not only Galahad, but also the other members of the Windrush generation are identified as a whole race, the Jamaican although most of the characters of this novel belong to different backgrounds. Although, Moses, the protagonist of the novel lives in London for a long time, he is also considered as alien to the English culture and he is also the victim of this “total identification” process by the English people. Although he is from Trinidad, he was asked about Jamaica. The most unfortunate thing about the immigrants of *The Lonely Londoners* is that, their experience of all adversities is not just being immigrants, rather being black. The issue of color is used as a weapon to subjugate the black immigrants in this novel. As Fanon says, “It is nothing more than the unreasoning hatred of one race for another, the contempt of the stronger and richer peoples for those whom they consider inferior to themselves and the bitter resentment of those who are kept in subjection and are so frequently insulted” (Fanon, 118). Even the white mother in *The Lonely Londoners* is aware of the fact that this color discrimination is pointless, yet she does not talk much with Galahad because it may be a crime in the eyes of white people. Although, there is no logic behind this racial discrimination, most of the immigrants gradually accept and internalize this racial discrimination. Fanon says, “The black man among his own in the twentieth century does not know at what moment his inferiority comes into being through the other. [...] But I was satisfied with an intellectual understanding of these differences. It was not really dramatic. And then... And then the occasion arose when I had to meet the white man’s eyes. An unfamiliar weight burdened me. The real world challenged my claims. In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness (Fanon, 110). This is a psychological state which is faced by Galahad when the mother of the child gives a

“sickly smile”. He does nothing but smile back, and his consciousness is taken over by the unfamiliar burden of white people.

If we look at the social ladder, first comes white man, then white women, after that black men and lastly black women. In order to climb the social ladder, some black immigrants of *The Lonely Londoners* try to be connected with the white woman. Harris uses proper English and organizes events for “distinguished gentleman”, Danial on the other hand tries to raise his standard by hanging with white woman in restaurants and different cultural activities. Daniel says, ““I want them to feel good that we coloured fellars could take them to these places, Danial say, ‘and we could appreciate even if they can’t’” (Selvon, 59). The condition of black women is even worse in London because they belong to the lowest place of the social ladder. Gayatri Spivak in her article “Can the Subaltern Speak?” says, “If, in the contest of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in the shadow” (Spivak, 2203). Thus, a West-Indian woman is triple oppressed through gender, class and ethnic discrimination at the same time. This situation parallels with *Orientalism* where feminine qualities are described as “weak”, “subordinate”, “irrational” “ineligible to represent herself” and so on. According to Valerie Kennedy, “... Said’s diagnosis of the West’s view of the Orient as something both desired and feared, as something relatively unfamiliar and therefore both attractive because exotic, and dangerous and repulsive because unknown and threatening, parallels the conventionally stereotyped view of women. It also parallels the oscillation in the Western stereotype of the Orient which divide masculine and feminine sides. The male Oriental becomes the despotic male, to be both feared and despised, while the female becomes the exotic, sensual, penetrable odalisque, or houri, to be desired and, arguably, also despised” (Kennedy, 40).

The lack of agency of women is prominent in Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners*. Women do not play much of a role towards the storyline. Throughout the novel, women are dominated

and objectified by the male characters. For example, even after marrying, Cap made his new wife go to work to allow him sleep all day so that he can go out at night to find other women after his wife fell asleep. Selvon says, “Cap carrying on the same sort of life like when he was single.” (Selvon,44). Cap continue to chase different women even after getting married. Selvon says, “When the train reach Notting Hill Gatte, Cap get off and went to hustle women as usual” (Selvon, 36). Black women are subjugated by even the black men. Black men are also subject to racial discrimination. This racial segregation makes the immigrants alienated from England. Being disappointed with the behavior of white mother Galahad thinks his misfortune is caused by the color black his frustrations of being isolated and alienated is depicted through this question: “...why the hell you can’t be blue, or red or green, if you can’t be white?” (selvon,88). He feels displaced in London when he catches a pigeon to survive in the park. He tries to catch a pigeon in the park to eat and he feels “...in this country, people prefer to see man starve that a cat and dog want something to eat” (Selvon, 107). This plight of the immigrants is explained by Moses by saying, “work hard like hell to get these days” (Selvon, 110). Moses gets homesick and wants to get back in Trinidad, “...Sometimes I look back on the years I spend in Brit’n, looking at things in general life really hard for the boys in London. This is a lonely miserable city, if it was that we didn’t get together now and then to talk about things back home, we would suffer like hell. Here is not like a home” (selvon, 114). This displacement of Moses is the result of ill-treatment of White people against the Black. Life in a London is nothing more than a perpetual struggle for the immigrants for sheer survival. Moses is also an ambivalent and utterly hybrid character. An ambivalent relation to home also informs Moses’ existence, whose constant wavering between the homeland and the metropolitan life fluctuates in accordance with the flow of seasons: “Every year he vow to go back to Trinidad, but after the winter gone and birds sings and trees begin to put on leaves again, and flowers come and then the old sun shining, is as if

life starts all over again” (Selvon, 137). It is this rootlessness that disturbs Moses, this existence “in-between the designations of identity” (Bhaba, 5), where he sometimes acts as an insider of the metropolitan culture, and sometimes he becomes extremely homesick and acts as an insider of Trinidadian culture. His utterly hybrid character is defined by, “a state of turmoil and change, where stress and pulls complete, where dialect is always present, where struggles are constant, where one sleeps with his boots on. This is why Moses constantly shifts his ideas, his strategies” (Roldan-Santiago, 130). At one point Moses repudiates the metropolitan lifestyle and its cultural manifestation by saying to the boys that he “don’t want no ballet and opera and symphony” (Selvon, 125), and in another point he yearns for the idyllic landscape of Trinidad which is in the migrant’s nostalgic reminiscence epitomizes paradise. Moses says, “Boys, you know what I want to do? I want to go back to Trinidad and lay down in the sun and dig my toes, and eat fish broth, and all day I sleeping under a tree. I go and live...where Jesus have a rumshop in paradise” (Selvon, 125). When the summer comes, Moses becomes surprised to see how the umbilical connection of the immigrants to their homeland is dissolves. Moses says, “what it is a city have that you get so much to like it you wouldn’t leave it for anywhere else?” (Selvon, 134). Therefore, the question where is home agonizes Moses that makes him alienated in the metropolitan culture. Even though he wants to go back to his origin, he is aware of the fact that it is not possible for him to re-inhabit in his own culture. John Berger contends, “every migrant knows in his heart of hearts that it is impossible to return. Even if he is physically able to return, he does not truly return, because he himself has been so deeply changed by his emigration” (Berger, 67). Moses appears at the end of the novel as an immigrant who knows everything and everybody in London, who “see some sort of profound realization in his life, as if all that happened to him was experience that made him a better man” (Selvon, 138). He is therefore, stuck between two homes, and the end of the narrative he finds him in a standstill position, “the thoughts so

heavy like he unable to move his body” (selvon, 139). This standstill situation confirms his inexorable hybrid situation which is one of the main reasons of alienation and displacement.

The theme of memory also comes strongly to the fore which underlines the stark contrast between the immigrant’s present and past. This strong sense of memory also alienates the immigrants from their mother country because they idealize their past and deep inside these immigrants have a strong desire to go back to their homeland. However, they are conscious about the fact that it is not easy to get a better life going back to their homeland because they left Caribbean life with the reality of rural poverty that provided the impetus for many to leave Caribbean behind. Yet, Moses lapses into an idealized nostalgic reverie by saying “I would get a old house and have some cattle and goat, and all day long sit down in the grass in the sun, and hit a good corn cuckoo and callaloo now and then” (Selvon, 125). By this statement, Moses also shows his utter disappointment towards the White people’s attitude on Galahad when he tries to kill a pigeon. In pale, grim London, a pigeon’s life is more significant than a starving black immigrant. He wants to go back to his homeland where he won’t be charged for hitting cuckoo. Moses is led by his physical displacement from his native land and his psychological alienation from his adopted city thus he has created an ‘imaginary homeland’, a Caribbean of the mind, which appropriates Salman Rushdie’s perspective on the migrant experience (Rushdie, 1981, p.10). Although Moses tries to idealize his homeland and shows a strong desire to go back to Caribbean, Galahad on the contrary, in a moment of role-reversal, becomes a hard-headed realist. In response to Moses’s deep desire to go back to Caribbean, Galahad says, “It ain’t have no prospects back home, boy” (Selvon, 125). Nevertheless, the significance of memory is prominent in most of the characters of the novel and Moses is taken over by his strong sense of memory which made him physically displaced from his homeland and alienated from his “mother country.” He describes London by saying, “this is a lonely miserable city, if it was that we didn’t get

together now and then to talk about things back home, we would suffer like hell” (Selvon, 126). Unfortunately, this old talk with his fellow immigrants cannot stop Moses of being alienated from the city of London. Unfortunately, the overall mood becomes utterly despairing and Moses shows deep insight into the pain of displacement all the character feels, shifting between dialect voice and idiomatic expression to more heightened diction and elevated lyricism: “Under the kiff-kiff laughter, behind the ballad and the episode, the what-happening, the summer-is-hearts, he could see a great aimless, a great restless, swaying movement that leaving you standing in the same spot. As if a forlorn shadow of doom falls on all the spades in the country” (Selvon, 138-9).

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Displacement and alienation are vibrant issues in the realm of post-colonial literature for its vast range of consequences on the post-colonial human psyche. Post-colonial displacement is broadly related to the history of colonization which is compartmentalized by Frantz Fanon which indicates that there is always two layers of people where one group remains superior over another. This inequality creates two types of displacement among the people who become subjugated by one particular group: physical displacement and psychological. Post-colonial writers focus both stages in their writing to portray the struggle of post-colonial subject. This physical or territorial displacement forces the people to move to alien land and it results psychological alienation. This displacement becomes a barrier in one's identity formation. In order to show the physical and psychological displacement in both of the novel, *The Lonely Londoners* and *The Mimic Men*, I have developed a theoretical platform of analysis that builds on several concept of the post-colonial critical theory such as hybridity and third space by Homi K. Bhaba. His theory of hybridity and mimicry shows how colonialism affect the identity of the people even in the post-colonial era. Homi Bhaba thus indicates, identities are "ever changing and impossible to fix" (Bhaba,73). Therefore, post-colonial subjects engage in an ongoing process of identity negotiation and reconfiguration, challenging the policy of exclusion developed on the fault line established between the metropolitan center and the colonial periphery. Edward Said's *Orientalism* is another important text that I have employed in order to demonstrate the futility of ideological separation of social group what Edward Said has described, the binary of 'us' and 'them'.

The construction of hybrid identity, which is the main trope employed in both of the novels is explicitly politicized because both of the novel operates a binary of the metropolitan

culture vs immigrant subjectivity, as an expression of the central and periphery division. Both the novel intends to promote identity hybridization as viable strategy of cultural co-habitation in a metropolitan topography pervaded by pluralism. The authors of both of the novel have depicted the complexity of contemporary multi-cultural affiliation and the increased physical and social mobility of diasporic subjects which contribute to develop a hybrid identity in the liminal space that emerges from the contact of metropolitan and original cultures. This identity hybridization occurred among the black immigrants of *The Lonely Londoners* who were not socially privileged, on the contrary the protagonist of the novel *The Mimic Men* could not get rid of this hybridization process although he was socially privileged. Both of the novel represents Bhaba's "cultural negotiation" where the oppressor's culture was not just imposed over the oppressed rather the colonized at some point has willingly adopted the colonizer's culture. For example, Harris adopts the original language of England and Ranjeet Kripal Singh has changed his name to Ralph Singh. The intricate connection between nation, nationhood and the concept of home and homelessness and exile are analyzed through Ralph who stands at the intersection of these terms. Ralph, as a descendant of the indentureship system, feels homeless by birth. As a representative of his people, Ralph is devoid of history from which he can take strength, however, his search for home, neither in the Isabella nor London proves successful. He abandons his "little bastard world" (Naipaul, 131), "the slave island" (ibid,262). Although he tries to find order in the West, he was stuck in a greater chaos. Being shipwrecked in an alien territory, he becomes the embodiment of suffering from rootlessness and makes one question, the notion of nation and home. The idea of nation is merely a myth in Isabella island where the people are not united with nationalistic spirit, thus the idea of home becomes defunct. What remains left as a member of the island is life of agony and painful experience in pursuit of order. The search for home ends up in utter disappointment and bareness when the formerly colonized individual understands that there is

no home and he is doomed to be exiled. Ralph thus denies the existence of home and feels utterly displaced. In order to heal his artificial self, he adopts language as his ideological tool to write about his nomadic experience of being exiled. He wants to get rid of this artificial self through writing a book because he feels that only writing uncurtains a man to himself who comes to harsh realization that he has been captured in his own prison and only writing grows into a healing strategy to the anguished shipwrecked man. Unfortunately, his writing could not heal his cramped identity and the product of his writing creates the product of ambivalent mimic individual who is neither here, nor there.

My observation about both of the novel shows that both authors attempt to challenge the boundaries of geographical, cultural and linguistic representation of post-colonial diasporic identity. For the Trinidadian immigrants of the *The Lonely Londoners* the skin color represents a critical signifier of difference that in some cases cannot be overcome through successful cultural mimicry. Harris for instance wanted to act like a white through his English language, but unfortunately failed. Galahad continuously questions his skin tone whether it is causing all the troubles or not. They are the representative of all colonial mimic men who do not belong to any of the culture in spite of having successful cultural mimicry. Both of the novel depict that the decolonized people are still physically colonized and they tend to perform mimicry. This act of mimicry becomes the ultimate failure for the characters of both of the novel which make them utterly rootless and it causes displacement and alienation among the characters. Considering the character Ralph Singh, he comes from a privileged background, yet he questions his identity throughout the novel. Although he tries to trace his actual identity through writing, but it turns out to be nothing but a mimic man.

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