

## Chapter I

### Mimicry and Hybridity

#### Mimicry

Mimicry is a notion that has played an important role in both feminist and postcolonial theories in recent years. The term was initially used in biology to refer to the close external resemblance which one living creature bears to another, or to some inanimate object. Clearly, the central usefulness of the concept involves the subversive potential contained in the forced and half-hearted adoption of style or the conventions of the dominant authority whether national, cultural, or gender-political. The concept also carries with it some of the associations of 'poking fun'—a sort of body language equivalent of parody.

*The World Book Encyclopedia* defines mimicry as:

Mimicry is the condition, in which one living organism closely resembles, or mimics, its surroundings or another animal or plant. It is usually the result of similar colour or construction. Mimicry may enable the organism to protect itself in its struggle for existence. (478)

Similarly, *The New Columbia Encyclopedia*, defines mimicry stressing its definition on biology as:

Mimicry, in biology, the advantageous resemblance of one species to another, often unrelated, species or to a feature of its own environment. (when the later results from pigmentation it is classed as PROTECTIVE COLORATION) Mimicry serves either to protect the mimic from its predators, and when the model is inedible or dangerous, or to deceive its prey (e.g. certain ant-eating spiders that themselves resemble ants). Mimicry occurs in both plants and animals, but is most

prevalent among insects, particularly butterflies and moths. The first scientific studies on the subjects were published by English naturalists H.W. Bates (1862) and A.R. Wallace (1865). The Batesian theory is based on operation of natural SELECTION: if, say, a harmless snake acquires a deceptive resemblance to a poisonous variety it is then more likely to escape its predators and thus to survive and propagate, producing offspring with the same resemblance of the viceroy butterfly to the monarch butterfly, which is repugnant to birds: harmless nettles that resemble stinging nettles: and the many fishes, crabs, and slugs of the Sargasso Sea that resemble the floating seaweed masses they inhabit. (1782)

*The Dictionary of Biological Sciences* defines mimicry as "the assumption of appearance of one organism by another" (325).

Mimicry has been one of the major terms in literature in postcolonial studies. Comparatively non western subject relates it to the imitation of so-called high and western culture. The people who follow the culture of other are caught up in a state of double articulation of their identity. In his "Mimicry and Man: the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," Homi K. Bhabha starts his discussion of mimicry with a quotation from Jacques Lacan: "[T]he effect of mimicry is camouflage" (86). He further moves on to suggest that this is only the beginning:

The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is thus the sign of double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which "appropriates" the other as it

visualizes power, Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both “normalized” knowledge and disciplinary powers. (85)

From this perspective, it will be seen that mimicry is not just a weapon of the oppressed but also of the oppressor, Jenny Sharpe has drawn attention to this double edged aspect of colonial mimicry, suggesting that the mimic man is the contradictory figure who simultaneously reinforces colonial authority and disturbs it (99). Bhabha’s discussion of mimicry is interesting specially for the students of literature: it takes in inevitably V.S. Naipaul’s *The Mimic Men* and also a literary character, Decund in Conrad’s *Nustromo*. The fact how Bhabha draws the conclusion from these novelists is discussed in chapter II.

Mimicry is often discussed and analyzed in relation to such theoretical terms as “Masquerade” and Bakhtinian “Assimilation.” The following discussion of Masquerade discloses the relation and difference it has with mimicry. The concept of Masquerade recently used in Feminist and postcolonial theories consists of a theorizing about the behavior of successful intellectual women who adopted a masquerade of exaggerated feminine flirteosness when interaction with men. Women thus successful in traditionally male roles used womanliness as a mask or masquerade to hide the possession of masculinity and to deflect the negative reactions that would stem from it. Thus the term mimicry has a relation to this gender and female related adoption of the other culture and roles. Yet it is significantly different from that also as it is related to the colonial sense of the adoption of the higher culture. The next term, assimilation in Bakhtin’s “Theory of Dialogue,” is a process whereby an

individual's viewpoint or the ideology is or is not at odds with those of the interlocutor. The concept can be seen as comparable in certain ways to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief" although Bakhtin seems to move more in the direction of the adoption of the belief. These ideas are pertaining to Bhabha's ideas of mimicry too, since he also express similar openions.

In his *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* Boehmar talks about mimicry as imperfect copying as:

Once injected into the new environment, European cultural references could produce a very different complex of meanings from what had originally been intended. From the first days of colonization began the mis-translation or imperfect copying of cultural signifiers which forms a germinal impulse in postcolonial rewritings of colonial experience.

(69)

Mimicry is also the tricky weapon of anti-colonial civility, an ambivalent mixture of defence and disobedience. The native subject often appears to observe the political and semantic imperatives of colonial discourse. But at the same time, she systematically misrepresents the foundational assumptions of this discourse by articulating it. In effect, then, mimicry inheres in the necessary and multiple acts of translation which oversees the passage from colonial vocabulary to its anti-colonial usage. In other words, mimicry inaugurates the process of anti-colonial self-differentiation through the logic of inappropriate appropriation. In this sense, Leela Gandhi views:

Mimicry has become the new slogan of postcolonial literary analysis.

The emerging consensus of postcolonial literary practice has it that the most radical anti-colonial writers are "mimic men", whose generic and

orthodox boundaries of "literariness". Accordingly, the paradigmatic moment of anti-colonial counter-textuality is seen to be with the first indecorous mixing of western genres with local content. By this reasoning, anti-colonial texts become political when, for instance, the formal shape of the European novel is moulded to indigenous realities, or when the measured sound of English is accented through an unrecognizable babel of native voices. (150)

Furthermore, while imitating the colonized, the colonizers do not imitate exactly the same to their masters. As Boehmer says, "Mimickers reflected back to colonizer a distorted image of his world: they undercut his categories of perception" (172-73). The colonized mimic the colonizer because they think colonizers are superior to them. In other words, the colonized mimic the colonizer by adopting colonizer's culture, language and values. Mimicking the colonizer, the colonized become, as Bhabha says, "almost the same but not quite" (qtd. in *Key Concepts* 140). This is to say that the mimic men never become pure white men and what they mimic appears also as mockery or parody. For example, Ashcroft et al. write of the "copying of the colonizing culture, behavior, manners and values by the colonized consists both of mockery and a certain 'menace,' so that mimicry is as at once resemble and menaces" (*Key Concepts* 140). The colonized want to acquire the superior position of the colonizer through mimicry. However, they are able to represent the colonizer partially as described by Bhabha:

The menaces of mimicry in its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority. And it is a double vision that is a result of what I've described as the partial representation/recognition of the colonial object. (88)

He uses "mimicry" to describe the colonized as a mimic man is not the same person as the colonizer though he wants to be so by wearing a "mask" to imitate the colonizer. Such a mimicry of the colonizer places the colonized in ambivalent, hybrid space or in-betweeness".

### Hybridity

Hybridity in a recent postcolonial study of race and ethnicity that refers to the newly composed, mixed or contradictory identities resulting from in-migration, exile and migrancy. The word, hybridity, was initially used as still is, to describe the practice of producing a new but hybrid form cross—animal breeding. Later, according to Bakhtin, it is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of single utterance: an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoche, by social differentiation or by some other factor (258). The term now has been extended to include the mixture of two cultures in a cultural encounter zone.

The second edition of *Webster's New International Dictionary* defines hybridity as:

The offspring of the union of a male of one race, variety, species genus, etc. with the female of another, a crossbred animal or plant. Generally, the more closely related the parent forms the more easily hybrids are produced, and the more likely they are to be capable of reproduction. Those between distinct species are distinguished by some as true hybrids, and were formerly considered to be infertile, as in the well known to be fertile either among themselves or with the parents forms. Hybrids may show various combinations of characters of two parents, or exhibit new characters or reversion to ancestral ones.

Sometimes they resemble one parent but contain in latent condition characters of the other. Artificial hybrids are obtained among plants by cross-pollinating the flowers of distinct species. By many plant and animal breeders the term hybrid is limited to cross between races or varieties of the same species. In genetics, however, the term hybrid is commonly applied to any offspring of parents of different genetic makeup. (1218)

Similarly, *The New Columbia Encyclopedia* defines hybridity as:

A term applied by plant and animal breeders to the offspring of a cross between two different subspecies or species, and by geneticists to the offspring of parents differing in any genetic characteristic (See GENETICS). Hybridization is often used in agriculture to obtain greater vigor or growth (heterosis): the MULE, the hybrid steer, and hybrid corn are examples. Hybrid vigor is achieved by crossing two inbred strains (see BREEDING). The first generation shows greatly increased vigor and a better yielding primarily because many genes for recessive, often deleterious, traits from one parents are masked by corresponding dominant genes in the other plant. (1298)

Boehmer in his *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* sees hybridity in post-independence writers. He says, “Post-independence writers again relied on hybridity – that is the blending of different cultural influences, an upfront and active syncretism – to unsettle the inheritance of Europe” (203). Again while talking about indigeneous writers of West Indies he finds their energies on revising the language, narrative styles, and historical representations of the colonialist or invader. Their aim is not to replace white with black rather as he says:

. . . [I]t is to accentuate hybridity: to write Indigenous stories using so-called white forms' like the novel: to weave constantly and creatively between what is native, and the culture of invader: to cross registers and undermine mixed points of view: to use what Aborigines call gammon or bullshitting, a mixed fantasy and humour. (230)

Ahmad in his "The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality" talks about two forms of hybridity. He says:

The idea of hybridity-which presents itself as a critique of essentialism, partakes of a hybridity of a carnivalesque collapse and play of identities, and comes under a great many names, takes essentially two form: cultural hybridity and what one might call philosophical and even political hybridity. (286)

He further says:

The basic idea that informs the notion of cultural hybridity is in itself simple enough, namely the traffic among modern cultures is now so brisk that one can hardly speak of discrete national cultures that are not fundamentally transformed by the traffic. (286)

Most postcolonial writing has concerned itself with the hybridized nature of postcolonial culture as a strength rather than a weakness. Such writing focuses on the fact that the transaction of the postcolonial world is not a one-way process in which oppression obliterates the oppressed or the colonizer silences the colonized in absolute terms. In practice it rather stresses the mutuality of the process. It lays emphasis on the survival even under the most potent oppression of the distinctive aspects of the culture of the oppressed, and shows how these become an integral part of the new formations which arise from the clash of cultural characteristic of imperialism.



Ashcroft et al. see hybridity in postcolonial societies as willing cultural suppression.

Hybridity occurs in postcolonial societies both as a result of conscious moments of cultural suppression, as when the colonial power invades to consolidate political and economic control, or when settlers – invades disposes indigenous people and force them to "assimilate" to a new social patterns. It may also occur in late periods when patterns of immigration form metropolitan societies and form other imperial areas of influence continue to produce complex cultural polimpsests with the postcolonialized world. (Colonial and Post colonial Reader 183)

The notion of "in-between-ness" conjured up by the term "hybridity" is further elaborated through the accompanying concept of "diaspora". It should be emphasized that the notion of "diaspora" tends to lose some of its historical and material edge within postcolonial theory. Although "diaspora" evokes the specific traumas of human displacement – whether of the Jews or of Africans scattered in the service of slavery and indentures – postcolonialism is generally concerned with the idea of cultural dislocation contained within this term. While "diaspora" is sometimes used interchangeably with "migration", it is generally involved as a theoretical device for the interrogation of ethnic identity and cultural nationalism. Its value, much like that of its companion term "hybridity", inheres, as Paul Glory points out, in the elucidation of those processes of "cultural mutation and restless (dis)continuity that exceed radical discourse and avoid capture by its agents" (2). Accordingly, diasporic thought betrays its poststructuralist origins by contesting all chains to stability of meaning and identity. In its postcolonial incarnation, such thought reviews the colonial encounter for its disruption of native/domestic space.

Bhabha sees hybridity as productivity of colonial power:

Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, it shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and original identity of authority. Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. (112)

He further says:

To grasp the ambivalence of hybridity, it must be distinguished from an inversion that would suggest that the originary, is really, only an "effect". Hybridity has no such perspective of depth or truth to provide: it is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures, or the two scenes of the book, in a dialectical play of "recognition". The displacement from symbol to sign creates a crisis for any concept of authority based on a system of recognition: colonial specularly, doubly inscribed, does not produce or mirror whereas the self apprehends itself; it is always the split screen of self and its doubling, the hybrid. (113-14)

Postcolonial critics have been influenced by the issues of hybridity, creolization, in-betweenness. They argue that each culture that of colonizer and colonized loses its identity in a colonial society. And there emerges a new culture that is neither purely colonized nor purely that of colonizer's European culture. Thomas B. Macaulay presented such a new culture in his treatise "Minute on Indian

Education” at British Parliament on Feb.2 1825. He strongly supported giving a European education to Indians to create a intermediate class of people by refining and training native people and making them civilized. His treatise played an important role in bringing about a shift in colonial education policy. He argues that by training certain Indian elites in English or western education, language and culture, the British rulers would be able to create an “intermediate” class of people who would be distinguished from the general mass of people, of native population by the help of their ability of mimic or mimicking colonizers. By intermediate people, he means “... a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (61). He felt that such class of people would function as interpreters between the British and the millions of Indian they ruled. This is to say that these “intermediate” class of people would be brown in terms of their skin colour only: in terms of their cultural training, manners, languages, mode of speech and accent they would be “almost” white. He proposed the “construction” of these kinds of people because he thought that few hundred thousand British subjects would be able to rule and regulate millions of native Indian peoples. The idea was that it was with the help of such intermediate group of natives-who would be culturally "superior" than the native though inferior to British models that they mimed-that the British colonial subjects would rule India. The product of this "in-between" class, "white buy not quite", was often a deliberate feature of colonial practice. These people would constitute a class who would in fact protect British interests and help them rule a vast and potentially unruly land.

The empire would not have survived as long as it did without the early co-operation of colonized elites. Frantz Fanon, a key theorist of anti-imperial nationalism, observed that the colonized man adopted the European models of life and

behavior because they thought those models superior to the native ones. European models were believed to bring income, status, and the possibility of sharing power. Like Macaulay, he also developed his idea of "comprader" class or elite who exchanged rules with the white colonial dominating class without engaging in any racial restructuring of society: and argued that these compradors were 'masked' by their partnership with the value of the white colonial powers. Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks* studies how colonial authority works by inviting black subjects to mime white culture. In a more similar to Bhabha, Fanon argues that colonial culture constructs a class of people who have black skin but become symbolically white by adopting mask of the colonizer for example he write:

Every colonized people, in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality, finds itself face to face with the language of civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes white as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (18)

In other words, as Fanon argues, colonized people suffer from "inferiority complex"—the feeling of the native that they lack something which the westerners have—the civilization—when they are away from the colonizers. They think that when they come in contact with civilizing nation, they improve their jungle status. By he culture of the mother country, he means that the culture of the colonizer which the colonized mime. In the next chapter, I will see Mimicry from Bhabha's view.

## Chapter II

### Homi K. Bhabha's Ideas on Mimicry

Homi K. Bhabha is best remembered for his theory of mimicry. He considers that "discourse of post-Enlightenment English colonialism often speaks in a tongue that is forked", which is not necessarily false. For the heroic ideal of the enlightening mission, as Lord Rosebery has discussed, produces a text rich in the traditions of irony, mimicry, and repetition. In this comic turn form the high ideals of the colonial imagination to its low mimetic effect, mimicry emerges as one of the most "elusive and effective" strategies of colonial power and knowledge. The writers like Naipaul and Rushdie take an ambivalent position to describe and write about the places they represent in the fictional discourse. Emphasizing this point, Bhabha says:

Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce is slippage, its excess, its difference. The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus the sign of double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which "appropriates" the other and visualizes power.

The effect of mimicry results in hybridity. Hybridity reverses the formal process of disavowal so that the violent dislocation of the act of a colonialization becomes the conditionality of colonial discourse. The presence of colonial authority is no longer immediately visible; its discriminatory identifications no longer have their authoritative reference to their culture's cannibalism or that people's perfidy. As an

articulation of displacement and dislocation, it is now possible to identify "the cultural" as a disposal of power, a negative transparency that comes to be agonistically constructed on the boundary between frame of reference/frame of mind. It is crucial to remember that the colonial construct the extent to which it is structured around the ambivalence of splitting, denial, repetition – strategies of defense that mobilize culture as an open textured, war like strategy whose aim is rather a continued agony than a total disappearance of the pre-existing culture. Bhabha also says that the effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is profound and disturbing. He further goes to the point that there is an effect of mockery. Regarding these concepts, he further writes:

It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the reforming civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double, that my instances of colonial imitation come. What they all share is a discursive process by which the excess or slippage produced by the ambivalence of mimicry (almost the same, but not quite) doesn't merely "rupture" the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a "partial" presence.

By "partial" he means both "incomplete" and "virtual." It is as if the very emergence of the "colonial" is dependent for its representation upon some strategic limitation of prohibition within the authoritative discourse itself. The success of colonial mimicry by the colonized nations rests on a explosive of inappropriate objects that ensure its strategic failure, so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace. Bhabha provides, concerning these issues, example from a discussion between one of the earliest Indian catechist, Anund Messeh and native Indian people who were imitating

the colonialist's religion. The incident took place outside Delhi in the first week of May 1817. There were about five hundred people possessing some printed and some written Bible. Messeh approached an elderly looking man asked what the book was. The answer was – the book of God. He looked the book and found it to be the Gospel of the Lord which was translated into Hindi language. As the discussion went on it is disclosed that the book was as they said given them by God's Angel, who was actually a Pundit. Anund is answer said that these books belonged to European Sahibs and they translated into their language, for their use. The man didn't accept the truth for the ground the thought the Europeans eat flesh.

Anund called these people to be blessed in a Christian Padre where the priest would teach them do the things according to the Christian rituals. He explained them the nature of the scarment and Baptism. In answer to which they replied, "We are willing to be baptized, but we will never take the scarment. To all the other customs of Christians we are willing to confirm, but not the scarment, because the Europeans eat cow's flesh, and this will never do for us" (qtd. in Bhabha 104).

Read as a masque of mimicry, Anund Messeh's tale emerges as a question of colonial authority, an agonistic space. To the extent to which discourse is a form of defensive warfare, mimicry marks those movements of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance. Then the words of master become the site of hybridity – the warlike, subaltern sign of the native then we may not only read between the lines but even seek to change the often coercive reality that they so lucidly contain. As Lacan says:

Mimicry reveals something in so far as it is distinct from what might be called an itself that is behind. The effect of mimicry is camouflage. . . it is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against

a mottled background, of becoming mottled – exactly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare. (qtd. in Bhabha 85)

Concerning these issues, Bhabha provides the examples from Naipaul and Conrad before he discusses Charles Grant and Macaulay. The reference Bhabha provides is a classic text of such partiality in Charles Grant's "Observations on the state of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain " (1792) which was only superseded by James Mill's History of India as the most influential early nineteenth century account of Indian manners and morals. The second example he provides is the "absurd extravagance" of Macaulay's Infamous Minute (1835) – deeply influenced by Charles Grant's "observations" that makes a mockery of oriental learning until faced with the challenge of a "reformed" colonial subject. Mimicry repeats rather than represents, and in that diminishing perspective emerges Decoud's displaced European vision as:

The endlessness of civil strife where fully seemed even harder to bear than its ignominy. . . the lowliness of populace of all colours and races, barbarism, irremediable tyranny . . . America is ungovernable. [from Conrad's Nostromo] (47-48)

Or Ralph Singh's Inner apostasy in Naipaul's *The Mimic Men*:

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 remainders of the corruption that comes so quickly to the new.  
(123)

Bhabha views that Grant's dream of an evangelical system of mission education conducted uncompromisingly in English language, was partly a belief in political



reform along Christian lines and partly an awareness that the expansion of company rule in India required a system of subject formation – a reform of manners, as Grant put it – that would provide a colonial with "a sense of personal identity as we know it." Caught between the desire for religious reform and the fear that the Indians might be turbulent for liberty, Grant paradoxically implies that is the "partial" diffusion of Christianity, and the "partial" influence of moral improvements which will construct a particularly appropriate form of colonial subjectivity. Inadvertently, Grant produces a knowledge of Christianity as a form of social control which conflicts with the enunciatory assumptions that authorize his discourse. Finally, that "partial reform" will produce an empty form of the imitation. Grant mocks his moral project and violates the evidence of Christianity.

Similarly, Macaulay's "Minute" (1835) makes a mockery of Oriental learning until faced with the challenge of conceiving of a "reformed" colonial subject. Bhabha says then, the great tradition of European humanism seems capable of ionizing itself. At the interaction of European learning of colonial power, Macaulay, can conceive of nothing other than "a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in morals and intellect" (49).

According to Bhabha, both Decoud and Sing, and in their different ways Grant and Macaulay, are the paradists of history. Despite their intentions and invocations they inscribe the colonial text erratically, essentially across a body politic that refuses to be representative, in a narrative that refuses to be representational. The wish to emerge as "authentic" all the way through, mimicry – though a process of writing and repetition – is the final irony of partial representation of the colonial power. Therefore, he comes to the following remarks:

What I have called mimicry is not the familiar exercise of dependent colonial relations through narcissistic identification so that, as Fanon has observed, the black man stops being an actual person for only the white man can represent his self-esteem. Mimicry conceals no presence or identity behind its mask. (88)

He goes on to clarify the menace of mimicry which he says consists in its double vision. Such a vision discloses the "ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority." And it is a double vision that is a result of what he has described as the partial representation/recognition of the colonial object. Grant's colonial as partial imitator, Macaulay's translator, Naipaul's colonial politician as play-actor, Decoud as the scene setter of the New World, these are the appropriate objects of a colonialist chain of command, authorized version of otherness. A desire that, through the repetition of partial presence, which is the basis of mimicry, articulates those disturbances of cultural, racial, and historical difference that menace the narcissistic demand of colonial authority.

Bhabha says that "the visibility of mimicry is always produced at the site of interdiction." He further says that the force of colonial thinking forces the writers to the brink of such interdiction:

It is a form of colonial discourse that is uttered inside itself: a discourse at the crossroads of what is known as permissible and that which through known must be kept concealed; a discourse uttered between the lines and such a both against the rules and within them. The question of representation of difference is therefore always also a problem of authority. The "desire" of mimicry which is Freud's striking feature that reveals so little but makes such a big difference, is not

merely that impossibility of the other which repeatedly resist signification. The desire of colonial mimicry – and interdictory desire – may not have an object, but it has strategic objectives which he calls the "Metonymy of Presence."

The metonymic strategy produces the signifier of colonial mimicry as the affect of hybridity – at once a mode of appropriation of resistance, from the disciplined to the desiring. As the discriminated object, the metonymy of presence becomes the support of an authoritarian voyeurism, all the better to exhibit the eye of power. Then, as discrimination runs into the assertion of the hybrid, the insignia of authority becomes a mask, a mockery.

In mimicry, the representation of identity and meaning is rearticulated along the axes of metonymy. Bhabha then returns to Lacanian concept thus: As Lacan reminds us, mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonization of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance that differs/defends presence by displacing it in part, metonymically. Its threat, I would add, comes from the prodigious and strategic production of conflictual fantastic, discriminatory "identity effects" in the play of power that is elusive because it hides no essence, no "itself".

Bhabha's analysis, which is largely based on Lacanian conceptualization of mimicry as camouflage, focuses on colonial ambivalence. On the one hand, he sees the colonizer as a snake in the grass who speaks, in "a tongue that is forked", and produces a mimetic representation that "emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" (85). Bhabha recognizes then that colonial power carefully establishes highly sophisticated strategies of control and domination through the reformation of the category of people referred to be Frantz Fanon in the phrase, "black skin/white marks", or as "mimic men" by V.S. Naipaul.

If discriminatory effects enable the authorities to keep an eye on colonized, their proliferating differences evades that eye, escapes the surveillances. Those discriminated against may be instantly organized, but they also forced a re-cognition of the immediacy and articulacy of authority – a disturbing effect that is familiar in the repeated hesitancy afflicting the colonialist discourse when it contemplates its discriminated subjects. Produced through the strategy of disavowal, the reference of discrimination is always a process of splitting as the condition of subjection: a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different – a mutation, a hybrid. It is such a partial a double force that is more than mimetic but less than symbolic, that disturbs the visibility of the colonial presence and makes the recognition of its authority problematic. To be authoritative, its rules of recognition must reflect consensual knowledge or opinion; to be powerful, these rules of recognition must be reached in order to represent the exorbitant objects of discrimination that lie beyond its purview.

Regarding the colonial discourse, Bhabha says that from a colonial encounter between white presence and its black or other semblance, there emerges the question of the ambivalence of mimicry as a problematic of colonial subjection. Mimicry, as the metonymy of presence is, indeed, such an erratic, eccentric strategy of authority in colonial discourse. Mimicry does not merely destroy narcissistic authority through the repetitious slippage of difference and desire. It is the process of fixation of the colonial as a form of cross-classificatory, discriminatory knowledge within an interdictory discourse, and therefore necessarily raises the question of the authorization of colonial representations.

The native refusal to unify the authoritarian, colonialist address within the terms of civil engagement gives the subject of colonial authority – factor and oppressor – another turn. This ambivalent "and", always less than one and double, traces the time and spaces between civil address and colonial articulation. The authoritarian demand can now only be justified if it is contained in the language of paranoia. The refusal to return and restore the image of authority to the eye of power has to be reinscribed as implacable aggression, assertively coming from without. The other's aggressivity form without, that justifies the subject of authority, makes that very subject a frontier station of joint occupation. Projection may compel the native to address the master, but it can never produce those effects of "love" or "truth" that would center the confessional demand. If, through projection, the native is partially aligned or reformed in discourse, the fixed hate which refuses to circulate or reconjugate, produces the repeated fantasy of the native as in-between legality and illegality endangering the boundaries of truth itself.

Similarly, mimicry rearticulates presence in terms of its "otherness," that which it renounces. There is a crucial difference between this colonial articulation of man and is doubles and that which Foucault describes as "thinking the unthought" which, for nineteenth – century Europe, is the "ending of man's alienation by reconciling him with his essence." The colonial discourse that articulates an "otherness" is precisely the 'other scene' of this nineteenth-century Europe desire for an authentic historical consciousness which is repeated throughout the twentieth century literature.

The concept of mimicry as both resemblance and menace can be seen in the lives of African characters, especially, Mr. Johnson Mr. Johnson, a mission school educated African, works as a clerk in North Africa which is ruled by English colony.

Influenced by English culture he adapts it in terms of education, clothing, customs and the like. On the other hand, he accomplishes his culture by showing the fascination and love towards his Muslim root. This representation by Carry becomes an ample example to see how the theory of mimicry by Bhabha illustrates itself in the colonial discourse. This issue that how the fictional characters are shown in such ebb of culture brings an important interest for the students of literature as well as other people having an eye to see the disparaging and often scurrilous account of the world; the victimizing act of the cultural globalization and universalism. The people as well as their mimetic forms, the characters, can be seen, understood and analyzed under this light to expose the condition of people in such condition of cultural hybridity as identity crisis. As Bhabha says, "mimicry is stricken by an indeterminacy" where there is the sense of permanent incompleteness, both menace and resemblance, this life cannot be a full and complete one. How we can exemplify it, remains the central concern of this paper. The next chapter tries to expose a next example of identity crisis and hybrid mentality of the central character, Mr. Johnson. Cary's Mister Johnson who remains ever incomplete no matter how much he tries to make himself complete and full by imitating others and at the same time sticking to his own cultural belonging. Throughout his life long journey, how he remains incomplete is a matter of interest which this paper aims at revealing it with all other evolving issues.

## Chapter III

### Cultural Hybridity in *Mister Johnson*

In *Mister Johnson*, the Africans mime the values and norms of the British subjects because of the hegemonic-power relations that shape the space of colonial encounter although there are certain binary oppositions. The term 'hegemony' plays an important role in suggesting the power of ruling class (British) in convincing other class (African) thinking that their interests (the interests of British) are the interests of all; a form of power in which domination is exercised not by force, but by persuasion. The African wittingly imitate the British, as they think the British are superior to them. Mimicking the white values the Africans become hybrid personalities, or "in-between" class as Macaulay in his treatise "Minute on Indian Education" suggests in the context of India "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (49). In similar way, the Africans especially Johnson has become a class of person African in blood and colour but English in tastes, opinion, in morals, and intellect'. The linguistic and cultural hybridities that manifest in the personality of Johnson, the protagonist of the novel, can be interpreted in the light of mimicry of the white values.

The colonial experience has caused the colonized to perceive themselves as inferior to the colonizers. Colonial education and cultural colonization have presented them with its rich culture, as a world of order, discipline, success and achievement. As a result, the natives consider their own culture, customs and traditions, religion and race to be inferior to those of their master's and try to identify themselves with the empire. Since they are away from original homeland, their own original traditions and religions have become meaningless to them, and thus, they cannot identify themselves with those remote rules and codes. However, as they are different from the mater in

cultural, traditional, racial, and religious background, they can never successfully associate themselves with the colonizer either. They suffer from dislocation, placelessness, fragmentation, and loss of identity. They become mimic men who imitate and reflect the colonizers life style, values and views.

Colonialisation has brought together in Africa two very different cultures – African culture and European culture. In some ways European culture was more advanced than the African. The Africans have assimilated something of this culture, they should not reject the good elements which it contains. Therefore, the European culture dominate the native culture in one way or the other. Kettle views, "the theme of Mister Johnson is the effect of the imposition of an alien code of morals and manners upon a native culture" (161) Mr. Johnson is the character whom we can see such effect. Therefore, the novel concerns the collision between civilizations, between communities, between religions, between groups and even between individuals. Since Mister Johnson is the representation of two culture [African and British], it also concerns cross-cultural relations, written in the liberal humanist traditions on the theme that explains personal relations among individuals, which are culturally discrepant, religiously polarized and politically opposed.

Mr. Johnson neither can be uprooted from his African culture nor fully be attached to English culture. Johnson, the black clerk, working under the British officer Rudbeck, initiates into white culture from the very beginning of the novel. Influenced by white culture, he describes other Africans, especially his beloved, later his wife Bamu, as "savage" and wants to civilize her when he sees her at the ferry, "Oh, Bamu, you are only a savage girl here—you do not know how happy how I will make you. I will teach you to be civilized lady and you shall do not work at all" (2). He repeatedly describes her as foolish and unchristian girl whom he wants to civilize and



Christianize. He thinks the British culture is superior to African culture; ignores the African culture and people and considers himself being educated and civilized.

Though Johnson defines himself to be an English man, the whites especially Blore hates him. Blore is senior to Rudbeck. Boehmer, a postcolonial critic describes that there is not a harmonious relationship between African and Europeans. He points out a gulf between them. The westerners construct such a gulf by describing them (the Africans), teaching them, ruling over them and setting them. He also says that Johnson is doomed between white and black because he is as an exile from Southern Nigeria and also takes an "doomed attempt" to Europeanize himself in the image of Rudbeck, who he devotes as his savior and intimate friend. For example, Boehmer criticizes, "He is also an exile from Southern Nigeria and thus appears doubly ridiculous, from the point of view of both the whites and the local Hausa. The action concerns his always already doomed attempts to Europeanize himself in the image of the ADO Rudbeck" (155). When Rudbeck comes in his office after his marriage to take over, Blore tells him all the gossip, "The Emir is playing up again—he ought to be sacked. I'm afraid you'll soon be without a clerk. The sooner you get rid of him, the better—he's the worst type—probably dangerous too a complete imbecile, but quite capable of robbing the safe" (18). Blore gives him the title of Muslim ruler. He also recommends Rudbeck to sack Johnson. Moreover he accuses Johnson as a thief. In fact Johnson is a temporary clerk, still on probation, called up on emergency from a mission school. The same man whom the title "wog" is given by Rudbeck's wife, Celia and other white characters, cannot see the gulf the whites are creating. He tries to associate with them though they try to disassociate. All the time he imagines that the uncivilized "bush girl" Bamu accepts his proposal of marriage because of his educated and civilized manners as can be observed in the following address:

Oh, but Mister Benjamin, My Bamu is mos' beautiful, clever girl you can tink. First time she sees me, she says, 'Mister Johnson, I 'gree or you, I don't like dese savage men– I like civilized man. Mister Johnson', She says, 'you good nice government man, me government lady. I love you with all my heart-we live happy, loving couple all the time everyday.' (27-28).

In other words Johnson describes what Bamu seems to say to him, to his friend Benjamin. Influenced by the white culture he positions himself in the white mannerism as if he were a British subject. He has a high pride in Englishness that is associated with cloths, country, king, marriage rituals and the like. The district officer Rudeck whom he form the beginning to the end of the novel addresses as his friend and savior despite of the fact that the is shot by Rudbeck. In the beginning, Johnson becomes very happy when the comes to know that Rudbeck has come to his native place. But his friend Ajali suspects that Rudbeck might take him to prison because he could not pay his debt to many natives. In a reply to it Johnson says what Rudbeck seems to say him in the following manner, "He my frien'– soon as he see me – he smile and say, 'Why it dat you, Mister Johnson? Is you still here? Den he shake my hand and say, 'God bless you, Mister Johnson – I 'gree for you – I pray for you'" (19). This means that both of them like each other. He believes that Rudbeck would never harm him. Moreover, Rudbeck had given him some drinks in a new year. He also describes what Rudbeck is like:

No, no, he no finish-Mister Rudeck my firen'–he save me. Oh, Jesus, he dear, good man – he got a big heart like de Lamb of God – oh, Jesus, it makes me laugh – Mister Ajali, what you say, I think I get dat lil wife now, dat Bamu. (20)

He thinks that Rudbeck is not only his friend but also his savior. Johnson compares Rudbeck with "lamb of god" – Jesus. He thinks of Rudbeck as holding superior position like God, and African as holding inferior position like devil. Thus, he initiates into white culture.

Though Johnson is initiated into white culture he couldn't leave his native culture. He is loyal to the Britishers and at the same time to the native Emir. Johnson secretly copies the letters of empire and gives them to the Emir which will help Emir to rule the natives. He misuses his position in British company. He appoints a road boy illegally to collect road money, do not enter Zungo money in the Zungo cash book and the like. As Allen puts it, "We are shown in these novels primitive peoples confronted with a new and almost wholly unintelligible civilization, taking what they want from the white man's religion and way of life and making it a new thing satisfying to them but quite baffling to the white administrators and missionaries" (10). Johnson is able to marry Bamu and get respect from the natives because of his affinity to English education, religion and way of life. But he uses English virtues only to satisfy his interest forgetting its essence. As a result, it becomes a sock to the English. Furthermore, when Johnson is spending his days in Zungo after Gollup fires him from his store he says, "I stayed too long on the road. Allah, what is the good of roads? A road headman, who is he? Nobody, Of course, Mister Rudbeck depended on me and I couldn't go away from him" (231-32). From this speech we can say that Johnson who claims himself as an English man has still some traits of Muslim.

Together with Rudbeck, Johnson helps to build up Rudbeck's road. The road symbolizes for him a bridge of communication that joins Africans and the British, black and white, and South and North. Johnson, like other British people believes that road will help to increase trade by ten times though the native people claim that the

road will bring western influence that will corrupt and spoil them. He, following Rudbeck, blames other native people by saying, "Oh, yes, sah, we want a good road in Fada– a motor road way up north to all dese bush people – get plenty shea butter" (67). Johnson wants to civilize the native people by building up the road which will provide benefit to the bush people. He also contributes some ideas as to how to build the road as described below, "Oh, sah, I tink perhaps if you make it like a game for dem – get plenty drums, give dem plenty beer. Dis pagan people like game" (67). In other words, Johnson argues that if he turns labour into game providing them the entertainment of drums, music and songs; the man will sing out and work hardly knowing that they are working. Previously, it is arranged that the road will be finished before rainy season, but the lack of money and labourers, there remains no chance of completing the road before the give time. However, Johnson insists that he will finish the road before the rainy season, for example he says, "perhaps they come for beer, sah – we make a good play – den we finish dis year" (195) This is his Euro-centred belief made upon other native people thinking that they (native people) are dependent to the civilized people like he. He also inspires the native "bush people" to build the road by acting different plays as singing, dancing, digging, and cutting. Using such tricks, he completes the road in time. When the road work is finished, their friendship also seem to come to an end for Rudbeck. On the other hand, Johnson believes in friendship with Rudbeck even up to the time of his death (hanging). For example, he says to Rudbeck at the last hour of his life, the time when he is prepared for hanging, " I no fit know nutting about it – he, too quick. Only I like you do him yourself, sah. If you no fit to shoot me. I don' 'gree for dem sergeant do it, too much. He no my frien'. But you my frien'. You my father and my mother' (290). His friendship with Rudbeck is of such a great intensity that he even prepares to get killed

by Rudbeck. He compares Rudbeck with his father and mother, and he imitates him, as child mime their parents. His mimicry of Rudbeck constructs him as hybrid character who is caught up in an in-between position of black and white.

Johnson thinks of Rudbeck's wife Celia as a civilized women. He believes that his wife Bamu will be civilized when she gets into contact with Celia. He becomes very happy when he knows that Celia is coming to Africa because he has to civilize his wife and he thinks Celia will help him to civilize his wife. Around this time Johnson gives long description to Bamu concerning Celia's arrival in the following words". . . [S]he will be your friend, my dear Bamu, and you must study her carefully and see how she behaves herself. She is a government lady and you are now a government lady and learn civilized behaviours" (64). Bamu, he thinks, is savage girl. He wants to civilize her not only by himself but also in the presence of Celia. Since Bamu has become a "government lady" after her marriage to him she, as he believes, must be like Celia. Johnson forces Bamu to put on white dresses while he is taking his wife to be introduced. But Bamu refuses to put on the dress. At that time he scolds her saying, "But why, you silly girl? The government lady is waiting. You don't want her to think you a savage bush girl" (77). His attempt to make Bamu wear the white dresses goes on time and again. On the other hand, Bamu keeps on rejecting the white dresses by saying that the white dresses are only fit for a chief's wife. In response to it, Johnson replies; "But Bamu you are a chief's wife, Bamu – bigger than any chiefs wife – the wife of government man. You're not one of the same bush girl any more. You are as good as a white women. That's why I give you a cloth fit for a government wife" (133).

Johnson vision of civilized women is associated with Christianity as he describes, "I think all dem women, have too good Christian hearts – dem born

Christian" (61). He expresses this when he talks to Gollup who says Johnson that his wife Matumbi is also an uncivilized woman since she is an African. They both believe that only the Christian born women can be good women.

Johnson even dislikes African traditional marriage ceremony, rituals, and celebrates his marriage to Bamu in Christian style, for example he argues " Dese savage people think I make savage weeding like bush people. Dey never understand Christian marriage" (38). Johnson asks his friend Benjamin to read the bible for his marriage ceremony. Benjamin too reads the Bible well with great enjoyment of words, and orders Johnson by saying, "Give her the ring, Mister Johnson" (41). He performs a marriage party in the western style. He celebrates his Christian marriage because he tink that if he performs his marriage in Christian style, his love for Bamu will last long, and his wife will be happy too. But his marriage is not purely a Christian one. Both cultural traditions are mingled in it. Johnson loses his patience when the bridal party delays to come. He, with Ajali and Rudbeck's cook, flies off to fetc the bride. Bamu is waiting with her family, and they raise loud shouts and scream when Ajali and Johnson appear and claim her. This is the usual ceremony, meant to show she is being carried off by force. This is their native cultural tradition. Further more, the proper Christian marriage should have taken place in the church at the presence of father but Johnson takes the help of his co-worker Benjamin and the place is post-office.

He not only celebrates Christian marriage, wears white dress, like English people, but also praises England and English virtues, and also its king. In other words, he seems to adopt England as his own country and the king of England as his own king, for example he expressed his vision of Englishness by singing:

England is my country.

Oh, England, my home all on de big water.

Dat king of England is my king.

De bes' man in de worl', his heart is too big.

Oh, England, my home all on de big water. (35)

This question indicates that he thinks himself to be English; and like Rudbeck, he also wants to educate his fellow Africans and make them civilized. He fashions himself in relation to European culture and manner though he is Nigerian black clerk. When Johnson meets Bamu in the ferry at Fada river, he pays much money as the narrator says, "He gives her a three –penny piece instead of a penny" (2). His idea of Englishness is associate with the belief of spending much. He seals money only to have the glory of being known as the great showman, the giver of parties to everyone. He steals to throw his money away. He loves the fame of being admired, even dubiously, by the crowd. Everyone is his friend; that is, he pours out friendship, but never asks whether he gets it. And he forgets an injury at once because his imagination immediately carries his mind away from it. Tell him mad or will come to a bad end, and he is delighted. He is totally intuitive and is also tricky. Johnson goes on giving parties almost on minor occasions. He has limited income. To afford parties his income is not sufficient so he goes on doing many illegal activities. He lends money from the natives, don't pay the workers, steals money form Gollups store, copies the letters from the empire and the like. He not only steals Gollup's money but also his wine. He is very much happy to give English wine to his friends. Even he categorizes the wine as English. He is fascinated by everything that is English.

Johnson's downfall starts when Tring comes to Fada to replace Rudbeck. Rudbeck is returning home as his wife is sick. Tring sacks Johnson and Audu on the charge of embezzlement. Johnson then joins his job in the store which is run by

Gollup. Gollup is a retired policeman. He is also a white. Gollup appoints him in a labourer's salary. Gollup advise Johnson not to gather anyone in his compound as he was going to lion hunt with Tring. Johnsons in the absence of his boss gathers his friends and starts drinking, singing and dancing. The village is full of noise. Suddenly, Gollup appears in the compound. The crowd is dispersed. He suddenly punches Johnson. Accidentally, while defending himself, Johnson happens to hit Gollup, who falls down. Johnson is ousted form the store and is forced to live in Zungo. While he was in the store he had good knowledge of robbing the safe. Moreover, he also had the key of the store safe. He goes on stealing money form the store. The money he gets from the store is all spent in party. One day when he goes to the store to steal money, Gollup disturbs him. He in response, stabs Gollup. In the introduction of Mister Johnson V.S. Pritchett views Johnson's killing of Golloup as Johnson's return to his primitive tribal pattern. He writes:

Why does Johnosn kill? Really, because he goes mad. And why does he go mad? Because he has betrayed Rudbeck, i.e. "civilization", once too often and "civilization" has got angry with him. Why is "civilization" angry? Because it doesn't understand his kind of imagination. It has lost it. And because civilization doesn't understand, Johnson reverts to the primitive tribal pattern. (xv)

But the fact is that Johnson wants to do the works which others natives can't. He wants to be admired. Johnson's killing of Gollup is an accident. His aim is to steal money to give party so that everyone would appreciate him. Gollup happens to disturb Johnson in stealing so he stabs Gollup. The crux of the incident is Johnson's desire of being oversmart. Johnson thinks himself as white man he beliefs he can do whatever



benefits him. He appoints a boy to collect money the portion of which, he gets as his share.

Johnson wears on the white dresses. He also forces his wife to wear on white dresses. While Celia comes to his house to meet Banu, he forces Bamu to wear white dresses. Though Celia appreciates Bamu's native dress, "Oh, but it suits her beautifully – I hope she always wears the native dress. It is so much nicer than those terrible frocks" (118). Johnson immediately rejects what Celia says in the following words, "Oh, no mam, dey too ugly" (118). He does not like Bamu wear Muslim dress. Johnson even appreciates his shoes when he visits Bamu's house for the first time to purpose her. Bamu's family ask for his shoes in response he says, "shoes-how dare you? My shoes are English shoes-the very best shoes-they're not for savage people-bad thievish people like you" (26). From the quotation we can say that Bamu's family members are also tempted to Western culture. Being influenced from the culture they ask for trousers, umbrella, hat and watch with Johnson. Johnson loves his shoes so much that he carries his shoes in his hand so that there will not be any harm to his shoes.

Arnold Kettle sees one-ness between Johnson and the native people:

Johnosn is not merely a passive figure in this novel, the pathetic victim of imperialism and its by products; he has vitality of his own, potentialities of his own, expressed partly in his unfailing resourcefulness in playing the counters he doesn't understand but chiefly in his deep understanding of his own people and one-ness with them. (164)

Mister Johnson can not get help form either group in need. The white, Mr. Rudbeck, whose image he worshipped at last, kills him. He goes to wiziri and tells

him. "I had to come, wiziri, it's urgent. My wife Bamu suddenly declares that she is going back to her family" (239). He is very much hopeful that Wiziri will stop his wife. Instead of helping him wiziri shouts, "Catch him!. How dare he come here into my private compound? Beat him, knock his eyes outsmash his face in – tear his guts out" (239). As Allen put, "But the 'Christianized' native is in conflict not only with his saddened white teachers but also with his fellows who are still pagan and with those who are Moslem" (10). Wiziri was his good friend when he had helped him. When Johnson is turned out by Rudbeck, Wiziri sees he has no importance. Moreover, when Johnson kills Gollup, his friends Benjamin and Ajali discloses that Johnson had such a knife and he has been spending money carelessly. Johnson can not get help from his own wife also. When he goes to take shelter to Bamu's house after killing Gollup, Bamu's brother knocks him down, catch him and calls the police. Bamu also helps her brother in the situation. Johnson gets trouble because he has followed both culture. Natives do not help him because they think him to be out of their culture. And at the same time the English people also see him foreign to them. Had Johnson rooted in own culture, he would have been saved by the natives. The British officials and the African are accomplices in Johnson's downfall. Their intolerance and incomprehension deepen. Johnson's isolation and drive his compensatory private visions into exaggeration. Their misconception is intensified as a result of cultural barriers and reactionary fears. The clerk's compulsive need to sustain his glorious luck leads him to budgetary acrobatic, embezzlement, dismissal by his less elastic superiors, robbery, and ultimately the accidental murder of Gollup, the shopkeeper. Johnson's lack of self-restraint is disastrous and calls for more control. What is blameworthy, however is his forfeiture of a sympathetic guidance that might have

averted the serious course of his activities. This is due to this hostile rejection by the British and the natives.

Though Johnson is an African clerk, he Europeanizes himself by mimicking white culture, dress and other ceremonies. He mimics European culture because he thinks it is superior to African culture. He wants to civilize his wife Bamu, and other native people, by making them initiate into European models. Thus, it can be said that he is a Blackman wearing white "mask" – like the people in Algeria described by Fanon – and occupies a "hybrid", in between position between black and white.

### Linguistic Hybridity

In a colonialist literature, at least, two languages are involved—language of colonizer and language of colonized. So cross – cultural ambivalence and *lingua franca* are involved there. But suppression of one by another makes oppressed conflict for their own existence. Parker and Starkey clearly describe how it is emerged:

Postcolonial literature have emerged from heterogeneous linguistic sources comprised of indigenous (oral or written) which colonizing languages have attempted to stifle. The opposition of language as stasis and language as growth parallels conflict between political hegemony and human inventiveness. (1)

What they mean is that every colonial discourse consists of two different languages: the language of colonizer and colonized. The language of colonizer functions as the language of domination because it becomes the official language in their empire. Through there are native languages, they become only the medium of contact between colonized people, but not a medium to talk to the colonials. This sort of contrast and suppression make indigenous people conflict to search for their own subject position. True example of this sort can be found in the history of colonialism

as well as the history of conflict and independence. Africa and India, for example, were once colonized by Britain, struggle for freedom of their land, and got independence from colonial domination around the mid-twentieth century. They brought back their own culture, languages, religions. Over the centuries many nations of the world have been dominated and designated by colonizing or centering languages. North America, North American empires exploited their economic and military preeminence to rename vast areas of the world-India, Latin America. The inheritors of distinctive pre-colonial languages and cultures, were distinguished, and placed within colonial discourse.

The colonialist writer translates the culture of colonized in his/her own language. While translating another's culture, the writer uses mainly his/her own language, or sometimes the writer uses pidgin language as a medium of communication. Still, the writer cannot translate another's culture completely as it is. There are certain traditions and customs which do not have equivalent words into the language to be translated. So, he/she uses at least some words, phrases or sentences from the language of colonized. Linguistic hybridity appears when two or more languages are at work. Such a situation can be termed as polyglot, the situation where more than two languages are used as described by Mikail Bakhtin, in his essay "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse" views: "only polyglossia fully frees from the tyranny of its own language and its own myth of language. Parodic-travestying forms flourish under these conditions, and only in the milieu are they capable of using elevated to completely new ideological heights" (140). Polyglossia is a kind of metalinguistics because the colonialist writers use two or more languages in a novelistic discourse to represent multiple voices. In other words, the writer uses his/her language to describe about other language and culture. While translating

other's culture, the writer may not find its equivalent to English language, and he/she used pidgin or contact languages to put his/her view in the form of novelistic discourses. In *Mister Johnson*, too, Cary uses on most of the time the English, and sometimes he uses pidgin and Hausa languages.

Since Joyce Cary is a British writer, he uses the English language as a medium of his expression to describe about Africa. He has also used Hausa language when he doesnot find the counterpart of English language. In a novel like *Mister Johnson*, as Bohemer describes, "he transposes the layering of languages in Nigeria (Pidgin, Hausa, English, etc.) into what is a creatively heteroglot text" (155). He translates Hausa language into English language. He translates Hausa language, in the novel, to represent narrative description. The characters in the novel speak different languages in different situations. The white characters speak in English languages except in some rare situations, while the black characters, on most of the occasions speak in Pidgin, and sometimes in their own native language – Hausa. If we look at the very beginning of the novel, for example, the narrator uses English language. The narrator describe the physical features of the Nigerian young girls in the following words, "The young women of Fada, in Nigeria, are well known for beauty. They have small, neat features and their backs are not too hollow" (1). But the languages vary when characters vary except some rare expectations. In the beginning, Johnson speaks pure English when he first meets Bamu at the ferry. He says, "I want to marry, of course I'm clerk Johnson. I'm an important man, and rich. I'll pay you a large sum" (3). Johnson while speaking to Bamu and her brother speaks pure English. As the story moves on he uses pidgin and Hausa as in the example:

Oh, England, my home, away der on de big water.

England is my country, dat king of England is my king.

His heart is big for his children –

Room for everybody. (35)

Throughout the novel the characters, we can see, use different languages since the novelistic discourse is equivocal. For examples, An African old woman speaks in Hausa language when she is inquired by Ajali to know whereabouts Johnson. She replies in the Hausa phrase as "Go to hamfiss" (5). Hamfiss is the Fada translation of office. She sometimes uses other Hausa phrases as "da dadi" to mean very nice. She repeatedly speak in this phrase when she finds a very fine situation. Similarly, in a very unpleasant conditions, she repeatedly uses the another Hausa phrase like "Ohey, ohey".

There are so many examples that clarify how the characters use Hausa language, for instance, a messenger addresses Johnson as "Akow" to mean clerk. One morning Johnson seems to be ill, and says that he cannot go to office, "I can't go to hamfiss – I did". Bamu at the same time asks him, "Are you well enough to go to the homfice?" The words like "hamfish" and "homfice" refer to English word office. Johnson in his great excitement uses Hausa greetings at any passer-by he meets as, "Hail-God go with you." Similarly he uses a Hausa word *Zungo* for inn. Like Johnson and the old woman, other characters also use Hausa phrases. For example, at the time of Johnson's hanging, a soldier strikes six times and counts the rings in Hausa words "Daia – biu – oku – fudu" for one, two, three, four, etc. Another character Adamu, the head messengers uses Hausa word to address Rudbeck as "zaki" which means 'judge' in English.

Johnson, sometime, uses Pidgin language when he is taking or telling great pleasure or excitement, for example, when he has strong enthusiasm for his love of Bamu, and at the same time he begins to hum a local song in poetic live in a pidgin dialect:

I got a lil girl, she roun' like de worl'.  
 She smoot like de water, she shine like de sky.  
 She fat like de corn, she smell like de new grass.  
 She dances like de tree, she shakes like de leaves.  
 She warm like de groun', she deep like de bush.  
 How doo, lil girl ? I see you dar.  
 How doo, lil girl? Why you 'fraid of me?  
 I no get nuttin, no stick, no knife – (13)

This above quoted song shows that Johnosn is not speaking pure English language. In other words, he uses Pidgin language to express his feeling. The words, such as 'de', 'doo', 'nuttin', and other are form pidgin dialect. He uses such pidgin dialect whenever he finds himself in excitement or trouble. For instance, once his creditors come to claim for their money, he finds himself ruined, and confesses his difficult situation in Hausa phrase as well as in English and in Pidgin dialect:

Oh Gawd ! Jesus ! I done finish – if finish now – Mister Johnson to big dam' fool-he full chile – oh, my Gawd . . . why you so bloody big dam' fool, you Johnson? You happy for fada – you catch government job – you catch good pay – you catch dam pretty girl – you catch nice gentle frien's – you catch new shoes you big man – now you play de bloody fool – you spoil everything – oh, Gowd – what you got to do is to give dis fool good whipping – you not fit stop when he yell – you take off his skin you cut him up small wid you biog whip – you beat him to fritters – you kill dis dam,', bloody, good – for – nutting, silly fool bastard, Johnson –. (14)

The fact is that Johnson's "hybrid", in-between state often shapes the way he uses languages since he is born in Nigeria and works as a clerk under British officer Rudbeck. He is influenced by English language, which for him is the language of civilization. At the same time he can not entirely disregard his own local linguistic roots. As a consequence, his language twists from English through Pidgin to local language.

There are other words and phrases representing Hausa and Pidgin expression though it is impossible to represent all of them within the scope of this dissertation. However, I have made an attempt to represent some major words and expressions that are used in Hausa and Pidgin languages, expressions that point the linguist hybridity that functions at the heart of the novel.



## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

Joyce Cary was one of the most prominent literary figures in 1940s who had written many novels, narrative poems and also political and philosophical texts during his life time. He wrote four novels using an African background in the 1930s, of which *Mister Johnson* is the most important one. In this novel he has made a vigorous attempt to represent Africa and the life of Africans. His description of characters such as Rudbeck, Gollup, Tirng, Celia, Johnson, Bamu and others, however, show that he constructs Africa not as it really is, but rather as it is perceived through colonial stereotyping. In other words, the binary oppositions like civilized Europeans / uncivilized Africans shape his characterizations in the novels; an opposition that can be seen in his description of Johnson who is often portrayed both as uncivilized and as a liar as different from Rudbeck who is portrayed as civilized and truthful.

In other words, Cary uses the stereotypes of Africanist discourse – which are based on binary opposition – to represent Africa. Some of these might come from his own experiences working as a colonial officer and later as an Army lieutenant in Nigeria (like Rudbeck in the novel). This is to say that instead of representing Africa as it is, he represents it through binary stereotype of Africanist discourse which sees Africa and Africans as "lacking", "uneducated" and "uncivilized" as opposed to the civilized European models.

Mr. Johnson, the central character in Cary's *Mister Johnson* exposes the mimicry of colonial culture including its language and other practices. When a person starts living in a new culture, leaving his original one s/he has to experience a lot of traumatic situations. Mister Johnson – even his not having a first name but being called either, by his aspirations, "Mister", or, by his job, clerk, makes a strong point –

is the quintessential misfit. Because he has had some education from the missionaries and speak something closer to English than the prevailing pidgin, he sees himself as an Englishman, though he never set foot outside Africa. He is equally distant from the tribes working the land, to whom his beautiful wife, Bamu, belongs, and from the native rulers, such as Muslim Emir and his oily deputy, the Wiziri. Nor is he accepted as one of the British, either by the good-natured district officer, Harry Rudbeck, who is trying, with inadequate finances, to build a road that would bring trade to Fada, deep-sleepy outpost, or by Sagy Gollup, retired British sergent and owner of the Fada general store, who dispises the "nigs" but, is, like Rudbeck, impressed by Johnosn's intelligence and enterprise.

Cary treats the cross-cultural relationship between the English and the Africans, where people form different culture and race to develop a bond of mutual understanding on a common cultural ground despite differences. At times they preserve their heterogeneity but their sole concern is to develop a reciprocal relation in order to share a common cultural way of life. Through a host of uprooted and alienated characters from their original homeland, Cary beautifully observes the predicaments of these outsiders in an alien British culture. Deprived of a secure sense of personal identity like Johnson, his protagonists are emotionally too incapacitated to encounter the hazards of life—social, ethical and spiritual. Their emotional sterility is at once the cause and consequence of their failure to achieve an authentic and integral selfhood.

The cultural connection is apparent in the lives of people. Johnson also implies the fact that fully expressed identity is not possible in such situation. His experience is seen as the experience of a colonized man. He wants to protect a certain image. He is good at creating image, but unable to maintain. He adopts British practices later he

gives up. There is always a sense of detachment because of hybrid mentality. Such situation is often felt when the cultures are cut across the race and ethnicity and intersect the frontiers, and when people have been dispersed forever or certain time from their homeland.

Johnson tries to initiate into British culture by imitating British way of life. Though the imitate British way of life, he cannot internalize it with his own. The impact of which he goes on doing many activities which are thought to be illegal. As a result, he is given death penalty by Rudbeck who thinks Johnson's activities to be "savage" and he, as a "civilized man" kills him.

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