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FROM PERIPHERY TO THE CENTRE: POST-COLONIAL FICTION VS. COLONIALIST FICTION

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Abstract

Discourse written in the aftermath of the colonial practice reverts the colonial discourse of the British authors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries during which the colonial venture was in its highest peak. The colonialist discourse that used to be in the cultural centre of the literatures written in English marginalised the discourse of the colonised peoples, their language and culture; and pushed it to the peripheries. However, postcolonial discourse in the fiction of postcolonial writers who wrote in the aftermath of colonization forces the limits and comes to the centre from the peripheries. By due references to the traditional colonial novels, postcolonial texts create a reverse structure of novels in ideological opposition to the imperial centre. This study examines two postcolonial novels: *Midnight's Children*, as one of the exemplary postcolonial texts by Salman Rushdie with its numerous allusions to the colonial past and the colonialist novels and *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy who, despite being a younger writer, powerfully put forward a postcolonial discourse that functions as an anti-colonial rhetoric. This paper aims to compare the discourse of these postcolonial novels to the discourse of two colonial novels: *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster and *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling.

Keywords Discourse, Ideology, Postcolonial culture, Colonial culture.

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PERİFERDEN MERKEZE: SÖMÜRGECİLİK ROMANINA KARŞI SÖMÜRGECİLİK SONRASI ROMAN

Öz

Sömürgecilik uygulamalarının sonrasında yazılmış olan sömürgecilik sonrası romanların söylemi sömürge politikalarının dorukta olduğu on dokuzuncu ve yirminci yüzyılın sömürgeci İngiliz romancıları tarafından yazılan romanlardaki sömürgecilik söylemine bir karşı retorik oluşturmaktadır. İngilizce yazılan sömürgeci romanların kültürel merkezinde yer alan sömürgecilik söylemi sömürgeleşmiş halkların dilini, yazınsal söylemlerini ve kültürlerini marjinalleştirerek onları merkezden uzak bir perifer kültür haline getirmiştir. Ne var ki, sömürgecilik sonrası yazarların romanlarındaki sömürgecilik sonrası söylem sınırları zorlamış ve periferden merkeze gelerek alternatif bir söylem üretmeyi başarmıştır. Geleneksel sömürgecilik dönemi romanlarına yerinde göndermeler ve atıflarda bulunan sömürgecilik sonrası romanlar imparatorluğun siyasi merkezine karşı ideolojik bir duruşla karşıt bir kültürel yapı içeren bir retorik meydana getirmektedirler. Bu nedenle on dokuzuncu ve yirminci yüzyıl başlarında yazılmış olan sömürgecilik dönemi edebiyatını yirminci yüzyıl sonlarında yazılan sömürgecilik sonrası edebiyat ile karşılaştırmalı olarak çalışmak önem taşımaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma iki sömürgecilik sonrası romanı incelemektedir: sömürgecilik geçmişine ve sömürgecilik dönemi romanlarına yaptığı pek çok göndermeyle sömürgecilik sonrası romanlar içinde önemli bir yer tutan Salman Rushdie'den *Geceyarısı Çocukları*'nı ve daha genç kuşaktan bir yazar olsa da yazdıklarıyla sömürgecilik karşıtı bir retorik ortaya koymaya başararak yeni bir söylem yaratan Arundhati Roy'dan *Küçük Şeylerin Tanrısı*. Bu romanlar incelenirken, bu metinlerdeki söylemin sömürgecilik döneminin iki önemli romanı olan E. M. Forster'ın *Hindistan'a Bir Geçit* ile Rudyard Kipling'in *Kim* romanlarının söylemi ile karşılaştırılması da amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Söylem, Ideoloji, Sömürgecilik sonrası kültür, Sömürgecilik kültürü.

Introduction

Postcolonial literature, particularly by Indian authors in English, tends in most cases to convert the colonial discourse of the British colonial writers who wrote in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Among these, Salman Rushdie's fiction in particular stands out as the most controversial one. In the tradition of colonial writing, such as those of E. M. Forster and Rudyard Kipling, the colonised land and its people are depicted through imperial eyes as the "other" that is to be re-discovered and re-defined. However, in postcolonial fiction of Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy, this depiction of the colonised land is strongly rejected. The view of the imperial eyes is converted to the view of the indigenous eyes. The western perception of the eastern reality leaves its place to the eastern perception of the western reality.

The uses of the term have been, for the past few decades, under debate to clarify the areas, historical periods and ideological scope that should be covered by various spellings of the term

and clarify the meanings attributed to them. In an age when colonial and postcolonial ventures have gained new dimensions different from the colonial understandings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it is rather useful to return to the discussions of the different interpretations of this ideological practice.

The main concern here is the evaluation of postcolonial and postmodern literature written by Rushdie and Roy in comparison with the modernist colonial writing of E. M. Forster and, though not modernist, Rudyard Kipling. Postcolonial readings of *A Passage to India*, *Kim* in comparison with Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Roy's *The God of Small Things* reveals the divergence that postcolonial writing has taken from the colonial discourse.

As one of the most well known novels in English about India by a writer of Indian origin, *Midnight's Children* displays significant rejections of the imperial idea of the colonial land. Contrary to the mainstream colonial discourse, the narrator, being Indian, depicts the colonisers as the "other". Therefore, the coloniser is to be re-defined and re-discovered. However, this kind of discourse emerges after the Independence. Literally, it is called post-colonial. Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge argue that it was incorrect to name the literature of the colonised lands as "commonwealth literature" since it imposed a standard that was impossible. On the other hand, they rightly insist that the term post-colonialism is both literally more correct and it is more convenient than the former uses of the term. It puts forward "a politics of opposition and struggle, and problematizes the key relationships between centre and periphery" (Mishra & Hodge, 1991: p. 339). Rushdie brings together the elements of periphery and centre, and thus he challenges both the imperial depiction of colony and the traditional forms of novel. Arundhati Roy also comes up with a postcolonial story in which the former colonised confronts the former coloniser. This confrontation is no more of the kind that brings together the two nations as the ruler and the ruled or the more civilised and the savage. Roy re-defines the relationship of the British and the Indian in a much more unpolitical context unlike Rushdie. Yet, she remains faithful to the notion of postcolonial writing that inevitably causes cultural confrontations. She finds herself granted the liberty to reformulate the English language. The language spoken by the main characters of *The God of Small Things* is not the English as spoken by the native English speakers, but it is Indo-English created by the non-native English speakers. At first glance, the language, at least, seems to be the opposition that Mishra and Hodge mention.

1. Multiplicity of Postcolonial(ism)s

Mishra and Hodge also state that there are many forms of postcolonialisms. They use two different spellings of the term. One is hyphenated "post-colonialism" that refers to the aftermath of decolonisation. The other is unhyphenated "postcolonialism" that inevitably tends to mark a "process of cultural domination through the imposition of imperial structures of power". Mishra and Hodge prefer to call the hyphenated one "oppositional postcolonialism" as it can be used to refer to post-independence historical period. The unhyphenated postcolonialism, as they argue, is a product of the process of colonialism that implicitly carried postcolonialist structures to the colonised land. The hyphenated "post-colonialism" has, on the other hand, ideological orientations as well as historical (Mishra & Hodge, 1991: p. 407). Elleke Boehmer regards the unhyphenated postcolonialism as a term referring to the colonised peoples' struggle to stand as historical subjects. From Boehmer's point of view, postcolonial literature covers the "experiences of cultural exclusion and division under empire", and in its earlier stages "it can also be a nationalistic writing". Boehmer seeks to distinguish postcolonialism from the hyphenated post-colonialism, which she regards as more conventional, because it is a term referring to the aftermath of the Second World War (Boehmer, 1995: p. 5). Deepika Bahri is one of the scholars who study postcolonialism as the cultural interactions between colonising powers and the societies they colonised. Bahri argues that postcolonialism also refers to the global conditions after decolonisation, and the description of the formerly colonised lands (Bahri, 1995: p. 52).

In a sense, Bahri's argument sounds legitimate, because postcolonialism *is* a condition, rather than an ideological standpoint. If the term is to be used without a hyphen, the term is meant to be political, as suggested, which means the term offers an anti-imperialist stance. When the political ambivalence of the contemporary postcolonial writers is taken into consideration, this sounds illogical. It was certainly possible to read writers who were against the colonial rule *during* colonisation, and thus, they need not be called *post*-colonials. In the same way, there may well be writers that support the colonial rule, living and writing *after* the colonisation. Thus, the term is irrelevant as an ideological term. Clinging to Bahri's view, the terms post-colonial and postcolonialism refer to a condition.

The next and equally important question is what the colonial writing is meant to be. In the nineteenth century, the fiction set mostly in the colonial lands used to be adventure fiction and that discourse, as Martin Green argues, was largely dominated by the sense of the superiority of

British culture (Green, 1980: p. 4). The adventure fiction was intertwined inevitably with the colonial fiction as both of them depicted the colonised lands. Chris Tiffin suggests that colonial writing by the imperial writers was eclipsed by that superior sense in the adventure fiction. What implicitly, if not explicitly, was made clear in colonial writing was the imperial policy redefined by the novelists. The new colonised lands were seen as "wastes requiring to be put in use". Tiffin argues that the land colonised by the "imperial teleology" was to be "tamed". Colonial fiction in the nineteenth century was deeply involved with "the messages of imperial expansion" which marked the superior privilege of European culture and the inescapability of its dominance (Tiffin, 1992: p. 3). Yet, "the process of colonialism", according to Tiffin, brought Europeans to a conflict with "landscapes, peoples and practices" that were so times found "attractive and compelling" by them; thus, there were very few texts in the nineteenth century that "undermine the imperial enterprise" which marked the condition of "absolute destiny" (Tiffin, 1992: p. 3).

The adventure fiction mentioned above is the fiction conceived by the European colonialism having its roots in as early as first centuries of the second millennium, although there have been different forms of colonialism. Colonial writing as a literary term, if it is ever a correct term, refers to the literature written by both the inhabitants of the colonised lands and the colonisers. As we are discussing the differences of post-colonial literature from the colonial ones, the colonial writing in question has to be the one written by the colonisers that depicted the colonised land in the sense mentioned in the above quotation. Both historically and politically, colonial writing belongs to the era that was before decolonisation. It is clear that the ideology of colonial writing was not in the post-colonial sense, since the global condition when colonisation was in full swing had not yet been redefined in post-war terms. Even the term "colonial discourse" was coined in the post-colonial era coming out of the post-colonial vocabulary, as Francis Barker et al. state (Barker, 1994: p. 2). For colonial literature, Boehmer's view is worth considering. She argues that if colonial literature refers to the literature concerned with colonial perceptions and experience, "written mainly by metropolitans" as well as by "Creoles and indigenes" in the colonial period (Boehmer, 1995: p. 2), then it is a periodical term. It can even cover the literature written in Britain during the colonial period. However, the fiction written solely by metropolitans specifically concerned with colonial expansion should be called colonialist literature, because it was written from the perspective of colonizers for the benefit of Europeans "about non-European lands"

dominated by the westerners embodying "the imperialists' point of view" (Boehmer, 1995: p. 2-3).

The consideration here is the impact of colonial discourse defined in the post-colonial era. This discourse, as my argument is the conversion of *that* discourse in post-colonial and post-modern fiction, is specifically that of the European colonial fiction. For the purposes of this argument, as opposed to the hyphenated post-colonial writing, I would rather use the term colonialist literature coined by Boehmer.

Bill Ashcroft et al. use the term "post-colonial" to designate all the cultures "affected by the imperial process" from the beginning of colonisation to today (Ashcroft et al., 1989: p. 2). "Post-colonial", even when it is hyphenated, is still under the imperial influence. In this respect, there would not be any "postcolonialism" or "post-colonialism" at all, if there was no colonialism. If we go back to Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge's argument, the way Ashcroft et al. use the term is, in a way, verified. Bahri, who also supports what Mishra and Hodge claim about unhyphenated postcolonialism, suggests that "the dropping of the hyphen would permit us to recognise one version of postcolonialism as implicit in colonial discourse, thus emphasising continuity rather than rupture " (Mishra & Hodge, 1992: p. 67).

Both postcolonialism that has its roots back in colonialism and Mishra and Hodge's hyphenated post-colonialism having ideological orientations could not be studied without sifting through the colonialist impacts. How was colonialist discourse shaped then? What was the impact of imperial identity? The colonialist texts written by the imperial authors could never "form the basis for an indigenous culture", and it was not possible for them to be integrated with the culture that already existed in the invaded land. The centre, in other words the empire, was inevitably privileged; the "home" is emphasised over the "native", the "metropolitan" over the "provincial" or "colonial". The imperial discourse of such authors was hidden under their claims to objectivity (Ashcroft, 1989: p. 5).

2. Colonial Discourse in *A Passage to India*

Even in the novels by literally acclaimed authors, this case is true. In *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster, the inhabitants are depicted through the imperial eyes as a distinct species whose characteristics depend on the climate. This is presumably true in the sense that people's charac-

ters can be affected by geographical and climactic conditions, but it is a matter of question whether or not it determines the criminality of a character. Mr McBryde, the District Superintendent of Police in *A Passage to India*, is described by E. M. Forster as "most reflective and best educated of the Chandrapore officials". However, Forster gives him a sarcastic understanding of the Indians:

> Aziz was led off weeping. Mr McBryde was shocked at his downfall, but no Indian ever surprised him, because he had a theory about climactic zones. The theory ran: "All unfortunate natives are criminals at heart, for the simple reason that they live south of latitude 30. They are not to blame, they have not a dog's chance - we should be like them if we settled here." Born at Karachi, he seemed to contradict his theory, and would sometimes admit as much with sad quite smile. (*A Passage to India*: p. 160)

The degrading of the land and the climate becomes the degrading of its people too. Hidden under his theory about climactic zones, there lies an imperial arrogance. Although he himself was born in Karachi, in the same climactic zone, he does not consider himself unreliable, because he is not originally a native who, from his perspective, is a criminal at heart. The absence of his homeland's climate and landscape helps him legitimise his ideas of the native people, and redefines the native culture according to climate: Different climates make different people, and as you go to the southernmost of the latitude 30 people get more criminal. This imposes the idea of superiority of Europeans, by which the colonialist discourse is shaped.

E. M. Forster is careful about giving photographic descriptions. The following extract that is randomly chosen from the novel depicts a scene when Aziz, the Indian protagonist of the novel is at a meeting with a group of other Indians, Mr Fielding, the principal of a small college in Chandrapore walks into the meeting room:

> Aziz said "Sit down" coldly. What a room! What a meeting! Squalor and ugly talk, the floor strewn with fragments of cane and nuts, and spotted with ink, the pictures crooked upon the dirty walls, no punkah! He hadn't meant to live like this or among these third-rate people. And in his confusion he thought only of the insignificant Rafi, whom he had laughed at, and allowed to be teased. The boy must be sent away happy, or hospitality would have failed, along the whole line. (*A Passage to India*: p. 111)

As aforementioned, the objectivity serving to hide the imperial discourse seems to acknowledge Ashcroft et al.'s argument. The impartial description in the above quotation implicitly reflects the imperial idea of the natives: Third-rate people live in rooms whose floors are spotted with ink and covered with cane and nuts. Superior sense of being European acknowledges itself here by degrading the natives as the third-rate people.

3. Postcolonial Discourse in *Midnight's Children*

In *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie's description of a scene stands out as an answer to the above extract. This situation is the other way round. Amina Sinai, Saleem Sinai's mother is shocked when she sees how dirty the house they want to buy is. Controversially, the house belongs to an Englishman who is about to leave India for good:

> But my God, the paint … and the cupboards are full of old clothes, janum ... we'll have to live out of suitcases, there's nowhere to put one suit! . . . And look at the stains on the carpets, janum; for two months we must live like those Britishers? You've looked in the bathrooms? No water near the pot. I never believed, but it's true, my God, they wipe their bottoms with paper only! … (*Midnight's Children*: p. 95-96)

Amina Sinai's reaction seems to be a counter-attack to the narrative perspective in *A Passage to India*. Salman Rushdie converts Fielding's idea of the indigenous Indians to Amina's idea of the British. While Fielding thinks the Indians live in filthy places, Amina thinks the same of the English. Degrading of the Indians in *A Passage to India* becomes the degrading of the colonisers in *Midnight's Children*. The objectivity of the depiction implicitly carries an imperial understanding in Forster's style. Whereas in Rushdie's style, this objectivity explicitly criticises the Raj. For Forster's characters, Indians are the "other kind" possessing a distinctly third-rate culture. Rushdie controversially brings this discourse upside down. The English people are the "other" having a significantly opposite culture, and this culture, in Amina's reaction, is regarded as unacceptably wrong and low-rate. William Methwold, the English owner of the house, has one strict condition while selling it to the Sinai family. Nothing is to be changed in the house for two months until the British have left India completely. He rightly admits his imperial desire behind this condition: "'Lock, stock and barrel,' Mehtwold said, 'Those are my terms. A whim, Mr Sinai … You'll permit a colonial his little game? We don't have much left to do, we British, except to play our games.'" (*Midnight's Children*: p. 95).

Perhaps Methwold's condition is to emphasise his colonialist cultural authority still hiding an expansionist desire. Yet, this condition is that of a defeat. He has not much left to do, except

imposing the continuity of English culture even after leaving India. Despite this, as Rushdie presents him, Methwold clearly has his place in the novel as an imperialist character. His remarks on the independence confirm the imperialist view that considers the colonised land as a place to be tamed:

> You'll admit we weren't all bad: built your roads. Schools, railway trains, parliamentary system, all worthwhile things. Taj Mahal was falling down until an Englishman bothered to see to it. And now, suddenly, independence. Seventy days to get out. I'm dead against myself, but what's to be done? (*Midnight's Children*: p. 96)

When *Midnight's Children* is read from a post-colonial perspective, it persuades us "to think through logical categories" that are quite alien to our own, by deploying untranslated words and concepts throughout the text (Mishra & Hodge: p. 406). The peripheral in Forster's discourse is converted to the central standpoint in *Midnight's Children*. Therefore, the colonised, in other words the peripheral, "writes back to the imperial centre" as Ashcroft et al. quotes from Rushdie whose discourse is not only nationalist assertion but also proclaims itself central and self-determining (Ashcroft: p. 33).

In some cases, Forster brings some of the peripheral discourse to the centre of the novel. In this centre, he puts Mr Fielding and the native Indians in confrontation. The native desire to get rid of the British is revealed when Mr Fielding talks about the moral decline in England:

> "Excuse the question, but if this is the case, how is England justified in holding India?"
>
> There they were! Politics again. "It's a question I can't get my mind onto," he replied. "I'm out here personally because I needed a job. I cannot tell you why England is here or whether she ought to be here. It's beyond me." (A Passage to India: p. 112)

Although the political and racial issues of the time constantly impinge on the text, Forster detaches all his main characters from the political scenes, as Parminder Bakshi argues, because the theme of the novel is composed around the friendship of Aziz and Fielding (Bakshi, 1994: p. 38). The detachment of the characters from politics is the central point in the novel that gives the author's point away. Forster himself does not get involved in racial issues in his text. His deliberate prevention gives a strong sense that imperial issues cannot or perhaps should not be discussed. Nevertheless, this does not prevent the text from being political. There are strong arguments going around about politics although the characters are detached from it. The text is not totally isolated from the contemporary issues. At least the setting alone is the core of a political

argument in terms of bringing the coloniser and the colonised together. The British India setting is a reflection of imperial expansionism.

Edward Said points out that, although *A Passage to India* is a novel that expresses the author's affection for India, it clearly indicates that the political origins of the problem of identity, convergence and merger foregrounded by Forster lie in the British presence (Said, 1993: p. 242). Said's critical approach to the novel does not only clarify its political side but also the author's incomprehension of the place that contradicts his affection. Forster honestly shows how the British officials impose sense on India. There are clubs with rules, restrictions, orders of precedence, military hierarchy and above them all the British power. Said argues that this is due to the lack of understanding between natives and the liberal Europeans as happens in most colonised lands, which suggests that in *A Passage to India* Forster finds India "difficult", because "it is so strange and unidentifiable" (*A Passage to India*: p. 241-245).

The narrators in colonialist writing are mostly the colonisers, and the discourse is inevitably shaped by their incomprehension of the place. On the other hand, in *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie's narrator is a native Indian in the first place, and the story he narrates clearly reveals the protagonists' incomprehension of the British. This incomprehension caused by the distinct cultural difference leads, in some cases, to the mocking of the English:

> "Tell me, Mr Methwold," Ahmed Sinai's voice has changed, in the presence of an Englishman it has become an hideous mockery of an Oxford drawl, "why insist on the delay? Quick sale is best business, after all. Get the thing buttoned up." (Midnight's Children: p. 96)

However, Rushdie does not venture to totally condemn the British. He does not consider the coloniser totally bad and the colonised inarguably good. He attempts to criticise his native culture too without romanticising the hardships of India struggling for Independence. In his fiction, although the Independence is praised, the native Indians' vulnerability to European culture is emphasised:

> In India, we've always been vulnerable to Europeans . . . Evie had only been with us a matter of weeks, and already I was being sucked into a grotesque mimicry of European literature. (We had done *Cyrano*, in a simplified version, at school; I had also read the *Classics Illustrated* comic book.) Perhaps it would be fair to say that Europe repeats itself, in India, as farce . . . Evie was American. Same thing. (*Midnight's Children*: p. 185)

Their vulnerability to Europe is reflected in their interest in European literature. However, the fact that a simple version of *Cyrano* and *Classics Illustrated* could only be digested is ironic. On

the other hand, the colonialism is interpreted as Europe's repetition of itself. The imposed European culture in India is a farce. The narrator in the above quotation also mentions that being American is no different from being European. This is a political awareness that identifies colonialism as exclusively European, since the American continent was colonised by Europe for centuries.

Another interesting issue put forth in Rushdie's fiction is the resistance of the Indians against the European culture. The European presence in the subcontinent should not be taken to mean that the natives are necessarily affected by and converted to European culture. This is solely due to the split between the coloniser and the colonised. The colonisers live in a separate world they created in India for themselves and the natives are merely the elements of exoticism they want to feel. For the natives, the culture brought to their land by the Empire is nothing but an alien phenomenon. Rushdie explicitly shows how the natives resent those who are influenced by European culture:

> "Ah, I see your confusion," Ghani said, his poisonous smile broadening, "You Europe-returned chappies forget certain things. Doctor Sahib, my daughter is a decent girl ... She does not flaunt her body under the noses of strange men. You will understand that you cannot be permitted to see her, no, not in any circumstances; accordingly I have required her to be positioned behind that sheet. She stands there like a good girl." (*Midnight's Children*: p. 21)

As opposed to the context of colonialist writing and as seen in the above examples, what is indefinable and unidentifiable is not the native inhabitants in post-colonialist writing, because the central point of view, in other words the eyes through which the land is depicted are not the imperial eyes. Those who cannot identify and define the alien culture are the natives this time, in return to the imperial arrogance in colonialist fiction.

What Rushdie also does is to convert the English novel genre. D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke states the fact that although it is not his mother tongue Salman Rushdie chooses to write in English which is a Western language, because he had an English education. Despite this, he "allied himself to Eastern tradition" of storytelling. The narrative strategies, particularly in *Midnight's Children*, "include a first-person narrator, chat, digressions, a considerable length which permits a range of characters and stories" (Goonetilleke, 1998: p. 18). All these narrative devices seem to be borrowed from Eastern genres. There are many paragraphs beginning with "once upon a time" that is a leitmotif throughout the novel (Goonetilleke, 1998: p. 21). Using the language imposed by colonialism on his native land, not only does Rushdie change the discourse of colo-

nialist fiction, but also he hybridises the European novel genre used by Forster and Kipling to write about the subcontinent, thus altering the narrative structure. He pulls the novel genre from its Eurocentric nature and brings a cultural context from a different perspective into the colonialist discourse. He also reproduces the traditional techniques of the Indian oral narrative tradition (Ashcroft, 1989: p. 183). A significant example of this is seen in Saleem Sinai's oral narration that is intervened by his wife Padma's questions. The narration is regularly cut to place Saleem's conversations with Padma who stands as his alter ego to reveal his subconscious.

4. Counter Colonial Discourse in *The God of Small Things*

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* as a counter text against colonialist writing does not seem to be altering the novel genre as happens in the case of *Midnight's Children*. Although Roy does not ally with eastern tradition like Rushdie, her first counter attack is to the use of English language that, in colonialist writing, "becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated". Through this medium, conceptions of "truth", "order" and "reality" become established in the Imperial terms, and this kind of power is rejected in post-colonial writing, (Ashcroft, 1989: p. 7). Arundhati Roy reflects this rejection in *The God of Small Things*. As an author of Indian origin, in this novel set in Kerala in India, Roy reformulates the English grammar through her characters:

> "We're divorced." Rahel hoped to shock him into silence.
>
> "Die-vorced?" His voice rose to such a high register that it cracked on the question mark. He even pronounced the word as though it were a form of death. (The God of Small Things: p. 130)

As a post-colonial writer, Roy makes herself granted the liberty to alter even the formation of words to give secondary meanings. The rejection of the imperial power over the use of language extends to capitalising of the initial letters in her text:

> "When someone says How d'you do? You're supposed to say How d'you do? back. Not 'Fine, thank you.' Come on, say How do YOU do?"
>
> ...
>
> Ambassador Estha felt bluegreyblue eyes on him, and an Imperial Entomologist's nose. He didn't have a How do YOU do? in him.
>
> ...

> And an angry feeling rose in her and stopped around her heart. A Far More Angry Than Necessary feeling. (*The God of Small Things*: p. 145)

Reformulated English grammar, spelling capitalised initials in the middle of the sentences, and ordering words without leaving spaces between them, as in "bluegreyblue", are the expositions of the native child's reaction in *The God of Small Things*. Roy puts it explicitly that the child feels an "Imperial Entomologist's nose" on him while being corrected. It is admitted that he does not have a "how do you do?", so the rejection continues. Culturally he does not have this expression in his vocabulary, because "all post-colonial countries once had or still have 'native' cultures of some kind" as Ashcroft et al. state. The development of post-colonial countries is usually under the influence of their pre-colonial indigenous culture. For this reason, it is quite comprehensible, in Roy's text, to come across the rejection of a standard use of English (Ashcroft, 1989: p. 116).

The Imperial entomology is also denied strongly. The protagonists of *The God of Small Things* reject the redefinition of the native Indians by the Imperial eyes. Ammu, the mother of the twins reacts upon Margaret's surprise when her daughter's hand is inhaled by an Indian, because it is explained to her that it is a way of kissing. She cannot help asking whether men and women do the same to each other. Ammu rightly protests and exclaims ironically that that is how they make babies: "Must we behave like some godforsaken tribe that's just been discovered?" Ammu asked (*The God of Small Things*: p. 180). Here, Roy's style clearly brings her views to the surface. The character created by her under the name Ammu seems to answer the discourse of colonialist fiction where the natives are perceived as a new tribe to be discovered, re-defined and understood.

Elleke Boehmer writes that the distinctive stereotype language of colonialist literature is concerned with the superiority of European culture, and writing, for the colonised people, is the only strong way to resist the colonialist perspectives. While Post-colonial writing reshapes the dominant meanings, post-colonial writers seek to "undercut thematically and formally the discourses which [support] colonisation" (Boehmer, 1995: p. 3). As seen in the extracts from both Roy's and Rushdie's texts, colonised peoples search for their own reality and place in history made by the others. Single voiced authority of colonialist writing leaves its place to the post-

colonial subversion of imperialism in post-colonial writing as opposed to colonialist literature (Boehmer, 1995: p. 4). Both Rushdie's and Roy's fiction, in this sense, exhibit an exceptional opposition to colonialist writing.

5. Colonial Domination in *Kim*

They have a resistance against the colonialist ideas defended by Rudyard Kipling as well as Forster. Kipling, as asserted by John A. McClure, is "a strong defender of the idea of colonial domination" (McClure, 1981: p. 5). In *Kim*, the boy that the novel is named after is always a young, lively and strong Indian boy that remains young in the course of the novel during which he ages from thirteen to sixteen or seventeen. Kim is used in a British Secret Service Plan to overcome a Russian conspiracy. Kim has to work as a messenger between an Afghan working for the British and Colonel Creighton, the head of the Service. The role given to Kim is an imperial one. He is young, strong, attractive and full of never-ending energy as long as he is at the service of the British. Edward Said argues that one should not be mistaken about the boyish pleasures in the character of Kim. These boyish pleasures, according to Said, do not contradict the "overall political purpose of British control over India and Britain's overseas dominions". Pleasure is steadily present in many forms of imperial-colonial writing, and inevitably, *Kim* is one of them (Said, 1993: p. 166).

In most of his writings, Kipling has a White Man. This figure as an idea, a persona, a style of being serves all the Britishers while they are abroad. They are 'dramatically and reassuringly' different from the natives because of the colour of their skin. This figure exists in *Kim* too. In one of Kipling's verses, the road taken by White Men in the colonies is celebrated (Said, 1978: p. 226):

> Now, this is the road that the White Men tread
> When they go to clean a land -
> Iron underfoot and the vine overhead
> And the deep on their hand.
> We have trod that road - and a wet and windy road -
> Our chosen star for guide.
> Oh, well for the world when the White Men tread

Their highway side by side! *

Said criticises strongly the idea that a land is cleaned best by White Men. Kipling's White Men are also quite prepared to go to War, if a danger of European rivalry in the colonies is present (Said, 1978: p. 226).

In *Kim*, every time Kim or any other native Indian addresses an Englishman, they call them *sahib*, a word meaning "the owner" in Urdu. It suggests the idea that Indians are the unidentifiable and incomprehensible "others", and the colonisers are the *sahibs*. Perhaps Said's argument over Kipling's discourse displays the colonialism in his texts. In *Kim*, Kipling's India "has a quality of permanence and inevitability that belongs not just to that wonderful novel but to British India", and also to its history and administrators. Kim, being a character created by Kipling, "requires direction, requires the patronage and outside authority that [his] own impoverished experience cannot provide" (Said, 1993: p. 79, p. 101).

In this respect, Kipling seems to write in a patronising sense. The way Kim is characterised in the text is outside Kim's own will, because he is directed by the imperial authority. As well as in Forster's fiction, in Kipling's too, the colonialist discourse is hidden behind their colonial cultural authority. The colonialist discourse determined by the author's imperial background is written from the centre that recognises the inhabitants of the colonised land as peripheral and thus undermines them either explicitly or implicitly.

Conclusion

The undermining of the colonised non-European lands is true if we agree that "more than three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism" (Ashcroft, 1989: p. 1). In the light of this discussion, colonial and post-colonial literature, "on a superficial reading" embrace the majority of the world's modern literatures, and in return, the "history of Europe for the past few centuries has been profoundly shaped by colonial interests" (Boehmer, 1995: p. 1).

* Rudyard Kipling, *Verse* Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1954, *quoted from* Orientalism *by Said.*

Whether they are written with an affection for India or not, and whether they are shaped in order to satisfy the adventurous feelings of the Empire, *A Passage to India* and *Kim*, in terms and the limitations of the purposes of this study, are written from the imperial centre depicting the subcontinent through imperial eyes and isolating the writers and readers of Europe from the indigenous.

The post-colonial fiction emerging after de-colonisation as discussed in this study so far is rejecting the imperial cultural authority. Colonial literatures seem to be totally converted in post-colonial literatures, not only in terms of language usage but also in terms of hybridising the novel genre. As opposed to colonialist discourse where the standard usage of the English language is the absolute authority of the author, it seems that this authority is refused by the post-colonial writers, by reconstituting the language, deploying untranslated words of the native culture, and seizing the centre and replacing it in a discourse of the colonised place. While colonialist literature remains loyal to the novel genre shaped by European intellectualism, post-colonial literature, as written by subcontinental authors, happens to be flirting with Eastern story-telling techniques. Post-colonial literature depicts the white-European-coloniser as the other taking the former colonised from the periphery to the central standing point, whereas reverse is the case in colonialist fiction.

It is possible to speak for and against the ideological concepts and practices that the different uses of the term postcolonialism refer to. Although there are many anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist interpretations of the term, this paper suggests that the term postcolonial could be used as a periodical term referring to the aftermath of colonization. It is also suggested that the postcolonial writers in question here bring the periphery voices of the formerly colonised cultures to the centre. *Midnight's Children* and *The God of Small Things*, the two novels by two writers of Indian origin are taken here for comparison with *A Passage to India* and *Kim*, the two novels by two writers of European origin. As discussed so far, the first two of these four novels offer non-Eurocentric perspectives as opposed to the other two. They reject European theories of literature. They become the part of a genre that belongs to the post-colonial era. Inter alia, it is among the functions of postcolonial fiction to make the subaltern and suppressed voices heard as well as standing against the colonial oppression.

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