

**DISCURSIVE MYTHS IN DEREK WALCOTT'S OMEROS:
A POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS**

**Pamukkale University
Social Sciences Institution
Master of Arts Thesis
Department of English Language and Literature**

Betül AKÇA

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL

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DENİZLİ**

I declare that all information, research and analysis in this work have been presented under the lights of ethical conduct and academic rules. I also declare that I have referenced and cited all materials in accordance with academic rules and conducts.

Signature 

Name, Last Name: BETÜL AKÇA

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ABSTRACT**DISCURSIVE MYTHS IN DEREK WALCOTT'S OMEROS:
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AKÇA, Betül

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The key elements of post-colonial English Literature include the subversion of Western cultural hegemony and the dislocation of marginalized characters and themes of colonial era. The post-colonial literature deconstructs images and legends, which have existed within the collective consciousness of Western culture from the myths to the present, historically, socially and culturally. Thus, it is significant to study examples of post-colonial literature within the contemporary English writings in order to interpret the cultural conflict between the old colonies and Western culture within the contemporary cultural atmosphere. For, it is only this way that the dilemma and imitation of individuals stuck between their own culture and that of the colonizer will be understood.

Accordingly, this study examines concepts of the identity, alienation to the cultural roots, imitation, dilemma, historical and cultural change, linguistic hybridization, myths and anti-imperialism in the epic poem named *Omeros* by Caribbean-English author and poet Derek Wallcott. In this work, Walcott initially transforms the point of view of the colonizer by changing the old Greek myths, and reflects the point of view of the colonized through the deconstructed myths. Furthermore, by identifying the touristic travels in colonized lands with mythic invasions through the deconstructed myths, he makes allusions to the colonialism. Thanks to this epic poem, he underlines the fact that the island has alienated from its own cultural roots to a great extent and its cultural appearance has gained a similar identity with any other place in the world.

Keywords: Imperialism, Colonialism, Postcolonial Period, Myths

ÖZET

DISCURSIVE MYTHS IN DEREK WALCOTT'S OMEROS: A POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS

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Sömürgecilik sonrası İngiliz edebiyatının temel öğeleri arasında batı kültürel egemenliğinin tersine çevrilmesi ve sömürgecilik döneminin ötekileştirilmiş karakterlerinin ve temalarının yer değiştirmesi bulunmaktadır. Tarihsel, sosyal ve kültürel olarak sömürgecilik sonrası edebiyat mitlerden günümüze batı kültürünün ortak bilinçaltında yer alan imgeleri ve efsaneleri yapışökümüne uğratmaktadır. Bu nedenle, çağdaş İngiliz yazını içinde sömürgecilik sonrası edebiyatın örneklerini çalışmak, eski sömürgelerle batı kültürü arasındaki kültürel çatışmayı, günümüzün kültürel ortamı içerisinde yorumlayabilmek açısından önem taşımaktadır. Kendi kültürü ile sömürgecinin kültürü arasında sıkışmış olan bireylerin ikilemi ve öykünmeciliği ancak böyle anlaşılabilir.

Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmada Karayip kökenli İngiliz yazar ve şair Derek Wallcott'un *Omeros* adlı epik şiirinde kimlik, kültürel kökenlerden uzaklaşma, öykünme, ikilem, tarihsel ve kültürel değişim, dilde melezleşme, mitler ve antiemperyalizm kavramları incelenecektir. Bu eserde Wallcott öncelikle eski Yunan mitlerini değişikliklere uğratarak, sömürgecinin bakış açısını dönüştürüp, değişime uğrayan mitler üzerinden sömürülenin bakış açısını yansıtmaktadır. Değişime uğrayan bu mitler üzerinden de sömürge topraklarındaki turistik gezileri, mitik işgallerle özdeşleştirerek, tarihsel olarak sömürgeciliğe göndermeler yapmaktadır. Bu epik şiir aracılığıyla adanın kültürel kökenlerinden ne kadar uzaklaştığını, kültürel görünümünün dünyanın her hangi bir yeriyle özdeşlik kazandığını vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Emperyalizm, Sömürgecilik, Sömürge Sonrası Dönem, Mitler

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INTRODUCTION

Relationship based on self-material interests gave birth to a harsh system all over the world. The system, namely colonialism, has divided people as the ruler and the ruled. European empires, as rulers, have been powerful to shape the world. Regardless of geographical regions or distances, promulgating the ideology of imperialism has strengthened their power and has constituted the east as the ruled. The ruled ones have been used and abused in terms of their race, religion, and culture under the name of civilization. Since they have been commodified, they have lost their past and future. Colonial literature treated the colonised people from their own perspectives, and characterised them as uncivilised, othered, and deprived.

Supposedly, when decolonisation started, colonialism came to an end. However, as natural outcomes of previous times, the results of colonisation have still maintaining its effects on colonised people. Therefore, post-colonial period, the era in which the effects of colonization still continues covers a long process. As the impacts of colonisation had penetrated into the bosom of cultures, post-colonial period is not restricted with regions and time. Post-colonial literature has had an opposing view to reflect colonised people according to their own perspectives. All struggles and calamities have been the main issue of post-colonial literature.

Derek Walcott, as one of the writers and poets from a formerly colonised region, wrote works reflecting the colonial tribulations. He was born in Castries, Saint Lucia and he directly witnessed hybridity, cultural clashes, otherness, mimicry that have been the fundamental concerns of post-colonial writing. In *Omeros*, Walcott not only presents the conditions of colonised people, but also he puts forward possible ways to overcome the troubles of colonization. The present circumstances of Saint Lucia indicate all the negative effects of colonial past. The host culture and the target culture pave the way to various mutual interactions that result in persistent change in behaviour, attitudes, acts, characteristic features, life style of people. This lasting change not only penetrates the deeper parts of the colonised but also it is observed on the side of the coloniser. Physical end of colonisation does not make an apparent sense in the heart and the mind of the colonised people as they have already lost their past, present, and future.

It is important for people whose history had colonial oppression to hold on to the life by rewriting their own destiny. Since their past have been stolen and their present have been designated by imperial authorities, their existence is only restricted their cultural inheritance. Before they totally forget traditions and values that belonged to their ancestors, passing them to their posterity may be considered as a way to preserve them. In this sense, as long as the bond between individual and ancestral inheritance is powerful, colonised people can maintain reaction against target culture.

As aforementioned, Walcott presents the situation of his people in his poem. Saint Lucian people characterised as ordinary fishermen and ordinary servants of comers to the island in *Omeros* have been processed as people that hardly maintain their lives under the oppression of post-colonial life. The absolute power to nourish their soul is to hold on to their past so that they could exist as they are. Therefore, this study aims to explore and analyse *Omeros*, the epic poem of Derek Walcott, in terms of recreation of the Ancient myths as a stance against colonial writing under the lights of post-colonial studies by considering the impacts of process during colonialism, and post-colonialism.

This thesis is divided into four parts. First part titled as "Imperialism, Colonialism, Post-colonialism and Myths" gives brief definitions and the background information of the concepts such as imperialism, colonialism, post-colonialism under the lights of the theoretical studies, and the views of many critics who have been pioneers of post-colonial studies. Also, this chapter gives historical, social and ideological reasons for occurrence of colonialism and its evolvement into post-colonial period. Moreover, the first part gives short information on post-colonial literature and the characteristics of post-colonial works including Derek Walcott and his works. The definitions of myths and the importance of myths in post-colonial works are pointed out in this part.

The second part titled as "Myths in *Omeros*" gives analyses of myths in *Omeros*. The transformation of ancient myths to ordinary myths of the colonised indigenous Saint Lucia is going to be analysed. How Walcott processes mythological character by their similarities and differences to their ancient counterparts is going to be

analysed in this part. Also the mythological allusions and their contribution to the development of the theme of this work are going to be handled in this part.

The third part titled as "Post-Colonial Period in *Omeros*" gives the framework of colonial impacts on Saint Lucia and people who live on the island. Saint Lucian colonial past and its natural outcomes on physical appearance and spirit of the island are going to be analysed according to the perspective of the poet by giving references to the related quotes from the poem. Also, the change in the characterization of both island and the characters resulting from the influx of tourists, and the immigrants are going to be handled with its outcomes as hybridization, mimicry, ambivalence, and identity crisis.

In the fourth chapter titled as "Deconstruction of Myths in *Omeros*" the second and the third chapter's arguments are going to be discussed together with the context of post-colonial literature. The issues of how Walcott challenges colonial writing and how he processes his point of view are going to be analysed in this chapter. His objection to colonial writing by deconstructing myths with indigenous people to hybridize the Western myths, and also his creating cultural identities to strengthen cultural bonds within his characters are going to be analysed by giving references related quotes from the poem.

CHAPTER ONE

IMPERIALISM, COLONIALISM, POSTCOLONIALISM AND MYTHS

Imperialism and colonization are the key terms to understand and analyse the post-colonial period as they both have consequences that create the conditions of post-colonial era. Since they have been advocating each other and have significant relevance, they seem to substitute one another. However, analysing the outcomes of imperial and colonial process requires the remarking of invisible differences between them.

Imperialism means "the power or authority of an emperor, the spirit of empire" (Donald, 1874: 249) that is derived from the term empire which means "supreme control: the territory under the dominion of an emperor" (Donald, 1874: 153) Imperialism and empire are interrelated terms, because an empire has been the means of perpetuation of imperialist principles.

In relation to its content empire means desire for authority, power and hegemony that constitute the consequences of imperialism. In that sense imperialism has been a policy and an act of extending economy, power and frontier of a state to maintain its perpetuation by holding the hegemony over other states' political, cultural, and economical entities. As Said defines, "imperialism" means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory" (Said, 1993: 9).

In historical sense imperialism has been divided into three main periods throughout its time span. First one started with the starting point of humanity and covers the time until the nineteenth century related to the extension of empires Old empires such as Persians, Alexander, Roman and Byzantine have pursued imperial process to extent their territories till the sixteenth century (Bush, 2006: 11). The second era of imperialism encapsulates colonial period of empires. After the conquest of America, Bush evaluates it as "Eurocentric prioritization of imperialism" (Bush, 2006: 8). Imperialism has led to different processes. Empires like France, British, Spain and Portuguese have come to the state of exploitative empires through their imperial acts. While early empires extended, industrialization has changed the way imperialism

functioned. Bush states that “such early settlements schemes reflected utopian dreams and the contemporary obsession with mercantile wealth rather than imperial ambitions. The industrialization of England, however, irrevocably changed the nature of imperialism” (Bush, 2006: 17). Therefore, their interests turned to share African and Asian lands. The last and the highest point of imperialism have been associated with capitalism as it has maintained its perpetuation after decolonization. After world wars and decolonization period, empires have supplied their imperial continuity because of the strong relation between economy and imperialism. Still in contemporary empires like the USA or Russia have been leading an imperial policy. At this point the term imperialism turned to a controversial issue which leads to different definitions; Lenin points out the economic side of imperialism and defines it as the highest stage of capitalism and he evaluates imperialism as a degenerate capitalism;

Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination and not for liberty, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations — all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as parasitic or decaying capitalism (Lenin, 1999: 120).

Imperialism has relied on justification of some causes that constitute its idea within the imperial process. Ideas like civilisation, racial and cultural superiority, security have been imposed as the justifying ideas that support imperialism that Empires regarded as their right to hold the hegemony over other countries which, they thought, had been inferior in terms of culture, race and civilisation. They believed to civilise them, and under the proposition of securing the colonized, they secured their own boundaries and power. (Bush, 2006: 24) Definitely, economic side of imperialism was economic exploitation. Desire for raw material, labour force to process them, and new place to market them were the economic means of imperial policy of powerful empires.

These ideologies formed imperialism, as mentioned above, bring different definitions of imperialism and make it a controversial issue among authorities. According to Barbara Bush it is a "comprehensive concept" and "untangling imperialism depends on how imperialism is defined and explained and on specific conjunctions of

internal and external factors relating to different imperial powers." (Bush, 2006: 43) Being formal imperialism means that it has an imperialised country and it exists till the imperialized one gains its sovereignty, in that case informal imperialism exists since the imperialized one has already depended on. Namely, identifying whether it is informal imperialism or formal imperialism does not have so much contribution to explore and explain its problem for post-colonial period. The important point is to reach the idea that they both have effects on people culturally and socially at the end since imperialism forms the basis for colonialism.

Geographical discoveries led European powers to confiscate new sources. After the Renaissance, developments in the fields of science, arts and industry and the collapse of Byzantium Empire paved the ways of colonialism in Europe. Although authorities agree that fifteenth century is the starting point of colonialism; historically colonialism dates back to the early periods of humanity, since human beings have always had the need for settlement and establishment of colonies. After the fifteenth century, as it historically dates back to that era, it has gained a new notion. Ania Loomba evaluates ebb and flow of colonialism without breaking the chain of past and Modern Europe:

Modern European colonialism cannot be sealed off from these earlier histories of contact—the Crusades, or the Moorish invasion of Spain, the legendary exploits of Mongol rulers or the fabled wealth of the Incas or the Mughals were real or imagined fuel for the European journeys to different parts of the world. And yet, these newer European travels ushered in new and different kinds of colonial practices which altered the whole globe in a way that these other colonialisms did not. (Loomba, 1998: 8-9)

As it is quoted above, colonialism had existed in the earlier periods before it gained different features based on economics. Especially after the industrial revolution, the necessity of raw material, sources of other countries and the necessity of new places to market the products have been the basic reasons that related modern colonization to economic reasons. In order to continue the persistence of production, in order to be more powerful than the other countries, to spread Christianity and to gain superiority over the other countries, colonization was a must for maintenance of powerful empires.

For those reasons mentioned above, Europe aimed at colonizing first America and Asia and later aimed at colonizing Africa especially when Ottoman Empire began to lose its power in Africa.

Colonialism and imperialism seem to have the same meaning as they carry a close relationship. Since they seem to have the same notion to a certain extent, they have substituted each other. However, there are slight ties and differences between them. While imperialism is comprehensive, colonialism seems to be the resulting act of that comprehensive power. The distinctive side is the capacity of existence. As Bush points out "informal imperialism can exist without colonialism but colonialism cannot exist without imperialism" (Bush, 2006: 46). In this sense colonialism can be the result of imperialism as Said asserts: "...colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (Said, 1993: 9). Therefore, colonialism has been dependent on ideologies like imperialism and orientalism that have been evaluated as cogent grounds of it. As McLeod states, colonialism is the act of imperial ideas: "Colonialism is only one form of practice which results from the ideology of imperialism, and specifically concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location" (McLeod, 2000: 7).

Also Loomba draws attention to the recurrent side of colonialism and points out that "colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods. But colonialism in this sense is not merely the expansion of various European powers into Asia, Africa or the Americas from the sixteenth century onwards; it has been a recurrent and widespread feature of human history" (Loomba, 1998: 8). As stated in the above quotation, colonialism has existed in its historical structure with its power of conquest and control of others, but its difference depends on justificatory ideologies within its body.

Thus, like an umbrella of that body, imperialism, as a major ideology, covers it, generates important reason for colonialism. Alastair Pennycook evaluates imperialism as the most extensive structuring:

At one level the concept of colonialism is fairly unproblematic, referring to the settlement of territory in one region or country by people from outside that area, with control over the new territory generally remaining in the hands of the country from which the colonizers have come. Imperialism, generally speaking, can then be seen as the larger organization of colonies into one economic, military or political system controlled by the imperial power. (Pennycook, 1998: 34)

Imperialism is much more comprehensive than colonialism as quoted above. In this sense colonialism has needed the support of imperial power; it cannot exist itself but it can be the most effective practice with subsidiary ideology of imperialism. For countries, imperial power's acts, conquest of a land and profit from its wealth, have not been considered an appropriate process. However, justificatory reasons of imperialism like superiority of political, military, economic system, superiority of culture, religion, race and civilization have legitimized colonialism.

Further to that, colonists have adjudged the idea of superiority after they had obtained information about others. They have combined those reasons with information about others so that they could justify their act. So, that combination has brought about Orientalism as another ideological base for colonialism. As colonial acts have been located in historical scene, they have been identified with knowledge of unknown east. Since empires have felt the necessity of colonies, to learn and to reach knowledge about others are closely connected with colonialism. For colonialists, curiosity has been the means of reaching the knowledge of imperfections of East. At that point elimination of deficiencies has turned to be the supportive side of colonialism. For example, "to say that an Englishman in India or Egypt in the later nineteenth century took an interest in those countries that was never far from their status in his mind as British colonies" (Said, 1979: 11). As Edward Said explores, without the meaning of justificatory colonial acts, for imperial powers, there has never been an interest to learn East. With the aim of encapsulating wealth including natural sources, and of holding authority over colonised and benefiting by material and nonmaterial; colonialists have ascertained the nature of others. Accordingly, they have performed disciplinary studies under the name of

orientalism. According to Said interests in knowing the others have given birth to close relationships between East and West. (Said, 1979: 9)

The most formidable ally of economic and political control had long been the business of 'knowing' other peoples because this 'knowing' underpinned imperial dominance and became the mode by which they were increasingly persuaded to know themselves: that is, as subordinate to Europe. A consequence of this process of knowing became the export to the colonies of European language, literature and learning as part of a civilising mission which involved the suppression of a vast wealth of indigenous cultures beneath the weight of imperial control. (Ashcroft et. all, 1995: 1)

As quoted above Ashcroft explains the importance of knowledge for colonial process to supply authorial control over other people. By imposing their culture, imperial powers have legitimized colonialism and have recreated their east in accordance with their desire.

Creating the new East that serves the West has been as easy as creating characteristics of a child because for West attaining the knowledge and the nature of a child and transforming it into a submissive frame has already been the outcomes of oriental ideology. As Said points out in *Orientalism*, the East was born as it was, and it was not discovered but it had been made oriental related to the desires of the West. He says that "The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be "Oriental" in all those ways considered common place by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it *could be*-that is submitted to being-made - Oriental" (Said, 1979: 5-6). Therefore, recreation process of the East as oriental has been a cultural process so as to achieve their objective. They have imposed it with "distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts" (Said, 1979: 12). In this sense, texts have been efficient ways consciously to support the idea of the West. They have approached the unknown East in the texts and they have constituted that awareness after texts had reached anticipated success. Said explains the effects of texts' success with the example of fierce lion in people's mind before and after reading:

Favouring the textual attitude is the appearance of success. If one reads a book claiming that lions are fierce and then encounters a fierce lion (I simplify, of course). the chances are that one will be encouraged to read more books by that same author, and believe them. But if, in addition, the lion book instructs one how to deal with a fierce lion, and the instructions work perfectly. then not only will the author be greatly believed, he will also be impelled to try his hand at other kinds of written performance. (Said, 1979: 93-94)

As it is explained in the quotation above, the unknown has gone through a process over texts and has been perceived in an intended way. When their perception coincides with the idea transferred through texts, they reach success and it leads people to write more and more. Thus, inevitably, literature has taken its share.

The important point here is literature has been an occasion so as to reflect ideological conscious. Philip Darby draws attention to imaginative literature in terms of its inseparability from international relations. He states that "imaginative literature and analysis in international relations do not inhabit different worlds; they overlap and even intertwine - or at least they should" (Darby, 1998: 19). Indeed, he does not praise the ideological side of colonialism but he focuses on literature and international relations that have mutual relationships and that always have been hand in hand. Which one is more effective or more dominant throughout literary time may be controversial but considering that colonialism literature has served it as it has played the role of new notions according to imperial ideologies through written works, literature legitimizes the colonialist act of big empires.

Furthermore, those works have been influential in order to grab minds of people related to their emotions. With politics, ideologies and other disciplines it is hard to take attention of people and create new perspectives. In this sense literature has not been unsuccessful to reach the heart of people and it has engrained ideologies behind colonialism in the minds of people. "Readers are drawn in by literature's social orientation and the way in which the political is embedded in the personal. Readers relate more easily because feelings and emotions nestle alongside power and interest" (Darby, 1998: 29). Therefore, readers of literary works have inoculated subliminal

perception behind colonialism and they have not failed to impersonate colonialist power.

Obviously those perceptions were their superiority and administration while peoples of the East were inferior and they did not have the faculty of ruling. Accordingly, European peoples accept themselves as the centre of the world with the power of ruling the East since the Eastern peoples are others. The West is the centre of power, economy, science and civilisation, and so on. For European peoples the condition of accepting others as human beings requires a revolutionary change of their indigenous culture and indigenous nature. Historically and culturally they changed and fitted the conditions of colonialism. They were exiled from their own lands to be workers. They were hybridized both biologically and culturally. They had to constitute a new community for themselves. As Mishra states in his work *The Literature of Indian Diaspora* "Nations are not fixed entities, national cultures are not absolute cultures, they are not governed, like religion, by perennial, universal values. Nations and cultures are products of their multifaceted histories, and they grow and change with the times" (Mishra, 2007: 20). During colonial period they had a tendency to be shaped according to the controlling power of European enterprises without considering whether they are happy or uncomfortable with the exile within their spiritual and physical conditions. The relationship between Dr. Aziz and Fielding in E.M. Forster's *A Passage of India* as an example of power shows how they are forced to change their identities. Just because Aziz was educated in the West and he speaks English, he has the opportunity to make friendship. With his own language and his natural behaviour, he fails to do it and is accused of harassment. However, the texts' main concern during colonial era legitimized colonialism and writers certainly focused on valid reasons of colonialism and instead of negative effects. With the bounds of benefits, a character with a mixed identity and hybridized culture may be the concern of a work like the character Kim in Rudyard Kipling's novel. Kim is accepted as English since he highlights the ideal English projects related to the positive effects of colonialism.

Also, literature has moral effects to highlight the support of colonial act and in literary works morality is induced via personal acts. "literature's moral agency, its capacity to induce us to reappraise our values and sensibilities, follows from its

personalization of issues and the models of behaviour it offers for our contemplation - many of them beyond our direct experience" (Darby, 1998: 49). As he states here literature's moral side is an effective way to legitimize their acts. In that way they had the right to change the language, religion, and other traditional characteristics of the East because individual in the West spoke English, believed in Christianity, acted and behaved like a European individual. Intrinsically, those modelled behaviour had been visualised and exuded. The gap between colonised and colonialist extended much more that way. "It was standard fare for novels of empire to emphasize the gulf between European and non-European cultures" (Darby, 1998: 45). In order to tame the East, they imposed their own traditional values and forced them to behave like European and caused insoluble mixed identities.

As aforementioned, literature had a new notion of spreading imperial ideologies throughout European people during colonial period:

The work of late-Victorian authors shored up and pushed forward the imperial enterprise. Haggard, Buchan and, more ambiguously, Kipling and Conrad rendered the expansive spirit of upper- and middle-class English society, magnified some of its constituent elements and projected the whole to a far wider audience. (Darby, 1998: 25).

With the Industrial Revolution and the rise of a new middle class, novel, as a new genre of literature, served imperialism especially with its portrayal of individual characters. As stated above, moral issues were transferred to the majority of society over an individual main protagonist in the novels. The protagonist is definitely European, Christian and white. He may be an officer instead of a farmer, a merchant instead of a worker and makes a voyage to the East to educate people there. The setting of novels was colonised places. People had strange names and they were like wild creatures deprived of Western culture. As in the example of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, the most famous example of British colonisation, since it praises colonisation and British colonisation is justified and practiced with the acts of Robinson in the novel. He tamed Friday, constituted master-slave relationship, and ruling the island by bringing civilisation to it. Reader comes across the term "subject" obviously in the

mouth of Robinson since all colonised people are called as subjects of the ruling empire. Europe, its people, and their commanding abilities were being praised while the people in the East were being othered. They are ruled, forced to change their culture, cultural identities and all their basic institutions like education, language, religion, and they accepted the systems of the colonising country.

As aforementioned, main justifying ideology behind colonialism was imperialism. However, in the twentieth century, economic, scientific, and sociological development brought modernity to societies. It opened roads to new relationship between modernity and imperialism. While imperialism had been legitimizing colonialism, with the help of modernity it was spreading nationalism to the detriment of colonialism. As Bush states:

Through imperial expansion, modern Western concepts of progress and linear time, capitalist modes of production, liberal democracy, and nationalism were spread globally, demonstrating the triumph of civilization over barbarity. The impact of this modernity on the rest of the world was profound and had far-reaching transformative influences on the economies, social relations and cultures of colonized peoples. (Bush, 2006: 78)

Thus, decolonization did not take a long time. After the Second World War, decolonization started and great empires lost their colonies. However, after that period, a new period began when colonisers have granted independence to their colonies and thus started the postcolonial period. John McLeod states twentieth century as colonial demise of British Empires:

At the turn of twentieth century, the British Empire covered a vast area of the earth that included parts of Africa Asia, Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, and Ireland. At the turn of twenty first century there remain a small number of British colonies. The phrase 'the British Empire' is most commonly used these days in the past tense, signifying a historical period and set of relationships which are no longer current. In short, twentieth century has been the century of colonial demise, and of decolonisation

for millions of people who were once subject to the authority of British crown. (McLeod, 2000: 6)

Then, decolonization started in India and Pakistan in 1947, then South Asia, Africa and the Caribbeans followed. Ghana in 1957, Nigeria in 1960, Sierra Leone in 1961, Uganda, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago in 1962, Kenya in 1963, Barbados and Guyana in 1966 and Saint Lucia in 1979 won their independence (Greenblatt, 2012: 1894). McLeod states two reasons for independence of those colonised nations; one is influential nationalist movement within their mind and hearth and the second one is the rise of rapid power of America and the Soviet Union (McLeod, 2000: 10). The British Empire had not enough capacity of economic system to handle the nationalist movements of colonised people and so decolonization came for those colonised peoples.

The effects of colonial period have made irreversible problems for colonised peoples in the East. Post-colonialism then began like a new-born child of colonisation that may be called as descendent of colonisation, because from that time colonisers have changed their method in order to colonise other countries. Since the term 'post' defines the period after, it opens new critical arguments and discussions whether it is really the end of colonisation or a new beginning. So this post in fact shows the interaction between the coloniser and the colonised after the independence.

Postcolonial period covers all cultures that have been affected from the beginning of colonialism till today. Namely, post-colonial period characterises cultures that had been imposed by colonialism. However post-colonial period is not restricted with a certain period and geographical region since colonised cultures have lived nearly in every part of the world. After decolonisation, people began to migrate from different parts of the world to the imperial centre in post-colonial period. It leads to various mutual interactions and changes in not only the culture of immigrants but also in host culture. While host culture was being affected by different types of new food and clothing habits, by the art and culture of immigrants, they were also being imposed by their literature. In order not to be othered, as they were hybridised, they mimic their behaviours and attitudes and they stayed in between host culture and themselves, namely that process caused identity crisis for them.

As mentioned above, hybridity is one of the main concerns of postcolonial study. In postcolonial period hybridization has been created inevitably because decolonization was the time that opened up a road to a new hybrid culture. After a long time namely, by the adaptation of colonising culture it was impossible for people to save their own cultures and identities. Living in two cultures facing the struggles between a foreign culture and his own culture causes new forms of cultural differences as Robert Young points out by referring to Said; "hybridity begins to become the form of cultural difference itself, the jarrings of differentiated culture... Hybridity here becomes a third term which can never in fact *be* third because, as a monstrous inversion, a miscreated perversion of its progenitors, it exhausts the differences between them" (Young, 1995: 22). Prabhu evaluates hybridity not as a challenging stance to colonialism but as its outgoing effects. For her, "hybridity is everywhere... hybridity is not everywhere... Hybridity, when carefully considered in its material reality, will reveal itself to actually be a history of slavery, colonialism, and rape, inherited in terms of race" (Prabhu, 2007: 12). So, it is possible to come across hybridization everywhere since contemporary time includes postmodern subjects according to Hall and now national identities are damaged. With decolonization London and other metropolises were not the same as they had been before because of the migration of millions of peoples. According to Bhabha, in the introduction part of *The Location of Culture*, as Prabhu also gives references to him while she is positioning hybridity, the confrontation of two or more different cultures, neither belong to colonised nor belong to colonialists, a new culture is born as 'Third Space', they do not belong to only one holistic culture and they are not 'unitary in themselves' and pure. (Bhabha, 1994: 36) Creating hybrid culture and process of belonging to a new culture, race or environment is not stable and harmful process for both colonialists and colonised. However, some elite part only talks about hybridity which proves Prabhu's statement that hybridity is not everywhere.

Moreover, hybridity brings imitation of culture to migrant people. Accordingly, mimicry is another concern of postcolonial literature. Colonised people imitate hyperbolically the target culture. Mimicry is appropriation and adaptation of the coloniser or host culture. It is definitely a cultural concern as the adapted behaviours are more related to culture. In its basic definition it is imitation, however cultural concept of mimicry is more than what it means in its simple definition because imitation itself

refers to meanness imitation. On the other hand, in colonial discourse, imitation comes from inner identity and effects with a difference because identity influences of people necessitate recurrence as defined by Bhabha:

In mimicry, the representation of identity and meaning is rearticulated along the axis of metonymy. As Lacan reminds us mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonization of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying 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 a power that is elusive because it hides no essence, no 'itself'. (Bhabha, 1994: 90)

As it is stated above, people belong to national cultures imitate host culture as colonised culture is different from the host culture. This mimicry creates split self which leads to identity problems. Creating a fixed identity seems to be a solution in order to objectify split self but huge gap between host culture and national culture makes it impossible. Therefore, mimicry is not a permanent solution to get around label of other. Since new culture which is formed with the clash of nation and target culture is not able to stand same and with mimicry it is obviously open to ambivalence. As colonizer have been the major hegemony and oppressive force to change the colonized culture, colonized cultures stay in between their identity and the identity of host culture.

Since, after the independence, it was not an easy and quick period for colony to change the effects of colonisation, representations of colonisation still continued. According to Ashcroft, "Post-colonial literatures are a result of interaction between imperial culture and the complex of indigenous cultural practices" (Ashcroft et.all, 1995: 1). So post-colonial writing was to change colonial writing by challenging it and living as opposed to it. For this reason, postcolonial fiction analyses the works created by writers from the formerly colonised countries of British Empire. In colonial fiction eastern people were considered as other, uncivilised, and debarred. Their identities were trampled. As Darby states it was necessary for them to reflect themselves with their perspectives instead of colonialist discourse:

Just as the accentuation of cultural differences by European writers served to provide a justification for imperial rule, so in the hands of Third World writers it carries a message about the damage wrought by imperialism and puts on record the worth and history of their own cultures. (Darby, 1998: 46)

In this sense postcolonial literature includes works written in post-colonial era and includes ideological and historical discourse because postcolonial literature cannot be thought without the effects of history and ideology on colonised cultures.

At the same time hybridity, difference, cultural clashes, otherness, mimicry and ambivalence have been the main characteristics of postcolonial literature. Postcolonial fiction deals with cultural and biological hybridity, mutual prejudice between coloniser and colonised, identity crisis of colonised ones when they migrate to colonisers' dominion. Characters in post-colonial fiction firstly come across a society which turned into a hybridized culture and try to imitate the host culture in order not to be othered. Later they recognized their own reality and began to feel in between their own reality and host culture and this inevitably led them to identity crisis and ambivalence.

As novel and ideologies went hand in hand in colonial period, and as it had been the main tool to reflect the ideological, political and cultural superiority, in postcolonial period it was the main concern of colonised nations in order to maintain a stance against oppressive cultures. As Priyamvada Gopal quoted from Timothy Brennan; "Nations, then, are imaginary constructs that depend for their existence on an apparatus of cultural fictions in which imaginative literature plays a decisive role" (Gopal, 2009: 5). It was an indicative power over peoples of indigenous culture. Chinua Achebe, Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Timothy Mo, Sam Selvon have been the prominent figures of postcolonial literature because of their stance against colonialism. In their works they criticise colonialism and their character portrayals reflect the effects of colonialism and become their main characters and peoples of host culture are othered. As opposed to colonial literature, characters reflect their own nation and language intertwined with the language of host culture. In that way they reversed the colonial discourse.

Like novel, poetry in postcolonial literature deals with the issues and themes related to the effects of colonial past of the colonised people. Throughout the colonial history they had been exposed to parlay of colonisers which caused cultural, traditional and social confusions. Therefore, poets used the same issues which prompted the poets as they had been affected by the outcomes of colonialism same as other people who had the same past. Manjinder Kaur comments that empires created means to maintain the perpetuation of their power over colonies and poets had mission to efface those means:

It became the colonial poet's task and urgent need to wipe out these myths and white lies as he set out to make poetry. And in different colonial settings and landscapes, the poets created great poetry out of memory, displacement, loss of history, exile, brutality, neglect and through the celebration of rejected or little known aspects of environment, nature, seasons and daily cycle of life. (Kaur, 2015: 541)

In this sense, Derek Walcott has been one of the poets who deals with the themes related to consequences of colonial history. Derek Walcott is a renowned poet among other postcolonial literary writers and poets by his literary style and treatment of the themes of postcolonial period. His full name is Derek Alton Walcott. He was born in Saint Lucia in 1930 and died in 2017. Although he was educated by her parents, as a painter, his career development was turned to writing. He is not only famous for his poetry, but also for his plays. He also wrote a criticism book. Some of his works are *In a Green Night: Poems between 1948 and 1960*. The verse in *Selected Poems* written in 1964, *The Castaway* in 1965, and *The Gulf* in 1969, *Another Life* in 1973, *In Sea Grapes* in 1976, *The Star-Apple Kingdom* in 1979, *The Fortunate Traveller* in 1981, *Midsummer* in 1984. His *Collected Poems, between 1948 and 1984*, was published in 1986. Then he wrote poems *The Bounty* in 1997, *Tiepolo's Hound*, *The Prodigal* in 2004, *Selected Poems*, in 2007, *White Egrets* in 2010. He wrote 30 plays, and the best-known of them are *Dream on Monkey Mountain* in 1967, *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* in 1958, *Pantomime* in 1978, *The Odyssey: A Stage Version What the Twilight Says* which was written in 1998 is his literary criticism book. In 1992 he received the Nobel Prize for his epic poem *Omeros* which has been accepted as his masterpiece by critics. Some other prizes he received are Arts Council of Wales International Writers

Prize in 1990, T. S. Eliot Prize in 2010 OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature in 2011 Griffin Trust Lifetime Recognition Award in 2015 ("Encyclopaedia Britannica", 2019).

He is accepted as innovative, subtle and intelligent with his literary style. He is also renowned for his use of symbols, conceits, metaphors, and allusions. He uses beauty of landscape of Caribbean islands as Kaur states; "Walcott is renowned to sensitively mark each aspect of his natural world-from stones, rocks, trees, flowers, birds, animals, to the climatic changes, even the blowing of breeze across the landscape- and correlate it with the life and shifts in its passage through time" (Kaur, 2015: 541). Also his use of Homeric style and of elaborating the lyric form with creoles challenges the classical, canonical texts and grammatical power of English language and that makes Walcott's style impressive among other poets.

The themes of his works are closely connected to his rooted link of his life. In his works he uses natural beauty of Caribbean, cultural experience of the island, national themes which have been cultural clashes, race, language and isolation between European and national culture. As a black writer he feels the alienation and he focuses on national identity and exile of nations. Caribbean islands, especially Saint Lucia and their colonial history left so many traces that impelled his creativity as he was born there. He defines Caribbean island and its experience through his poetry. Kaur states that "His poetry often throws up complex issues of conflict and portrays the impact of the cyclical waves of colonial incursions on the West Indian past and its geographical location, and that changed their destiny and identity forever" (Kaur, 2015: 541). Related to Caribbean past, Walcott's main concerns are the thematic concerns of postcolonial literature. Same as the other postcolonial writers and poets, he had obstacles because of his hybridized identity and he developed an opposing stance to the colonial effects through his poetry. In this sense Iftecarul Azam defines Walcott as "a melting pot of ambivalence, hybridity and postcolonial dilemma that have been frequently manifested in his poetry. Being a hybridized identity himself, Walcott has greater struggles to overcome through his poems" (Azam, 2016: 342).

Also he created postcolonial myths as myths have been the main means of continuity of the white culture to preserve their oppressive identities. Walcott uses myths and deals with them from his own aspect to dislocate their functions. Therefore, myths have been important instruments for colonisers to spread the ideology behind colonial past and for the colonised to invert the effects of colonial past.

Myths have been speeches created by people with the purpose of explaining unknown history of people, nature and the relationship of them. Existence of earth and human being and the existence of other creatures had been mystery for people and they created common satisfactory myths to clarify those mysterious events. Those myths have been means of unifying Gods, Goddesses, peoples, animals and the nature itself and they have been the means of understanding and interpreting on them. Still in contemporary world myths maintain their importance and they are the resources for people to create a common universal idea in order to lead people. Since myths have been speeches and they have been created according to the needs of human desires; they have been transformed throughout the time within oral and written literature and are related to those changes. In case of necessity they have been the important sources of creating common history and common future. Therefore, myths are significant as they are the products of people's history and at the same time they are the seeds of next harvest.

Myth etymologically comes from French word *mythe* and from Latin *mythus*, or from Greek *mythos* which means "signified any story or plot, whether true or invented" (Abrams, 1999: 170). It is defined as speech, story, or thought comes from unknown origin. According to Hamilton myths came into being as a result of relationship between nature and people as people had tried to find answers to unknown questions. Later those myths became the basis of other myths:

Greek mythology is largely made up of stories about gods and goddesses, but it must not be read as a kind of Greek Bible, an account of the Greek religion. According to the most modern idea, a real myth has nothing to do with religion. It is an explanation of something in nature; how, for instance, any and everything in the universe came into existence: men, animals, this or that tree

or flower, the sun, the moon, the stars, storms, eruptions, earthquakes, all that is and all that happens. (Hamilton, 1999: 10)

People created those stories not only to explain the unknown but also to create a consistent system. Since myths are the creation of human being, they are the reflection of human nature and human body. Universal Senses related to feelings, angers, happiness, hopes, desires have all been shaped according to an ideal myth. Hercules has been the symbol of masculine power while Odysseus symbolizes the intelligence of human being. Hundreds of wives and husbands have, for thousands of years, lived through the same discussion as that of Zeus and Hera after Zeus' betrayal and Hera lived the crisis of jealousy. So ancient Gods were formed as human nature and they became the idealized examples for people both for those times and for today. Edith Hamilton evaluates myths as "One need only place beside them in imagination any Greek statue of a god, so normal and natural with all its beauty, to perceive what a new idea had come into the world. With its coming, the universe became rational" (Hamilton, 1999: 5). Therefore, they become rational within the idea of people related to their imagination and they also symbolise the ideal people.

Myths have been important tools throughout history as they have the characteristic of shaping people with their significance of changing within time and conveying hidden messages. While Hall analyses the concept of cultural identity he questioned subject and cultural identity and he focuses on sociological subject as a consequence of relations between self and other. Memory from the past, according to him, is one of the three principles that unify people to create cultural identity as identity is "historically, not biologically defined" (Hall et. all, 1996: 598). In this sense myths have the function of creating identities as they are the created ancient ancestors of people. They have been the source of imaginative thought and lead people with either reasonable or unreasonable ideas. Myths reflect the ideal society within ideal person since they have been the basis of conceptual skills. Reasons of events and causes and effects of them are all explained. Accordingly, they have passed down from ancient ages to contemporary time. Myths are not real and the validity of them is limited to the changes of history by people. All myths have been formed and passed to the next generations both in written form and orally and they affect people. According to

Barthes, "myth is a special type of speech... system of communication that it is a message" (Barthes, 1972: 109). In this sense, as being speech, myths have been used as a way of telling or saying some important ideologies either in the form of a story or in the form of a person but not in the form of an ordinary speech. Therefore, Barthes focuses on its functioning as an instrument to send secret messages which keep hidden meanings. Those messages and ideologies exist around in real world. They are natural, same as the growing period of newborn babies so that people could accept without understanding their real functions. In fact, he analyses what language needs to become a myth. He relies on Saussure's theory and concludes that myth is a second-order semiotic system. It takes an already constituted sign and turns it into a signifier which is a myth itself. To embody, he gives the explanation of Black soldier who salutes the French flag. At first sight, the signifier, a soldier, signified his being saluting the flag. On the other hand, those two become the signs themselves and in fact that myth tells that France is a big empire that covers people all around the world including both whites and blacks. Thus, myths have been imposed and affected the people in order to create people who believe ideology represented through natural myths.

As stated above, myths are produced by people, namely they are the history of powerful states and empires. Although myths are created by poets or writers they reflect the real life for those big empires in order to make a national conscious. They depict the civilization, culture, education, religion, and human nature of dominant countries. Thereby, it becomes easier to penetrate into the deep parts of colonized culture, both physically and spiritually. As Darby states "the revival of old myths and legends about the heroic and the romantic and the celebration of values associated with masculinity and adventure" (Darby, 1998: 25) describe the ideal colonial power through fiction for both cultures. So, while myths are the means for affecting others, through time, they become history themselves in order to affect next generations. When such fictional tool and history are considered together, it is inevitably questioned and analysed by theorists whether the theory is different from that created history or they are both dependent and independent. Young comments on this issue by dealing with some theorists that theory and history are not strictly different from each other. For him history is not apart from theory. History itself is not a progressive process alone, instead, it is dependent on

contemporary time. It is past and it is only interpreted under the lights of theories that serve ideologies behind mythologies of cultures.

CHAPTER TWO

MYTHS IN OMEROS

Omeros starts with the third person omniscient narrator and tells the story of fishermen Achille, Hector, Helen and Philoctete. They try to maintain their lives on an island but Helen causes a quarrel between Achille and Hector. Helen goes with Hector which wounds Achille deeply. She is a beautiful pregnant woman and she works for The Plunketts as a maid until she steals Maud's dress. Major Dennis Plunkett and his wife Maud are English and they decide to live in St. Lucia after world wars. While working for them Major Plunkett is impressed by Helen's beauty and decides to find out some historical traces to write the history of the people on the island. Philoctete is the mutual friend of Achille and Hector. He has a wound on his leg because of a rusted anchor. Therefore, he goes to Ma Kilman, a sibyl woman, to be healed by herbal treatment. After the fight, Achille and Hector quit the sea. Achille dreams about a spiritual journey to his ancestors caused by sunstroke and he witnesses the encapsulation of his ancestors. Hector buys a van which brings death to Hector after an accident. Later, the narrator in *Omeros* turns into the first person omniscient narrator and tells his journey to the people on the island and in different parts of Europe. When the narrator comes back to the island he witnesses physical and spiritual change on the island. Helen comes back to Achille who goes on his work as a fisherman and Philoctete's wound is healed.

Meyer Howard Abrams puts forward some criteria for a work to be epic; "it is a long verse narrative on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style, and centred on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race." (Abrams, 1999: 76) In this sense *Omeros* is a long epic poem which contains seven books and sixty-four chapters. All chapters are divided into three parts. Except some of the differences in line. Generally, stanzas are constructed in three lines. Physically poem is totally epic with its long narrative style. The characters are not heroic but their lives depend on the fate of their tribe and race. By mythologizing his characters and giving references to the Greek mythology Walcott elevates his poem. Walcott deconstructs the myths by giving new identities and by attributing new

meanings to them. Therefore, in this chapter these mythological references will be analysed.

To begin with the title, *Omeros* is a mythical reference to Homer. Omeros is also a character whom the narrator meets everywhere. For the first time, the narrator meets him and he is introduced to Omeros when he sees a foam bust of Homer and he analyses the name; "and O was the conch-shell's invocation, mer was / both mother and sea in our Antillean patois, / os, a grey bone, and the white surf as it crashes / and spreads its sibillant collar on a lace shore." (Walcott, 1990: 14)

In the quotation above, O is a living creature in the sea while mer is both sea and mother and O and mer together creates Omer which is a name related to the Eastern cultures. It may be said that Walcott as a Caribbean poet uses Omer to make connection with indigenous people of his island. While adding "os" to it, he makes another connection with Europe because "Os" is related to Latin and it means bone. Here Walcott equalizes "os" with grey bone sibilant collar which is related to colonialism to be analysed in detail in the following chapter. So when Walcott combines "Omer" and "os", he unites east and west together like two parts of an entire.

After the narrator analyses the name Omeros, Omeros becomes the means of writing for the narrator; "And I heard a hollow moan exhaled from vase, / not for kings floundering in lances of rain; the prose / of abrupt fishermen cursing over canoes." (Walcott, 1990: 15)

At that point the narrator tells how the moan gives him the idea of writing about the life of fishermen in St. Lucia. So Homeric version of the Iliad turns into its modern version of Walcott. The idea of the epic of Homer turns into the idea of writing the epic of fishermen named *Omeros*, but this time instead of lances of kings, the canoes of fishermen would be the object of the narrator.

Like his Greek ancestors renowned throughout the time, Omeros is seen in a different time span. Omeros is seen everywhere by the narrator because he is beyond his time. The narrator meets Omeros in London later when the narrator travels to different

parts of Europe and sees Omeros and at the end of the poem he sees him in St. Lucia. There, Omeros with Seven Seas function as guide to the narrator with his travel to the underworld. Different from the original Homer, Omeros when he meets the narrator questions the reason of wars; "Are they still fighting wars?" / "Not over beauty," I answered. "Or a girl's love." / "Love is good, but the love of your people is greater" (Walcott, 1990: 284)

Reason for the Trojan War of the original Homer was the beauty of Helen on the surface, but in its underlying reasons were material instead of love or beauty. Unlike its ancient epic, Omeros processes wars over materiality on the surface, but underlying reason for war between Achille and Hector is the beauty of Helen. The war of fishermen is fought over the love of sea and the island, because in the following lines Omeros talks about the smell of a girl being better than world libraries which refers to the idea of understanding women. If one can understand the inner world of a woman it means to internalize the inner world of all people. So beauty and love are highlighted here and for Omeros he prefers to fight for those beauty and love rather than for economic reasons while Homer puts forward materiality.

The other mythical character is Achille, the protagonist in *Omeros*. He is renamed with both differences and similarities when he is compared to original Achilles whom people met in *Iliad*, the epic of Homer. Homer's Achilles is the son of a sea nymph Thetis and mortal Peleus. He is a great warrior and more powerful than other warriors. He is an important, idealised hero in the Trojan War with his attitudes. However, he cannot escape from his fate. His mother, Thetis "intended to make him invulnerable by dipping him into the River Styx, but she was careless and did not see to it that the water covered the part of the foot by which she was holding him" (Hamilton, 1999: 278). He is wounded on his heel with an arrow which is shot by the coward Paris and he dies. Achille turns into a fisherman who tries to lead his life in *Omeros*. He is a happy man only when he makes himself ready for the day on the sea. His power comes from his struggle for life in St. Lucia where he waits for the sea: "This was the light that Achille was happiest in / When, before their hands gripped the gunwales, they stood / for the sea-width to enter them, feeling their day begin" (Walcott, 1990: 9).

The quote above shows that he only finds happiness very early in the morning when he awaits to unite himself with the sea. In this sense he seems to be the happiest man like the other fishermen who try to maintain their life while doing the job they loved the most. Achille and the other fishermen are the warriors of the sea on the island and they have a war to win, which brings them economic income like Achilles and his myrmidons (myrmidons are warriors fighting at Achilles' command in Trojan War) aim to win glorious victory in the Trojan War. Also he fights with Hector for a bailing cup on the surface. Instead, he fights for Helen because she is about to move with Hector. He is as wounded as Achilles when Helen leaves him like Achilles who was wounded when Agamemnon took Briseis from her. Both have different reactions then. Achilles does not want Agamemnon to live a victory owing to him while Achille does not want to retreat but to earn more in order to get Helen back. However, he questions; "...What if love was dead / inside her already? What good lay in pouring / silver coins on a belly that had warmed him once?" (Walcott, 1990: 44)

Namely, he thinks that Helen left him because he does not have much money, but his hopes also leave him when he questions whether Helen really wants money or still loves him. This makes Achille to get a work on Plunkett's pig pen. Although he is a simple fisherman who attends pigs, his heroic side comes from his tribal ancestors when he takes a supernatural journey after a sunstroke to his tribal past; "In a language as brown and leisurely as the river, / they muttered about a future Achille already knew / but which he could not reveal even to his breath-giver / or in the council of elders." (Walcott, 1990: 139)

For the original Achilles, past represented nothing. He only cared that his name would live after an honourable victory. He knew he would die, but his name as a great warrior and hero would be transferred to the next generations. His honour is an ideology for next generation and that is what he wants to gain. On the other side, honour and glory for Achille are important features which are kept in their origins. His vacation to his past is worth everything related to his future. He learns his roots, his ancestors, his traditions, his name; he sees his father and he realizes his own reality. When he comes back to St. Lucia he knows who he is, where he belongs to and what to do: he wants to give Helen's baby an African name.

Hector is antagonist in *Omeros* and he directly refers to Hector in Greek mythology. In the *Iliad*, Hector is the brave son of the King Priam and Queen Hecuba. He is an important character for Trojan War in the *Iliad*. He is a great commander, noble warrior who does his best in order to defend Troy. He knows his fate and he feels the day death will come for him and for his people; "the day shall come when holy Troy will be laid low and Priam and Priam's people" (Hamilton, 1999: 260). Although he is doomed to death, he fights without losing his sense of responsibility. He is idealised related to his heroic attitudes that the only one who can defeat Hector is Achilles. Hector knows it is impossible for a mortal to escape from his fate but he has enough pride to feel self-confidence while he is fighting till his death. This renowned noble character turns St. Lucian fisherman in *Omeros*. So both in *Omeros* and the *Iliad* readers come across totally different Hectors from each other in terms of their characteristic treatments.

Hector in *Omeros* is not an ideal hero because of his greedy nature. He earns his life like his friend Achille but unlike original Hector, he fights with Achille because of Helen and he takes Helen from Achille which is not an honourable act for a hero. He leaves the sea; " and left the sea. He believed she still loved Achille, / and that is why, through palm-shadows, the leopard shot / with its flaming / wound that speed alone could not heal." (Walcott, 1990: 118)

Therefore, Hector does not work as a fisherman and leaves his life on the sea because he has hesitations that Helen still loves Achille and just because Hector cannot earn enough money with his new job she may leave him as well. Also Hector is a man who is open to change. Hector in *the Iliad* does not change his attitudes and his belief till the end of his life. However, Hector in *Omeros* symbolises people who believe that inevitable changes, as reactions to ongoing events around time and place spans, bring happiness. When compared to his original ancestor, as a hero of St. Lucia, new Hector's behaviours, escaping from his life source and being doomed to change himself in order to survive, cause his downfall. Instead of remaining same and surviving like original Hector, he changes his life and his new venture brings him death after a crash; " ...He bowed in endless remorse, / for her mercy at what he had done to Achille, / his brother.

But his arc was over, for the course / of every comet is such. The fated crescent / was printed on the road by the scorching tires." (Walcott, 1990: 226)

In the quote above Hector dies not because of physical but because of spiritual pain related to his mistakes. He is punished as a result of stealing Achille's Helen and leaving the sea. Two chapters later the narrator tells that Hector's love for Helen is not real and whenever he gets her, his love ends. His real love is the sea and when Hector leaves his real love, this change brings him grief not only in his life but also in his afterlife; "...but for the One that gathered his race / in the shoal of a net, a confirmed believer / in his own hell, that his spectre's punishment was / a halt in its passage towards a smokeless place." (Walcott, 1990: 292)

So Hector's punishment for his change continues in underworld when the narrator visits, there he sees Hector and tells his belief to Christianity that is the belief to "the One" is equalised to betrayal of Hector to his race.

The other mythologized character is Helen who turned out to be the Helen of Troy from the *Iliad*. The fate of original Helen starts with a trouble of Eris, the evil goddess of Discord. She is not invited to all the banquets among Olympians. Again in marriage she is out and angrily she throws an apple marked "for the fairest" to banquet in order to make trouble and she succeeds. All goddesses want apple, but Zeus makes Paris responsible for the judgement. Paris gives apple to Aphrodite because she promises to bring him the fairest woman in the world. After the judgement of Paris Aphrodite gives Helen as the fairest woman to Paris. Helen is the most beautiful woman in the world. Her father is Zeus and her mother is Leda, namely she belonged to immortal ancestor. Her mother's husband King Tyndareus selects Menelaus as husband for her but she moves with Paris that her beauty is accepted as the basic reason for Trojan War. (Hamilton, 1999: 254-255) So the fairest Helen from the *Iliad* turns into a Caribbean woman in *Omeros*. Like her ancient counterpart Walcott's Helen is the fairest woman of St. Lucia and she becomes the source of trouble between fishermen.

Helen of St. Lucia is renowned with her beauty on the island like her ancient namesake. On the island wherever she goes everybody admires her beauty that the

narrator comes across Helen; "I felt like standing in homage to a beauty / that left, like a ship; widening eyes in its wake. / "Who the hell is that?" a tourist near my table / asked a waitress. The waitress said, "She? She too proud!" (Walcott, 1990: 23-24) Helen's beauty turns out to be her pride. She walks like a 'mirage' on the beach when the narrator's and the others' attraction is grabbed by her. The narrator focuses on the effects of her physical appearance on people around.

Helen in the *Iliad* is a figure between Paris and Menelaus and without asking her desires she is swayed from side to side. Helen in *Omeros* is commoditised like Helen in the *Iliad*; " He smiled at the mythical hallucination / that went with the name's shadow; the island was once / named Helen..." (Walcott, 1990: 31). Here Helen is identified with the island. She is as beautiful as the island. Since island itself is a commodity between countries, Helen in St. Lucia is a commodity between men. The winner will get the woman just like the winner of war who will get the island. This is much more related to the colonization of the island and will be analysed in a detailed way in the following part.

Besides her beauty, she is the same as Helen of Troy in terms of chastity. Helen of St. Lucia stays in between Achille and Hector. When she is with Achille she has discussion with him and moves with Hector. Also she is pregnant but she does not know "For who". The original Helen has the same behaviours she moves with Paris but later she tries to have it off with Hector but Hector is faithful husband of Andromache. Therefore, she becomes the means of great feud between Achille and Hector in *Omeros* as she seems to be the main reason for Trojan war. When the Trojan War ends with the fall of Troy, Helen is on the ship with her husband who gladly received her. Helen in *Omeros* wants to come back to Achille when Hector dies. So both women reunify themselves.

Another mythological figure in *Omeros* is Philoctete who returned from Philoctetes in the *Iliad*. He is an important character in Trojan War as he changes the fate of the war when Greeks are demoralised. On the route to Troy he is left at Lemnos because he is bitten by a snake and he is wounded. However, prophet Helenus tells Greeks that Troy will fall if they take the bow and arrows of Hercules that had been

given to Philoctetes is healed and they take him to war. He joins the war and wounds Paris with his arrow. (Hamilton, 1999: 280) Philoctetes of Homer becomes one of the fishermen on *Omeros'* island. Both ancient warrior Philoctetes and fisherman Philoctete have similar festering wound which has different outcomes in two epics.

Philoctete has the same fate with ancient Philoctetes which is left on an island. He is wounded by a rusted anchor on his leg. Like Philoctetes' being left on Lemnos, he is left on St. Lucia by his friends. "The rest walked up the sand with identical stride / except for foam-haired Philoctete. The sore on his shin / still unhealed, like a radiant anemone." (Walcott, 1990: 9) Here, in the quotation readers come across a lonely, left, isolated character like the original Philoctetes. The other fishermen go to sea for their daily works because of the painful wound on his leg. He cannot keep his festering wound as it is a radiant anemone, it is not healed. Philoctete is bound to the island and he prefers to search cure for his wound at Ma Kilman's cafe.

Wound has different meaning for those characters. For the ancient one it means to stop himself on an island and he only takes action by joining to war after healing. For the other wound itself means searching not only cure for physically but also cure for spiritually to stop war in his mind. Philoctetes and Philoctete find cure for their non-healing wound. Greeks help Philoctetes while Ma Kilman helps Philoctete. However, cure for Philoctetes is found so that he could join the battle. For Philoctete cure means to realise his roots and to put an end to cultural battle. Also this is related to cultural clashes and it will be discussed in following part. Philoctetes in the Iliad is healed and joined the battle. Unlike his original counterpart Philoctete tries to make peace between Achille and Hector;

Philoctete tried to make peace between them. He told
Hector that they were men, that he bore his own wound
as patiently as God allowed him, that the bad blood

between them was worse, that they had a common bond
between them: the sea. (Walcott, 1990: 47)

The only way to purify their mind is to accept their origin and common points. Philoctete tries to show Hector and Achille that they are not enemies but friends. They have common bond which is sea and they are both fishermen. Instead of being the part of a battle, he tries to be the means of peace between Achille and Hector. In the end he becomes Helen's godfather. Seven Seas is another important character who is a blind seer but at the same time he is a unified figure with Omeros which comes from Homer himself.

At first sight he seems to be a blind old Caribbean person who tries to find his way with the reflection of his inner vision to his ears; " His kettle leaked. He groped for the tin chair and took / his place near the saucepan to hear when it bubbled. / It would boil but not scream like a bosun's whistle / to let him know it was ready." (Walcott, 1990: 11). In this sense Seven Seas is told by the narrator as an old man who has lost the ability of sea because of a disease. However, he can see everything well enough to lead his life through the voices around him.

He is also another wanderer in the poem like Omeros since the reader comes across Seven Seas in different places and in different time. Achille's voyage to his tribal ancestor Seven Seas is there; "Achille saw Seven Seas foaming with grief. He must / deaf as well as blind, Achille thought. The head / never turned but it widened its mouth to the river." (Walcott, 1990: 145)

Accordingly, Seven Seas is beyond his time like Omeros. He has supernatural power to wander throughout time and place. At the end of the poem he accompanies the narrator to his travel to the Underworld; "Seven Seas watched me with each receding stroke. / And my cheeks were salt with tears... / And Omeros nodded: We will both praise it now." (Walcott, 1990: 286) Although the narrator and Omeros together are passengers on Charon's canoe, Seven Seas and Omeros change their identities. Namely, Seven Seas is not an ordinary old man, instead he keeps changing himself with Omeros from that underworld voyage to the end of the poem. So, he is identified with a Caribbean poet like Omeros himself by Walcott in *Omeros*. He is St. Lucian Homer in other words.

The other character is Antigone in *Omeros*. She is not totally a different Greek Antigone. Antigone is Oedipus' daughter who is put to death by Creon as she opposes the law of Creon. Creon allows to bury Eteocles with an honourable funeral, he does not allow Polyneices to be buried. This means that Polyneices cannot pass the river of Underworld and he is left to beast and birds. Naturally Antigone cannot stand her brother to face this vengeance and she buries him. She opposes the law of mortals because she only accepts the law of Justice by Gods. (Hamilton, 1999: 388) The other Antigone in *Omeros* is presented as a character who tells the name of Homer and Omeros to the narrator in the poem. She says she misses her country; "I am tired of America, it's time for me to go back / to Greece. I miss my islands." / I write, it returns- "(Walcott, 1990: 14) In this sense she becomes one of the sources that feed the narrator's idea of writing. She belongs to Greece but she lives in America. Like her counterpart she wants to be against the law of people and she wants to live in her own land. This gives inspiration to the narrator. "Warwick shows a woman who climbs with basket; / climbed with her hundredweight basket, every load for / one copper penny, balanced erect on their necks / that were tight as the liner's hawsers from the weight." (Walcott, 1990: 74) In this quotation the narrator directly gives reference to Sisyphus myth who has eternal punishment to roll over a rock to the highest point of a hill.

Circe is referenced as history and Helen in *Omeros*. Circe is a mythical character who lives on the Aeaea Island. She offers charming food and drinks to her guests, as soon as they eat she transforms them into animals: they become pigs. She loves animals and all her guests are doomed to live in her palace as animals. The narrator identifies history with Circe; "If History saw them as pigs, History was Circe." (Walcott, 1990: 64)

Later, the narrator gives references to Odysseus's crew who try to bristle "the middens of Circe" (Walcott, 1990: 203) and enchanted by her. They react against Odysseus because they do not understand to stay away from their home for years as a result of a war which is not their but other's war. The narrator calls Helen Circe when she tries to put one of Maud's bracelets. Helen's eyes are "calm as Circe" Later the narrator talks about her; "Then Circe embraced her swine." (Walcott, 1990: 155)

The other reference to mythology is Cyclops. They are giant creatures that were banned from the earth till they were allowed again. "Zeus gave them a home in a fortunate country where the vineyards and corn lands, unploughed and unsown, bore fruits plenteously." (Hamilton, 1999: 105) In this sense the eyes of Cyclops turn to the eyes of big powers on the island, and Cyclops become the symbol of the effects of those power on the island; "of the surf lines wandering like the shambling fleece / of the lighthouse's flock, that Cyclops whose blind eye / shut from the sunlight." (Walcott, 1990: 13) First the narrator likens the noise of the surf lines to Cyclops' sheep, then likens Cyclops to lighthouse. Although they are big and powerful creatures, they are under the effect of the power of nature, sun light. They have enough power to control over their environment When Achille makes him sink to find silver coins galleon he realises; "The ransom of centuries shone through the mossy doors / that the moon-blind Cyclops counted." (Walcott, 1990: 46)

He sees the negative impacts of centuries on the island. Moss doors show how time makes them pay the heavy price that Cyclops counted. However, they do not have the capacity to see the reality of nature of the island which is connected to blind eyes shut by light. Later when Plunkett tries to find history for Helen, he sees through the eyes of Cyclops. Indeed, Plunket himself is an Englishman and it is impossible for him to find or recreate a history for Helen's island. If he tries, it will bring history just through the Cyclops eyes. The other negative impact is the tourists taking photos of Achille's boat; he gets angry because he thinks he is losing his soul "to the click of a Cyclops". In the end the narrator explains Achille as one of the source of his work by resembling his woolly crests of Cyclops' flock. The narrator gives reference to Telemachus when he likens himself to the son of Odysseus. Telemachus has problems with the absence of his father throughout his growing period from childhood to adulthood. "there was a changing shadow of Telemachus / in me, in his absent war, and an empire's guilt / stitched in the one pattern of Maud's fabulous quilt." (Walcott, 1990: 263)

Omeros and the narrator walk to the sea shore and they meet a "grizzled oarsman" who is a reference to Charon. He is drunken and he speaks like one of the friends of the narrator.

When they visit pool of speculation in Underworld they see Hephaestus with his anger to the souls who sold out their race. Hephaestus is much more beloved between immortals but he is also the ugliest one. He is also the protector of handcrafts, agriculture, civilization and smiths.

During Achille's visit to his ancestor's tribe Helen grieves. This is not a normal behaviour for Helen but for Penelope grieving is an excepted behaviour. She waits for ten years since Odysseus takes part in the Trojan War and ten more years for he loses his way to Ithaca.

Centaurs are another mythical reference associated with ambition of human being. Centaurs turn men in *Omeros*; "These were the rites of morning by a low concrete / parapet under the copper spears of the palms, / since men sought fame as / centaurs, or with their own feet" (Walcott, 1990: 33) Centaurs are referenced as kind that seeks fame and in St. Lucia the narrator liken men to Centaurs for they have been searching honour. Centaurs are warriors, they fight with human being for their fame. Like their nature people have been fighting for their name under the shadow of concrete low "parapet".

Another reference is to Calypso. In mythology Calypso is nymph and ruler of an island where Odysseus has been prisoner for seven years. Calypso plans not to let him go till Gods interfere. When *Omeros* and the narrator are on the way of Underworld, *Omeros* wants to praise. The narrator cannot sing at first till he realises; "from which nothing sounded, and then I heard his own / Greek Calypso coming from the marble trunk, / widening the sea with blind man's anger" (Walcott, 1990: 286)

She is powerful enough to capture Odysseus for years, Calypso within *Omeros* is powerful enough to stand against captivity for years. According to the quote above Calypso turns anger of *Omeros*. In order to sing song to praise, the narrator needs to reverse his tongue tied and this becomes possible when he hears the Calypso of *Omeros*.

Therefore, the issue of how mythological characters and references are processed by Walcott has been analysed in this part. Well known, renowned characters

of Greek mythology Achilles, Hector, Helen, Philoctete play the role of other characterization written by Walcott. Homer himself turns Omeros and Seven Seas in the poem. Also those characters have revealed common characteristics while sometimes they have been totally different with their attitudes and behaviours towards ongoing events. Walcott recreates those characters without their heroic fame. In this sense instead of his ancient counterpart he puts forward modern heroes whose heroic features come from struggle of modern daily routines. Besides characterization with allusions to Greek myths, Walcott amplifies the power of maintaining new identities to his characters.

CHAPTER THREE

POSTCOLONIAL PERIOD IN OMEROS

As pointed out in theoretical part of this study postcolonial period deals with the cultures that have been under the impact of colonialism. Especially, after decolonization postcolonial era has not been limited with certain geographical region and certain period as it has been intensively experienced in nearly all parts of the world. People migrate from their own land to different parts of the world. Also people migrate to the different regions from the imperial centre. Those migrations cause unlimited mutual interactions both in host cultures and the culture of immigrants. Namely, all cultures that had been influenced by colonialism have been the main concern of post-colonial period. The effects of colonialism on the lives of colonised people have been considered with the interactions of their dominant culture. Saint Lucia is one of those colonised lands throughout the history. It is a Caribbean island and except many trips to the different places and capitals of Europe, *Omeros* set is St. Lucia which turns *Omeros* into the epic of Caribbean people. Although St. Lucian people gained their independence in 1979, the traces of colonisation period inevitably remain the same. Hybridity, difference, cultural clashes, otherness, mimicry and ambivalence are all main characteristics that people must confront during postcolonial period. St. Lucian people face hybrid culture on their island because they imitate others in order not to be different. They imitate dominant culture and it leads them to ambivalence. *Omeros* is the epic of those people since these are all problematic results of colonial act for indigenous people and they must face in their life span. Therefore, this part is going to analyse the outcomes of colonialism for Saint Lucia and Saint Lucian people in *Omeros*.

First important characteristic of that era is hybridization. Postcolonial period was the period that created a new hybrid culture because decolonization inevitably causes hybridization. It means adapting coloniser's culture by losing their own cultures. Certainly, it was impossible for them to save their own identity and cultures under the suppression of colonial power as Ashcroft evaluates below:

Hybridity occurs in post-colonial 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 settler-invaders dispossess indigenous peoples and force them to 'assimilate' to new social patterns. It may also occur in later periods when patterns of immigration from the metropolitan societies and from other imperial areas of influence continue to produce complex cultural palimpsests with the post-colonised world. (Ashcroft et. all, 1995: 183)

As quoted above, hybridization of St. Lucia is inevitable related to its colonial past. Its transformation is not only limited with people, but also island itself loses its purity:

Although smoke forgets the earth from which it ascends,
and nettles guard the holes where the laurels were killed,
an iguana hears the axes, clouding each lens

over its lost name, when the hunched island was called
"Iounalao," "Where the iguana is found."

But, taking its own time, the iguana will scale

the rigging of vines in a year, its dewlap fanned,
its elbows akimbo, its deliberate tail
moving with the island. The slit pods of its eyes

ripened in a pause that lasted for centuries,
that rose with the Aruacs' smoke till a new race
unknown to the lizard stood measuring the trees.

These were their pillars that fell, leaving a blues space
for a single God where the old gods stood before. (Walcott, 1990: 4-5)

As it is pointed out above, very early in the poem colonial past of the island is alluded through the lizard on the island and falls of the laurel trees. The indigenous culture has lost its origin and people of the island have lost their own identity.

Symbolically lizard and laurel trees represent the changes that colonialism had brought to the island. Lizard is a reference to its original name given by Caribbean indigenous. The island had belonged to Aruac people and its name was Iounalao till French Empire began to colonise it in 1635. Later it was renamed as Saint Lucia by the French. In 1814 hegemony of the island was assigned to the English by the Paris Agreement. Lizard is also known as a powerful creature which learned the various ways to survive and it passes the power of survival to its next generation. Accordingly, it symbolises the origin of the island. The island was its land and it remains its land after all changes. It only witnesses these physical changes on the island. Moreover, falls of the laurel trees are on-going events that not only lizards but also people on the island have to be exposed to. Colonization of the island by Europeans is equalized by laurel woods which symbolise the pillar of the island. When they fall, the original nature of the island falls and it is damaged by colonisers.

...the island was once
named Helen; its Homeric association

rose like smoke from a siege; the Battle of Saints
was launched with that sound, from what was the "Gibraltar
of the Caribbean," after thirteen treaties

while she changed prayers often as knees at an altar,
till between French and British her final peace
was signed at Versailles. (Walcott, 1990: 31)

St. Lucia is also known as "Helen of West Indies" because of its beauty and Homeric association. In Homer's *Iliad* the surface reason of the Trojan War is Helen and her legendary beauty. St. Lucia is associated with Helen's body for which the French and the British fight over the island for years like Greek and the Trojan soldiers fight over Helen for ten years. In fact, it is the war of power and pride to hold the hegemony of the island to colonise its sources. That is the main reason for war between the French and the English. While the island had belonged to the French before, the English took the hegemony as the result of a peace treaty signed at Versailles as quoted above.

Those political developments under the shadow of civilization through physical and spiritual development of the island only bring cultural changes to the island. Helen is St. Lucia and St. Lucia is Helen, too, but both do not care how they sell themselves:

She was selling herself like the island, without
any pain, and the village did not seem to care

that it was dying in its change, the way it whored
away a simple life that would soon disappear
while its children writhed on the sidewalks to the sounds

of the DJ's fresh-water- Yankee-cool-Creole. (Walcott, 1990: 111)

As quoted above, like Helen the island is selling itself in a sense. It is changing and these changes destroy the real island without any realization of the people on the island. It turns into a Western village from its original culture. It adopts the western life style with the music of the DJ's. At first sight it seems that life comes to the island but in reality real life of the island move away from the island. There are colourful nights, dances, music enjoyed by the people all of whom are carried away from their own origin. While some of the people do not like the situation as they realize the change. One of them is Statics who realizes that St. Lucia is in pain and those changes cause spiritual torment to the island:

Every vote is your ticket, your free ride
on the Titanic: a cruise back to slavery
in liners like hotels you cannot sit inside

except as waiters, maids. This chicanery!
this fried chicanery! Tell me if I lying.
Like that man hopping there, St. Lucia look healthy

with bananas and tourists, but her soul crying (Walcott, 1990: 107)

Here Statics speaks because he tries to win the elections but during the process readers come across that he is not successful enough to win. However, it does not mean that he is not a good observer. He tries to show that they should take the authority in order to live as they deserve. Otherwise they will continue to slave the others as workers or maids. Statics is not successful to grab the attention of people on the island but he still tries to point out that if they win, they will get free right to live according to their own wish instead of powerful corporations of the island. He likens that idea to free ride on Titanic where they will not sit as workers of others. He also tries to reveal the reality of St. Lucia that it seems to be physically wonderful but in fact it has an unhealed wound in its soul because of its colonial reality.

these people had, but what they envied most in them
was the calypso part, the Caribbean lilt
still in the shells of their ears, like the surf's rhythm,

until too much happiness was shadowed with guilt
like any Eden, and they sighed at the sign:
HEWANNORA (Iounalao), the gold sea

flat as a credit-card, extending its line
to a beach that now looked just like everywhere else,
Greece of Hawaii. (Walcott, 1990: 229)

The real St. Lucia is so far from its originality. Tourists come to St. Lucia to see its beauty, to taste its traditional exotic tastes, but their happiness will not last long because the island has been damaged by themselves. Its original beauty will be lost while it accommodates them. Power over the island changes it from paradise to ordinary place. That paradise, like a song, will be carried from different parts of the world but soon tourists will realize St. Lucia has lost its original vision and it turns into the other ordinary beaches around the world.

Hybridization also affects the indigenous people on the island. They adapt themselves consciously or unconsciously to the culture of the colonisers. So their

descendants hybridized biologically. The narrator reveals his hybridity as one of the children of those people: "Half of me was with him. One half with the midshipman / by a Dutch canal. But now, neither was happier / or unhappier than the other..." (Walcott, 1990: 135) Here the poet intrudes himself to Achille's identity in order to represent his identity. Achille represents enslaved people while Midshipman represents colonisers. In this sense the narrator represents their hybridised future. He evaluates himself as the unity of two halves. However, that integration makes both sides happy or unhappy because of their being removed from their roots. They ignore their bases and they accept a new way and act according to the behaviours that cultural integration has brought upon them. Also the narrator visits her mother in a nursery home and this represents the disembodiment of colonised people from their roots. Those people leave behind their past and their lives turn into new lives that include new ways of survival by their rulers. All their roots consist of forgotten past:

...I was as old as her
exhausted prayer, as her wisps of memory floated

with a vague patience, telling her body: "Wait,"
when all that brightness had withered like a memory's flower,
like the allamanda's bells and the pale lilac

bougainvillea vines that had covered our gabled house.

They, like her natural memory, would not come back. (Walcott, 1990: 166)

Her mother forgets everything related to her past and he tries to remind himself to her. Her body remains the same but her memories are lost. She has dementia which is paralleled with dementia of the enslaved people. Her mother's illness is the same as the illness of colonised people because they are also forced to forget their past. Their bodies remain same and healthy but they lose their soul. All their language, identities, traditions, customs have been forgotten through time while they have been adapting themselves to the changes that dominant culture brought them.

When Achille has sunstroke, he is guided by a sea-swift. He finds himself far from his home, St. Lucia and as soon as he comes across his ancestral tribe he realizes how they are hybridised during the colonial period: "...A skeletal warrior / stood up straight in the stern and guided his shoulders, / clamped his neck in cold iron, and altered the oar." (Walcott, 1990: 133) In this quote Achille thinks it is a foreign area and he is far from his own home. In fact, the shore belongs to his ancestors. He is forced by a skeletal warrior and he is clamped. This is a spiritual journey of Achille to highlight the reveal of his ancestors' enslavement. The English brought African slaves to plant sugar cane. Achille's ancestors are those people who were captivated before. Although Achille is on his own land, he is stuck in cold iron by a warrior as his ancestors lived before. Achille has to face the results of this enslavement by realizing and learning his tribal ancestors and their settlement. During this spiritual journey he learns more about his ancestors. He comes across the traditional ways of drinking and eating, and mythical stories of them. Some attitudes in a feast are the same as in St. Lucia He stays in between whether St. Lucia and that settlement. Yet, he realizes who he really is and he worries about his ancestors' future: "He foresaw their future. He knew nothing could change it. / The tinkle from coins of the river, the tinkle of irons. / The son's grief was the father's, the father's his son's." (Walcott, 1990: 146)

Achille can do nothing to change their ancestors' fate. He at first sight seems to be in pain for his ancestors but at the same time he worries about himself because he knows their future. He comes from their future and he knows every possible torture of future brought to them. He knows what he does during his daily life in St. Lucia to maintain his life as a fisherman. He sees how his people have been treated during and after colonial period. His own home St. Lucia has become one of the ordinary places around the world. He knows his ancestors have faced many other problems like these and their children will continue to live problems. One of them is Achille and that is the reason why he is so much in grief. His ancestors' children will never find a chance to live their own cultural constituents independently. Since Achille realizes all dark history of them he has nothing to do to prevent them from their fate. Not only their language, traditions, religions will be interacted but also their original race will be integrated and hybridised.

Moreover, Helen represents all people who change their lives according to the necessities of hybridised culture on the island; "was like a meteor too, and her falling arc / crossed over the village, over some moonlit lane / with its black breadfruit leaves. Every life was a spark, / but her light remained unknown in this backward place," (Walcott, 1990: 112) As it is mentioned here, like St. Lucia Helen is changing, too. Here Helen is equalized with meteors which fall from the sky. This means that Helen in her spirit change herself along with the changes within the island. This change leads her to an unknown way of life with integration in herself.

From Achille's point of view, Helen is a whore like island since both sell themselves to foreign(as mentioned before) but for a moment Achille tries to understand her situation: " ...He saw how she wished / for a peace beyond her beauty, past the tireless / quarrel over a face that was not her own fault / and for that moment Achille was angrily filled / with a pity beyond his own pain." (Walcott, 1990: 115) Although he gets angry with her and always affronts her, he forgets his pain and reasons for her problems of survival. The main problem seems to be the beauty of Helen on the island. The other women's jealousy and hate result from her being beautiful more than them. Cultural pride of others despises Helen because of her race but she is beautiful enough to be ignored by women but beautiful enough to start a war between men. Among these problems, Helen tries to be peaceful and survive and her beauty is not her fault according to Achille. This idea removes Achille's anger for a moment and he feels pity for her.

Helen's behaviours and manners reveal the second important characteristics of postcolonial period which is mimicry. Like the other people on the island Helen tries to imitate dominant culture of the island in order not to be different and othered. In this sense, Adaptation of the coloniser or host culture means mimicry. It is imitation in its basic definition. Yet, in cultural sense it has more dignity than simple imitation because mimicry is appropriation of adapted behaviours. However, colonised people exaggeratedly imitate the culture of coloniser since they need to repeat it which comes from their identities as Bhabha defines below:

In mimicry, the representation of identity and meaning is rearticulated along the axis of metonymy. As Lacan reminds us mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonization of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying 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 a power that is elusive because it hides no essence, no 'itself'. (Bhabha, 1994: 90)

Accordingly, Helen is not alone while imitating the imperial culture. Hector leaves the sea and tries to maintain his life by dealing with commerce as a taxi driver:

The comet, a sixteen- seater passenger-van,
 was the chariot that Hector bought. Coiled tongues of flame
 leapt from its sliding doors. Each row was a divan

 of furred leopardskin. Because of its fiery name
 under an arching rocket painted on its side
 the Space Age had come to the island... (Walcott, 1990: 117)

He buys a comet and decorates it according to European style. Leopard skin, fiery name gives a different view to his van like "space age". Although Hector is an ordinary fisherman like Achille, he does not have strong bonds to his root. He is much more affected than other characters by the culture of rulers of the island. This means he is under the effects of hybrid culture. He exemplifies all colonised people who have forgotten their roots and adopt themselves immediately to the changes in the society. Moreover, hector ranges up imitation of cultural rules and commandments:

who the serpent-god conducted miles off his course
 for some blasphemous offence and how he would pay for it

 by forgetting his parents, his tribe, and his own spirit
 for an albino god, and how that warrior was scarred
 for innumerable moons so badly that he would disinherit

himself... (Walcott, 1990: 139-140)

When Achille with his ancestors he hears the history of his tribe. He has already known the future of his tribe but here they focus on the outcomes of following the necessities of their ruler. Since God symbolises the only power over them, albino god here is not only identified with God. Apart from religion, God represents the imperial power, because believing in God means receiving all the commandments and implementing them to their lives. In this sense, new commandments spirit away their own beliefs that have been bound to their roots. Accordingly, instead of their tribal traditions and customs, descendants of those tribes have been exposed these transformations by inheritance. Although they inherit that imperative change without knowing their tradition, they are obliged to face its torment as Hector has to face in underworld:

...for the road-warrior

had paused in the smoke, not for Omeros's gods
nor the masks of his origins, the god-river,
the god-snake, but for the One that had gathered his race

in the shoal of a net, a confirmed believer
in his own hell, that his spectre's punishment was
a halt in its passage towards a smokeless place. (Walcott, 1990: 292)

When Omeros and the narrator visit the underworld they come across Hector. Hector is a significant epitome of those people who imitate the colonisers' life style and apply them. The narrator emphasises on the degree of Hector's adopting himself to the life that has been influenced by the British. He both tries to live according to albino god's orders and also he changes his religion. However, as Achille's ancestors tell in the story, Hector and the others who forget their past will certainly pay for it. So Hector's guilt for ignoring his past to move away equals to suffering in hellfire.

Besides hybridization and mimicry, ambivalence and identity crisis are the other outcomes of colonial period. It seems to be easy for people to adapt to a new way of life, but it definitely creates problems in the souls of those people. Resulting from living in a hybrid culture and mimicry, all of the necessities of that culture have brought spiritual problems to islanders. Hector is one of those people who live in ambivalence. His van is significant as it reflects his dilemma in his mind. He drives fast:

...Passengers

crammed next to each other on its animal hide
were sliding into two worlds without switching gears.

One, atavistic, with its African emblem

that slid on the plastic seats, wrinkling in a roll
when the cloth bunched, and the other world that shot them
to an Icarian future they could not control. (Walcott, 1990: 117)

Hector's passengers are on an unknown road because of the divided world. One represents their atavistic side while the other world represents imperial power that holds the authority to control their lives. Along with those passengers, Hector himself is on an unknown way since he does not know which way he should follow. His spiritual journey takes him to the commercial ways related to his wishes and desires to make more money but his traditional past still live within his soul. He wants to be free, without knowing the future of him. Just like other indigenous people on the island, Hector does not have the power to control his future. They opt to follow the way that has been designated for them.

Unlike Hector, Achille's dilemma derives from his being in love with the island and with sea life at first sight:

This was his garden. God bless the speed of the swift,
God bless the wet head of the mate sparkling with foam,
and his heart trembled with enormous tenderness

for the purple-blue water and the wilting shore
 tight and thin as a fishline, and the hill's blue smoke,
 his muscles bulging like porpoises from each oar (Walcott, 1990: 126)

He loves the sea and the island so much. St. Lucia is his heaven and the sea is his shelter where he keeps his loneliness. He feels himself so much willing to see blue water and willing to sail from the "wilting shore". Since the island is not the same as it was before as a result of rapid changes, he escapes to the sea from his beloved St. Lucia. For him the only way to isolate himself from the corrupted complexion of the island is to hide in the bottom of the sea. In this manner Achille's ambivalent is not because he has ignored his ancestral past but because the dignity of his connection to the island and the sea. He loves the island but he escapes as he cannot bear to be exposed to being consumed. When he escapes from the island to the sea, the problems in his mind follow him but this time he stays in between his ancestral roots and his situation on the island:

...And Achille felt the homesick shame
 and pain of his Africa. His heart and his bare head

were bursting as he tried to remember the name
 of the river- and the tree-god in which he steered,
 whose hollow body carried him to the settlement ahead. (Walcott, 1990: 134)

As quoted above, Achille feels shame since he cannot remember the original names of the river and tree-god. They symbolize the memory of his ancestors' past but he is unable to remember them. His shame comes from his feeling of guilt because of lost memories. This highlights the ambivalence of his soul because of his being stuck between his contemporary time and his ancestral past. He says: "he walked down to the cold river / with the other shadows, saying, "Make me happier, / make me forget the future." (Walcott, 1990: 141)

He knows he has come across their enslavement and it makes him very much worried about their future. He is even in between being happy or unhappy. He can be happy if he forgets the future. In this sense, he tries to escape what he has seen during

his spiritual visit consciously in order to forget so as to be happy. Here the narrator evaluates how he is in a deep pain while living in his dilemma.

Furthermore, Achille's pain is not easily healed as he lives identity problems when he questions his identity:

...Achille saw the ghost
of his father's face shoot up at the end of the line.

Achille stared in pious horror at the bound canvas
and could not look away, or loosen its burial knots.
Then, for the first time, he asked himself who he was. (Walcott, 1990: 130)

He comes across a bound canvas under sun stroke. He hallucinates that it is the burial of his father. His father's face triggers his curiosity about his roots. He is not an ordinary fisherman as he knows. In fact, he has own reality that comes from past but he does not know who he really is. This leads him to learn his own roots during a visit to Africa.

Achille's ancestors have lost their identities when they were taken from Africa to new world. In order to remember their names, they write them on freights and this causes identity crisis of their descendants. The narrator evaluates how they lose their names below:

So now they were coals, firewood, dismembered
branches, not men. They had left their remembered
shadows to the firelight. Scratching a board

they made the signs for their fading names on the wood,
and their former shapes returned absently; each carried
the nameless freight of himself to the other world. (Walcott, 1990: 150)

They identify their names with the freight they use. In this way their names live with them. Each wood that they have transformed carries the traces of their own identities. Whenever they are taken from their home to other world, they have to leave those names behind them. They have been comprised of coals, wood, split branches instead of human beings.

Also Helen reaches whatever she wants as she seems to adapt herself to the acculturation on the island. While sometimes she is happy with her situation, she sometimes seems to be unhappy and tries to change it. She stays in between her manner and whites' attitudes towards her. Cultural integration forces her to act according to the rules of managers on the island but it leads her to live in a dilemma:

...What the white manager mean
 to say was she was too rude, 'cause she dint take no shit
 from white people and some of them tourist—the men

 only out to touch local girls; every minute-
 was brushing their hand from her backside so one day
 she get fed up with all their nastiness so she tell

 the cashier that wasn't part of her focking pay,
 take off her costume, and walk straight out the hotel
 naked as God make me... (Walcott, 1990: 33-34)

As mentioned in the above quotation, Helen has problems because of her race and culture. She has to face those problems to gain her life because she does not have any way to live according to her own wishes. Hybridised cultures have such kind of problems around the world. One of them is harassment. As a black woman she is abused by tourists who come to Helen's workplace. Since she does not let them touch her back, her manager accuses her being too rude to them. When she feels that she cannot bear such kind of manners she quits her job at the hotel. She strips her costume but it is impossible for her to be naked as God makes her because she already accepts the necessities of culture that has been brought by the powers of the island. Not only Helen

but also other local girls must face. Helen seems to be eager to defend herself against that harassment but this time she is labelled as being proud.

Her proud comes from her personal identity related to her tradition and customs. On the other side she searches a new job and she does not find. She goes Maud, her previous master, but Maud is determined not to be merciful to her: "We've no work, Helen." / "Is not work I looking for." / Pride edged that voice; she'd honed her arrogance / on Maud's nerves when she worked here, but there was sorrow / in that rudeness. Helen tore the stalk in her hands." (Walcott, 1990: 124)

Maud does not like Helen because she has enough beauty to attract other women's hatred to herself. Maud's husband's tendency towards Helen is also another reason for jealousy for Maud. Apart from these, the important reason for hatred between those women is cultural pride. This pride triggers Maud's anger towards Helen. Even so, Helen ignores her pride and instead of work, she asks whether Maud can borrow her five dollars. She gets five dollars from Maud as she succeeds everything that she wants.

Philoctete is one of the important characters on the island as he reflects all negative effects of influence of culture and suffers a lot. He says it is impossible to live without roots. Wound on his leg symbolically represents the wound of culture within the heart of colonised people:

He believed the swelling came from the chained ankles
of his grandfathers. Or else why was there no cure?
That the cross he carried was not only the anchor's

but that of his race, for a village black and poor
as the pigs that rooted in its burning garbage,
then were hooked on the anchors of the abattoir (Walcott, 1990: 19)

Like Achille, Philoctete's ancestors are enslaved. He also knows the reality that the source of his wound is not a simple anchor but in fact its source is slavery itself. They have been colonised and they have been forced to change their origin that result in

an integrated culture during colonial history. He realizes that inflation of his wound comes from chained independence of his grandfathers and for this reason it never heals. He is in despair of his race and that wound passes from his ancestors to their next generations which means it will last longer.

Although he belongs to the imperial authority, Major Plunkett lives the effects of cultural oppression on the island. He suffers because while he was one of the masters of the island, he turns into an ordinary person. Since their ancestors have been ruling the island, they have chosen St. Lucia as a heaven for themselves. They use the local tastes of the island but at the same time he and his wife drink their Guinness at a bar where they usually go together. They seem to be the owner of this heaven till they lose authority:

A government that made no difference to Philoctete,

to Achille. That did not buy a bottle of white kerosene
from Ma Kilman, a dusk that had no historical regret
for the fishermen beating mackerel into their seine,

only for Plunkett, in the pale orange glow of the wharf
reddening the vendors' mangoes, alchemizing the bananas

near the coal market, this town he had come to love. (Walcott, 1990: 119-120)

As abovementioned, Plunketts' situations change when St. Lucia gains independence. The situations of the other indigenous people on the island do not change after gaining independence but for Plunketts it will not be the same as before because they do not have the position as masters. This time they are equal and they have the equal rights like every person on the island. This means social situations of Plunketts have changed. They are not from St. Lucia anymore; they are outsiders like any other tourists who come to visit the island. Related to this social change they so much face the outcomes of postcolonial period. Since they do not have the host culture, they have to be within the host culture of St. Lucia because majority of society gain their independence.

To sum up, cultures have been under the negative impacts of colonialism during post-colonial period. After decolonization, people either migrate from different regions to the imperial centre or migrate from imperial centre to the different parts of the world. This leads various mutual relations between the cultures of the coloniser and the colonised. The results of these interactions have created various problems for both sides. However, colonised people have lived negative effects more than the colonisers as they have lost every important constituent related to their roots.

Saint Lucia have been colonised nearly for three hundred and fifty years. The negative effects of that period for Saint Lucia and St. Lucian people have been analysed in this chapter. St. Lucia consists of ordinary indigenous people, British immigrants, and many tourists. The island has lost its originality and it turns into an ordinary beach around the world. Indigenous people on the island have been servants of tourists who come to the island or they have been servants of British immigrants who want to live on the island during their period of retirement. Life is wonderful for tourists so they lead the life of the island according to their own wishes. On the other hand, life is not as easy for servants and immigrants as it is for tourists because they have persistent relationship.

Helen, Achille, Hector, Philoctete and Plunketts (as an outsider) and their lives have been given as examples of the lives that face problems of colonial process during postcolonial period. Both indigenous people and the outsider of the islands have created a hybrid culture. They all have suffered from hybrid culture and its negative results. While Helen and Hector try to adapt themselves to the coloniser's way of life, Achille and Philoctete try to reject it since they have comprehended the dependence of their ancestors. Plunketts also have taken the local tastes to feed their soul and body. However, since they have stayed in between their own culture and the target one, they all have dilemmas within their spirits.

CHAPTER FOUR

DECONSTRUCTION OF MYTHS IN OMEROS

During and after decolonization, the effects of colonisation still continued. It had taken a long process for the colonized land to erase the impacts, since it was not easy to change all of a sudden. Colonization had penetrated from politics to the daily lives of the enslaved people, including every aspects of intellectual development. Literary works had been under the influence of colonisation and post-colonial writing was to change colonial writing. In order to challenge colonial writing, post-colonial fiction was created by writers from colonised regions. While formerly colonialist writers treated colonised people as othered, deprived, trampled, and uncivilised, post-colonial writers tried to reflect themselves according to their own perspectives. Hybridity, cultural clashes, otherness, mimicry, ambivalence have been the main characteristics that are reflected by post-colonial literature. Taking on the perspective of the colonised, post-colonial writing challenges the prejudices and ideas that occurred according to the view of the colonised. Therefore, this chapter will analyse how Derek Walcott, as a post-colonial writer, presents his perspective to challenge the authority of colonial writing.

First of all, Walcott maintains a stance against their colonial past by deconstructing the myths of colonial writing. He has dealt with negative outcomes of colonisation in *Omeros* by processing main characters as apparent examples of people who live those problems during their daily lives. Their names do not come from their own past but from the past of their ruler.

As it has been pointed out in the theoretical part of this study, myths are speeches created by people to make a common universal idea to unite and to lead people. They constitute a common history and future for people. European myths passed from the past to the future according to the necessity of people so as to apply important ideologies of imperial powers of the world. Without question, for powerful countries, consciously inoculating the imperial idea is main task of the myths.

Helen, Achilles, Hector and Philoctete myths in the *Iliad* turn into new characters in *Omeros*. It has been discussed that their names remain same but the portrayal of their characterization are totally different from each other. Naturally, the mythic heroes have nobler ancestors, super-human deeds, and the national importance and those qualities are closely connected to the quality of an epic hero. As a Caribbean poet, it is Walcott's mission to write about his people. Therefore, he has written for the love of his own people, since they are in complex life of struggle. For their war is not over woman but over their lives, they all turn into epic heroes.

However, the heroes in *Omeros* do not have such kind of qualities, but they are heroes, too. They are quite simple fishermen, and Helen is only a servant. On top of that, they all suffer from the effects of colonial past. In *Omeros*, St. Lucian people were biologically and culturally hybridized, and they have had identity crisis. There have been mutual prejudices against each other and colonised. Hybrid culture leads people to imitate target culture in order not to be othered. Naturally, they stay in between their own identity and the identity that the dominant culture has created. All those interactions lead those heroes to crisis and ambivalence. On the other hand, although the way that they were colonized seems to be the same, the ways that they act to confront difficulties are different. Their deeds and attitudes towards ongoing events and the living conditions of the island make them heroes of modern time. So, reader comes across heroes whose heroic side come from life itself, instead of noble family and war. It is also acknowledged by Jonathan Martin that Walcott's *Omeros* is his attempt to create and illustrate the post-colonial identities of the Caribbean people. Drawing on the influence of the connection between past and present on Walcott, Martin states that "At around 7,500 lines, *Omeros* has ample room for such housecleaning, and the poem treats a great many situations and characters of both past and present; but its unifying theme remains the tragic burden of history on all West Indians and specifically on the poet himself" (Martin, 1992: 199). Martin here makes it clear that while Walcott combines historical figures with the present ones, his main motive is not to continue the myths he looks back on. Instead, by using myths of the Westerns, the colonizers, he attempts to create a new identity, which is the post-colonial identities of Caribbean people that have emerged as a result of their colonization by the Western. Martin especially acknowledges this attempt by using "the tragic burden of history on all West

Indians". The characters Walcott creates, unlike those in epics like the *Iliad*, become tragic figures whose past is full of misery and pain of war instead of glorious victories. In addition, it is an attempt to create a hybrid Caribbean identity, who is in a crisis due to a search for self-realization and identification that is lost due to colonization.

Furthermore, Walcott's myths are the reflection of colonised people instead of Greek ones, he creates cultural identities with St. Lucian heroes. Therefore, they symbolise the ideal people within colonised people especially Ma Kilman, Achille and Philoctete. So he does not process them in the same way. He tries to grab the attention of the reader to highlight that individual acts are not enough to create national power unless they make a unity. Each person has their own problems at first and they act according to their own desires. They do not know who they are at first and they do nothing to protect their island and themselves. Walcott has a powerful bond to his land, and he visualises her as she is. He focuses on that the value of the land will be understood when people really lose it: "...I was seeing /the light of St. Lucia at last through her own eyes, / her blindness, her inward vision as revealing / as his, because a closing darkness brightens love, / and I felt every wound pass." (Walcott, 1990: 282) According to the quotation he has pain in his heart when he takes a look at the changing island. He is going to die when his time is over as each person passes. Saint Lucia is personified like she is going to die because she is like a person who approaches to her end. Everything that Saint Lucia has lived passes through his mind like a person who visualises every event in his life in the last minute of his death. His wound in his soul comes from his endless love of the island. Due to his love he can only realize Saint Lucia as she is. He knows that people who do not have the sense of real bound to their lands are doomed to lose and to change. Walcott here reveals that they do not witness the physical loss of St. Lucia but they witness the spiritual loss of themselves. As they do not really love themselves, they do not love the island. They are blind to see the true vision of themselves and to see the real Saint Lucia. Whenever they come to their end, their self-awareness clears their mind but it will be too late to change their fate. Appreciating the island's importance in the last minute means losing it forever. Therefore, the prior feature of protecting both themselves and their island is to reach the knowledge of who they really are and true love of their own origin. In this way they can realize the cultural identities of them.

The idea that Walcott's use of mythical characters to create cultural identities is also supported by Stefania Ciocia. She states that "the poet eventually creates a universe where the paternalistic connotation of the acknowledged debt to the Homeric tradition is discarded and a new awareness of the ultimate simultaneity of all art is reinstated against the backdrop of a timeless St. Lucian setting, an environment which testifies to the author's belief that, at least in the Caribbean, 'the sea is history'" (Ciocia, 2015: 87-88). Realizing that epics have the function to unify a nation (Ciocia, 2015: 88), Ciocia claims that the poet's style is not a random choice. Perceiving Caribbean identity as something diminishing, accordingly Walcott tries to connect the cultural identity with the natural environment of St. Lucian. Creating an epic poem, setting of which is changed into a Caribbean one, he makes the nature and people the one identity: the sea is history for him, thus the cultural identity of its people could only be preserved should they be able to connect with it. Therefore, he tries to achieve union of Caribbean people by uniting them with the nature. As colonized people, by holding onto their connection to the "sea", they could also hold onto who they have been and who they have become, which is why losing the island symbolically means the loss of the sense of identity and sense of belonging to a nation.

Walcott also tries to reveal that, although they have different idea and way of accepting the outcomes of their past, it is not impossible for them to react to their problems in the same way. Their own individuality should end up with togetherness so that they can create a unity to save their origins. Firstly, they need to learn their origin in order to overcome each possible problem of colonial past. Walcott's use of epic to create a unified identity in its relation to cultural heritage is discussed by Paul Jay. Referring to the criticism that Walcott's poem is way too Eurocentric and Western-influenced, Jay argues that it is deliberately done by the poet:

Omeros does not inadvertently open old wounds. It is designed to open and explore them. For this reason, it is hard to take Walcott too seriously when he complains that the poem's critical reception has been marked by 'stupid historicism' that sees him 'reinventing the Odyssey [...] trying to make it via Homer' ('Reflections on *Omeros*,' 232) (Jay, 2006: 546).

Obviously, this epic-style poem does not simply recall the past traumas and tragedies suffered by Caribbean people in the hands of colonizers. “Exploring” them simply means recreation of them. Walcott uses the so-called Eurocentric or heavily-Western influenced style for a reason. He brings forward the past of the colonized Caribbean people. And he does it by imitating the style of those who colonized them. Moreover, by doing so, Walcott aims to create the cultural heritage that is lost within this colonized past.

...Walcott designs *Omeros* to explore, negotiate, and try to come to terms with many of the major issues extant in critical debate about his work. As such, *Omeros* is less a poem about the Caribbean than a poem about *writing about the Caribbean*, one that embodies the various stands of Walcott's identity - African, European, Caribbean, American - in a range of characters and scenarios carefully orchestrated to explore critical debates about Caribbean writing and Walcott's relationship to it (Jay, 2006: 546).

Accordingly, Walcott's poem functions to bring together all the identities existing in the Caribbean, some of which are the results of the colonization. His use of Western – or European – epic style becomes meaningful in this sense because now European influence is a part of the Caribbean post-colonial identity. The identity Walcott tries to draw in the poem is the one of many influences, thus to be able to create a sense of unity as a Caribbean nation, he creates an epic that is to reflect all layers of this identity that has been shaped by the past events. In other words, the post-colonial Caribbean identity includes both its origins and new aspects brought by the invaders, and Walcott imitates the invader's style, not to forget the past, but to preserve the origins of their old nature prior to the colonization, so that the Caribbean identity could embrace and accept the cultural heritage, the origins of their culture is preserved in the new post-colonial culture, which makes a unity of identity for his people, as observed in the case of Achille. As Achille learns his name, he realises who he is:

A name means something. The qualities desired in a son,
and even a girl-child; so even the shadows who called
you expected one virtue, since every name is a blessing,

since I am remembering the hope I had for you as a child.

Unless the sound means nothing. Then you would be nothing.

Did they think you were nothing in that other kingdom (Walcott, 1990: 137)

As it is pointed out in the quotation above, Walcott highlights the importance of name to protect cultural inheritance. Afolabe's words to his son, Achille, are key factors for them since they can only exist with their names. Afolabe is processed here as a powerful character who has the clear mind of ancestral bonds to traditions because he can ignore Achille if he cannot know the meaning of his name or if he does not care it. Achille has identity crisis just because he does not know who he is. Without knowing the meaning of his name, it is impossible for him to learn who he really is and where he belongs to. Although they are broken off their lands, he shows the way of sustaining their origins, their place and their identity to Achille. In this sense, within Afolabe character, Walcott evaluates the usage of native tongue is important in order not to live identity crisis.

Likewise, Walcott offers constructing national conscious as the other way to challenge the authority of the past. He reveals the ideal society that is composed of colonised people on the island. Therefore, ordinary fishermen and Helen on the island are processed through represented natural myths in *Omeros*. They are to affect people to believe that they have their own ideas. Power struggle of colonisers is identified with stamping out the weaker than themselves. Greek heroes set examples of these political acts to whole world. While the main idea behind Greek heroes to create idealized society that legitimizes the suppression of the West, for colonised people this case is exact opposite. For them struggle is not to threaten and colonise, instead, they want to prove their existence with their history and their future. So Walcott aims to constitute national consciousness. In this sense they will not only remain with their affect but also they will be future since they will pass next generations through literary works. So he puts forward the importance of language when he creates national consciousness. For him, language is an important tool that has to be protected in order not to lose cultural dignity. It preserves root, identity, tradition and customs of a nation. St. Lucia's physical change is not only limited to its physical appearance; its cultural change also reveals

itself with the change of its language. The narrator evaluates the language of the trees on the island:

"Tree! You can be a canao! Or else you cannot!"

The bearded elders endured the decimation
of their tribe without uttering a syllable
of that language they had uttered as one nation,

the speech taught their saplings: from the towering babble
of the cedar to the green vowels of *bois-campêche*. (Walcott, 1990: 6)

As it is mentioned in the quotation above, the narrator evaluates the fall of the trees and their speech. Trees are religiously significant as they symbolise the Gods of Aruac people. Later Aruacs' control passes to the colonisers of the island and all the trees fall. Fishermen cut down them to make canoe in order to serve new comers of the island. Achille is one of them who cut down laurel trees to make canoe for himself. The trees personified here. They talk and their speech represents the loss of the language of St. Lucia and people who lose their original language because saplings are taught to speak the language of the ruler of the island instead of indigenous people.

Moreover, the names of ordinary things turn into another names according to the language of dominant culture: "...and what began dissolving was the / fading sound of their tribal name for the rain, / the bright sound for the sun, a hissing noun for the river, / and always the word "never," and never the word "again." (Walcott, 1990: 151-152) The narrator focuses on the loss of language again. Naming the things with new vocabulary means it is removed from their original mother tongue. River, rain and sun are only used as examples here. There are many other words that changed as a result of renaming the dominant culture on the island. In this sense national and cultural dignities of people began to dissolve. Enslaved people in this way cannot use their mother tongue and they lose one of the important constituents of their culture.

Furthermore, Philoctete has already portrayed as a character who knows the importance of cultural inheritance and past. He says: "You all see what it's like without roots in this world?" (Walcott, 1990: 21) Since he has a strict bond to his ancestor like the narrator his wound never heals till Ma Kilman finds the way to cure. With Ma Kilman Walcott produces concrete examples for language and cultural relation and shows to the reader that language is not limited with cultural power. It has a spiritual healing effect the soul of colonised people:

the ants talking the language of her great-grandmother,
the gossip of a distant market, and she understood,
the way we follow our thoughts without any language,

why the ants sent her this message to come to the wood
where the wound of the flower, its gangrene, its rage
festering for centuries, reeked with corrupted blood (Walcott, 1990: 244)

Philoctete's non-healing wound has been pointed out in previous chapter. Ma Kilman can find a herb to heal that wound when she leaves everything and follows the ants. Philoctete's wound According to the quote above the language that ants talk to her is their ancestors' language which means that in order to cure themselves they have to follow their native tongue. Even though they live in post-colonial period, there also exists a way of healing the wound within their heart that comes from their past and non-healing. Obviously Walcott aims to show how to remove identity crisis and belonging problems of colonised people with the example of Ma Kilman's finding cure by using native language to heal Philoctete's wound.

Additionally, Walcott puts forward that hybridization of his characters causes the hybridization of the target culture. As aforementioned, Walcott has tried to purify their culture by focusing on the importance of language. He shows language as a prior way to protect their culture. Though, the point in question is that his culture has already been hybridised, which is realized by Alexander Irvine, as well: "If there is to be a centre for Walcott, he must carry it with him wherever he goes, continually negotiating a place for himself somewhere in between the two cultures whose uneasy interaction

produced him. This negotiation is one constant project of Walcott's poetry..." (Irvine, 2005: 123). Walcott's identity clearly consists of different cultures, namely that of the colonizer and of the colonized, and eventually he is a part of this hybridised culture. Constant negotiation suggests his identity politics are shaped by the aspects of these two cultures and his poetics reflect the hybrid culture he was born into. Even though he sees language as a way to protect one's identity, he is also well aware of the fact that the identity he tries to protect does not only consist of pre-colonized cultural heritage. Walcott may attempt to preserve origins of the Caribbean people such as their language. However, this colonized nation now has an identity heavily influenced by the European colonizers. Consequently, he does not actually try to get rid of the colonizer's influence on the Caribbean people. Instead, he tries to purify the Caribbean culture by integrating what used to exist before European invasion into the culture emerging after colonization. For, even he belongs to that multicultural Caribbean culture. He himself was educated by the European doctrines. He uses their language. His characters have already adapted themselves to the dominant culture on the island. Namely, deconstruction of myths in *Omeros* does not only mean creating new heroes, it also means that changing their origins with indigenous ones. As Loomba evaluates:

Anti-colonial movements and individuals often drew upon Western ideas and vocabularies to challenge colonial rule and hybridised what they borrowed by juxtaposing it with indigenous ideas, reading it through their own interpretative lens, and even using it to assert cultural alterity or insist on an unbridgeable difference between coloniser and colonised. (Loomba, 1998: 146)

This is the central point that Walcott does with his characters in *Omeros*. Achille, Helen, and Philoctete attend Maud funeral and pray. When they come to Christmas time, they celebrate Christmas with their African ritual dance. Achille and Philoctete wear women's clothes and dance together. For New Year's benediction Philoctete performs ablutions. For instance, Achille's has motto, and it does not belong to himself: "...In God We Troust" (Walcott, 1990: 8) He possibly trusts his God that he and the other islanders will gain an independent life, and one day they will be free from imperial suppression. While he wishes and believes in his God, he still believes in a motto that has been written on US dollar to oppose the imperial power. He takes their

motto but he uses it for his own benefit to get rid of their imperial power. Since then it does not belong to United States anymore.

He also questions whether hybridization process of cultures still continues or it has come to an end with independence. Children and their education during their growing period are revealed here: "The Battle of the Saints moves through the surf of trees. / School-texts rustle to the oval portrait of a / cloud-wigged Rodney, but the builders' names are not there, / not Hector's ancestor's, Philoctete's, nor Achille's." (Walcott, 1990: 315) As the narrator points out in the quotation, the history of the island only includes the colonisers' history. The indigenous people of the island have been forgotten. Achille's, and the other's ancestors do not have names within the text that are being taught to students at schools. Walcott himself is one of those school children, too. For this he only learns what they taught him before. Although Walcott does not mention colonisation as an ongoing process at contemporary time, he takes the attention that while colonisers impose their power and change indigenous people under the name of education, people have the ability to see around through their own spirit.

Moreover, the narrator's trips give him different perspective to visualise the colonised people around the world and on St. Lucia. Walcott has many trips to the different parts of the world. These trips function as reminders to the narrator that there are parallelisms between those places and St. Lucia because of their colonised past. So he realises that he is not the only a person in grief. Except African indigenous people, Native Americans have also faced the cultural and biological destruction. Examining the function of "wound" in Walcott's *Omeros*, Jahan Ramazani argues the existence of different experiences of colonized people in Walcott's work: "But Walcott conceives the Antilles as a physical, corporeal, and linguistic site of multiple and inextricable histories of victimization and cruelty" (Ramazani, 1997: 415). The narration he draws in his poetry apparently does reflect the different types of wounds suffered by different people. In other words, it could be argued that Walcott is aware of the effects of colonialism on different ethnic groups and nations. They are many and they cannot be separated from each other. In accordance with it, "histories of victimization and cruelty" suggests that Walcott's poem is also a reflection of collective experience of colonized people from different parts of the world: He does not only create a post-colonial

Caribbean identity, he also tries to illustrate and connect to other groups who suffered in the hands of colonizers, which is visible in *Omeros*. Especially when he processes his characters in *Omeros* and searches more, Catherine Weldon has been the means of conveying cultural subversion through her experience. With her past he subdues his grief as hers is sharper than his. He says: " When one grief afflicts us we choose a sharper grief / in hope that enormity will ease affliction, / so Catherine Weldon rose in high relief / through the tin page of a cloud, making a fiction / of my own loss. (Walcott, 1990: 181) Although he hopes to soothe his grief by choosing the sharper one, the affliction that they have lived is the same. In fact, Weldon's grief triggers the desire of writing and strengthens the bonds to his people, because all tribes around the world have nearly the same experience related to their colonial past. So Weldon makes fiction of his own loss and the only way to relieve him is to write of their stories. He also comes across with his father, Warwick, who questions him whether he can write about his own people.

He visits "the Trail of Tears" by guide. He points out that colonial past has settled every part of the daily life so that it could remind the ruled people of their helplessness. In Georgia towns and meadows have been named with Greek names. At the same place justificatory ideology of slavery within the names of myths, and the Trail of Tears are together. So the rights of them still maintain.

The narrator comes across the poets in pit when they visit underworld. They suffer because they have written only for themselves selfishly. He thinks himself as one of them and says: And that was where I had come from. Pride in my craft. "Elevating myself... / ...Omeros gripped / my hand in enclosing marble and his strength moved / me away from that crowd, or else I might have slipped." (Walcott, 1990: 293)

However, he has time to write not for himself but for his people, Omeros functions as guide here to him to protect from being a poet like others. Walcott here criticises the poets who have written for their benefits. Those poets are associated to the literary people that have been responsible for writing in the name of authority. In this sense art itself becomes as guilty as its creator since through art the idea of people is imposed by the controlling messages hidden literary works. So the future of people is

shaped just like their re-written. That is the reason why Warwick wants the narrator to visit museum and world classics. Beside there is a made up embellished history for people, there are a lot of dazzler work of art to blind people. While the West shared that history with its supporter, colonised people do not have any past without their pain. "...History has simplified / him. Its elegies had blinded me with temporal / lament for a smoky Troy... / History has melted and, beneath it, a patient, hybrid organism / grows in his cruciform shadow." (Walcott, 1990: 297) As the quotation explains here history only simplified his people. He himself is also one of the blinded people around without any past. He is not able to see his island through his own way of understanding but through the eyes that have been given by European power. In this manner he only visualises the island as Troy and his characters do not move beyond Homer's characters. In spite of this, he is freed of Western perspective and he is able to perceive his people as they are. He has hopes to write for his people through their perspectives because he does not believe the controlling ideas of the ruler. He says: "I had lost faith both in religion and in myth." (Walcott, 1990: 293) During all the time, colonisers have got hold of the authority in their hands with justificatory ideas behind it. Myths have been the umbrella concept that hides all ideas within it. If they insist on believing in their trickery, probably they will not be able to gain a chance to rewrite them. By escaping from his selfish vision, he indeed criticises the value of being true poet for his people.

Shortly, in this chapter, since the central point of post-colonial writing is to challenge the authority of colonial writing, from his perspective of Saint Lucian people, Derek Walcott's stance against colonial writing has been analysed. First, he deconstructs Greek myths by changing them with their ordinary indigenous people who face all the negative outcomes of colonial period. Their names are noble but their deeds nobler than their names. Walcott's processing them as heroes of daily struggle of the life of the island has been evaluated. Then Walcott's aim to find cultural identities has been analysed. He portrays his St. Lucian myths as reflections of colonised people and they all symbolise ideal people who search for their own identities instead of accepting new one. Later, Walcott's idea of togetherness to overcome the outcomes of problems that they face has been analysed. He offers individual acts make unity to learn their origins. Then, the importance he gives to language to strengthen the cultural bonds has been analysed. He puts forward the ideal society to construct national conscious. He

gives examples of relating to the power of language for cultural inheritance so that it can pass through to the next generations. Additionally, Walcott's hybridization of the Greek myths has been pointed out. Besides his powerful bond to his culture, he reveals that hybridization is inevitable for colonised but hybridization of target culture protects them to be the same as the coloniser. Lastly, his approaches towards the importance of colonial people's perspective instead of colonisers have been discussed. He argues that with his true vision he can only write about his own people.

CONCLUSION

Colonization have affected people all around the world from the beginning till contemporary time. Post-colonial period characterises influenced cultures from different regions and time for its not being restricted definite period. Post-colonial literature puts emphasis on changing colonial writing by highlighting the lives of people in their society that has been imposed many changes as a result of various mutual relations and interactions of colonizer and colonized. *Omeros* is the epic poem of indigenous people of the island. Walcott mostly creates heroes and identities of multi-cultural community from those indigenous people and deconstructs their Ancient counterparts. This thesis aims to analyse the changes of ancient myths to epic characters of Saint Lucian myths under the lights of post-colonial literature.

This study has embarked on an enterprise to comprehend the power of cultural bonds in order to overcome the struggles resulted from mutual interactions of the coloniser and the colonised people that Walcott focuses on in *Omeros*. So this thesis has been divided into four parts. In theoretical part the concept of imperialism, colonialism, post-colonialism, post-colonial literature, and the myths have been analysed according to the critics of colonial and post-colonial studies. In the second part mythological characters and references have been analysed. Walcott created myths from colonised people by deconstructing the ancient ones. He processes Saint Lucian myths as ordinary people unlike their ancient counterparts. In the third part, the island and characters in *Omeros* have been analysed from the perspective of post-colonial era. He puts forward the negative impacts of colonialism on Saint Lucian island and people live there. The condition of Saint Lucia has been evaluated since it has been under the impression of colonial power both physically and spiritually. As for the last part, Walcott's challenging of colonial writing has been discussed. He tried to protect their identities and their cultural inheritance by reflecting attitudes and reasonable behaviours of his mythical characters.

Omeros is the reflection the lives of ordinary people as modern myths attributed by Walcott in modern life. The names of renowned characters of Greek mythology remain same but the source of their characteristic features, and fame has

been changed by Walcott. Their heroic side come from the colonised past of their ancestor instead of the nobler ancestry of Greek myths. Walcott focuses on that without nobler ancestors it is possible to be nobler than heroes of history. He concretises this approach within Achille and the other fishermen of the island. Also, myths have been created in order to exemplify an idealised character for people to inoculate the ideologies that colonial powers had been produced. The main aim of colonised people is to prove their existence without facing any idea. Walcott creates his own myths from colonised people so that he could wipe off the perception of the West. The truth of the absolute power of the West is a general perception being inoculated with myths around the world. Walcott stance against the idea with his mythical characters. Moreover, deconstruction of myths means of creating new identities by hybridizing his own characters and ancient myths together. In this sense Walcott speaks the same language of the West to shatter their authority by putting forward his own characters. New identities of his myths are vivid examples of heroes like every colonised people around the world who struggle for life.

Derek Walcott was born in Saint Lucia and he is a hybridised person like his characters in *Omeros*. He dealt with the conditions of the island and reflected its ongoing problems resulted from colonial past of island. Firstly, the island has been processed as a place changing permanently. Tourists, immigrants, and the indigenous people on the island have constant mutual relations and interactions. Walcott focuses on his land's losing its originality and local tastes during changing process. Also, Walcott evaluates that Saint Lucian people do not get the attention that they deserve. Real owner of the island are indigenous people, but their inferior position against colonial power makes them servant of extorters of the island. Moreover, Walcott emphasis on the problems of hybridization, mimicry, and ambivalence. As a result of interactions between islanders and outsider, hybrid culture has negative effects on Saint Lucian people. They lose their original culture and identity by imitating comers from outside. However, Walcott's characters affect others, too. They still continue to live their original traditions. The bond to their roots contributes hybrid culture, and strengthens their loyalty to their ancestral inheritance.

This dissertation has aimed to enlighten that independence of a colony does not bring real independence unless colonised people protect their ancestral roots. As one of the descendants of colonised people, Derek Walcott highlights importance of social clues to advocate his cultural inheritance in *Omeros*. First of all, he processes his people from their original perspective. His recreating myths indicates his worthwhile stance against the authority of colonial discourse to challenge it. From his own point of view his characters nobler and more renowned myths than other Greek mythological characters in terms of the difficulty of their task. Their aim is to maintain their life within an interacted community.

Furthermore, Walcott handles hybridization of his own myths with ancient ones to create ideal society purified by their own language and culture. As colonised people lose their origins, Walcott clarifies that hybridization of target culture is another way to protect them to be same as coloniser. For this he also reveals the idea of togetherness from individual acts to make unity. Each character in *Omeros* has its own unique attitude. When they act according to their tradition and customs, they create powerful bond between their past and present to have control over their oppression of daily routines.

Lastly, Walcott shows the problems of colonised island within characters and island itself in *Omeros*. The problems consist of all negative effects that colonization had brought. Hybridization of both host and target culture lead various complex struggle which is the indication of change in both colonised and coloniser. Accordingly, both of them maintain their lives with transformation that interaction have brought to them. On the other hand, as it can be concluded from this study, once they have been imposed target culture, it will be hard for them to turn their origin. Although colonised gained their political independence, colonisation of their cultural values have been in progress. But Walcott focuses on that colonised ones can lead their lives by giving importance to their cultural values. Cultural power is processed as clear way to save the roots of colonised people against colonizer. It is a way of reaction to imperial authority for colonised ones. In this sense, they will impose their cultural concepts to the target culture and hybridised them. Walcott processes that hybridization with recreation of myths in *Omeros*. Also, with this study, it will be clear that acting according to the

traditions, and speaking their own language and so on will always help colonised to remind their past. Otherwise they will lose reality of them and behave according to the future that rulers have designated for them.

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VITA

Name Surname : BETÜL AKÇA

Birth of Place : DENİZLİ

Birth of Date : 09.06.1983

B.A. : Pamukkale University
Faculty of Science and Letters
English Language and Literature Department

Graduation Date : 2015

M.A. : Pamukkale University
Social Sciences Institution
English Language and Literature Department