

**POSTCOLONIAL ILLUSIONS AND JUXTAPOSITIONS IN TIMOTHY MO'S  
FICTION**

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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To my children

Oğuz Kağan & Aylin Ece

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**ABSTRACT****POSTCOLONIAL JUXTAPOSITION AND ILLUSIONS IN TIMOTHY MO'S  
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Demir, Ayşe

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The post-colonial period brings a different form to the individuals and nations' lives. The nations that were once colonized regain their independence, but the traces of colonialism can still be observed in their lives. In order to get adapted, people need to redefine the established ways of thinking, and this is the point where the subject matter of this dissertation, post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions, emerges.

As a writer who has an Anglo-Chinese background, Timothy Mo's fiction is a true medium to analyse the juxtapositions and illusions within post-colonial context. Since the post-colonial illusion of having a new life engages the minds of the protagonists of the novels within the scope of this dissertation, they end up looking for ways out of their borders. Thus, discontented with their current circumstances, they leave their home and they set up a new life in a new environment. However, the post-colonial juxtapositions start to hunt their lives since they mostly live as immigrants or expatriates in a foreign setting. It appears to be a compulsion for them to be there for a better life, at the same time, they strive to go away since they cannot feel themselves as a part of the whole. Stuck in this vicious circle, people need to form new identities conforming to the post-colonial world.

Being an outsider becomes an imposed identity on the people who live in post-colonial world. Hence, the cast away, discriminated, oppressed individuals; namely the outsiders form the basis of this dissertation, which is aimed at analysing Timothy Mo's selected novels; *The Redundancy of Courage*, *Renegade or Halo2*, *Sour Sweet* and *The Monkey King* in terms of the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions.

**Key Words:** Timothy Mo, juxtaposition, illusion, postcolonial discourse, fiction

## ÖZET

### TIMOTHY MO'NUN YAZININDA SÖMÜRGEÇİLİK SONRASI DÖNEM KARŞITLIKLARI VE YANILSAMALARI

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Sömürgecilik sonrası dönem, bireylerin ve ulusların hayatlarına farklı bir yaşam biçimi getirmiştir. Bir zamanlar sömürgeleştirilen uluslar bağımsızlıklarını geri kazanırlar, ancak sömürgeciliğin izleri yaşamlarında hala görülmeye devam etmektedir. Adapte olabilmek için insanların yerleşik düşünce biçimlerini yeniden tanımlamaları gerekir ve burası tam olarak mevcut tezin konusu olan, sömürgecilik sonrası karşıtlık ve yanılısamaların ortaya çıktığı noktadır.

Çin kökenli, İngiliz yazar Timothy Mo'nun yazını, sömürgecilik sonrası bağlamdaki karşıtlık ve yanılısamaları analiz etmek için uygun metinler sunmaktadır. Sömürgecilik sonrası yeni bir hayata sahip olma yanılısaması, bu tez kapsamındaki romanların kahramanlarının zihinlerini meşgul ettiğinden, çareyi kendi sınırlarının dışına çıkabilmenin yollarını aramakta bulurlar. Mevcut durumlarından hoşnut olmayan bu insanlar, evlerinden ayrılırlar ve yeni bir ortamda yeni bir hayata başlarlar. Bununla birlikte, sömürgecilik sonrası karşıtlıklar çoğunlukla yabancı bir ortamda göçmen ya da geçici yabancı işçi olarak yaşayanların hayatlarının üzerine çökmeye başlar. Daha iyi bir yaşam için orada bulunmaları bir zorunluluk olarak görünmektedir, ancak kendilerini bir bütünün parçası olarak hissedemedikleri için aynı zamanda oradan kurtulmaya çalışırlar. Bu kısır döngüde sıkışık kalan insanların sömürgecilik sonrası dünyaya uygun yeni kimlikler oluşturmaları gerekir.

Yabancılık, sömürgecilik sonrası dünyada yaşayan insanlara dayatılan bir kimliktir. Bu nedenle, kenara itilen, ayrımcılığa uğrayan, ezilen; yani yabancılaştırılmış bireyler, Timothy Mo'nun *The Redundancy of Courage, Renegade or Halo2, Sour Sweet* ve *The Monkey King* romanlarını sömürgecilik sonrası karşıtlık ve yanılısamalar açısından analiz eden bu tezin temelini oluşturmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Timothy Mo, karşıtlık, yanılısama, sömürge sonrası söylem, yazın

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature is the reflection of real life. Over the centuries, not only the drastic changes, wars, revolutions that have a great impact on history, but also the unchanged universal themes such as love, death etc. have been the subject matter of literature. One of these focus points of literature is human beings' thirst for power. Although people used to battle against nature in ancient times; in time, it has been evolved into a man-to-man rivalry. Therefore, in this world order, it has become a reality that whoever has the power dominates over the other. This, at the same time, brings out terms like oppression, exploitation and manipulation to the stage of history. When the phenomenon is extended to the global scale, it is called "colonization".

In its simplest terms, what colonizers do is simply using their power to manipulate those in weaker position. Since those who do not have capability to defend themselves cannot defy them, the colonizers take advantage of this, and it marks the beginning of exploitation which, as a multi-faceted topic that will be explained in detail and discussed all through this dissertation, is a key term to grasp the colonial context. Although colonial process covers many other issues as well, the scope of this thesis is more related to the end of colonialism; namely, the post-colonial period. It would not be weird to call post-colonialism as the awakening of nations. Once the exploited nations become conscious about the unfair treatments imposed on them and gather the necessary power and courage, they try to regain their independence no matter what it costs; this is regarded as the end of colonialism and the point where the postcolonial era starts.

The colonial agencies deem people under their reign to submit to their sovereignty. The way they do this is through the ideological apparatuses as enounced by Louis Althusser. He claims that "the division between fiction and truth, between ideology and the real, *are wholly internal to ideology*" (Williams, 2002: 34). That is to say, the dominant ideology shapes the lives of people and their ways of thinking in the colonial world. However, it is inevitable that there appears a gap between the reality and the illusionary disposal created by the states. Marxist critics claim this gap as the overt and covert structure in a society. While the overt structure is the legitimized one, they unveil the covert meanings through social structures, class conflicts and historical construction of the societies. The covert structure and the illusions also form the basis of this dissertation, but this will be through post-colonial perspective.



In fact, the focus of this dissertation is on the post-effects of colonialism, because even when the colonial reign is not going on actively, the hereafter results can still be detected. The people living under these circumstances share similar troubles. Hong Kong, as a former British colony for instance, is a true example to trace post-colonialism. It is a setting which will frequently be mentioned in this study. Timothy Mo, the writer of the novels analysed in this thesis, is Hong-Kong born, and it is a preferred setting in his novels because it suits the post-colonial frame with the ex-colonised people living with the ongoing colonial effects on their lives.

Migration turns out to be one of the most distinct results of the new order post-colonial world brings into the lives of people. When people coming from different backgrounds change their living places, this affects not only these people as minorities, but the already-existing order they move into undergoes drastic changes, as well. That is to say, the demographic structure changes through immigrants. The interchanging of relations between cultures leads to a reconstructed type of society. The language used by people, working conditions, food culture and social values are all the things that are affected at first. Also, due to the differences between cultures, a chaotic atmosphere is very likely to emerge because as well as people who welcome the multicultural outcome of migration, there are also the conservative nationalists who reject people from other ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, the anti-immigrant host societies make it more difficult for the already restless immigrants to get integrated into the society.

The immigrant literature has gained significance due to the increasing number of multi-cultural societies in the globalized world of modern age. Especially in recent centuries, people in the literary world have pointed the issue that there is a reality of immigrant population. The problems arising from their existence, the troubles they cause have attracted both the readers' and the writers' attention. However, as Gayatri Spivak states in her well-known *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, the voice of subaltern has not been heard in Western literature until post-colonial writers like V. S. Naipaul, Sam Selvon, Hanif Kureishi and Timothy Mo started to write about the immigrant experience. Although their subject matters seem to be the same with their Western contemporaries, these writers let people see the other side of the conflict and denote the presence of minorities in the Western world from their point of view. In other words, the immigrant experience has started to be told by the people who experience it, not from an outsider's angle.

Timothy Mo, one of these pioneer writers in post-colonial literature, narrates the presence of Chinese minority in Western literature. Most of his protagonists are immigrant people living in diaspora, and either the alien culture they move into or their own ethnic background causes troubles for these characters. The terms Timothy Mo's novels preoccupied with are mostly the subjugation and displacement of individuals, the resulting identity crisis, the marginal characters' integration or disallowance into a new society.

As a writer who was born from a Cantonese father and an English mother in Hong-Kong and educated there during his childhood, Timothy Mo spends many years of his life in England, which leads him to experience all the troubles of being a non-native in a foreign setting. Timothy Mo experiences the discrepancies of being an outsider in all walks of his life. That is why, it is not surprising to see that most of the themes he applies in his novels, the topics he deals with, even the protagonists of his novels are derived from his own experiences. What is more, his two-sided way of living enables him the gift to observe both cultures equally, as well. In his novels it is possible to see that he keeps himself at a fair distance to both sides; you can find him in such instances as boasting something about English or Chinese culture at one point while criticizing the same one at another. This is also something that differentiates him from the other fellow writers who either favour the strong with a Westernized point of view or advocate the weak.

Timothy Mo has seven novels and four of them, namely, *The Redundancy of Courage*, *Renegade or Halo*, *Sour Sweet* and *The Monkey King* are the ones to be analysed in this study. *The Redundancy of Courage* is a novel based on the confiscation of Danu Island by the *malais*. The people living in this fictional island struggle against the invaders. Adolph Ng., the protagonist-narrator of the novel, is caught between the two fires. However, his adaptability lets him survive this conflict, and he restarts his life in exile in Brazil. The novel can be referred to as a fictional account of the events following the invasion and occupation of East Timor by Indonesia. The other novel in the scope of this dissertation, *Renegade or Halo*, is narrated by Rey Castro. As a boy grown up in the suburbs of Philippines, Rey's life is changed completely upon his involvement in a crime. Though he is a member of underclass, he is to become a lawyer and dreams to move off the prejudices against his ethnic background through education. However, the values of the tribe he is required to be a part of do not let him make his own way. Therefore, he becomes a wanderer who cannot escape from being the cast away whichever society he goes into. *Sour Sweet* (1982) is a novel based on familial relations. Chen and Lily, a

newly married couple immigrate to London from China. Their little son, Man Kee and Lily's sister Mui are the immediate family members who experience the turmoils of being foreigners in an alien setting together with Chen couple. Lily and Chen have different character traits, which also changes the way they perceive the events. Their lives also end up in different ways; while Lily becomes a hybrid that can sustain her and the other family members' lives, Chen is suspiciously killed. The last novel to be analyzed in this dissertation is Mo's prize winning first novel, *The Monkey King*. As a novel set in colonial Hong Kong, the tensions between Wallace Nolasco and his father-in-law Mr. Poon are narrated in the novel. Coming from a completely different background, Nolasco cannot get easily adapted to the order of Poon family. While attempting to gain acceptance on one side, he tries to set himself free from Mr. Poon's oppressions. Following his departure to Mainland China, Nolasco finds his true self and upon his return, everything becomes different.

In order to handle the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions in every aspect, the novels have been selected in terms of their subject matters. While it is possible to have a look at the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions from individual and familial perspectives in *Sour Sweet* and *The Monkey King*; *The Redundancy of Courage* and *Renegade or Halo2* are the novels that provide an insight into the communal and national frame of post-colonialism. Intended as a narrowing down plan from general to specific, the first theoretical chapter that covers the necessary background information for the analysis of the novels will be followed by a second chapter with the name of *The Redundancy of Courage* for dealing with the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions on the nation-wide level. The third chapter, *Renegade or Halo2*, will focus on the adventures of Rey Castro with his communal membership. The novel of fourth chapter, *Sour Sweet* takes a Chinese couple to the centre of events and looks into their new life as immigrants in London. The last chapter is centred on Wallace Nolasco in *The Monkey King*, as an individual trying to be integrated into the Poon family as an outsider. All these novels treat post-colonial illusions from different perspectives, and the aim of this dissertation is to cover the topic in all aspects with explanations and examples from the above mentioned novels.

As a contemporary writer of the last century, Timothy Mo takes a prominent place in literature. Thus, his works have been studied by those who are concerned with immigrant experiences, cultural identities and the livings of ethnic people within the post-colonial context. Elaine Ho, a professor at The University of Hong Kong, has published

many articles and a book on Mo's fiction. Her detailed analysis about each novel guides the scholars as well as providing general background information for the people who would be interested in Mo's works. In addition to Ho, there are also some studies that focus on Timothy Mo's novels from different angles like, food, gender, immigration and cultural discourse; however, this dissertation differs from the other works in its dealing with the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions specifically. The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized has been a common subject matter studied in literature, but the fact that juxtapositions like colonized people's dichotomy between integrating or refraining from the others and their conflicting identities with the host societies; as well as the illusions provided by the colonizers and the new world illusions of individuals embodied in the post-colonial world has not been correlated in one study like this dissertation. Timothy Mo's novels have been taken as the medium for this research because the contents and the figures of his novels provide the due material for studying these tenets in detail.

## CHAPTER I

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The subject matter of literary works mostly bears the traces of the era they are written in. It is difficult to pinpoint an exact boundary for labeling these works, but in terms of their common aspects, they can be classified. The authors who write about the struggles of the nations which were colonized once or current colonies, for instance, are merged under the name of the Post-colonial literature, which gains importance in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the problems that the colonized nations encounter have been the topics that are worked through from a variety of angles in literature. What makes this study peculiar is that further than the relation between the colonizer and the colonized, the juxtapositions and the illusions resulting from the cultural clashes and the identity crises within post-colonial context are thoroughly discussed. For this reason, post-colonialism appears to be the right setting to ground the theory of this dissertation. Thus, the focus of this study is mainly on one of the post-colonial writers, Timothy Mo's fiction, and it aims at exploring the juxtapositions and the illusions in his selected works. In order to make a detailed analysis, reflecting on the theoreticians' premises, this chapter provides theoretical background within a post-colonial frame.

To begin with, Colonialism- a movement that has long been studied in literature from different aspects- is mainly accepted to be based on the domination of European imperial powers on their colonies. Thus, the two basic parts of colonial studies are the colonizer and the colonized. Following this movement, Post-Colonialism moves beyond merely the colonizer and the colonized relationship, and the post-colonial theory focuses on "the relations between ideas and practices: relations of harmony, relations of conflict, generative relations between different peoples and their cultures" (Young, 2003: 7). Hence, post-colonial studies are mainly about the after-effects of the colonial period. The end of colonialism starts at the point where the colonized ones became aware of their power as a self-nation and started to fight for their freedom. In this respect, the colonial motives for exploiting everything in the colonies were encountered with the resistance of colonies. One of the peculiar examples of this struggle is Indians' success to get their freedom from British colony in 1947. Following the period in which the nations that used to be the colonies before starting to gain their independence worldwide, the term "post-colonial" was coined in 1970s and started to be used commonly for "the interactions between European nations and the societies they colonized in the modern period"

(Ashcroft et al, 2002: 7). The word- “post-colonial” has become a referential word for the new period in which the ex-colonies reconstruct themselves and their attempts to reformulate their historical, social and political positions.

Post-colonial literature deals mainly with the nations which were “other”ed by the dominant imperial powers. There has been much discussion on how to identify these “other” nations; whether to exclude the power agencies that have shaped the relations in the world for so long and determine these nations’ economic, social and historical existence; or to take the mutual interactions between these nations into consideration by also focusing on their peculiar national traits. What Post-colonial studies make possible to talk about is a multicultural narration free from the dominant ideologies. Thus, Post-colonialism paves the way to search for the notions of home, language, race, ethnicity, multiculturalism, displacement, resistance and all the other terms that are used for defining the identities of multi-cultured post-colonial nations.

Before giving the details of other Post-colonial concepts, the notion of culture should be recounted at first hand since it is core to define the Post-colonial relations of nations. Culture can be defined as how people make sense of the world in which they live individually and how they live among others. Hence, there is a cultural identity that keeps the people who share the same things together. Stuart Hall notes that:

“There are at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (Hall, 1995: 223).

What Hall claims as the first way of looking at culture is “oneness”; people inevitably live in a society, and there is a collective entity that is shared by the members of the culture they belong to. However, in the colonization process, the emerging hybrid societies offer a new means of deconstructing the boundaries of the cultures. The second view of culture that is proposed by Hall is that:

“as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather - since history has intervened - 'what we have become'. We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about ‘one experience, one identity’, without acknowledging its other side” (Hall, 1995: 225).

In other words, this second way is “becoming”, which means that the societies go through changes and are transformed into different forms. In addition to their different cultural background and their roots, the base of new formed societies is comprised of individual or public interactions that also affect the people’s social positions, social roles, economic structures, policies, values and perceptions. To make it clear, Homi Bhabha states that “the transnational dimension of cultural transformation -- migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation -- makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification” (1994: 247). The societies have been shaped through these social changes. During this socialization process, people take their cultures, languages and lifestyle with them when they change their living places and interact with the other people. In this case, the emergence of the societies turns out to be a matter of belonging, and individuals’ experiences gain different meanings in terms of the society they live in. This sense of belonging, which will also be studied in detail in this dissertation, is something almost all the colonized nations experience. Thus, the people who were eradicated from their own culture and locations cannot stick to their real inherent identities and become strangers; neither can they comply with the new social formation they are involved in. Hence, in Bhabha’s terms, they become hybrid beings that have nowhere to pertain to, and there appears an unavoidable identity crisis awaiting the people living in this third space.

Homi Bhabha, one of the pioneers of Post-colonial studies, is the one who raises the question of cultural identities of colonized cultures. Bhabha states in his *The Location of Culture* that colonizers and the colonized are mutually bonded to each other in constructing a shared culture. The fact that there is a “Third Space of Enunciation” in which cultural systems are constructed is what Bhabha brings into the Post-colonial studies, and the domain of this study is mainly this third space Bhabha points. In addition to “the third space”, Homi Bhabha offers many concepts like hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry in order to define the cultural relations between the colonizer and colonized and especially how the individual and national identities are formed within Post-colonial context. In order to unearth these agencies in Timothy Mo’s fiction, the key concepts such as hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry will be elaborated.

Among the other Post-colonial terms, one of the most commonly used key features that forge Post-colonial identity is hybridity. In Post-colonial discourse, hybridity “is celebrated and privileged as a kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of in-betweenness, the straddling of two cultures and the consequent ability to negotiate the difference” (Hoogvelt 1997: 158).

Although it seems to be a term that becomes well-known by Homi Bhabha, it has been used long before and means more than “a single idea or a unitary concept, hybridity is an association of ideas, concepts, and themes that at once reinforce and contradict each other” (Kraidy, 2005: vi). In addition to its other usages that predicate the mingling of two different parties, hybridity has been proposed as a counter concept to the dominant cultural imperialism that prevailed the perception of culture until 1960s. The main problem about the dominant understanding of culture is that it did not reflect the complexity of multicultural relations within and across cultures:

“Since hybridity involves the fusion of two hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles, or identities, cross-cultural contact, which often occurs across national borders as well as across cultural boundaries, is a requisite for hybridity” (Kraidy, 2005: 5).

Hybridity is mainly the bodily representation of the colonizer and the colonized and a concept that connotes a new formation. Prayer Elmo Raj claims that hybridity is:

“a cultural transactive creating a temporal interactive sequential between the colonizer and the colonized bestowing a conciliation inestimably concussive beyond the managed identity of the dominant (Raj, 2014: 125).

As Bhabha’s idea of “third space” brings forth, when the different nations meet, they cannot remain as distinct and separate ones divided through a strict line, so new and hybrid societies emerge together with their interactions with one another. Thus, with the encounter of cultures, the process of hybridization becomes visible, as Bhabha states:

“it is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity, that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (Bhabha, 1994: 37).

In the third space, in fact each nation owes their beliefs and traditions; however, their values are shaped through social relations either by resisting or by reflecting on the others. On the one side, there are different peculiar cultural backgrounds; on the other side, the new social conditions force them to comply with unfamiliar or foreign settings of racial, religious, literary and cultural codes. Bhabha defines “these ‘new men’ as ‘the rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One... nor the Other... but something else besides, which contests the terms and territories of both” (Morrison, 2014: 48). Thus, the basic thing to inquire is what the newly emerging hybrid society’s nature is? Should it be accepted as a novel identity that is the result of cultural exchanges or as mimicry of the dominant ideology? Bhabha explains the process of mimicry as:



“the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which “appropriates” the Other as it visualizes power” (1984: 126).

Mimicry means for the colonized nations, borrowing and imitating the colonizers’ language, culture and codes and mimicking all these so that they can be integrated into the host society. For Homi Bhabha, “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable ‘Other’, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (1994: 122). The immigrants, who have been to a place different from their mother land, display a tendency to pick up the things s/he saw in the other culture. When the case is settling down into another nation’s borders as minority, mimicry seems a much more possible way of setting a new identity for the new comers.

Mimicry “emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge” (Bhabha 1994: 122). Bhabha distinguishes mimicry from hybridity. To exemplify, hybridity is like putting two cups of liquid into one bowl- the amounts of them may change for sure, and the emerging mix is what he calls “hybrid”. However, mimicry is like the wipe’s absorbing the liquid; it is penetrated inside. In Bhabha’s terms, mimicry occurs when the colonizer is a snake in the grass and speaks in “a tongue that is forked” (Bhabha 1994: 122).

In the Post-colonial discourse, the theoreticians like Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said pointed out the cultural pluralism, and their ideas led to the search for other ways of defining cultures and individuals in Post-colonial context. Gayatri Spivak’s well-known question “*Can the Subaltern Speak?*” is a milestone for the attempt to address the oppressive nature of the colonizers. She uses the term “subaltern” by borrowing from Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci in order to stress the inferior positions of marginalized groups like women and minorities.

“Spivak can be said to be the first postcolonial theorist with a fully feminist agenda. That agenda includes the complexity of female writers with imperialism” (Bertens, 2007: 211). To put it in another way, she is the one who points out the double oppression females are exposed to in the patriarchal societies; Spivak claims that the females in the colonies are exploited twice due to the inferior position they are given, not only because they are disadvantaged due to their roots, but also they are women. While Bhabha’s idea of third space might spare an area for growing a relation without privilege, Spivak argues that subaltern is the one who is forbidden from speaking in Western context. In other words, while the third space is offered as a place for the symbiotic

relationship between colonizer and the colonized, Spivak claims that the colonized is expected to submit and not given the right to take an active part in this relationship just like women who are not given the right to speak in patriarchies.

Spivak criticizes not only the oppressive attitudes towards marginalized, but also the Euro-centric knowledge. She claims that it is the West that manages the assumptions about the Other. Through the use of the economic power and authority, the knowledge is also converted according to Western standards by ignoring and excluding Third World people:

“to consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of “the Third World” as a signifier that allows us to forget that “worlding,” even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline” (Spivak, 1985: 243).

Spivak uses the term “worlding” to change the European based vision and to perceive the Third world in a different way. She rejects the idea that there is a pre-colonial pure past, because she believes that colonialism has affected the course of the events at a very large scale. It is the Western dominant ideologies that shape the world; however, she suggests understanding the “worlding” of the Third World by setting free from the denunciations of the West.

The clash between East and West is an issue that also finds a significant place in Edward Said’s books: *Orientalism* (1978) that contributes much to ground the theory of the Post-colonial studies and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) in which his thoughts are evolved into dealing with the eastern and western relations. In *Orientalism*, he basically rejects the ideas imposed by the imperial powers of the West and denies the definitions and boundaries set by the Western world; in *Culture and Imperialism*, he rather focuses on the mutual relationships between the colonizer and the colonized, the east and the west.

Although Orientalism is not a term coined by Said, he is the one who is remembered mostly, for he uses and redefines the term by enabling the Third World people to be seen through a different angle just like Spivak. He defines Orientalism as “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident” (Said, 1978: 9). His argument is mainly focused on the way the West perceives the East; however, he is firmly against the depictions of Europe as familiar and pronounced as “we” subject and the Orient as the strange and “they” or “other”.

Said explains his special concern on the encounter of West and East as not only an author and theoretician, but he is exposed to all the things he mentions in his individual life, as well. He states that:

“Much of the personal investment in this study derives from my awareness of being an “Oriental” as a child growing up in two British colonies. All of my education, in those colonies (Palestine and Egypt) and in the United States, has been Western, and yet that deep early awareness has persisted. In many ways, my study of Orientalism has been an attempt to inventory the traces upon me, the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals” (Said, 1978: 33).

Edward Said criticizes the fact that there is a stereotypical Western perception of Oriental which is mainly negative or inferior. The Orientals are believed to be barbaric, unreliable and uncivilized people. Their behaviors are not accepted as conforming to the rules of civilized West. This is a myth proposed by the Euro-centric thought, for sure. What Edward Said attempts to do is to dismantle this systematic idea stuck on the people of the East.

Said argues that it is not acceptable to ignore the cultural differences in the East and to put all the nations into one single category that is determined by the West. He points out a different perception of Oriental and claims Orientalism as:

“not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient; nor is it representative and expressive of some nefarious “Western” imperialist plot to hold down the “Oriental” world. It is rather a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of “interests” which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world” (Said, 1978: 20).

Under the influence of the European political dominance in Asia and The Middle East, Said emphasizes that the Orient has always been perceived as problematic, and the history written under this manipulative perspective should be approached speculatively. He is strongly influenced by the ideas of French philosopher, Michel Foucault. As he explains in his book, “yet unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism” (Said, 1978: 31). Moving from this idea, Said believes that the ethnic, formal and aesthetic ways of

Orient's existence in the world come to the foreground, and they are worth being inquired. Edward Said puts emphasis on the problem every writer in the Orient or every writer who writes about the Orient encounters. Since the power relations are unequal, and there is a fact that the writers adopt a narrative voice, he suggests them to be cautious when they write: "everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient" (Said, 1978: 28).

There is a common point which almost all the Post-colonial writers and theoreticians meet. Their ideas on the colonized nations and the deeds of colonizers are all based on the clashes between the East and the West, the colonizer and the colonized, the new-comers and the host nations. While the contradictions and differences within this Post-colonial context enrich the base of the societies, all the contradictory dimensions of the aforementioned arguments so far make it necessary to look into the nature of juxtapositions and the ways to find the reflections of this common theme that prevail the Post-colonial discourse in literature.

In fact, to accept the contradictions is to oppose the concept of purity offered by the Essentialist theories which reject complexity and difference, and reduce everything into single facts. Diana Fuss claims that:

"essentialism is most commonly understood as a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity ... Importantly, essentialism is typically defined in opposition to difference" (1989: xi).

In Post-colonial discourse, according to the theory of essentialism, there is or must be a shared culture which is unified. Salman Rushdie defines essentialism as "the respectable child of old-fashioned exoticism. It demands that sources, forms, style, language and symbol all derive from a supposedly homogeneous and unbroken tradition" (1991:67). By denying the diversities, it turns out to be an idea that essentialist thought lets the colonizing powers make use of as a tool to assimilate or ignore the already existing backgrounds of the colonies. "The melting pot" image, which has been coined for people from different nationalities but living in America, is a sample for this essentialist perception. The idea proposes the people with different races to leave everything including traditions, assumptions, language, way of living and all the other things that make them different behind and become Americans.

Bhabha's concept of mimicry, which is used for the colonized people's pretending to be like the colonizer, results in another post-colonial term he offers - "ambivalence". The basic thing about this term is its hosting contradictions within itself. Bhabha claims

that ambivalence refers to “a broader social framework where divergent cultural signs interact, intersect but fail to coincide with each other” (Papastergiadis, 1998: 47). The colonized nations which experience the in-betweenness and try to set up a new identity through mimicking the colonized, find themselves in an ambivalent situation. They experience a continuous fluctuation because the colonized people both want to be like the colonizers, and they want to keep their inherent identities at the same time. Thus, there is repulsion and attraction going hand in hand for the colonized, which is called in Bhabhian terms ambivalence.

What colonizing power looks for is the colonized nation’s acceptance of the values, assumptions and perceptions; however, colonized subjects might have different reactions to this demand: they can either reject submitting to the colonized by showing resistance, or they conform to the pre-existing or newly enforced rules. Under the influence of this ambivalence, the colonized people suffer from being dislocated and feel an ambiguity due to the sense of non-belonging in addition to loneliness and being “other”ed which will be exemplified through the plot and characters of Timothy Mo’s novels in the following parts of this study.

Ambivalence, which seems to be a problem for the colonized people, becomes in a way a threat against the authority and dominancy of colonizer at the same time. Despite the totalizing manners of colonies, the conclusion might turn out to be the emergence of hybrid nations. In this way, the colonizing powers also experience a kind of ambivalence. That is to say, the colonizers both want the colonized ones to be in their colonies, and they try to keep them away from themselves as much as they can. While the power and authority are centered on the colonizer, the colonized ones are expected to remain as margin. The colonized subjects are to have a confirmative attitude towards the rules set by them and show no resistance against their dominance, whereas the colonizers do not refrain from naming them as “other” and excluding or putting them aside in the society as strangers.

Since the mingling of cultures is a standing reality in the post-colonial discourse, the contradictions, differences, ambivalence and juxtapositions are the realities to be handled in this context. As one of the two key terms in this study, juxtaposition refers to “the fact of putting people or things together, especially in order to show a contrast or a new relationship between them”<sup>1</sup>. In simplest terms, two different items are set together

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/juxtaposition?q=juxtaposition>

to be compared and contrasted. The writers and authors make use of juxtaposing as a technique in their works frequently because placing two divergent concepts, characters, ideas, or places next to each other lets the contrasts and the opposing figures be seen more easily and noticed clearly.

The juxtaposing elements can be used in a wide range of various ways in literature. The reader encounters temporal, spatial and interpersonal forms of juxtaposed items. Differing physical features like a strong man across a weak child may be sidled; or an ambitious, outgoing young girl can be countered with a passive, old man through personal traits; or the settings in the plots of the literary works can be contrasted like putting a peaceful setting like an old cottage next to a luxuriously decorated big mansion located in a busy district. There are also situational juxtapositions like the struggle between innocence and corruption; pleasure and pain might be depicted in the same place to emphasize one another's presence; the apparent situation of the characters might be juxtaposed with a reverse reality; the characters can be drawn as having depression on one side and exaltation on the other. There might also be metaphorical juxtapositions like "a living dead" or conceptual juxtapositions that represent good versus evil. David H. Porter, who studies juxtapositions in the similes of *Iliad*, describes Homer's style as using abundant clashes of "juxtaposition of the lovely with the ugly, the productive with the destructive, the gentle with the violent, the peaceful with the warlike" (1972: 12). His description of the opposing elements in the poem explains the nature of juxtaposition which enables the writer to increase the efficiency of the contrast:

"The grimness and bloodiness of the battlefield are inevitably rendered darker and more tragic by the constant brief glimpses we get in the similes of a world where milk flows, flowers and crops grow in the fields, shepherds tend their flocks, and small children play. Conversely, these momentary glimpses of the world of peace are made more idyllic and poignant by the panorama of violence and destruction which surrounds them" (Porter, 1972: 19).

Since language is seen as working in the same way a society is formed, finding out the linguistic features of juxtapositions and the differing components in the language help to perceive social relations, too. There is a parallel relationship between the formation of languages and the cultures; language is "a system of relationships, by producing a network of similarities and differences" (Sardar, 2005: 11). Based on Saussure's philosophy of language, the signs or words are believed to gain their meanings through their binary oppositions. Black/white, on/off, male/female, sacred/profane, up/down, in/out, pure/impure... only have meaning in relation to its opposite. Just like

Terry Eagleton's explanation on language and word formation: "'cat' is what it is because it is not 'cad' or 'mat', and 'mat' is what it is because it is not 'map' or 'hat'" (1996:121) which supports the idea that it is their differences from each other that gives the signs their meanings. Saussure "shows that meaning in language, is a matter of contrasts between words and words, not between words and things. Meaning, that is to say is a network of differences" (Barry, 1995: 119). While Saussure divides the sign from the referent, in Post-structuralist thought, Jacques Derrida, by accepting Saussure's argument that meaning is generated by relations of difference between signifiers rather than by reference to an independent object world, argues that the relation between the signifier and the signified is not stable.

"A sign can mean something only in a chain or system of differences. It must belong to some figuration in order to function...No meaning can be fully present in itself at any time because meaning always implies a reference elsewhere, to other signs and meanings" (Derrida 1976: 89).

To make it clear, one signifier has a signified, but then the signified becomes the signifier of another signified, and this vicious circle revolves forever. In this way, it is possible to say that this chain of relations contribute to the formation of the society too; in other words, in Post-colonial context, there is also a peculiar relationship between the colonized and colonizer which is also built upon these references and contrasts.

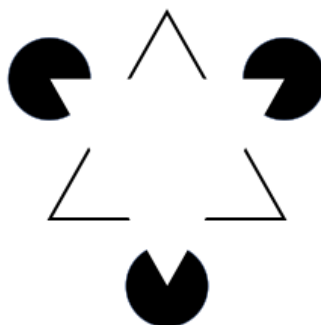
Looking basically at the juxtapositions in Post-colonial context, the most distinctive juxtaposition can be indicated within the relation between the colonizer and the colonized. There is an interaction that cannot be refrained from between the colonizer and colonized because there is and should be a social formation so that these nations can live together.

"If identity construction is a work of negotiation between discursive and material structures and subjects positioned within those structures, instances of power must be juxtaposed with those of resistance. The former invariably creates conditions for the latter to exist" (Kumar, 2010: 171).

In Post-colonial discourse, it is the supreme power having the agencies to conduct and exploit the submitting minority. In a way, it is the colonizers' authority that determines the colonized nations' limits. Together with the differences and varieties both parties have, the process of a new society's coming into existence is formed and changed; however, the contrasts between them are in fact the main things that make "the other" meaningful. In other words, the colonized define themselves through their differences from the colonizer. On the one side, there is a settled, established and stated host culture;

on the other side, mobile immigrants changing their places by leaving many things behind, and in this context, colonized subjects have to confront with these realities and find themselves a place.

The term reality has been speculated, and what it really is has been searched for centuries. Different explanations have been attempted to put forward to point out the issue in a great numbers of various ways. However, the focus of this study is not on the realities, but on its counter- illusions that come to the foreground when the reality is questioned. Traditionally, illusion is defined as the moment when “you perceive a (worldly) object but you misperceive one or more of its properties” (Macpherson, 2016: 3). Illusions are widely regarded as a physical notion, as Smith explains “any perceptual situation in which a physical object is actually perceived, but in which that object perceptually appears other than it really is” (2002: 23).



**Figure 1: Kanizsa Triangle**

The triangle which was named after Italian psychologist Gaetano Kanizsa in 1955, *Kanizsa Triangle*, is a classic sample for illusory forms. Although there seem no explicit lines to indicate such a triangle, the image above shows a white triangle that can be clearly noticed. “The interior of the triangle generally appears brighter than the ground, even though it is not” (Nieder, 2002: 250). Thus, the main focus is on the fact that we believe that we see something that does not exist in reality. When it comes to check the reality of a belief, it is also possible to define illusions as the juxtaposition of reality or “an idea or belief that is not true, something that is not really what it seems to be”<sup>2</sup>. It is a broad term to deal with because illusions are so common and dispersed in all walks of life. That is why, after presenting an overall background information, the scope of the study will be limited to find out the illusions in Post-colonial context.

As mentioned above, despite the fact that illusions are the beliefs that are far from or contradicting reality, they can be claimed to show up from the very beginning of human

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<sup>2</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/illusion>



life, in the “Mirror Stage” suggested by Jacques Lacan. At this stage, the infant, who feels a unity with the mother from the moment s/he was born, sees the reflection on the mirror and realizes that there is a separate self apart from his/her mother. There is no perception of self, before the mirror stage:

“mirror self-reflection, that is, the illusory functioning of symmetrical reflexivity, of reasoning by the illusory principle of symmetry between self and self as well as between self and other, a symmetry which subsumes all difference within a delusion of a totalizable, unified and homogenous individual identity” (Felman, 1980: 51).

The image of self is formed upon seeing the reflection, because it is the first encounter of the infant with his/her appearance. This is named as “the founding moment of the imaginary mode, the belief in a projected image” (Gallop: 1982, 121). Lacan claims that “this development is lived like a temporal dialectic that decisively projects the formation of the individual into history” (1966: 97). The baby, who recognizes his/her separate self, is awakened from the illusion of unity, and his/her individuation process begins.

All through the life, illusions are present in every domain of people, and the reason for the illusions’ existence and being so common is mostly believed as deception. Gerato suggests that “since pleasure cannot be found in reality, one turns to imagination, which is the source of both hope and illusion” (1976: 121). The realities are hard to cope with at times. Thus, there is a tendency to cover them up through illusions. However, in order to have a healthy mind and a balanced life, the real should be distinguished from the imaginary; or the true reality from the false reality or illusionary. Gerato discerns between these two forms of realities as:

“the true reality, or the world in which we live (nature), and the false reality, which is the world of illusion. The first is characterized by the life of man, who is doomed to suffering and pain; the second is characterized by our aspirations and ideals which, even though they will never be fulfilled, at least bring to man temporary joy and relief” (1976: 124).

Jean Baudrillard, who came up with a ground-breaking theory in his book, *Simulacra and Simulation* deals with the concept of reality. Since simulacrum is also based on the same false reality of illusions and shelters the same question of how real reality is, Baudrillard’s ideas on simulacra should also be pointed. The two terms used by Baudrillard are based on the same idea of false reality. Simulacrum’s definition is basically “something that looks like or represents something else<sup>3</sup>”, and Baudrillard defines simulation as “different from a fiction or lie in that it not only presents an absence

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<sup>3</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/simulacrum>

as a presence, the imaginary as the real, it also undermines any contrast to the real, absorbing the real within itself” (Poster, 1988: 6).

Baudrillard’s argument is based on the fact that there is nothing like real anymore, because real has been replaced by the signs. He claims that “It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real” (1994: 2). He emphasizes the artificiality and claims that it is difficult to distinguish artifice from reality.

“The act of simulation is one in which there is no longer any reference to reality, instead what we have is a simulation that is generated without allusion to something real, but rather to a code or model that finds its origins outside of concrete reality” (Haladyn et al, 2010: 263).

Baudrillard believes that all the established notions of thought are shattered in our age, and there is a cultural shift in the formations of societies through post-modernity. He argues in *The Precession of Simulacra* that “simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential Being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (1994: 1). He concludes that absolute truth cannot be reached because everything around us is hyperreal and part of an illusion.

Baudrillard defines three orders of simulacra to make his argument clear. In the first order, “the counterfeit is the dominant scheme of the “classical” epoch, from the Renaissance to the industrial revolution.” (Baudrillard: 1988, 135) It is the period before the modern world in which images are just illusions or the imitations of reality. The second order is associated with the Industrial Revolution, and it is called “production” (Baudrillard: 1988, 135). It is at this order that a breakdown between the representation and the image starts. Baudrillard shows the industrial developments like mass production as the reason for the misrepresentation of reality. Though difficult, there is still some hope to reach the reality at this order. In the last order; however, “simulation is the dominant scheme of the present phase of history, governed by the code” (Baudrillard: 1988, 135). People in the post-modern culture are confronted with a hyper-real at this order. The reality with its traditional sense is wiped out completely, and people are left with the virtual. The hyper-reality forms a “new linguistic condition of society, rendering impotent theories that still rely on materialist reductionism or rationalist referentiality” (Baudrillard: 1994, 2). Baudrillard puts the blame on the media and mass-communication tools as the agencies that help hyper-real dispersed into our lives. At the third order,

representation and reality cannot be distinguished because there only exists the simulacrum.

In his book, *Republic-Book VII*, Plato, whose cave allegory sets up the base of illusions, explains how the way reality and illusions are perceived may change depending on the situation people are in. In this allegory, there are some prisoners whose legs and feet have been fettered since their childhood. They do not move, even cannot turn their heads and just remain in their places, so they just see the same things all the time. They are like puppets whose strings are out of their control. There is also a fire behind them and that is why, they can only see the shadows reflected on the wall. “The prisoners deem reality to be nothing else than the shadows of the artificial objects” (Plato, 1941: 748). In the case of the release of one of the prisoners, he cannot see anything clearly since his eyes are used to dark, nor can he distinguish the real objects whose shadows he has seen for so long. When the prisoner is told what he has seen all those times is in fact “all a cheat and an illusion” (Plato, 1941: 748), but it is difficult to persuade him to believe in this. He might even try to escape to the darkness because sunlight hurts his eyes. If the prisoner is exposed to sunlight for some time, there begins “habituation” (Plato, 1941: 748). In a period of time, the prisoner, who gets used to the day and night times, begins to see the differences between the real objects and the shadows and discern the reality from the illusion. He perceives the seasons, sun, nature and the real objects in a different way from the ones he used to believe in the cave. When he is put back into the cave, since the illusions are peeled off, the man’s senses and his perception cannot be the same with the others.

The shadows which are accepted real by the prisoners and the reality lying outside the cave as the opposite turns out to be the same illusion as the colonized ones experience. Just like the prisoner that leaves the cave in Plato’s *Allegory of the Cave*, and questions the reality of the shadows he has seen for so long, the colonizers’ pseudo reality strengthens their being “other” in the colonized world. Surrounded by the unreal illusions, the colonized ones end up by giving themselves up to the consensus of the majority. It is not the case all the time, for sure. When they adapt themselves to their new living places, they start to see the shadows as real or they believe in this simulacrum. If they cannot, they suffer from such troubles as alienation, estrangement and turn into beings with no sense of belonging. They can neither adapt themselves to the new society, see themselves as a member of the newly emerged living conditions, nor can they go back and feel belonging to their deserted home.

Emigration, the struggle for independence, national identity, otherness and resistance are the common themes in Post-colonial literature; however, at the core of all these in fact, there is an illusion. The first and the foremost important illusion is that the colonizing culture distorts the realities and experiences for the sake of constructing an essential on which they can build their power and make the colonized believe in it. In post-colonial context, it is not surprising to see this peace building activity. The colonizer attempts to conceal the conflicts and to cover the fact that they violate the basic rights of colonized ones. What the colonizer attempts to do is to try to make the colonized ones believe that they are being protected, developed, even supported to become more civilized and have better conditions through the policies of the colonized. For simplifying the task of colonization, they deny the existence of differences and try to degrade them to a single power. It seems to be giving a sense of unity in the culture; however, the denial and ignorance of the indigenous people's diversity, traditions and roots destroy or damage the identities of the colonized people. The colonizer, which might be described as the controlling power, tries to achieve it by totalizing; following the idea of John Frow: "One out of many" and by establishing national myths, the colonizer aims at reaching full control over the Others.

The "otherness" is also a common theme in Post-colonial writing. Since the colonized are the minorities, they are literally excluded from or pushed aside in the society. Furthermore, they are not only "other" from the colonizing power, they also have diverse backgrounds and pasts that make them "other" to one another. Starting from being "other", another illusion that should be noted in this context comes to the foreground. That is, every immigrant has a strong belief for a better life; they believe that when they move to another place, they will earn much money; they will be happier; they will find what is lacking in their own places. The urge to get the opportunity for these dreamy realities, and this illusion might turn out to be the main motive for them to leave their soil.

In pursuit of independence, money, education facilities and all the other things included in a better life, the target lands in the colonies become desirable because the world presented before their eyes is the one which Baudrillard explains in his "*Simulacra and Simulation*". In post-colonial period, just like the shadows in the cave or the illusions created by the colonizers, after the colonial power is gone, "only the allegory of the Empire remains. For it is with the same imperialism that present-day simulators try to make the real, all the real, coincide with their simulation models" (Baudrillard, 1988: 166). In this way, Baudrillard focuses on the manipulative effects of these illusions. Just

like the ones in Plato's cave allegory, the people in the modern life are left with the realities through the lenses of media. He mentions that "information is beginning to circulate everywhere at the speed of light" (Baudrillard, 1988: 193). The easy accessibility, non-reliability of the oriented information enforces Baudrillard's idea that there is no reality any longer.

This study will contextually be based on Post-colonial writing; however, it is noteworthy to give brief information about Hong Kong as the colony of England because it is a setting that is studied in the frame of Post-colonial context as well as the subject matter of this dissertation. As it has been the case for many other countries throughout ages, the reason why Hong Kong was in Britain's demand was economic. "The British and the rest of the European nations faced an economic catastrophe by the end of Eighteenth Century since China's economy had little or no need of European goods" (Pineda, 2012: 5). Britain was after Chinese tea, but the Qing Dynasty that governed China had no interest in buying other British goods; they demanded silver or gold in exchange for the tea, which has been a distinctive habit in British culture. However, in the reserves of British market, there was not enough silver to trade with Qing Empire. "The solution for Europe was to pay in as little silver they had to, and to use opium at its coin of exchange" (Wallerstein, 1974). Therefore, the British government exported opium from the British-colonized India to China where opium would be exchanged for tea. As it became easier and common to find opium, it led to a number of problems on a larger scale. As a result of opium's effect, a generation of addicts showed up between 1790 and 1832 in China. The society was "experiencing an opium crisis, with its military forces suffering direct impacts from their addictions" (Szczepanski, 2018). The social turmoil caused by the opium use and China's official ban for foreign opium in 1836 lead to disagreements between Qing government and British merchants. British Empire's military respond ended up with the start of Opium Wars. As Peter Ward Fay defines: "The Opium War of 1839 was the first large scale military conflict between the Qing Empire and western imperial powers" (Fay, 1998). Having hard times due to the Opium Wars, China not only ceded Hong Kong Island to Britain; it opened the path to many other economic pressures from the other European countries because of its military weakness, as well. After the war, "The British were given the island of Hong Kong and trading rights in the ports of Canton and Shanghai" (Tao He, n.d). For over a century, Hong Kong remained as the British colony, and it became an important trade center. Later on, it was returned to China with the signing of the Joint Declaration in 1997. Hong Kong started

its post-colonial period after this time. “Although British imperialism never politically took hold in mainland China, as it did in India or Africa, its cultural and political legacy is still evident today” (Tao He, n.d). In other words, Hong Kong became officially rebounded to China as it was before; however, although the city is not a British colony any more, the way of life and people who live there still carry the signs of British Empire.

As it was the case for Hong Kong and other colonies, it should be recounted that at the core of colonialism, there lays the exploitation of the weak by the superior one. Through economic and social policies, the colonial power intends to oppress and force the other nations in the colonies to submit to their sovereign. Overall, the colonizing power treats the colonized ones as inferior economically, culturally and socially; on the other hand, the colonizer has to make these minorities believe that it is for their welfare to live in this way. Systematically, the superior power creates illusions to manipulate these nations’ perception of newly emerged and made-up societies as “whole” or “united”. In this way, the colonizers guarantee their authorities over the colonized subjects and keep the right to govern them in their hands.

Having covered the theoretical background of the dissertation, the following parts are intended to focus on tracing these themes in Timothy Mo’s fiction. However, the autobiographical assets of the writer are also worth mentioning, because the writer is bearing the traces of Post-Colonial conditions not only in his life, but in his literary works, as well.

Timothy Mo, who is an Anglo-Chinese writer, has an English mother and a Cantonese father. He was born and got his primary education in Hong Kong and then left for England. Due to his Chinese family roots and his upbringing in England, he experienced the life through the mingling of cultures himself. Coming from an Anglo-Chinese background, he focuses on colonization, domination, imperialism and the related Post-colonial subjects. He writes about the immigrant experiences and the dislocated and unrooted immigrants in the colonized world. As he claims in an interview with him “what I write about, is the clash of cultures, the war of civilizations” (Jaggi, 2000). In his novels, Mo uses protagonists who are strong, and the way he portrays the characters takes them from merely drawn characters to being individuals and makes them symbolize the individuals in cultural conflicts. The settings of his novels, which will be studied in the following parts of this study in detail, also draw a picture of the conflict between colonial and post-colonial realms. Parallel features of his fictional settings and real places are easy to spot in his novels.

Timothy Mo has been an important figure in the contemporary British literature because he made a remarkable change on the map of literary fiction of his time with the publications of his novels. While there were writers like Sam Selvon, Salman Rushdie, Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul and Kazuo Ishiguro who wrote about the minorities, Mo made the readers aware of a fiction overseas. *The Redundancy of Courage* (1991) can be referred to as a fictional account of the events following the invasion and occupation of East Timor by Indonesia. In *Renegade or Halo2* (1999), the story of Rey Archimedes Blondel Castro's journey all over the world and his encounter with different cultures are narrated. *Sour Sweet* (1982) is also based on familial relations, Chen and Lily's immigration to London from China and the turmoil they experience as foreigners. Finally, his prize winning first novel, *The Monkey King* (1978) is a novel set in colonial Hong Kong. The plot of the novel turns around the tensions between Wallace Nolasco and his father-in-law Mr. Poon, Nolasco's attempts to gain acceptance and freedom from Mr. Poon's oppressions and his departure to Mainland China.

Overall, almost all Mo's novels are based on the theme of being an outsider. The characters have individual challenges because of their search for an accepted identity in the society they were attached. Also, they are not only oppressed by their families, they are socially forced to live in a different way from the host people who live in that society, as well. The basic themes of Post-Colonial literature, namely, the immigrant psychology and the harsh conditions they have to put up with can be detected in Timothy Mo's works. The aim of this dissertation is to display the illusions and juxtapositions lying under these Post-colonial themes in Timothy Mo's fiction. Since the novels included in this study are the works written either in post-colonial realm or about the troubles of the characters stemming from post-colonial issues, the argument will be studied further through the references from Timothy Mo's fiction.

## CHAPTER II

### *THE REDUNDANCY OF COURAGE*

Timothy Mo's *The Redundancy of Courage*, another novel shortlisted for Booker Prize for Fiction and the winner of E.M. Forster Award, was published in 1991. In his earlier novels, Mo's focus was on family issues, and the plot stories were rather limited to individuals than a nation as a whole. However, in this novel, Mo writes about the history of Danu- a fictional island- and the recurring fate of the island's invasion by the *malais*<sup>4</sup> people. Although the setting and the characters are imaginary, the novel reflects on the events that are true to life and is accepted as an account of East Timor's invasion around 1970s. The novel mainly deals with the experiences of Danuese people during *malai* invasion, thus the characters in the novel have to cope with the hardship of survival, and they are in a constant struggle to regain their independence from the invaders. The struggle for independence is a common theme together with individual and cultural clashes in post-colonial context, thus it is feasible to trace the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions in *The Redundancy of Courage* and analyze the novel in detail within this sense.

In *Sour Sweet* and *The Monkey King*, Mo takes an omniscient stand in the novel's narration, but it is Adolph Ng- the protagonist of the novel- who experiences the events and narrates the story in *The Redundancy of Courage*. Hence, the reader sees the events from Adolph's point of view rather than an authoritative voice that has a neutral position. Adolph, who is of Chinese descent, gets his higher education in Toronto and turns back to live in Danu. The events in *The Redundancy of Courage* revolve around these discrepancies that stem from the different backgrounds of the nations. Adolph is portrayed as a foreigner just like the other outsider characters in Mo's novels. In addition to his ethnic difference, Adolph has much difficulty in setting up an identity for some reasons which will be discussed in detail all through this chapter.

To begin with, Adolph Ng is portrayed as having a passive character. He is not a key figure for the society he lives in; he is not a leader of a group neither is he an active agent in the social and political conflicts. He is just an ordinary man who owns a beachside hotel whose control is taken over by the *malais* commanders during the

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<sup>4</sup> Italicizing of the word "*malais*" is in the original text. The malais people are also fictional, but in the novel, they are thought to be representing Indonesians.



invasion. The most distinctive feature of him is that to survive is the only motive he cares for. It is not also surprising that he is apolitical because he is not bounded to anyone or anything but his own interests. He gets adapted easily to every circumstance and finds a way out from every trouble. However, despite the fact that he is not a passionate supporter of any groups, he finds himself right in the middle of the warfare.

The setting of the novel, which was the colony of Portuguese before, has been invaded by the *malais*. The ongoing power struggle between the occupiers and the Danuese people living in the Danu island makes the novel a story of survival. Adolph Ng, who is caught between the two fires, experiences the events in a two-folded way during the course of the novel. Namely, he takes place in the warfare both by the occupier's and the Danuese people's side. In fact, both are out of his control. He involuntarily participates in the guerrilla group that defends their island, and then he is captured by the occupiers and becomes a servant in one of the colonels' house. He desperately tries to find himself a place under these tough circumstances. At the beginning of the novel, he gives the reader the background information about himself:

"My name is Adolph Ng. Please laugh. To pronounce it, imagine you have been constipated a long time. Now strain. There you have my surname. You know I am of Chinese race and you may surmise that in despite of my occupation of hotelier-if you are given snobbery, or are merely realistic-I am an educated man. I am a man of (the) modern world" (Mo, 1992: 24).

As he states, he does not have a specific surname, but in his new life, he wants to be called *Mr. Kawasaki*. He chooses the surname connoting the brand of the vehicle that takes people away in case of hard times, which makes us think once more about his desire to leave everything behind.

Before a detailed analysis, it is worth mentioning the role of the setting in the novel. Lorna Sage defines the book as

"the story of a third-world war, a messy struggle in a small far away country of the sort that perhaps makes headlines in the West for a day or two, then gradually slips out of mind. It is set in imaginary "Danu", an ex-Portuguese island- colony north of Australia" (quoted in Mo, 1992: foreword).

The fictional setting of the novel, an island in Australia, is crucial as much as the plot and the characters in *The Redundancy of Courage*. It is named as Danu by Timothy Mo. The island is small, but it is said to have a significant role on the global scale. "From the start, our fate was determined not by ourselves, not locally or by the invader even, but abroad, in Canberra and Washington" (Mo, 1992: 110). Although at the beginning it seems like a

trivial conflict between two local groups, towards the end of the novel, it is clarified that there is a channel under the island of Danu, and “that channel is one of only three in the whole archipelago that will allow a nuclear submarine safe passage” (Mo, 1992: 405). On the whole, the occupation of island goes further than a local invasion or power struggle between two nations; rather, it is a part of a barely known strategical plan of the US. The reader learns at the end of the novel that during the *malais invasion* “the American President and his adviser were in the *malai* capital” (Mo, 1992: 405), which is of little chance for such outstanding figures to be there coincidentally.

“The Redundancy of Courage had been hard to write. I disliked it in the way that a mother has to fight her resentment of the child who gave her the most painful birth. But, like a runaway child, this novel had been the one that had a life of its own. It had become a part of the events it purported to describe, with fact and fiction intertwining till they were indistinguishable” (Mo, 2014).

Timothy Mo’s own ideas on the novel also reveal that in addition to the fictional significance of the Danu Island, which is claimed to stand for Timor Leste (East Timor) -an island located in the north of Australia, the historical facts about East Timor correspond to the accounts of imaginary Danu. Namely, East Timor was a colony of Portuguese and soon after they declared independence, it was invaded by Indonesia. The occupation was supported by greater powers since a left-wing party’s existence so close to the border was thought to be a big threat for the West. In *The Redundancy of Courage*, “East Timor becomes ‘Danu’, FRETILIN, the resistance movement, becomes FAKINTIL, and the Indonesians become the *malais*” (Lanchester, 1990).

As mentioned before, the events in the novel are told by Adolph Ng. Although he says “that’s just a personal opinion. Don’t let me influence you for one moment” (Mo, 1992: 94), the reader has to rely on Adolph’s perception and narration to figure out what has happened. Adolph experiences the events himself first, and narrates them as memoirs in the novel. To exemplify, he gives clues about the main characters right at the beginning of the novel through the lines: “I don’t want them forgotten: Rosa, Osvaldo, Raoul, Maria, Martinho, Arsenhio” (Mo, 1992: 3). The reader implicitly grasps that something bad must have happened to these people. Rather than telling their stories directly, Mo raises the readers’ interest and hints that the novel is a compilation of memoirs in this way. As inferred from the first lines, different time periods can simultaneously be seen within the plot line:

“the distinction between three distinct points in time – the time of the narrated events, the time of the narrator, and the time of the reader – and the means through which the

narrative moves between the three, is central to the manner in which the text operates to enable Ng's narrative" (Spark, 2011: 166).

Therefore, in order to have a full grasp of the story and follow the events, it is of much importance to have a clear idea about Adolph's way of living and his perceptions in these different time periods. Shirley Geok-Lin Lim defines Adolph as follows:

"The narrator-protagonist, Adolph Ng, is a citizen of Danu, a state which is a thinly disguised version of Portuguese Timor. Adolph is self-consciously reflexive of his multiple identities...he possesses a recognizable core of psychological features, among them worldly intelligence, sensitivity to his problematical identity as Chinese diasporic and citizen of a non-Chinese state, loyalty and affection to friends, and a strong will to survive" (1997: 98).

Adolph Ng is a cultural hybrid. He was born as Chinese, he gets educated in Toronto and he is a citizen of Danu. In a way, he is "a man of the modern world" (Mo, 1992: 24) as he defines himself. The compilation of his experiences in different cultural backgrounds contributes much to his multicultural identity. In the novel, he emphasizes that "the world of televisions, of universities, of advertising, of instant communications made me what I am. It made me a citizen of the great world" (Mo, 1992: 24). That is to say, the things he has experienced so far constitute "complex elements that go together to make Adolph Ng's character – his ethnicity, his sexuality, his cosmopolitan upbringing, his wit and irony" (Spark, 2011: 172).

Adolph has an easily adaptable nature that mainly stems from his mobility. Since he is exposed to intercultural relations in various places, it is these relations that make him a rather flexible person who can comply with the others and conform to the affairs without difficulty. Most probably for the same reason, he is neither an enthusiastic patriot who is committed to national affairs nor a man of case like his friends who spare their lives on the cause they believe. Opposing the traditional values that delineate the boundaries for people, Adolph leads an individualistic life that is mainly based on personal choices.

One of the things that makes him different from the majority is his sexual preference. Though it is not uttered evidently, there are many implicit references about his homosexual inclination. In the novel, he says "there was nothing sexual in my friendship with Rosa and Maria. With men there was always the prospect of that... I was as good as priest to the girls" (Mo, 1992: 35).

"Throughout the narrative, Mo foregrounds Adolph's homosexuality, his ethnic-Chinese identity, and his familiarity and affinity with Western cultural norms. As a Chinese citizen

of Danu, Adolph's diasporic identity defines him as outsider, an uprooted individual ghettoized within a racist stereotype" (Rao, 2004: 51).

Adolph's sense of non-belonging is in a way reinforced by his homosexuality, as well. The males around him like Osvaldo and Martinho are mostly the heroic characters who are portrayed as having powerful images. However, Adolph says "I've never thought of myself as a hero" (Mo, 1992: 262). Rather, he assumes a passive role; that is to say, he intentionally stays behind the masculine order of the society and the established thoughts that instruct him to be one of the others. He has a different way of thinking from the rest of the society.

From the very beginning of the novel, Adolph is portrayed as an intellectual who longs for the questions and finding answers. He remembers his university years at Toronto as fulfilling and feels lucky "to be given the leisure and the opportunity to become acquainted with the great thinkers of the past" (Mo, 1992: 26) since he spends much time reading at the library. As for the post-colonial juxtaposition that people who are being "other"ed exclude the others as well, Adolph sustains keeping away from the other people, and the books are a way for him to refrain from those who are not like him. Accordingly, upon his return to Danu, he chooses his intimate acquaintances from the circle of the sophisticated people. He is "not the founder of the Literary Society of Danu" (Mo, 1992: 42), but it is Adolph who gives the group of intellectuals called "literary society" a new lease. In their meetings, these educated people have debates on various topics and even release a news sheet that include "extended critiques of imperialism, calls for revolution. rhetorical stuff" (Mo, 1992: 45). Since Danu is a small local place, people do not have many options for such activities, and it turns out to be the venue where the liberationist entity called FAKOUM is started.

FAKOUM is a movement of resistance that a group of idealist Danuese people launched to repulse the threat against their independence. In fact, the leaders of it used to be the members of another local party called Independent Party (IP); however, Arsenio, Osvaldo, and some other commanders have left and founded this new organism. What makes them different from the IP is that the supporters of FAKOUM are younger than IP people who "were mainly the big estate-owners, or village chiefs who'd come to live in the town, or absentee rent-gatherers and their hangers-on" (Mo, 1992: 67). Although IP people can also be defined as idealistic under those circumstances, the FAKOUM members "were younger and—I think it is fair to say- more ardent" (Mo, 1992: 67). The dynamism of the new formation is the main motive that affects their goals. That is to say,

IP members seem to keep the already existing order without much intrusion while FAKOUM is after their independence no matter what its cost is. The profile of FAKOUM members connotes a greater juxtaposition; keeping the colonizer and the colonized relationship in mind, it is possible to note that their struggle to set themselves free is the same as the colonized ones'. The urge to be free is their main motivation.

While FAKOUM is putting up with the IP party, the malais people have become a greater threat not only for them but also for the Danuese people and the nation's independence. As a defense mechanism, the commander leaders of FAKOUM- Arsenio and Osvaldo- make use of military tactics as well as their wit and social abilities to fight against *malais* invasion. "The key to it was directing things without appearing to do so, the façade of democracy concealing an autocratic leadership" (Mo, 1992: 67). Just like the colonial agencies that manipulate their colonies to believe that it is the best choice to live under the reign of the colonizer, FAKOUM leaders manage the group not by displaying the agony of the case, but they try to stimulate their endeavor of getting rid of the occupiers. Also, in order to let the entity be more persuasive, they choose one of the comrades' elderly aunt as the president to take the advantage of her position as "a betel-chewing mountain woman from the family's ancestral village near the sacred mountain" (Mo, 1992: 67). Thanks to her age, dignity and the potential of her influence on the others, she is an appeal to the traditional people who could hardly find a way to reconcile with the young ardent people. Hereby, FAKOUM chooses a proper way for compromising the traditional people with a new impulse. Clear from their choice of the president, they try to invent a tradition so that they can lead their people to independence. Eric Hobsbawm defines three main ways to present an invented tradition, "the national anthem, the national flag, [and] the personification of "the nation" in symbol or image" (1992, 7). Accordingly, FAKOUM leaders also have "mass indoctrinations with flag-wagging (black and red was the FAKOUM emblem) and a specially composed anthem...'O, Mighty Mountain!'" (Mo, 1992: 86). They had all the necessary items to present themselves to the public as the defenders of their nation against the outer threats.

The other big challenge for the FAKOUM is to express themselves in the right way not only to their own nation but to the world, as well. To reach their goal, they "need to send delegations abroad" (Mo, 1992: 90). In fact, Adolph would be a perfect match for this task since he speaks English well and has the right qualities to represent them. However, he cannot be chosen since "it was impossible for a Chinese to represent FAKOUM, even if he wanted to. Danu for the Danuese" (Mo, 1992: 90). Thus, he is left

out of the circle once more due to the nationalistic concern that excludes the people who do not come from the same roots.

### **2.1 Illusion of media**

FAKOUM members take active steps to spread the word of Danuese people to the world and tell what is happening there in reality. Edward Said claims that “if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job for the West” (1978: 23). That is to say, when the Orient does not express itself, their realities will be told by means of Westernized way of thinking, and when this happens, it is the Orient that gets exposed to all kinds of negations and exclusions.

The idea of being represented by someone else is also related to the subjectivity of truth, which is uttered in the novel by a representative of government-oriented media; journalist Speich: he tells Adolph that “truth is relative, Mr Ng. Like beauty it is in the eye of the beholder” (Mo, 1992: 359). Hence, the fact that Orient cannot manifest their own matters makes it possible for the dominant ideological apparatuses to manoeuvre everything as they wish. From another point of view, the need for the Danuese people to explain themselves might stem from the fact that it is difficult to differentiate the simulacra from the reality as Baudrillard states. As for the FAKOUM leaders, they have a concern for this since they are aware of the illusion of media too, which again reminds Jean Baudrillard’s theory of simulation and simulacra:

“In the era of digital technology, the act of simulation is one in which there is no longer any reference to reality, instead what we have is a simulation that is generated without allusion to something real, but rather to a code or model that finds its origins outside of concrete reality” (Haladyn, 2010: 253).

Timothy Mo takes a cynical stand against the media’s power that distorts the realities. He portrays the events happening in Danu in a two-fold way; one Danuese people live and told by Adolph, and the other media shows. For instance, many people including some Australian film makers and journalists whose duty is to report the events are killed by the *malais*. However, controlled by the invaders, the media reports the events as the cruelty of anarchist Danuese soldiers. Their attempts to defend their soil against the invaders are reflected as a threat for the peace of the nation. The invaders’ propaganda turns out to be an illusion that deceives the other people who do not know what happens there in reality. One of the commanders’ wife, whose house Adolph is employed at as a servant, invites journalists “all from the West” (Mo, 1992: 338) for interview:

“They’d chosen journalists very carefully, of course. Rather, they’d selected newspapers, which while endowed with authoritative reputations, were sympathetic to the *malai*

government – in a nutshell, quality right-wing newspapers which weren't soft on Communism" (Mo, 1992: 341).

It is possible to interpret Mrs. Goreng's "guiding part in what she called 'these media arrangements'" (Mo, 1992: 339) as an individual practicality or the wit of western thought. Whatever, the journalists, whose perspectives are in a similar direction with the invaders, make Mrs. Goreng's manipulation easier since they are ready to accept what they are told. In this way, history is manufactured. Mrs. Goreng tells

"lies about the close relations between the old *malai* half of the island and ours which had, she said, made them indistinguishable for all practical purposes: for example it was not an invasion but a reunion. ... A whole series of lies about Revolution, FAKOUM, The IP and the Civil War followed" (Mo, 1992: 342).

The journalists are intentionally taken into a made-up simulation. Mrs. Goreng provides them with fabricated information to justify the invasion. The false realities she claims go along with Adolph's idea that "from the start, our fate was determined not by ourselves, not locally or by the invader even, but abroad, in Canberra and Washington" (Mo, 1992: 110). The word "redundancy" in the title of the novel can also be elaborated as the Danuese people's attempts in vain due to the big game behind the counter. The post-colonial illusion in this context is that the Danuese people are striving for the things that are beyond their control. As stated in the novel, "we were correct to think that we had no control over our destinies: to consider that resistance was futile and bravery superfluous" (Mo, 1992: 110). Just like the colonized people, who are manipulated by the colonizers to believe that the only way for them to have welfare is to submit to them, Danuese people and the rest of the world are given pseudo realities. In this way, the *malai* invaders attempt to redefine the Danuese history which stands for the western thought of exploiting and hegemonizing those in the lower status. In addition to the military force, there is also a local and global perception management. "The *malais* needed to win friends and influence people... This was the directive from their President... [they] needed collaborators to legitimise the regime in the international forum" (Mo, 1992: 118). Instances like the interviews with the journalists and the *malais* people's attempts to get integrated into the society also denote the fact that the invasion is tried to be legalized at the same time.

In the novel, Mo sets forth a different scope to the colonizer and the colonized relationship through the invasion. Explained as "exploitation was the name of the game" (Mo, 1992: 7) by Adolph, it gives the reader a chance to question the nature of the invasion or colonization as a whole. The "other" group that is also included within the

game as the third party is the outsiders represented by Adolph in this context. Literally, the Danuese people are the colonized ones, the *malais* are the colonizers; the third group from different nations like Adolph is the economically bounded ones who do not mind the national matters such as independence or the governing agencies. Since their basic motive is to earn their living, whoever provides the necessary medium is acceptable for them.

“...the Chinese quarter; that is, the district of the stores and repair shops. It was thronged with people, almost all of my own race. They didn't want to leave their business unattended, were far more conscious of the risk of looting by Danuese than of any threat posed by the invader. They- we- had been the ones who'd had the most to lose by Independence. Most Chinese didn't give a damn about politics, independence, dependency, it was all one and the same to them. Except that the colonial regime offered peace and stability, the given framework in which they could prosper without worrying about big things.... Exploitation was the name of the game” (Mo, 1992: 7).

Except for the economic motivation, Adolph intrinsically does not feel a sense of belonging to the society he lives in as well as all the other foreigners. This is something that also hinders him from taking an active part in neither sides of the conflict. Beyond this, since he is noncommittal, whoever has the power manipulates Adolph to do something, and he does whatever he is told. However, the more he escapes from either group, the more he is withdrawn into their politics and turns into an object that is used. When he is sent as a messenger to assert that the *malais* people brought stability to Danu, the Colonel tells him not to have any ideas and states that “we'll tell you what to say. And you say what we want to hear, or you take a long walk” (Mo, 1992: 339).

Adolph is characterized as having a weak personality. While the other characters including females around Adolph are portrayed as powerful, manipulative and heroic; Adolph is a “nobody”. Since he does not have a firm position, it would not be daring to define Adolph as a leaf swept through the wind. “For sure, I was terribly confused. With all my heart, I hated the *malais*. Yet, I didn't feel part, either, of this desperate band fleeing through these quiet suburbs” (Mo, 1992: 372). It is clear that Adolph is like a man who is in a permanent exile wherever he goes. He is also in a kind of ambivalence. Homi Bhabha uses the term ambivalence for the colonial discourse which shows the unstable nature of the colonizer and the colonized relationship:

“Both colonizer and colonized are in a process of miscognition where each point of identification is always a partial and double repetition of the otherness of the self- democrat and despot, individual and servant, native and the child” (Bhabha, 1996: 138-139).



In Adolph's case, the ambiguity in his identity creates ambivalence. He can neither be an active supporter of each group, nor can he defy their effects on his life and his personality. The time he has spent in Danu causes him to get lost. He defines this time as "I'd had nearly four years taken out of my life. That time was a black hole of nothingness" (Mo, 1992: 318).

Besides the heroic figures, the two leading female characters in the novel- Maria and Mrs. Goreng- are drawn in a different way from the stereotype of Third-World women. The submissive and obedient women figures, who are passivized by the patriarchal social order and exposed to double oppression due to the colonial ideology, are juxtaposed with the determined and powerful mode of women in *The Redundancy of Courage*. Maria and Mrs. Goreng, each represents one side of the conflicting groups. While Maria is fighting against the *malais* for her nation's independence, Mrs. Goreng is the Colonel's wife who takes an active part in colonizing and forming the future of Danu. Contradicting with the conventional female roles, Maria performs at her best as a surgeon who does not see any harm in taking risk in critical instances. Even before she gets married to Osvaldo, she voluntarily cures the people "with her clinic to work miraculous cures" (Mo, 1992: 150) in the guerilla camps up on the mountains. She dies during an attack for the sake of her nation. "It was not in her nature to sit by, abandon hope, and do nothing" (Mo, 1992:298). This strong will and heroic attribution of Maria contradict with Adolph's inconsistency and sneaking nature. Especially, their reactions against the events during the work time they shared reveal their contradicting characters. In other words, Adolph is the one who keeps himself away from the national matters and all types of dangers while Maria would socially be expected to bear this passive role. Just like Maria, Mrs. Goreng is the wife of a *malais* Colonel who is an influential figure in the administrative power of *malais*. When Adolph first meets her, he sees "a woman by herself, laughing, in public, sharing a joke with a menial. Any of these things would have been unusual in itself; jointly, and in a humbler personage, it would have verged on the scandalous" (Mo, 1992: 315). Her behaviors would not be acceptable, were she to belong to the Third-World. However, she can recklessly wander around alone thanks to her westernized way of living. When Adolph asks about this, her answer proves a number of facts at the same time: "I am a brave woman who is frightened only of the dark and her husband" (Mo, 1992: 316). Her statement reveals the ideas claimed by Gayatri Spivak in *Can the Subaltern Speak?*. She does not suffer from the social pressure due to her position in the society as a member of marginalized group; still, she is a woman who is expected

to keep herself behind her husband in the domestic family domain. Whereas, she is a character even contributing much to the flow of events in favor of the invader group she belongs to with her wit and practicality. Mrs. And Mr. Goreng affect the Danuese and the world's view on the events. It is also worth noting that the names of the Gorengs couple are not given specifically throughout the novel; they are only called Mr. and Mrs. Goreng along with "Colonel". While it can be interpreted as their official position in the regime, it also reminds the reader that they are the representatives of the colonial discourse that is tried to be set up in Danu.

Adolph's position within the conflicts in Danu is different from the other Danuese people. "As if I was some privileged witness, outside the events" (Mo, 1992: 4), he stands like an observer. Since he does not belong to either side, he "had the sensation of being an invulnerable witness inhabiting a third dimension" (Mo, 1992: 7). Adolph is not an assimilated fellow. Rather, he turns out to be a hybrid in the zone where Homi Bhabha calls "Third Space". In other words, Adolph's Chinese background has not been annihilated; he neither becomes Danuese nor *malais*. What makes him a hybridized individual is his ability to have a new self rather than being dragged by the dominant ideology. From being a hotel owner to a freedom fighter and a servant, he goes through hard times and experiences all the challenges of being an outsider, but he knows what he wants at the end of the novel:

"...now I wanted to be somewhere that had a future and no past to carry... I wanted to be somewhere I wouldn't be defined by what I'd been, where I could fashion a new notion of myself and impose it on others as the truth. I decided to go to Brazil" (Mo, 1992: 402).

On one side, there is the hardship of survival he has to put up with; on the other side, he has been more or less attached to his friends in Danu. "Ng's attitude toward Danu is in fact more ambiguous than first meets the eye, wavering between a yearning to return and a desire to escape and forget" (Lai, 2011:77). At the end of the novel, he walks away from his past, and though it is a new exile, he starts a new life with a new self in Brazil:

"That was neither an end, nor a beginning. If I thought I could unmake my old self so easily I was a fool. I could not terminate Adolph Ng so conveniently. I was trying to accomplish within my own small person what the *malais* hadn't been able to do to a nation. An identity and a history cannot be obliterated with a switch of a name or the stroke of a pen" (Mo, 1992: 406).

Adolph compares his attempt to gain a new identity to the *malais* people's subjugation of Danu nation. The emphasis is on the difficulty of making such a big change both for individuals and the nations.

As mentioned before, Adolph does not feel attached to any of the sides, but there is a drastic postcolonial juxtaposition that while he is trying to keep away from both parties, he finds himself as mimicking them so as to survive. Bart Moore-Gilbert likens mimicry to “the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare” (1997: 131). This is exactly what Adolph does in the novel as he also narrates: “I tried to wrap myself around the situation, think myself into the *malai* mentality. For me, safety lay in camouflage and integration” (Mo, 1992: 113). Camouflage is a way of survival for Adolph, but it is a matter of identity problem, too.

## 2.2 Identity

Identity is a frequent topic that Timothy Mo handles in his novels. He mostly puts an outsider into a new environment and lets the reader observe the individual’s adaptation process either as a failure or success in terms of constructing an identity. He also displays the changes in the characters’ identity from the very beginning to the end of the novels. The protagonist that comes from a different cultural background goes through almost the same procedure of identification in each of Mo’s novels. While it was Chen couple in *Sour Sweet* and Sun Wu Kung in *The Monkey King*; now that in *The Redundancy of Courage*, Adolph Ng is the foreigner and just like the other characters, his experiences as a foreigner make him a different person in the end, too. He defines himself as “wandered bizarrely, often with that feeling of standing outside myself as a separate and dispassionate watcher” (Mo, 1992: 406). Adolph’s multi-cultural background is at odds with even his own self to such an extent that he is also estranged from himself. He is in search of finding who he really is.

“Now, I [he] found an identity, a place in the little society of Danu. It was not quite what I had desired, but there was no question that was how I was seen. I was a Chinese entrepreneur with capital. I was an exploiter. I was a provider of work. I was a parasite. I was hated. I was to be appeased. I was vulnerable. I was powerful” (Mo, 1992: 51).

Before he goes back to Danu, Adolph’s ethnicity has been of little importance during his education in Toronto. As he asserts while talking to Arsenio: “he wasn’t quite certain *how* much of a man of the world I was to the extent of poking fun at my own people” (Mo, 1992: 89). Due to the multi-cultural relations he has had for four years, he has witnessed a bit more different, that is to say globalized value system in there. In other words, Adolph’s background has not been something featured as important either for Adolph or the other people from different nations; he has been a man who is unnoticed like anyone else. It is crucial to note that conservative nationalism both makes a nation unified and it

also keeps the “others” off the circle, which is one of the most distinctive post-colonial juxtapositions. Danu is a small local place characterized by the nationalistic determinism, thus under the effect of the Danuese people’s attitudes that exclude him, Adolph’s perception also changes. Namely, he starts to notice some of Chinese features he already possesses: “I think I have that much of the Chinese pragmatism in me” (Mo, 1992: 24). He arrives at Danu and thereafter is labelled as Chinese. In order to accentuate that he is not Danuese, they helped him build up a Chinese identity. In spite of the fact that he is named as Chinese, “as a man of the world”, he cannot be a consistent Chinese for sure, which is again the result of his upbringing and the flexibility of multi-culturalism.

### 2.3 East & West

The novel is highly eligible to trace the basic post-colonial juxtaposition between the colonizer and the colonized. The clash between the East and the West is constantly touched upon by Timothy Mo throughout the novel. He uses the invasion as a means of conveying the western world’s perception of the Third World.

“West and East form a binary opposition in which the two poles define each other; the inferiority that Orientalism attributes to the East simultaneously serves to construct the West’s superiority. The sensuality, irrationality, primitiveness, and despotism of the East construct the West as rational, democratic, and progressive and so on” (Bertens, 2004: 205).

There is a common notion which is also exemplified in *The Redundancy of Courage* that Orient is a threat for western hegemony. “Malai propaganda portrays the Danuese leaders as dangerous communists, whose existence threatens the stability of the region” (Yingtago, 2008: 59). Therefore, unless they are submissive or serve for their purpose, the *malais* see no harm to clear them away.

Just like their way of living, the perceptions of people living in the East and the West radically differ from one another. While those in the Orient have to spend much more effort on the things such as education, health and most of the basic rights than their equals in the West, these are seen as the naturally given rights for the Western people. As it is stated in the foreword of Ivan Gregorovic’s *Oblomov*, the book in which the East and the West is juxtaposed,

“Europe is the country where people have dreams to come true. The dream that is unlikely to happen is an agony, a source for tragedy. In the East, dream is a pleasure, a way of getting away from the realities” [my translation] (Goncharov: 2010).

At the core of the post-colonial illusion to have a new life lays this motivation to get rid of the harsh conditions of life and the motivation of getting what they deserve. Adolph’s

father sends him to Toronto aiming to give him a chance to find a way out from the limitations his ancestors suffered. Educated in the West, Adolph becomes a hybrid. He knows English well, he is literate and has a cultural accumulation that takes him beyond the national limits; all for these, he is among those who are given the right to have dreams for self-fulfillment. His education has been the key to go beyond his limits for him. He defines people with the same incentive as “those who saw learning as the key” (Mo, 1992: 25) because they are the people who have dreams not to satisfy but to save them.

Having a new life is the most distinctive post-colonial illusion. Upon leaving Toronto, Adolph describes his feelings as “a sense of being in a dream settled over me” (Mo, 1992: 28). However, it does not take long for him to grasp the fact that things are not as they seem, which connotes the post-colonial juxtaposition that the man who leaves home is not the same person upon his return.

“Then I felt numbed. I felt lost. It was not the home-sickness I’d felt in LA four years before, when I’d been bewildered and intimidated by uncertainty, the challenge of finding a niche, making an identity for myself in a vast, strange, and complex society. This was the sickness, the vertigo, and familiar nausea of knowing to a certainty that there was *no* place for me in the simple community to which I returned” (Mo, 1992: 29).

Adolph is disappointed for going back home since he becomes a citizen of the greater world anymore, he cannot feel a kind of belonging to Danu. The discontent he feels stems not only from the community’s limited scope when compared with his newly gained multi-cultural perspective, but he is also aware of the prevailing assumptions concerning the East, as well. In other words, the Orient that is characteristically defined as inferior in many aspects makes him feel alienated to his own soil.

In the novel, on the one side there is the common negative perception of the East from the Western scope; on the other side the Eastern people’s distrust for their counterparts is illuminated through the use of media. The statement from the novel “*if it doesn't get on to the TV in the West, it hasn't happened*” (Mo, 1992: 91) can be read in two ways. The first interpretation is that the only way for being recognized by the others is to appear on TV in the West, which empowers the use of media. At the same time, this is a harsh criticism for the western way of living which leads people to unquestioningly rely on what is presented. However, the western ideology of using up the resources, which is named as exploitation, requires full submission to the super power. Thus, people are fostered to believe whatever they are told or given. Even before Danuese island is confiscated, the invaders have “thrown dust in the world’s eyes” (Mo, 1992: 91) which is an attempt for leaving no vacancies to any resistance at home and at the global scale.

Placing Kaniza's triangle suggesting that there is a subjectivity of perception at the core of the argument, it is possible to analyze the illusion created by the invaders from two different angles. In reality, what the invaders do is the annexation of Danu to *malais* governors' administration. The annexation means annihilating the Danuese people's own history by cleaning out their background through assimilation and slaughtering those who resist. Adolph's definition of the invasion is not a peace-making process, but the vivid picture he draws is a cruel war scene: "My first sight on that day... stronger than the bad things which came later was of parachutes dropping... it was reinforced battalion, as I now know" (Mo, 1992: 3). Adolph witnesses that the innocent people are slain. Though he is an outsider, the Corporals' command, "kill as many as you can" (Mo, 1992: 242) echoes in Adolph's mind for many times. Despite all the tyrannical deeds, on the other side, the *malais* intend to depict it as a union, a process that brings stability to Danu. This is a re-inscription of the already existing facts to make it seem legal. This so-called improvement is justified in this way. However, the fact that Danuese people are subjugated is swept under the mat.

#### **2.4 Nationhood & Globalization**

The identity clashes in Mo's novels mainly stem from the basic post-colonial juxtaposition that national and global identities overlap each other. On one side, there is an established national identity in which the characters are born into. On the other side, the commitments of global mechanism that eliminates the local borders show up on the scene. The international cultural identity offers hybrid individuals with

"no nations which are composed of only one people, one culture, ethnicity. Modern nations are all cultural hybrids. Instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, we should think of them as constituting a discursive device which represents difference as unity or identity" (Hall, 1996: 297).

While the global culture seems to welcome all the differences, colonial discourse ignores the ethnic backgrounds and even assimilates the minorities so that the true medium of exploitation can be set up. The colonizers have to dominate in order to ensure their sovereignty. Accordingly, the Oriental people are not given a chance to represent themselves by the Occident that mostly shapes the dominant ideology. There is another view to note that especially in the countries colonized by the Western nations; the individuals who are presented far better global facilities start to question their local codes which might end up with their assimilation by the colonizer. Similarly, the ones who stick to their national values inquire the global assets, and once they cannot find fulfilling

answers, there appear lots of confused minds and disavowed individuals. Though there is a common assumption that globalization makes the world smaller, at the same time it can be referred to as the cause of many lost individuals who can feel belonging to nowhere.

## 2.5 Cultural Identity

The *malais* people's assault is not only through confiscating the Danu Island, but they attempt to take over their cultural background, as well. The notion of cultural identity is mainly formed by the events experienced by the people living in a certain place. It is not something fixed; rather it is in a constant process of change, which makes it possible for the colonizers to re-shape the cultural identities. Stuart Hall suggests that cultural identity is

“is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something, which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture... they undergo constant trans-formation. Far from being externally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to continuous ‘play of history and power’” (1989: 70).

Cultural practices are the things that bring people together and tear them apart at the same time. The reason for FAKOUM's insistence on creating awareness to defend their soil is the threat against the lives and the future of people living together in Danu. Since they share the same history and the past events, upon the invasion, they try to build up a national of resistance.

The basic motive of this resistant group is to have a unified soul. Osvaldo tries to explain that in fact they are the real “friend of the people, their protector, and their best hope for a free and peaceful future; how any accommodation with the *malais* was illusory and would only lead to misery” (Mo, 1992: 291). The idea of “our own people” never leaves the minds of them. Martinho's hesitation to give up their struggle is revealed as:

“‘... we murdered those innocent people. Our own people. We shot them down as if they were dogs.’

[Adolph] ‘It was terrible Martinho. But it wasn't our fault, still less was it Osvaldo's. We pulled the triggers but *malais* put the people there in the first place. They were the real executioners’” (Mo, 1992: 226).

The reason for the fluctuation Martinho and all the other people who fight for their independence experience is the remorse they feel for causing innocent people's death. Though he is not a passionate supporter of FAKOUM, nor is he a patriot citizen of Danu, even Adolph objects to any possibility of surrender by saying: “What are you saying? That we should let the *malais* capture us? Or just stood there and been gunned down? That's not reasonable” (Mo, 1992: 226). However, this uniting spirit of a nation is not something desired by the colonial powers, since as Fanon explains:

“Colonization is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it” (Fanon, 1963: 170).

The indigenous cultures' shared experiences and conservative codes keep them safe from the colonial discourses' disguised intention of exploitation. While they seem to be bringing stability and welfare, in fact the colonizer uses up the colonized ones' resources in every sense. When the colonized people get aware of this basic trick, they notice their potential power and resist the colonizer. In this way, the seeds of post-colonialism are planted. The nations gain their independence and the post-colonial era starts for them.

In Danu, the awareness of standing against the *malais* people and the process of resistance seem to be going on under different names, but the ultimate aim of independence is the same.

“They'd had two separate organisations, in the manner of NLF and Viet Cong: FAKOUM and FAKINTIL. The distinction had always been slightly blurred, mainly because of the smallness of Danu and the interconnectedness of the élite, with people serving on both bodies” (Mo, 1992: 144).

The strategical attacks are all organized through FAKINTIL members. In other words, it is possible to name FAKOUM as the political and FAKINTIL as the military wing of Danu. Osvaldo clarifies that the movement of resistance is not only “a military plan- our movement is founded on objective social criteria, too” (Mo, 1992:146). Although they seem to be a group of people who “pull together against the common threat” (Mo, 1992: 141), the struggle of Danuese people is not only a military defend. As the leader of resistance movement, Osvaldo's primary concern was not setting up an army; rather he wanted to make a community in which people are organized in terms of their capabilities, and he also prioritizes the social order of the society, as well. In a way, he “build[s] a nation” (Mo, 1992: 74) under those hard conditions. To exemplify, his people, who reside in the mountains to attack the *malais* forces, have to change their locations regularly. This is sometimes caused by the attacks of the enemy, sometimes it is only for camouflage, or it might be due to the weather conditions that make it compulsory to leave their places. Osvaldo, who can determine the needs of his people well, “was truly smart ... he'd realized long ago that food, not bullets was the crux” (Mo, 1992: 148). He makes such a convenient organization in the camp that it was self-sufficient. They cultivate the land and can store enough food for themselves, which means they do not need additional support for survival. What is more, there is a constant lecturing. While Adolph teaches



the washerwomen the safety precautions and the details about using gun. Osvaldo trains the younger people in his camp so that they can sustain their lives in the warfare.

“He’d divided the kids into proper-sized fire-teams, squads, and platoons as well, giving them unit designations. Basic fire manoeuvre, flanking assaults, the immediate counter-attack into an ambush, were the least sophisticated of the tactics I saw ten-year-olds putting into practice” (Mo, 1992: 136-137).

In the novel, in addition to the illusionary world created by the *malais* people, Osvaldo also plays with the perceptions of people through manipulative tricks. Although his garden project covers up some time and provides food for the people in the camp, as the conditions get harder due to the *malais* attacks, they have to find other solutions in order to find food. Osvaldo sends women and children to the villages for this task. He does not prefer soldiers so that this will not make the villagers feel discomforted and fear them. Leaving only barely food for the villagers, once, the washerwomen take all the food in one village. Osvaldo takes some amount of the food back saying that they “only take from the people what it needed, a bare minimum and no more” (Mo, 1992: 290). Adolph believes that this is a planned deception so that the villagers’ ideas about Osvaldo and his people can be evolved into positive.

“Whatever they’d brought back, he’d have given back a quarter. It was a conjuring trick, it really: he was stealing, yet he was making it seem he was bestowing a gift on them. People remember the most recent thing: what they’d recall was the donation, not the robbery... Of course, the fact that it was soldiers generally who were making restitution was good, but he came out the best” (Mo, 1992: 291).

As it is also clear in this quotation, Osvaldo manipulates people’s ideas. They are in a way interpellated in Althusser’s terms: “we tend to feel free, though we are constrained by our identities within a system of ideological categories” (Mauer, 2017: 2). Though his deed is an exact example of enforcement, he steers the event as he wishes, which also reminds us of the post-colonial illusion of created unified and stabilized nation.

The strategies of both sides for keeping people under their control look alike in this context. The freedom motivated group, led by Osvaldo and a few comrades make use of nationalistic pattern for the sake of gathering people around the same purpose; the *malais*, in contrast, have “ruthless, implacable killer[s]” (Mo, 1992: 102); also “they’d raped them, gang-raped them in many instances, this hadn’t stopped them from shooting or stabbing some of the woman afterwards” (Mo, 1992: 105). By any means, even with brutality or patriotic feelings, the leaders of both groups create illusions so that they can keep people along with them. Through Adolph’s experiences, Mo objectively criticizes

the operation of media, its effects on the perceptions of people and the constant manipulation in the politics of leaders.

Adolph Ng, the narrator of the novel, keeps a position that is based on keeping himself alive and safe in this conflict. Thus, neither the heroic deeds for the sake of independence, nor the island's exploitation are important for him; all these are "redundant". This reminds a quotation James Joyce's protagonist Stephen utters in *The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*; "when the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets" (203) Stephen, similar to Adolph, is a man who tries to set himself free of the boundaries that surround and prevent him from becoming an artist. As a hybrid having the multi-national characteristics, Adolph is able to live in all cases. As he states, "I didn't have a solid grasp of myself- I depended on other people and surroundings to cue me" (Mo, 1992: 406). He needs other people for his existence. He has a fragmented self that is a common feature of post-colonial individuals.

*The Redundancy of Courage* can be classified as post-colonial since at the core of the novel, the policies of colonial discourse can clearly be seen through Danu nation's awakening. Ellaine Yee Lin Ho claims that:

"Redundancy relocates the issues of identity and history in the late twentieth-century struggle between nation-states and, through the quasi-allegory of Timorese resistance, puts an urgent postcolonial spin on these issues. The postcolonial discourse in *Redundancy* maps the project of nation-building and the making of the national subject onto that of resistance against neocolonialism" (Ho, 2000b: 89).

All in all, the analysis in this study has been on the juxtapositions and illusions from the post-colonial perspective in *The Redundancy of Courage*. As Ho claims, nation-building is a prevalent theme in the novel. The two nations, both the *malais* and the Danu, try to construct a unified identity for their people. While the *malais* confiscate the Danu island and attempt to reconstruct the society in favor of their rule, the resistant Danuese people do their best to keep their nation's independence. Therefore, narrated by Adolph, *The Redundancy of Courage* stands as a clear example for a nation's struggles against colonial powers.

In the post-colonial context, despite the pressures of colonial powers, the individuals' desire to have a better life does not stop. Adolph, whose main motive is to go on his life no matter what the circumstances are, asserts that as an individual, living in the post-colonial world requires an ability to get adapted. Homi Bhabha defines this as hybridization process. This idea suggests that unless people leave behind their ethnicity,

they fail to get integrated into the society they live in. Thus, Bhabha's claim to set up a hybrid identity in the third space is a way for the immigrants' survival. Having stood against all the troubles throughout the novel, Adolph is a true example for becoming a hybrid in the post-colonial context.

### CHAPTER III

#### *RENEGADE OR HALO2*

Timothy Mo is mostly referred to as a writer who deals with Chinese diaspora; however, he goes beyond this predisposition since his writing includes the most frequent post-colonial states of flux that nations and individuals experience on the global scale. Thus, it would not be daring to ascertain that the post-colonial discourse with its most prevalent properties can be traced in his novels. The main characters in his fiction either have a strain of multicultural identity or they are the immigrants who are exposed to a different culture from the one they were born into. Through the clashes of social and individual attributions, Timothy Mo renders his characters as redefining themselves within the newly emerged conditions they experience. In *Renegade or Halo2*; the focus is on the communal effects on the individuals as well as the social and economic turmoil of the globalizing world. That is to say, the social pressure that shapes individuals in a drastic way, the sense of belonging to a group or community and the individual struggles to survive are the prevalent themes in this novel. Due to the effects of globalization, especially in the post-colonial discourse, the juxtapositions and illusions reveal itself in various forms. Thus, the focus of this chapter will be on displaying these tenets in Mo's most recent novel *Renegade or Halo2*.

Placing the multi-cultural protagonist, Sugar Rey Castro, to the center of the events in *Renegade or Halo2*, Mo provides a proper medium to elaborate the acculturation process in the globalizing world. In the novel, Rey Castro has a number of different names, which will be explained in detail in the following parts of this chapter. Each name he is called gives a clue about his identification process, and it stands out as a proof of his multi-identities.

“Rey, Castro or Sugar (the fact that he has a plethora of names is significant in itself) is a member of the Philippine underclass, the illegitimate son of a prostitute and an African American serviceman. We follow him from his wretched childhood in a Philippine slum, his membership of a street gang, his rescue and education at the hands of the Jesuits; his enrollment in college to study law and his developing talent for basketball” (The Lectern, 2018).

In the form of a picaresque novel, *Renegade or Halo2* unfolds Rey Castro's quest and the difficulties he experiences in the post-colonial world. In addition to financial difficulties and discrimination, the most prominent challenge the miscegenated protagonist is exposed to on his way is being excluded from the society, which results in his getting lost

and becoming an illegal expatriate. In other words, Castro is depicted as another *outsider* character of Timothy Mo. Though he is expected to be a promising lawyer, his life is completely changed the other way around; he takes different weird jobs in various places world-wide. Even when he returns to his native soil at the end of the novel, he cannot feel at home. This is the way Mo provides the reader with a wide range of different angles to grasp that wherever s/he goes one can feel that s/he is in constant exile. Hence, the present chapter will be devoted to a further study and analysis on Castro's experiences as an outsider and a lonely man among the crowd of people in *Renegade or Halo2*.

### 3.1 Title

Before a detailed analysis, it is crucial to get an idea about the title of the novel, to which a twofold symbolism can be attributed; in the first part, what is regarded as *renegade* is the people "who through choice, rejection, or birth do not belong. They are hybrids, a sign of the new, the future, and are at the moral center in an otherwise often divisive, tribal, and violent world" (King, 2001: 333). This reminds of Homi Bhabha's hybridization process. However, while Bhabha refers to the individuals who can constitute a new identity in the third space as hybrids, Mo emphasizes the fact that the renegades are people who lose their connections with the rest. Thus, Mo's claim is not in the same tone with Bhabha. While being a hybrid is an accomplishment in Bhabhian terms because it means integration into the society with a new identity under the new circumstances; being a renegade is featured by exclusion, discrimination and oppression by Mo.

A number of different meanings can be ascribed to *halo* in the second part of the title. Firstly, it is defined as "what the angel has over his head" (Mo, 2000: 11). Also, in many parts of the novel, the ones who have a mixed background like Rey are referred to as "*haloed*". Their reference is not for the good natures they have connoting religious or moral merits but for being *mestizos*.<sup>5</sup> To make it simple, the foreigners are called with this name. When he is away from home, Danton, Rey's intimate friend, writes in a letter to Rey: "Hey mans I a *foreigner* now ha ha! Guess we're all *Halo2* here man" (Mo, 2000: 43).

The word halo is accompanied by number "2", which stands for the contracted version of halo-halo. In fact, the duplicated use of the word creates a sense of reinforcement in English, but the repetition of the same word is not used in the time same

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<sup>5</sup> The word used for the hybrids in *The Redundancy of Courage*.

way in Filipino, which is the language mostly preferred for the speeches of haloed people in Mo's novel. The explanation for the referent repetition is that "we were used to repetitions, but repetitions that weakened, not strengthened: *init* was hot but *init-init* was luke-warm, *amahan* was father, but *ama-ama* was step-father... And, of course *halo-halo* was a fun, a dolly-mixture" (Mo, 2000: 35). Thus, *halo2* can be accepted to lessen the intended meaning, as well.

In the novel, another use of the word *halo* is a well-known combination of Asian people. In other words, it is "a whole bunch of ingredients that shouldn't belong together but work when you combine them. Some sour, some sweet, some stale, some new. [...] Candied napalm" (Mo, 2000: 261) - as clarified by Rey. It is the name of a "many-hued and multi-textured confection of ice-cream, cereals, neon syrups, crystallised fruits, frosty shavings, leguminous preserves and bloated pulses" (Mo, 1999: 11) in Filipino. As well as the contrasting tastes combined in the food, "many-hued" and "multi-textured" can be seen as the keywords that connote the likewise multi-layered events Rey experiences in his life time.

Over all, the title includes two words with contrasting connotations. This multi-dimensional way of interpretation of the title lets the reader make their own commentary on whether Rey is an accomplished hybrid or a renegade that turns his back on the others. Thus, halo might be seen as the positive counterpart of the pejorative use of renegade, which also makes a distinct juxtaposition within the title itself.

Among the characteristics of the modern novel, the fragmented narration is a commonly encountered one. Likewise, *Renegade or Halo2* has an episodic structure with twenty three chapters. The first six chapters, which can also be called as the first part of Rey's life, are based on his early years and education among Jesuits before he flees away. His life with Smiths family covers eight chapters, and his slave-like working under the Fauds and the following doomed events in his life in exile goes on until he comes back home in the last chapter.

The story of Rey begins in Philippines and continues in various cross-cultural settings. As a Nigerian looking boy grown up in Philippines, Rey is forced to flee from his birth-place due to his involvement in a group rape, which ends up with death. Life has already been compelling for him till then, but this is the point where he actually starts to witness the cruelty of people against the others. From drug use to murder of innocent people, from the rape of his closest friend to bribery and the assault of other people, he has tasted the bitter side of the life to the highest level since then. Having been accused

of the murder, Rey is compelled to slip away together with Dant and other suspects involved in the crime to become “stowaway” (Mo, 2000: 144) in a ship that is expected to take them illegally to Singapore. Dant and all the other fellows are killed on this “death ship” (Mo, 2000:167). Rey also commits another murder so as to survive. The second part of his life starts with Smiths, a British family living in Hong Kong. Though he works as a chauffeur, he becomes a trusted family member and a congenial companion rather than just an employee for them. When the family moves to Arabian Peninsula, Rey’s hands are bloodstained once more in order to protect the Smiths. Having been much more illegal, this time he falls prey into the Fauds people, an organization that exploits the fugitives. He manages to escape from the Faud society in London and takes up other various jobs in many parts of the world. Each time he changes place, his accumulated experiences and the new people he meets lead him to question the nature of human beings and the way people behave at each other. After seven years’ exile, he is back in his hometown, but he is a different man from the one who has escaped one night suddenly.

Similar to other protagonists of Timothy Mo’s novels, Rey is also an individual discontented with his low-rank society and looks for the ways out of this life. The post-colonial illusion that the new world presents them the chance they have been looking for is constantly repeated within the novel. This idea which busies each exploited person’s mind is revealed through Dant’s claim that “we gotta get outta dis flace it it’s da eber do girl dere’s a vetter life for you and me” (Mo, 2000: 41).

Rey also supports this idea with his deduction from the events he has experienced with his statement: “we can’t live without our illusions, even the worst of us” (Mo, 2000: 187). However, it should be noted that as a fatherless boy and having “no pull, no family to protect” (Mo, 2000:135) him, Rey’s journey out of his native land appears to be a compulsory one. That is to say, as mentioned above, the reason for their departure is the crime they committed. Thus, it is much more strengthened by the fact that even if they were not involved in such a crime, it would still be necessary for them to leave their soil as long as they want a better life.

The protagonist of *Renegade or Halo2*, Rey Castro is a dislocated man. He was born in Philippines but he has been to lots of different places from Hong Kong to Thailand, to Qatar and America during the seven years he is away. Observed in every immigrant individual, there is an undeniable fact that these people need to leave their soil for having better conditions, but they do not want to live there, as well, which is the basic post-colonial juxtaposition. They want to go back to their roots, but since they gradually

lose their connections and get adapted to their current lives, they do not feel at home even when they are back at home. Were he an ordinary immigrant, Rey would still be looking for ways to leave Philippines. Whereas, due to not only his physical appearance, but also the illegitimacy of his case, wherever he goes, he remains in the margins of that society.

Just like Adolph Ng. in *The Redundancy of Courage*, Rey is not a member of a high-society family. Rather, he is the son of an African-American father who is a serviceman, and a Malaysian mother who is a prostitute. Although he is of Philippine descent, he looks more like an African, which distances him from not only the other people but also his own people, too. Due to his unusual physical power, he is called with different names. His physical characteristics lets him be a good basketball player, and he has been nick-named as Sugar Rey reminding “the world’s greatest pound-for-pound boxer” (Mo, 2000:11). At the same time, due to his extraordinary bodily features, his school mates call him “Frankenstein, that creation of separate parts whose strength was greater than the simple sum of his components” (Mo, 2000: 10). However, it does not take long for the others to leave calling him Frankenstein, because he is “too bright and friendly to be Frankenstein’s monster” (Mo, 2000: 11) Therefore, Rey’s body and personality are depicted as having distinct contrasts similar to the relationship between Rey and the other people around him.

Individually, Rey Castro’s education serves as a ladder out of his own context, but he cannot have a complete control over his life due to the fact that he is forced to belong to a group to survive. As the “first year law students at Artheneum” (Mo, 2000: 98), Rey and his friends are assigned as a group to discharge clients with debts. Among the group, he is the one who behaves prudently all the time. When the others force a girl named Haydee into a house, and both torture and take turns to rape the girl, Rey does his best to intervene. He says “That’s enough Brod. Whatever she’s done, man, that’s enough... I want no part of this” (Mo, 2000: 121), but he can do nothing to stop it. What is more, he is drawn into it by force. Skipper, a fellow lawyer from fraternity obliges him: “this is a compulsory session, man. You’ll be in contempt, Brod” (Mo, 2000: 122). This is something stands as the proof that if one is a member of a tribe, s/he is not given the right to stand against the consensus. Brabazon, another one involved in the crime even threatens him: “in his hand was a large black revolver” (Mo, 2000: 124). The drug use also enforces the group’s level of violence. Upon realizing what they did, the group gets rid of the girl’s corpse by throwing it away wrapped in a plastic raincoat. For some time, “it joined the files on the scores of other unsolved Metro rape-slays” (Mo, 200: 131). It



is a striking fact that in the modern world, there are many nameless murders. It does not take long for them to be fingered as the suspects for the case. An immediate plan has been made to get away with it; “big brods got all kinds of papers for you and more to cover you when you got there... Singapore” (Mo, 2000: 133).

What makes Rey and the others’ case striking is that it is being in the tribe which causes the trouble; again it is the tribe that saves them from the same trouble.

Rey has difficulty in believing that they can really get away with it so easily:

“There’s just the little matter of rules and regulations. We just walk in through the airport and say, hey, we’re the boys from Delta Kappa Epsilon come to join your economic miracle?... Don’t worry man. This is what the Frat’s for” (Mo, 2000:134).

Skipper ensures that they would have two passports, and whatever they need would be provided by the Fraternity. “This is what Frat’s for” statement has a deeper meaning; that is to say, there is a mutual simulated relationship between the tribe and its members. It would not be daring to say that the absolute submissiveness is rewarded with the unquestioned backing up. For this reason, everything has been arranged for Rey and the others so that they get away from this problem.

From that moment on, Rey is a fugitive who must conceal his identity in order to keep living out of jail. All the moral values he is taught in Jesuit school are wiped away at once. In fact, the Jesuit people, a group of religious people with a bond of fraternity, are the ones who teach him to be virtuous man. These Jesuit people believe that “one is a sinner, yet called to be a companion of Jesus as Ignatius was”<sup>6</sup>. Ignatius of Loyola, who is the co-founder of this society, charges missionaries to travel around and establish the educational order of their society. In time, they spread over many quarters. Father Paul, who is one of the Jesuit people in charge, has much contribution to Rey’s life:

“Father Paul’s great gift to me was the ability to be dispassionate about myself, to see things cold-eyed from the outside. The key to the world of logic and learning could have come from someone else...What he gave me, Castro the sneak, the wind-up dinosaur, was a cool heart and a permanent emancipation from tribalism” (Mo, 2000: 40).

Though the necessary arrangements have been made for Rey and his fellows in “an Indonesian ship” (Mo, 2000: 145), it turns out to be a Ukraine ship heading for Hong Kong instead. The fact that they should not believe in what is told have been emphasized in this way. Rey is the only one to survive on the ship, and he starts new life with a different identity all alone. The fact that the second part of his life as a global wanderer begins with a ship journey is worth underlining because ships are the regular ways of

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<sup>6</sup> (<https://www.jesuit.org.uk/what-jesuit>)

illegal immigration especially for those belonging to underclass. Rey also accentuates that they are the “member of the international under-class who [a]re the slaves of our century” (Mo, 2000: 370).

### **3.2 Decontextualisation**

In this century, the collective oppression everyone is exposed to in the modern-day societies is called globalization. It is seen as the regulatory power of the modern world.

“...order, law, hierarchy, and precedence in human affairs as well as communications, is that which makes civilization possible. Without a universally observed system of rules, clear and unambiguous exchange between large groups is impossible” (Mo, 2000: 28).

In the modern world, globalization, which is defined as the removal of barriers between nations at first hand, is this communized value system. While the barriers are attempted to be removed through standardized language, economic and social norms, the individuals are obliged to recondition their lives accordingly. Thus, although they may not change their living places, in the global world, everyone is in a way decontextualized. People’s connections to their roots are gradually blanked or distorted to set a world order in which traditional modes of belonging are outmoded. Hence, the new form of living that globalization presents both forms a unity and diversity composed of differences. Though Mo’s novels seem to be conforming to this globalized form of individuals since he takes each of his protagonists out of their native contexts and places them in new ones or he demonstrates how the globalized values are imposed on them, he draws a different world view from the other side of the coin, namely, the marginalized people.

### **3.3 Slavery**

Resembling his and other fellow people’s circumstance to slavery, Rey defines the people who have inferior status like them as slaves. Mo’s touching the issue of slavery is of great importance because from ancient times to modern era, it is something that has taken different forms in the lives of people living together as communities. As Marx states what keeps slavery rising is “the increase of population and of needs, and with the extension of external intercourse, either war or trade” (1963: 126). In other words, the need for work force keeps slavery on the agenda all the time, and what determines the ways of enslavement are basically the power relations. The “connection between slavery and levels of economy” (Kopytoff, 1982: 209) is also emphasized throughout the novel. That the powerful ones rule the weak has been among the essential causes of wars, invasions and conquests throughout the history. While it was the crowd of nations that

determined superiority in ancient times, nowadays, it has been the economy that reveals the potency of a nation within the global competition of civilizations. The countries Rey has been to exemplify their people's welfare in line with their economic power.

Mo also emphasizes the fact that there is a new world order that is based on economic interests which also requires a drastic transformation of individuals. To put it in another way, the conventional social structures that value moral virtues have gradually been replaced by the materialistic, economy-driven societies, and individuals are expected to change, accordingly. Similar to the concept of slavery with its simplest meaning, the modern times slavery is also based on the same method; that is exploitation. The modern day enslavement "involve restricted movement, confiscation of identity documents, threats of deportation, forced overtime" (Cahill, 2006: 119). In the new world order, "the immigrant, the expatriate, the outsider, the exile and the mixed blood, are the new global citizens. They exist in a new world order, one where traditions, roots and community must either be reinvented or be extinguished" (Hall, 2008: 280). Conforming to all the above mentioned criteria, Rey Castro, just like Adolph Ng. in *The Redundancy of Courage*, is drawn as a global citizen or a man of the world, and all the events Rey has lived are the true examples for the above mentioned traits of the new world order.

### **3.4 Tribalism/ Community & Individual Choices**

In *Renegade or Halo2*, there is a constant interrogation of individual choices and tribalism. The groups sharing similar interests are referred to as *tribe* in the novel, which is explained as "big men according to Hubert were naturally close to each other, with an instinctive understanding. It was like belonging to a tribe" (Mo, 2000: 352) by Rey. Mo takes his argument further than the simple fact that people live in communities and they are in a way bonded to each other; rather, he examines the hierarchy of such formations like Jesuit fraternity and colonies like The Fauds- the group Rey goes into after his escape- as well as the individuals' position within the order. First of all, each community has a mission and the rulers have to set up a formation so that the individuals or smaller groups will neither fall apart nor defy them. Forming also the base of colonialism, oppression is the basic tenet of tribalism. The oppression imposed on the members are in a way neutralized and internalized by the members to such an extent that it becomes the way they manage the events. Without questioning, the rules of the group are taken for granted. This is the source of colonial illusion that everything is for the good and welfare of the members. Therefore, in the novel, Mo's use of different groups also explains the way colonial powers operate on people they govern. Laclau and Mouffe explains that

“identity as a concept .... necessarily involves exclusion, the drawing of an imaginary line which those on the wrong side will naturally contest. The excluded constitute the ‘constitutive outside’ that haunts the very process of identity formation. To free themselves of such ghosts leads those asserting tribal identity to denigrate, punish, expel and attempt to destroy the excluded, an attempt that by definition is destined to fail, as if they succeeded they would lose their very sense of identity” (Finney, 2010: 65).

Rey’s participation in different tribes also gives us a chance to see the issue from different angles. That is to say, Castro’s education in the Jesuit community makes him question what it means to have and feel belonging to a community initially. He explains that the priests in the Jesuit society are

“...testing the aptitude and reinforcing the fortitude of what was their beneficiary rather than their victim. Just like the Navy, the Jesuits wanted a priest purged of personal weakness and tribal traits, a preoccupation with the self. They wanted him wrenched out of his context to be more loyal to them” (Mo, 2000: 30).

Thus, Mo examines the nature of being in such communities especially for the lonely children with poor conditions like Rey and Dant, because it is an undeniable fact that they provide the students with better facilities than they can have on their own, on one side. The definite example is that it is the Jesuit fathers that enable Castro and Dant to get educated in Manila Law School. Further, they also serve for the good of the society; “the most Eastern of all virtues” (Mo, 2000: 40) are given to the students who arrive at the school at very early ages, which contributes to the regiment of moralization. Though their way of education is also through oppressing its members, the aim of Jesuit people is to make the students become adults with the right virtues.

On the other side, it is emphatically noted that being a member of a certain group means accepting the compulsory responsibilities called “cultural imperative” (Mo, 2000: 130) of that group, too. It is his involvement in the rape of a woman by the fellow lawyers in the fraternity that causes Rey to be an illegal immigrant, which turns his life upside down, as well. It is clear that he individually feels upset and does not want to take part in the cruel deeds of his fellows, but he cannot stand against the group and take an individual self-decision.

Rey is not all alone for suffering from the results of belonging to a group. Ah-Biu, Rey’s friend who is a “dejected Chinese watchman” (Mo, 2000: 178), shares the same destiny with him. As he explains:

“I was stuck in China for more than twenty years. I became a Red Guard. I did all kinds of terrible things- pulled the stuffing out of people’s Western sofas and then the hair out of their heads before beating them to death. Not because I wanted to but because I had to.

I was part of a group and in a group the best come down to the level of the worst” (Mo, 2000: 180).

Thus, it is clear that tribalism signifies a mode of oppressive attitude that hinders one from acting in his/her own way. As it is the case in post-colonial context, there is a strong juxtaposition of free will of individuals with the binding codes of community or “the congregation and the gang, the crew and the tribe” (Mo, 2000: 538). When he talks about Hubert, his pre-manager in Faud society and a hearty friend later on, he emphasizes what freedom accounts for people. “He had his freedom: he chose where he went. He didn’t bow and accept like the rest of us...” (Mo, 2000: 384).

Tribalism can be seen performing in various forms as mentioned before. It is the cause of minorities’ alienation, constitutes the rationale behind discriminating the others who do not belong to the community and forms the basis of colonialism that mandates the weaker people and their resources. The novel emphasizes how “difficult it was, even for Commander Smiths of this world, to refrain from reducing everyone to tribal pattern, to allow their individuality and distinctness from the rest of the offending gang” (Mo, 2000: 221). The colonial world ignores the individual differences; namely, the people with “a little out of context. Round pegs in square holes, as Fr Paul would have said” (Mo, 2000: 226), so that they can keep their order.

### **3.5 Being a Hero in the Modern World: Picaro**

The protagonist- narrator of the novel, Rey Castro starts a new life; that is to say, sets off a long journey like the heroes of many allegorical stories in literature. Brian Finney, who resembles Rey’s adventures to those of Odysseus’, focuses on the morality of modern people represented by Rey’s character. “Despite encountering as many strange individuals and societies as did Odysseus, Castro illustrates the failure of the modern world to offer the opportunities for individual choice and action that help to define the epic hero” (2007: 62). Contrary to the conventional heroes that signify the righteousness of moral virtues, the choices Rey make appear to be failing in terms of the social norms. This is what makes the novel’s tone realistic. As Adolph Ng. also states in *The Redundancy of Courage*, “I’ve never thought of myself as a hero” (Mo, 1992: 262), Mo’s protagonists are not the heroic figures who reach salvation through their good deeds at the end of their quests. Rey’s story has many puzzling points regarding this. He defines his experience both as “my quest was knowledge, not lucre” (Mo, 2000: 362) and he refers to his travelling as “my Odysseyette” (Mo, 2000: 365) with an attribution to the Greek hero. Therefore, he is neither a villain who takes pleasure to harm people, nor a

greedy that has a lust for money, sex or power. However, his life is not that of a spiritual man whose driving force is morality; rather, he one of the heroes of Timothy Mo who stands out with their faults.

Elaine Yee Hin Ho claims that in *Renegade or Halo*<sup>2</sup>, “the picaro function finds its contemporary embodiment as an illegal immigrant worker” (2000b: 127) with Rey’s character. The picaresque novel appears as a genre in Spain; “in contemporary usage the term ‘picaresque’ seems to be applied whenever something ‘episodic’ tied together by an ‘antihero’ needs a name” (Wicks, 1974: 240). The picaresque novel is featured with the protagonists who dive in to a chaotic world, and the definition of picaro protagonist as “insular, isolated... in an environment *for which he is not prepared*” (Guillén, 1971: 79) corresponds with Rey’s story. In fact, Rey is a law student at the college, but he becomes an illegal immigrant. He takes up different positions in many people’s lives from being a guardian to ship crew, from construction worker to travel guide. Beyond the tolerance of ordinary people, his experiences are narrated with a violent extremism. In other words, the picaresque novel is formed by the chaotic conjuncture. In order to clarify it, Wicks (1974) compares romance with picaresque and claims that

“If the romance mode satisfies our impulse for vicarious participation in harmony, order, and beauty, then the picaresque mode satisfies our impulse for a vicarious journey through chaos and depravity. In picaresque we ‘participate’ in the tricks essential to survival in chaos and become victims of the world’s tricks” (242).

Just like being called Frankenstein, but proving that he is a friendly giant boy, Rey’s life is made up of numerous upheavals and juxtaposing situations. It would not be surprising to see Rey as an outcast; even it could be acceptable if he were a potential violent criminal. This is possible not only because he is coming from under-class, but also the society trails people like him with these prejudices. Standing out as a distinct contrast with the circumscribed image, but similar to Adolph Ng., who is a book lover and an intellectual, Rey is also initially a boy who finds shelter in the world of books. His “sanctuary became the Diamond Bookstore, one particular branch, in one particular mall... for me an oasis of the spirit” (Mo, 2000: 197) in Hong Kong. In London, he refers to the public library as “my haven from all this” (Mo, 2000: 417). As mentioned before, he acquires his concern for the books and his thirst for knowledge in his first education with the Jesuits. He takes his love of books further by saying “as the melting snow from the umbrellas widened in the pools on the floor, so did my knowledge- a thirst which could never be assuaged” (Mo, 2000: 417). “As Father Paul liked to say, true wealth was

knowledge” (Mo, 2000: 185), and this becomes the governing principle of his life. The curriculum in his Jesuit education includes “Kipling, José Rizal as well as Shakespeare, Robert Louis Stevenson, Walter Scott, Captain Marryat, the Smollett of Feregrine Fickle, and C.S. Forester, Bevis and Father Paul’s favourite of all” (Mo, 2000: 37). All these names signal that in *Renegade or Halo2*, Timothy Mo makes lots of intertextual allusions to many other literary works through Rey’s will to learn more. In this way, in addition to his multi-cultural awareness, Rey is drawn as having knowledge about a number of different fields, “a bewildering mixture of idioms, drawing upon philosophy, sport, the law, the European novel, and Philippine street life” (Vlitos, 2018: 189). Depending on this, the reader starts to question the human nature once more, because Rey is the embodiment of contrasts as a man coming from lower class, having a sophisticated education and ending up as an illegal expatriate. Rey also makes this questioning throughout the novel “no one else thought twice about all this, but I went home with my head spinning. I wasn’t sure where I was or whither I might be bound...” (Mo, 2000: 37).

### **3.6 Exile & Expatriate & Immigrant**

In all the novels of Timothy Mo, being in exile is a prevalent theme. He focuses on the episodes of protagonists that are especially excluded from the society they live in. They are mostly the immigrants or new comers into an already-existing order. At this point, it is crucial to differentiate who are called expatriate, immigrant or exile because they have different connotations in the novels, too. An expat is a person who resides in a place different than his/her home-country temporarily; Wallace Nolasco is sent as an expatriate in *The Monkey King* and upon his return, everything changes. Therefore, the expats are not expected to have long-term associations with the society they live in. Basically, their aim is to earn their living. Hence, their lives are rather insular when compared with the immigrants. An immigrant arrives at a country to make a permanent living there, and the members of Chen family can be exemplified as the immigrants in *Sour Sweet*. Though there is a post-colonial illusion that every immigrant has an urge to go back, immigrants are people integrated into society much more than the expats. In order to reach their goals, an immigrant may have life-length immigration, still they keep their positions as outsiders; this is up to their choices and priorities. However, an exile is the one who is banished from homeland. Adolph Ng. in *The Redundancy of Courage* and Rey Castro in this novel are in exile due to legal issues. The exile are legally denied people from their own societies; that is why, as well as their living places, they are compelled to change identities and disdain their past life experiences, even their names. Though these

terms have been used in various ways for various purposes at different times and places, they are clearly distinguished in Timothy Mo's figures in his novels. Though the forms of living might vary for all of them, the certain common consequence is that they are exposed to exclusion from the host societies, and they suffer from being "other"ed.

### 3.7 Subservience

When the individuals are "other"ed by the majority, there appears two options lying before them. They either get integrated by renouncing something from their selves, or they make themselves outcasts. For those who choose to be integrated, there is again a twofold way. They are either assimilated in that society and accept the rules as they are, or they become hybrid individuals with redefined identities. In *The Redundancy of Courage*, Adolph's subservience is the key to his getting away from hardships, and again to his ability to get adapted to the global standards and become a hybrid. Similarly, Rey Castro can survive the precarious adventures only when he leaves the strong social commitment he has to his tribe and comply to the rules of powerful people whom he is entrapped. He crosses his boundaries only through bending himself. Elaine Ho claims that "Like Adolph Ng, Castro is a survivor; while enjoying better fortune than his fellow scape-goated friends and itinerants, an undoubted strategy of his survival is the ability to bond with exploiters... In doing so, he exercises but also masks an intelligence that is no less muscular than the physique with which he is endowed" (2000: 129).

Rey's compulsory break of his connection with the fraternity lets him a new life; the first step of his fresh new start is with Smiths family. Mr. Smith, also called as Commander Smith throughout the novel, is the father of Smith family for whom Rey starts to work as a chauffeur. Mr. Smith is a dentist and Mrs. Smith was "a teacher before she met Commander Smith" (Mo, 2000: 155). They have two daughters whose names are Jenny and Nicky. The image set before the readers' eyes is perfect people who have respect for both themselves and each other.

"The Smiths of this world possessed an unshakeable sense of who they were and what they stood for. Context was immaterial to them; they weren't relativists; they were unprepared to compromise on their sense of right and wrong, to make allowances, to bend the rules out of kindness and friendship to fit the individual case." (Mo, 2000: 154).

Mo draws the Smiths family with a strong juxtaposition to Rey's previous life. Neither his family life, nor the other people he has encountered can compete with the Smith family's proper way of living. Especially Jenny's behaviors against Rey are not like an employer, which startles him. "That was what I liked so much about Jenny. Even if you were only a servant she could still, at the moment she addressed you, make you feel you



were the only person in the world” (Mo, 2000: 427). They are the ideal true type of people that stands for individual choices as well as true human values. Rey expresses his surprise as

“Until I met the Smiths I hadn’t believed human beings could exist such pristine perfection. Jenny Smith was Eve before the Curse and Commander Smith, her father an Adam who’d partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil without being abashed by his own temerity” (Mo, 2000: 154).

Adam and Eve myth signifies the beginning of Rey’s new life. Similar to his feelings for Father Paul, Rey has a great respect for Mr. Smith, and he scrutinizes every word he utters. When Commander says “a good dentist tries to save a rotten tooth when he can. A filling if possible. Extraction would be the last resort.” Rey accepts “that’s a good general principle for life as well, sir” (Mo, 2000: 158). As Rey did, when Mr. Smith’s statement is generalized to a larger scale, this might be accepted as a criticism and suggestion for the society, as well. That is to say, the minorities are seen as the decayed tooth or a potential risk for the health of other teeth and the mouth. If there is a possible solution to enable a connection, excluding them is not the proper way of handling the problem. In fact, Mr. Smith’s claim is the way to ensure a medium of welfare within the society.

Rey’s working for Smiths family gives clues about both his and the lives of other expatriates. For instance, the cultural backgrounds of people are a crucial factor for the adaptability of immigrants to their new lives. “It was me, the Asian, who was in a state of culture shock. It was easier for the Western expats to adjust” (Mo, 2000: 160) Rey explains. This is also a clue for the clash between East and West. As Berten states “West and East form a binary opposition in which the two poles define each other; the inferiority that Orientalism attributes to the East simultaneously serves to construct the West’s superiority” (2004: 205). This difference reveals itself in the immigrant experiences, too. Rey observes that “in the east the placid poor lived in terror of the violent rich. In the West the rich lived in terror of the criminal poor” (Mo, 2000: 400).

The ship voyage of Rey ends up not in Singapore, but in Hong Kong. As a former British colony, Hong Kong is home to many immigrants like Rey. Having spent some time there, he observes Chinese people in their post-colonial medium and concludes that “they picked themselves up, dusted off their palms, figuratively speaking, and took another shot at climbing up the ladder” (Mo, 2000: 161). This is also a kind of motivation for the other marginalized people who experience the similar exploitation process. The encounter with Chinese also contributes much to Rey’s life.

“Hong Kong was a place where, like I say, the citizenry took their medicine stoically when they had to, but we screamed and struggled like brats when the spoon approached our pursed mouths. That was us, man, and it was no use ignoring it and pretending we weren’t like that” (Mo, 2000: 161).

Although he is still a foreigner, even an illegal fugitive, Hong Kong and the Chinese people have many positive impacts on his thoughts. He refers to Hong Kong as the “Promised Land” (Mo, 2000: 165) and while talking about his employers, he prefers positive adjectives all the time; “the Smiths were a happy and united family” (Mo, 2000: 264), “the Smiths were as honest as the day was long” (Mo, 2000: 276). As his thoughts are evolved into a different form, he sets up an emotional bond to the family members, as well. “I’ll tell you something: the loyal retainer guards the employer’s property *more* jealously than if it was his own” (Mo, 2000: 238).

Rey’s responsibility is extended from only driving for Smiths to guarding the girls and accompanying them in time. Although Smiths are proper people with gentle behaviors against every living being, class distinction, racial prejudice, exploitation of labor in the society still exist. Speaking of Smiths family’s friends and their children, he clarifies this as “the ladies spoke quite freely in front of me because I wasn’t a man to them, but a menial. That was the power of thought for you, of social subordination” (Mo, 2000: 186). In other words, his slave-like status might change into a worker, but the economic power still keeps him as inferior, even unforeseen to the others. He defines himself as “hopelessly disorientated... as if I was invisible or didn’t exist” (Mo, 2000: 162).

Upon their arrival at the Arabian Peninsula, Commander Smith makes an enemy in their first month. Rey’s already existing loyalty exceeds to such an extent that “to myself, I thought: I’ll become Third Murderer. To the Smiths... what will be will be” (Mo, 2000: 303), and he acts as a “lightning rod for [his] beloved family” (Mo, 2000: 304). Though his life seems to get back on the rails with Smiths, everything goes downhill again. Rey’s Jesuit education, his good-willed nature and Father Paul’s doctrines are all the factors to prevent him from doing bad deeds, but he concludes that “when you shovelled turds with your bare hands, you got dirty. But if you did it for someone else, your conscience stayed clean and quiet as a changed baby” (Mo, 2000: 416). This is a kind of justification for him that the circumstances change the way people behave though they do not want to. “I wasn’t in the habit of belting people, being the peaceable person nature and nurture have made me” (Mo, 2000: 415).

The third murder Rey commits causes him to be entrapped in another tribe called the Fauds. Similar to the Triad society in *Sour Sweet*, it is also “a family construction firm” (Mo, 2000: 307). Rey defines his responsibility there as “*work on the body detail*” (Mo, 2000: 309). Strikingly, all of the people on “that clandestine trip had been fugitives” (Mo, 200: 309). That is to say the Fauds employ the illegal expatriates- the helpless employees. They hold their papers like passports and compel them to do whatever they are told since they have no other option apart from them. Rey describes the place where they are taken to dig dead bodies up as: “it was a low-key foreboding. It was the surroundings. It was finding ourselves somewhere we didn’t belong with nobody who care for us...” (Mo, 2000: 282). Rey is lost once more among the people who even he cannot define himself. Despite the inhuman working conditions, he refers to the importance of their names as individuals as “we’re meat without our names” (Mo, 2000: 329). The only truth that is clear is that the dead bodies are men like them. “They travelled far, like ourselves, in search of a livelihood and to provide better life for those they left at home.... they were poor men like ourselves, strangers in a strange land” (Mo, 2000: 287). They confront with the post-colonial illusion of having a better life, but this time it is the dead bodies that come across them.

### **3.8 Questioning the Communal & Individual Morality**

In *Renegade or Halo2*, Castro experiences the illegitimacy in various forms. Not only does his mother work as a prostitute and he grows in a suburban territory filled with lower class people, but he witnesses high degrees of social deterioration like rape, violence, discrimination, murder, the clandestine trips to dig dead bodies in addition to the institutional corruption within the society in his new life, as well. While narrating the upheavals in his characters’ lives, Mo develops a satirical tone to reflect the degeneration of values. The statement “the old cycle of abused becoming abuser” (Mo, 2000: 151) reveals itself when Rey kills the galley-boy although he did not have to. For the murder, he adopts a rationale that “I was Superman saving the world from itself” (Mo, 2000: 166). The moral judgements he acquired in the first years of his life are in the process of deterioration just like the societies he takes place.

At the end of his quest, Rey discerns many facts he would not notice if he did not experience them himself. One of the things that changes his way of looking at the other people after seven years’ exile is that he learns to welcome differences as well as similarities.

“Up to a point, travel and the encounters it forced upon you emphasized the differences between human beings, the contrasts between the Babyjanas and Huberts of this world but, beyond that, you started to remark the similarities as well, the dawning possibility that there might be a Bohaidenese Commander Smith or an American Atty Cadalong” (Mo, 2000: 371).

Having lived through the toughest circumstances, he learns to tolerate the other people. Although “faith” and “loyalty” were like pre-given commodities for taking part in the tribe before, Rey turns back home as having attained what they actually mean through his friendships, and even foes. He summarizes the covert relationship between loyalty and being a member of a tribe when he justifies that his departure from Faud society is not a betrayal. “I considered I had no debt of honour or loyalty to Faud, either as a type or individual... Defending the Commander, Ok, for as Fr. Paul used to remark of the radical theologians, when people say they are willing to die for a cause they really mean they are prepared to kill for it” (Mo, 2000: 402).

Every immigrant has the illusion of a different life; in the post-colonial context it takes a form of emancipation from the colonial pressure as well as better living conditions. However, Rey’s illusionary world is a bit different from that of the other immigrants. Since his departure is not at his own request, but he is forced to flee so that he will not be punished for a crime he did not take an active part in, the main motivation that triggers him is survival rather than a better life.

Rey has been a disadvantaged boy because of his unusual bodily features; a giant devil as stated in the novel. He is exposed to disturbing glances from the other people for this reason. However, it is also evolved into a different form and appears as another efficacy of his difficult journey: he was “the once despised Amerisian. In such slight nuances of behavior can great social changes be detected. They thought of me as amusing, glamorous, rather than a sorry product of miscegenation; in a word cool” (Mo, 2000: 382). He not only changes his own perceptions in his quest, but lets the others breakdown their prejudices, as well.

### 3.9 Language

Mo makes use of street language used by pinoy<sup>7</sup> as well as the eloquent forms of speech filled with intertextual references in the novel.

“Rey tells his story himself, infusing his language with Filipino street slang in Cebuano, Visayan, Tagalog, themselves types of bastardised Spanish, one of the *lingua francas* of the developing world. He can veer from high literary English to curses and imprecations

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<sup>7</sup>It is the colloquial name given to native people from Philippine

in Taglish (or Bislish if you like), and he knowingly and wittily references high European culture: *happy ships were happy in different ways, di ba, but unhappy ships were unhappy in different ways, siguro*. He also uses words like *cunctatory* (yes, I had to look it up too), and has read Dickens, Haklyutt, Hobbes, and the novel has obvious nods to Smollett and Conrad” (The Lectern, 2018).

Mo’s intended use of slang and the pronounced versions of words on the paper especially used by the ethnic people not only emphasize the great gap between the foreigners and the host culture but also it is a way of displaying the colonial effects on the minorities. In other words, the language used by the minorities gives clue about the effects of imperial powers on their identities through language.

In this way, language can be seen as both a bridge for integration and it is one of the main causes of the communication breakdown that that blocks “the others” to be part of that society. Since language is the main indicator of one’s identity, among the impositions of colonialism, the enforced language is of great importance. As stated in the novel, language barrier [is] what usually prevent the intercourse between native and foreigner” (Mo, 2000: 182). Hence, Mo’s emphasis on the pronunciation (especially “p” sound as “f” and “b” sound as “v”) ascribed from the language of the colonizer stands as strong evidence on the colonization process the ethnic people go through.

In addition to the intertextual references, Mo pays much attention to the importance of language use in the novel because he depicts the way people use their languages as the identity markers. To exemplify, Rey informs the reader that “language, Father Paul taught us, [i]s the ladder over the walls that divide us” (Mo, 2000: 34). Therefore, not only as a means of communication, but also as a way for the silenced people to break down the prejudices against them language appears to have a significant role. It is worth citing Gayatri Spivak at this point because she suggests that in order to enable the Third world to be seen in a different way, the use of language is of great importance. She criticizes the Westernized way of thinking that shapes the perceptions on the Orient and proposes “worlding” as the way to shatter the Eurocentric vision. The post-colonial juxtaposition that colonized people are “othered” by the dominant ideology while at the same time they are expected to submit to their sovereign denotes that unless they use language effectively and express themselves in the correct way, the “others” do it in accordance with their own assumptions.

To put it in a nutshell, as an individual Rey’s preferences are shaped through the social background that he cannot free himself of. He refers to his case as follows: “I was a man, that was my primary visible tribe, but I was also underdog by birth and by

temperament. That was my real tribe, that of the despised outsiders, trying to get in from the cold” (Mo, 2000: 190). He embraces the fact that there is an “effortless superiority” of the Western world, Rey “thought we Flips were unrivalled at effortless inferiority but I did my level best to get above my context” (Mo, 200: 35). Though he strives for keeping himself as righteous within the wickedness of the society, he also has a commitment to the heredity of his ancestors. His efforts to get relieved of the bounding of the social pressures appear as a post-colonial juxtaposition when he concludes that “I have learned to believe in destiny, in the immutability of natures, in the ultimate victory of essence over context” (Mo, 2000: 20). The fact that free choices of individuals can change their life is subdued with the external factors like people around him, the moral codes and the conditions of life presented before him. Thus, submissiveness to the tribalism is the key factor that keeps individual choices out of context.

## CHAPTER IV

### *SOUR SWEET*

The immigrant experience has been a common subject in the post-colonial period, but their stories have been narrated solely by the colonizers for a long period of time. In other words, the immigrants have been introduced to the reader in a Westernized way of thinking. The minorities have been mostly portrayed and perceived as the unwanted or problematic groups that cause troubles in the already existing order of the societies; however, Timothy Mo's novel, *Sour Sweet* has provided an insight into the world of the immigrants from a different angle. As a writer who has been able to cross the borders of Chinese and British nations with his works, Timothy Mo is credited as one of the pioneer novelists narrating the events through the eyes of the colonized. The immigrant story Mo sets forth in *Sour Sweet* embodies numerous instances of post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions, and the aim of this chapter is to cover these issues in detail together with sample quotations from the novel.

Mo's novel, *Sour Sweet* is mainly about a Chinese immigrant family living in London in the 1960s. The focus of the novel is on the couple who start a new life in London. While the course of events overlap with the troubles caused by a quasi-family organization called Triads, the Chinese family members' attempts to get adapted to English society is narrated. Peter Lewis refers to the novel as:

“an inside view of an unfamiliar social milieu, but by placing the narrative firmly in London, he [Timothy Mo] achieves a new frisson. What is startling is the apparent discrepancy between location and action, between modern England and a largely self-contained and alien world functioning within it” (1982: 502).

As a stereotypical immigrant family forced to leave their homeland, the constant struggle of the characters to survive in a society they are alien to is narrated by Mo with an emphasis on the troubles of being “othered”. Chen family experiences almost all the Post-colonial troubles aforementioned in the first part of this study; namely, being alienated, referred as “other” or inferior, troubled by in-betweenness; in addition to having the difficulty of adaptation to the new society, having a sense of non-belonging, mimicking and suffering from ambivalence while passing through acculturation and hybridization process. The fact that Chen family has a different ethnic background leads them to experience a number of conflicts, and their way of life and their perceptions collide with

the others in many ways. Thus, the focus of this part of present dissertation will be mainly on how the juxtapositions and illusions are displayed in the Post-colonial context of *Sour Sweet*.

The novel can be divided into three parts and consists of thirty six chapters. Overall, the first ten chapters introduce the main characters; from the eleventh to twenty second chapters, the process of Chen family's struggle to adapt to the life in London is narrated; and the rest of the novel deals with the drastic changes in the family and their lives.

The protagonist of the novel, Chen, who is a restaurant worker in London, goes back to Hong Kong to find a partner for himself and meets Lily at a party organized for the bachelors to get married. Right after their marriage, they move to London. When they have a son, named Man Kee, Lily's sister, Mui arrives from China to take care of the baby. Unlike her husband, who is pleasant with his life in its minimal form, Lily is an ambitious woman who wants more. She urges to run her own business because she needs a *new world* of her own in which she will be the one who arranges everything. Thus, Lily secretly saves the necessary money by cutting down on the house keeping expenditure for this purpose. Convincing Chen to quit his job at the restaurant he has been working as a waiter, Lily motivates the family to move their home south and to start a take-away food company, which is a common sector among the immigrants in 1960s of London. Mui, who spends most of her time watching English T.V programs upon her arrival, becomes a bridge for the Chens and the outer world in the meantime thanks to the daily language she has acquired from the TV programs. Chen, who is also responsible for sending remittances to his family, gambles and then borrows money from an organization called Triads, which he pays with his life at the end of the novel. The family cooks "sour" and "sweet" food for the drivers. Although they do not approve of this taste, they need to do this for their living. Chen's father arrives to live with them following his wife's death. Meanwhile, the reader is informed that Mui is pregnant, but the baby's father is not revealed. To cover up this illegitimate pregnancy, she goes to live with Mrs. Law, a wealthy widow and she gets married to Mr. Lo in the end. The Triad organization looks for Chen everywhere and he is killed mistakenly though he is proven to be innocent afterwards. The Triads send the family remittance as a compensation for their mistake, and it makes the other members of the family think that Chen is off for work and sends them the money. Lily, who believes that her husband will be back one day, also feels a kind of relief when he is gone. She takes up all the responsibility of the business and



family life. The novel ends with Lily's transforming into a bicultural Chinese-English individual.

Before a detailed analysis of the characters and noteworthy samples from the novel, it is crucial to touch upon the phases which every immigrant who leaves their living place experience, because Chen family also passes through almost all these phases and the reflections of this acculturation process are the main source of the illusions and juxtapositions that form the focus of this study.

Winkelman defines four phases that the immigrants pass through: the honey moon or tourist phase; the crises or cultural shock phase; adjustment, reorientation and gradual recovery phase; the adaptation resolution and acculturation phase, respectively (1994: 122). The most problematic one for the new comers to the new culture and the long-lasting one is the cultural shock/crisis phase.

"The crisis phase may emerge immediately upon arrival or be delayed...It may start with a full-blown crisis or as a series of escalating problems, negative experiences, and reactions.... Life does not make any sense and one may feel helpless, confused, disliked by others, or treated like a child. A sense of lack of control of one's life may lead to depression, isolation, anger, or hostility" (Winkelman, 1994: 123).

The concept Homi Bhabha uses, "third space" is the zone in which this phase is experienced, and the process of passing through this phase ends up in two ways. Those who are able to stand against the aforementioned difficulties set up a new so-called "hybrid" identity, and those who cannot are either assimilated or try to stick to their traditions and get lost in the society. Likewise, the characters in *Sour Sweet* can be categorized into two groups; namely the ones who can accomplish passing the stage of culture shock/crisis and the ones who cannot. What matters most in this context is the characters' endurance and flexibility for the unexpected situations. If s/he has the potential to conform his/her behaviors to the rest of the society and form a new identity accordingly, s/he can survive. If not, there await many other problems arising from not being able to get adapted.

Lily, who is one of the protagonists of the novel, can be referred to as one of the characters who can manage to survive in the new society she lives in. Just like the other immigrants who are unwilling to be adapted, Lily does not want to be integrated into the society initially and refrains from having much interaction with them, calling the others as "devil" (Mo, 1982: 135). The fact that Lily's insistence on sending her son, Man Kee to the weekend school to make him get Chinese way of education show her attempt to stick to her roots and protect her son from being infected by the English society. That is

why, “Lily rested her faith in his once-weekly exposure to Chinese curriculum, as a measured dose of radiotherapy might burn out cancerous growth” (Mo, 1982: 247). She refers to the English society as *cancerous*, because it is something threatening for her son’s right upbringing as a Chinese. Even after the Chen family sets up their own take-away food business, she keeps her position straight: “when Lily works at the till, she feels like a vending machine into which money is inserted and that expels food in return” (Celikel, 2006: 12). She does not have personal relations to the “devils” apart from business or compulsion. Nevertheless, the flow of the events changes everything the other way round for her. Her claim is evolved into “foreign devil friends” (Mo, 1982: 248), first, and an accomplished twist into what Winkelman calls adaptation phase occurs through the end of the novel.

In addition to Lily, her sister Mui can also be referred as surviving the conditions of being a new-comer successfully. As Hall points out to the individuals who are adapted to the new culture as “hybridized identities assembled out of the remains of the British Empire and in the shadows of the Chinese Empire” (1995: 90), Mui manages to set a bicultural identity, too. The process of her adaptation is different from that of Lily’s. While Lily shows resistance because of her desire to remain as only Chinese and does her best to keep herself out of the circle of the new society; despite her first constraint mood, Mui indigenizes the cross-cultural input through the programs she watches on TV. At the beginning, her only interaction is with television apart from the familial relations. Since she has difficulty with the language, and England is an alien place for her, she does not want to leave the house, but the only thing she does is to watch TV. Lily complains about her for being an “addict [who is] even watching children’s puppet shows with Man Kee” (Mo, 1982: 10). “She was unable to catch more than a few scattered words” (Mo, 1982: 10), but the television becomes her way out of the world she has to live in. She makes up new names like “Boy, Hairnet, Drinker, Cripple, Crafty, Bad Girl” (Mo, 1982: 10), and through the authentic language of the society she learns through TV, she later on plays the role of “cultural mediator” (Hall, 1995: 95) for the Chen family and the outer world.

Chen is the one who cannot break his chains out of the circle that the females could manage to set out. Although he has the patriarchal power of being a male, he is the one who fails to be one of the “others”, neither can he remain as he is. As Spivak claims in her article “*Can the Subaltern speak?*” it would be harder for the female characters to have a word in a new society and set up a separate individual identity due to the patriarchal oppression, and the pressure of being an immigrant would double this for Lily and Mui.

However, while the women can triumph over having a bicultural identity in the end, Chen has to pay his failure with his life. As Akilli suggests: “it is impossible for him [Chen] to achieve cross-cultural adaptation... his mysterious death at the end of *Sour Sweet* may also be read as a confirmation of his failure” (2001: 3).

In fact, Chen tries to fulfill all his duties as a husband, a father and a son; however, his attempts leave one thing incomplete while trying to do the other. If the ritual of Lily’s evening soup, is taken as an instance, Chen does not enjoy it from the very beginning, but “not wishing to hurt her feelings” (Mo, 1982: 2), he does not resist, because Lily believes that she is performing her duty as a wife in this way. However, due to his sentimentalisation “for four years, therefore, Chen had been going to bed with the last extremities of thirst” (Mo, 1982: 2). Chen would like to eat biscuit after the soup but “sweet after salty was dangerous for the system, so she [Lily] had been taught; it could upset the whole balance of the dualistic or female and male principles, *yin* and *yang*” (Mo, 1982: 2). Chen has to put up with Lily’s traditional ideas similar to these; however, he also finds himself in an ambivalent situation in Bhabhian terms, for keeping everything as it should be. Due to Lily’s and the society’s pressures on him, he finds himself in a desperate situation. For some time, he tries to forget about the things he cannot handle through gardening. Man Kee accompanies this break, which turns into a kind of father & son session in a short period of time.

In fact, Chen seems to be a man who contents with what he owns; however, he does not hesitate to renounce his responsibilities for keeping the balance- *yin* and *yang*; neither does he care his individual preferences for his responsibilities. Thus, his fault that prepares his tragic end is that he cannot keep the balance of his life. He leaves his homeland for a better life with Lily at first hand; however, in his new life, he has to put up with Lily’s endless desires and ambitions in addition to his troubles of social adaptation. He goes through many difficulties. Even when he hesitates to remit money to his family since he actually needs the money, he has no choice but to send because “he was a dutiful son” (Mo, 1982: 60). Although his father had other children, Chen “was the most affluent of their five sons” (Mo, 1982: 60). When his family asks for a large amount of money due to a problem in their hometown, he attempts to gamble with Roman, one of his colleagues, and he is caught up in the Triads’ trap beginning with this mistake. Again, he is the only child who is expected to host his father after mother Chen’s death, not the others because Chen feels an obligation to comply with his “traditional duty towards his father” (Sauerberg, 2001: 130). While he works at a restaurant in which he

earns enough for a living, he cannot resist Lily's desire for more. All these instances show that Chen is not the man who prioritizes himself, but he is apt to be manipulated by the other people's wishes.

Chen's experiences are the main sources of ambivalence and juxtaposition that affect all the members of the family: he is both the conduit between Lily and the others, and he is also the main obstacle for the family and the others to constitute a healthy relation. He is the one, who has the only potential and is expected to bear all the responsibilities of the family, but he is a failure as a husband, a son and a father. In other words, Chen can be referred to as a completely lost character in the end.

In addition to the juxtapositions in Chen's individual scope, Lily and Chen's relation also clashes. They resemble to the colonizer and the colonized ones' relation in many aspects. Pointing at Lily and Chen's marriage, Timothy Mo makes a "pattern, in fact, of Chinese history repeated in microcosm" (Mo, 1982: 15). Lily addresses Chen as *husband* because it is "a simple descriptive term after all, implied respect as well as a salutary recognition of the status quo and all that it traditionally implied" (Mo, 1982: 40). Just like the colonized, who sees the colonizer as the agency that sets the legal rules, Chen is a "safety net" (Mo, 1982: 44) for Lily. Strikingly, in fact, Lily is the one who holds the power within the family to manipulate Chen with her overriding behaviors; "the conqueror never knew it was he who was truly conquered" (Mo, 1985: 15). Once more, like the colonizer that sneaks into the colonized people's life through applying various strategies; it is Lily who plays the role of "the initiator rather than the willing accomplice" (Mo, 1982: 15) in their relationship. As a dominatrix, she latently exercises her will on Chen. "Chen thought himself the dominator, rather than the dominated" (Mo, 1982: 15). In reality, the patriarchal hierarchy enables Chen to be the one who is governing, "it was his function to oppose, part of the natural order of things" (Mo, 1982: 45). However, the juxtaposing characters of Lily and Chen show that he has a weak personality that is open to the other people's manipulation. As Winkelman suggests, Chen experiences the series of negative things related to his individual and social life, which explains his loss in the end. Therefore, as an immigrant who cannot manage the acculturation process, Chen also fails in his family relations, as well.

Man Kee, the little member of the Chen family, is the second generation immigrant whose experiences are different from his people. He has a Chinese family, but his living area is not alien to him the same amount as his parents' because he was born into it. He does not experience the same difficulties with the others because he is a

“twenty-nine-month old” (Mo, 1982: 3) baby at the beginning of the novel. Man Kee is a child in need of protection, and Lily takes the role of his protector in an extreme way. She frowns at Man Kee and Chen’s spending time together by growing the plants in the garden just to keep her eyes on her son and keep him safe, even from his father. Mui, Man Kee’s aunt, arrives to help the family after Man Kee’s birth, but her addiction to TV makes her inadequate for this task, too. Man Kee’s jumping from the window to catch a pigeon while he is with Mui increases Lily’s thoughts to a frantic level. She scorns Mui asking “Eldest sister, are you blind and deaf when you watch that television? Do you care if my son kills himself or not?” (Mo, 1982: 17). One reason for Lily’s overprotective behavior is Man Kee’s physical incapability. Timothy Mo describes Man Kee as having a disproportioned head. While Chen is taunting with this, Lily is disturbed by his comments: “Chen was rather matter of fact about his son’s progress, further annoying Lily by repeating his usual comments about the disproportionate size of Man Kee’s head compared to his body” (Mo, 1982:17). Man Kee does not speak much, and he has difficulty in walking till he is eighteen months old. However, Lily does not want to accept any of these abnormalities with her maternal protective attitude.

More than an instinctual maternal protection, Lily feels and sees herself superior not only to the people outside, but to the other members of her family, as well. Thus, her concern for her son becomes so extreme that she even identifies her husband with the little boy. Ignoring his age, gender and position in the house, she and Mui behave him as if Chen was also a “greedy little boy” (Mo, 1982: 40).

For Lily, Man Kee is a chance to accomplish what she could not: he “would have the opportunities from which she had been excluded herself because of her sex and ill-fortune” (Mo, 1982: 7). Man Kee’s development within the family is primarily determined through Chinese way of life.

“The mother’s determination to shape her son within a single tradition, and thus perpetuate her cultural heritage, comes up most sharply against the equally irresistible acculturation of the son into ‘British’ society in the process of education outside the family” (Ho, 2000a: 63).

His mother’s insistence on growing his son in terms of her own way of upbringing is Lily’s way of sticking to her traditions. However, Man Kee is to grow a Chinese- British since he is also shaped through the society he is born into.

While Mo puts the new-comer Chen family right in the middle of the English society, he does not create a crowded social setting or let the characters have a compact

relationship with the others. In the novel, there are some nameless characters apart from those coming from the Chinese soil, but they are either trivial or stereotypical characters that do not contribute much to the flow of the events. In other words, they can be seen as providing the family only a social setting. Mo does not give important roles to these characters; this might be because he wants to show the family's enclosed nature as an immigrant one. This might also be perceived as a way of showing the alienation and loneliness of the immigrants. That the people they have close interaction are mostly coming from Chinese roots denotes their search for anything from their homeland. However, the insular attitude of the family, as a dominant character, especially Lily's constant scorning at "the others" makes it difficult for them to be a part of the whole.

The Chinese people living in London also share similar features with the Chen family. Mr. Lo is a minor character who works in the same restaurant with Chen, and he is the future husband of Mui. In addition to being alienated from the English society, he is also an individually unhappy man who lives in the destruction of a "disastrous marriage" (Mo, 1982: 49). He is Chen's friend, but Lily also cares for him because they are destined to be living much or less the same troubles in a foreign land. She takes "a thermos of soup, fruit, some flowers, plain sponge cakes and some outdated Hong Kong newspapers" (Mo, 1982: 45) with her when she visits Mr. Lo for his illness. While the food shows her intimacy for the man to help him recover, the newspapers show the invisible bond that connects the two ethnic people in the same context.

Mrs. Law, who is "the widow of a wealthy ship-owner" (Mo, 1982: 43), is also an immigrant from Hong Kong. Following her husband's death, she moves to England. Although she is in her sixties at the course of the novel, she has no child but she has an affectionate nature caring for children. She insists on taking the address of the family because she is mature enough to see that they are people like her, and they will have difficulty of adaptation, for sure. She sends "an invitation 'to drink tea'" together with a "musical spinning-top for Man Kee" (Mo, 1982: 43) to Chen family. Thanks to her friendly attitude, while even Chen does not know this secret, she is the only person whom Lily asks for her help about Mui's illegal child. She might be regarded as having a positive influence on the family with her graceful behaviors of an upper class lady. When Lily learns Mui's pregnancy, angry though, she tries to protect her sister, which is difficult for Lily due to her strict upbringing that does not allow such extraordinary cases. It is a big deal for Lily to accept the situation, because the traditional way of thought forbids a woman to have a baby without a legal bond. For Lily's caring behavior, Mrs. Law and

her tolerant way of looking at the events are much influential. Through the transformation Lily undergoes with the effect of both English flexibility and Mrs. Law's tolerance, she not only finds a way out of this trouble, but also she cares for her sister's mood. She even tears the letter in which she asks "you have no shame? Not only do you bring disgrace on our family..." (Mo, 1982: 200) with the idea that it might hurt Mui.

#### **4. 1 Tradition (Li) & Individual (Yi)**

Timothy Mo makes use of a great many juxtapositions and clash of values and cultures in the novel; however, the overwhelming contrast is the one between the Chinese way of living that applies Confucian principles and Western individualism. The social practices of people arriving from China are mainly based on the tradition - "li" and the English culture they meet has opposing social codes with Confucian tenants. Neville explains that in Confucian thought, "the purposes of ritual and conventional social habits were to orient people so that social institutions and everyday relationships could flourish in harmony" (qtd. in Park, 2007: 302). In parallel with yin & yang philosophy, the Chinese people are brought up with the tenants of "li" as well. Thus, Mo paves the path to inquire the individual (yi) and the tradition (li) relationship through Chen family.

The roles in a society are of great importance because they are not the acquired, but the given roles. Timothy Mo defines the female profile drawn by the Chinese tradition as:

"uncomplaining, compliant, dutiful, considerate, unselfish . . . utterly submissive to the slightest wishes of her superiors, which included women older than herself and the entire male sex, including any brothers she might acquire in the future" (Mo, 1982: 10).

It is a woman's duty to comply with the traditions. The roles of individuals are pre-determined in the society; in traditional way of thinking, they have no choice but to submit them. Only if they fulfill their duties as a wife, mother and female, will they be regarded as the right person. The limits are clear-cut in tradition, but in order to adapt, the immigrant experience might have to bend these given codes.

As an immigrant who was brought up with Confucian rules, Lily starts her new life with a kind of resistance and gets the same reaction from the others "each regarded the other as a non-person" (Mo, 1982: 135). However, thanks to the notion of balance she is taught by her father; she turns into both a bicultural person and an independent individual who believes in herself. She does not quit being Chinese, and she sustains her Chineseness but, she can reconstruct it in the end. She gains a double perspective which gives her a chance to overcome the discrepancies she had to put up with. Her self-

identification (yi) with the Chinese traditions (li) is combined with the cultural flexibility she gains in her new socio-cultural environment. In other words, as an accomplished immigrant who could pass the acculturation process, she uses her own way of judgement to solve the troubles arising from the clash between her upbringing and new customs she is expected to conform to. Instead of insisting on indulging to the traditions without any inquiry, she chooses to be bounded to the way she perceives the events personally.

#### 4.2 Yin & Yang

Yin and yang are the benchmarks of Chinese philosophy. Although the western way of thinking perceives it as the opposites, the base of this philosophy proposes a state of balance and *harmony* of the opposites. The Yin-Yang philosophy suggests that the base of everything is these two elements: yin is the weak, passive and destructive side; yang is the strong, active and constructive one. Their references to male and female roles in a society are also derived from these opposing features.

Lily has a yin & yang counterbalance of female and male traits within her character, thus her character can be juxtaposed with both Chen as a female counterpart and with Mui for her strong-willed and ambitious nature. On one side, in the presence of a yang, a “solid masculine” husband (Mo, 1082: 51), she is a woman who is conforming to the patriarchal Chinese norms that require the female’s submission and servitude to the male. Mo describes Lily’s role as a housewife and a devoted wife to her husband at the very beginning of the novel:

“Lily Chen always prepared an ‘evening’ snack for her husband to consume on his return at 1.15a.m. ...Lily still went ahead and prepared broth, golden-yellow with floating oily rings, and put it before her husband when he returned. She felt she would have been failing in her wifely duties otherwise” (Mo, 1982: 2).

Thanks to her son, Man Kee and her motherly feelings, Lily’s ying side is reinforced while her strict, disciplined and conservative part is kept under control. Her emotional and feminine side prevents her from being as harsh as her father, the initiation of ying for her. That is to say, Lily has a deep understanding of traditional values of Chinese culture and an internalized yang force thanks to her martial arts background.

As a juxtaposing character to Lily, Mui is more *lady-like*. While Lily is trained by her father- a renowned fighter- through the techniques of Chinese martial arts, her strong character is directly contrasting with Mui, who is a “compliant, dutiful” (Mo, 1982: 10) girl having the submissiveness of ying. Mui criticizes this as: “We have no brother. But



father taught Lily as much as he could do before he was killed. Quite unsuitable, really, for a girl” (Mo, 1982: 44).

Lily’s perception and balance of life is changed upon Chen’s disappearance. Although Chen was a protective force for herself and for her family against “the others”, at the beginning, when Chen leaves she has no choice but adapt to the situation she is in. “To refer to her spouse by this alias was also suddenly to look upon him as an individual, whereas his importance really consisted in his role, his rank -- if you like -- of husband” (Mo, 1982: 40). The thing to note here is that contrary to the unexpected outcomes that she would be living, when Chen is gone,

“she was content with what her life has become...Surely Husband hadn’t weighed on her like that? He was such a quiet, self-effacing man. But it was as if a stone had been taken off her and she had sprung to what her height should have been. She thought she had found a balance of things for the first time, *yin* cancelling *yang*” (Mo, 1982: 278).

Her acculturation process is completed successfully, and she finds a *balance* not only in her character, but also in her relations with others. In other words, Chen’s going contributes to Lily’s individuation process.

After their marriage in China, Lily and Chen move to UK as a starting point in their new life. Chen family’s move from East to West symbolizes their first distancing from their homeland to a new and modern place. In the novel, when the physical sphere is changed, it also connotes drastic switches in the lives of the characters. Although their roles seem to remain the same as it was in China; namely, the husband who is breadwinner and the wife who takes care of the household, their perception of life starts to be evolved in another direction.

Following the second change in their domicile; namely, the time when they decide to start a food counter next to a garage, and move from central London, the switch of their roles explicitly appears to be noticed. Though the overt reason for this change seems to be the new business for the family to move to suburb; in reality, Chen fails to pay the sum of money he borrows from the Triads, and this is a chance for him to get away and hide himself from these gangsters. Contrary to the traditional concepts of marriage and their roles, in their new business, Chen is the one who cooks the food in the kitchen, and it is Lily and Mui who conduct the outer work. In order to emphasize the shift in Chens’ life, Timothy Mo chooses a mixture of Chinese and British name for the restaurant:

“Mo also playfully alludes to the notion of cultural hybridity in their restaurant’s name. There is a pun about the native word DAH LING, the name of their village, by which

they call their restaurant. The word inevitably recalls the English word “darling” [3, 95]. This is a situation of hybridity and a cultural clash” (Celikel, 2009: 231).

Thus, the traditional way of life associated with the homeland is juxtaposed with the modern, flexible and tolerant environment of London once again. As Guo suggests “both diasporic writers and their ‘hybrid’ characters do face the “double bind” of their home tradition and the target culture” (2008: 53). Likewise, upon buying a second-hand van, Lily has to take up the duty of driving, which is referred as masculine in conventional thought, because Chen fails to do so. Lily’s traditional claim “You know the best, Husband” (Mo, 1982: 86), and internalized sense of duty goes against the grain in this way, and though this is a clashing attitude with her traditions, she in a way boldly, starts driving the van for the convenience of the family and herself. Contrary to her initial abstention and the need to be protected, Lily proves that she might also do mannish tasks, and that she is on the right way to become an individual who can manage her life on her own.

Lily’s traditional perception is also juxtaposed with the English people’s treating their elderly people. “Respect for age had always been a fundamental moral principle with her” (Mo, 1982: 208). Having been raised up in accordance with the Chinese tradition, which prescribes the young people’s respect to old people, Lily strives to be strictly bounded to the value system of her society. The young people in her homeland are given the responsibility against their parents; in other words, it is a usual duty for a Chinese youngster to financially support his/her family just like Chen:

“Chen was still as conscientious about sending money to his father as when he had been single. He was a dutiful son...The remittances gave the old couple a comfortable enough existence...Chen was the most affluent of their five sons...” (1982: 60).

When Chen proposes to stop sending money to his family, Lily strongly opposes, and again it is Lily who arranges to send the money. Her attempt to bring her father-in-law to live with them in London also shows her respect for the elderly people. She is surprised to see the English people treat so ignorant for the old and scorns at them for not caring their ancestors. Lily’s claim “of course, help from the state couldn’t be compared with the loving care of one’s own family” (Mo, 1982: 246) asserts the juxtaposing perception of Chinese and English way of life and their treatment for their elderlies, as well.

### 4.3 The Illusionary Effect of Media

Having arrived in London after Man Kee's birth, Mui is entrapped in a post-colonial illusion of a different life perception, which is mainly caused by media she is exposed to. The Essentialist theory proposes that the colonizing powers use a variety of techniques for assimilating the colonized ones. The immigrant, who is unfamiliar with the host culture, seems to be affected by what is given because they cannot see the world without having an active part in it. Media tools are the perfect medium for the colonized ones to be persuaded and manipulated by the colonizers. Mui, who provides her communication with the outside world through the TV programs and the magazines, is a true instance for the case. Since her perception is limited to the illusionary world on TV, this causes her to believe in quasi-real things. Lily warns her that "life is not a TV programme" (Mo, 1982: 152). In fact, Lily is legitimate. The programs on television do not reflect the realities as they are because it is a made up world or a simulacrum as Baudrillard claims. They might include distorted realities for sometimes ideological reasons or sometimes with commercial concern.

Mui's illusionary world also stems from the fact that people also have a tendency to believe in what their eyes let them see. As it is the case for *Kanizsa Triangle*: the figure does not have a distinct border line; however, the image makes the viewer believe that there is a clearly noticed triangle. (Nieder, 2002: 250). As for Mui's way of perception, in which she sees the English society via serials, she believes in an idealized version of real life. Her claim is that "the English police-force is the finest in the world" (Mo, 1982: 152), which indicates the extent of her admiration for everything about the dominant culture. In the Post-colonial context, craving for ways of getting into or being accepted by the society, the immigrant may absorb what is presented as it is without questioning, like Mui.

In terms of post-colonial theory, Mui's TV addiction might also be referred as a way of imitating the colonizer's way of living and language; which reminds of the concept of mimicry that Bhabha and Naipaul refer to. Bhabha defines colonial mimicry as "the desire for a reformed, recognizable 'Other', as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (1994: 122). Mui also displays the tendency of the immigrants to pick up the things in the host culture. In order to set up a new identity, TV turns out to be a beneficial agent for Mui to learn the host culture. Mui's way of behaviors, her style of speaking and her admiration for the supreme power all stem from the fact that it is easier

for her to get adopted through mimicking the elements of host culture and take them as they are, which is called assimilation.

Another Post-colonial immigrant illusion is the concept of *a new life*. The immigrant believes that the new life in a different sphere will bring them what they are looking for, and their departure from their homeland is juxtaposed with the harsh realities they encounter. Mui's new formed identity, for instance, seems an authentic one that is close to the host culture, but the fact that she has been assimilated in the meantime is the grim reality of her new cross-cultural life. She can grasp the social norms; the programs on TV make her passage through the "the phase of adaptation" (Winkelman, 1994: 123) easy, but she loses her Chinese background in this way, as well.

Almost all the first generation immigrants live on the dream of going back to their home land one day. The initial reason for the resistance they display for not becoming a part of the society is this desire to leave. Mui and the other members of Chen family also resist being a member of the target culture right at the beginning. As for all the immigrants, their situation is ambivalent in Bhabhian terms, because it is their urge to be there to have a better life, but their priority is to leave there as quick as possible. Mo defines UK as "land of promise" (Mo, 1982: 1) at the very beginning of the novel. Thus, the new comers usually build high hopes like Chen family. They need to be there for their dreams; however, they cannot feel a sense of belonging to this unfamiliar place, as well. That is why, they cannot give up the idea of getting rid of there. When the Chen family goes on a seaside trip for the weekend, showing a ship to his son, Chen explains:

"It is a special little ship for people like us, Son. It is very little and very old but that is only what strangers see. We know better, don't we, Son, because it is the ship that will take us all *back home* [my emphasis] when we are finished here. It will take you to your homeland, Son, which you have never seen" (Mo, 1982: 154).

The ship Chen shows symbolizes another post-colonial illusion of minority people's insistence on anything related to their roots. The Triad society, which compromises the secondary plot story of the novel, also functions as a part of this illusion. We learn about the Triads when Chen gets in touch with them as he is trying to find a way out of the familial financial problems. Though Chen might look for other solutions, he chooses to rely on Triads, most probably with the illusionary idea that he can get out of this jam through the help of people coming from the same soil.

#### 4.4 The Triad Society

By the Triads, Mo sets up a second layer of plot within the novel. The domestic family story of Chens is juxtaposed with the story of gangsters and their bad deeds. Strikingly, the Triad organization is drawn as a family organization, too, and Mo puts the two family stories against one another, which enables the chance to see the familial relations that contribute to the perception of their differences. Frankie F. Leung explains this type of organization as:

“In Hong Kong, it is a common practice for Triad members and officials either from the same or from different societies, to band together for some particular purpose and, to signify their loyalty to each other each other, they undergo ceremony... to strengthen the bond of brotherhood between the participants” (1984: 99).

Mo focuses on the violent nature of the members of Triad family, also known as “Hung family” (Mo, 1982: 70), and the cruel behaviors of the leaders against other people. They are the marginalizing group, but for the money related issues. The Triad family is described in detail, and they serve as a secret society that claims to preserve the Chinese culture at the same time. Rothfork defines the Triads as “political, mercenary, rational, and aggressive. An artificial society of men, its concern is to nurture money through violence” (1989: 50).

The Triads’ relation to Chen family is not only limited to Chen and the affairs that follow his debt; Lily’s father- who is known as the master Tang in martial arts- is respected by the Triad members, as well. Especially the Triad leader Red Cudgel makes sure that Lily receives a pension for her husband’s unjust death. Cudgel, in a way, pays off his respect and loyalty to Lily’s father in this way. Thus, loyalty is a remarkable feeling in the organization. “Family Hung is greater than any individual” (Mo, 1982: 260) is the idea of the family beyond anything. The fact that there are special rituals taking place within the so-called family also denotes that the members are to be loyal to both the organization and their Chinese value system. This might also be the reason why Chen relies on the Triads no matter how notorious they are. After noticing that he will not be able to pay the money back, Chen thinks that he can get away from the Triads by disappearing. For the fear of being tracked, he even attempts to stop sending remittances to his family. However, the bonds Chen seeks a remedy take his life.

#### 4.5 Title: “Sour” & “Sweet”

Of the many juxtaposing elements, the title of the novel includes the most striking one. “Sour” and “sweet” have literally contrasting tastes: “Sour taste comes from acidic foods. The acids in food liberate hydrogen ions or protons. The sweet taste in food comes mostly from glucose and fructose. Sweet substances lead to nerve activation” (Blue, 2019). The scientific data reveal that it is the taste receptor cells that have an active role in determining the taste of the food. The chemicals in the food stimulates a different part of the tongue, in this way the brain perceives the taste of the food as sour, sweet, salty or bitter. Although the food may include similar chemicals, the point where it stimulates determines the taste of the food.

The sour and sweet tastes denote both physically and culturally distinctive features:

“Culturally speaking, Asian food tends to use opposing flavours in dishes, like mixing salty with sweet or sweet and sour together while a Western dish often focuses on a particular type of flavor like savory or sweet...” (“Why is Asian Cooking Different to Western Cooking?”, 2018).

In parallel with their way of living, the Eastern and Western way of eating also differs in many points. For instance, “in China, people attach more priority to pursue the taste than the nutrition of food” (Xiong, 2017: 7) while flavor of the food is as important as the quality of food for Europeans. The mixture of sweet and sour sauces is a typical Chinese taste; therefore, it would not be daring to say that the culinary style appears to be an indication of identity as well as language, customs and traditions.

Mo, in his novel uses the food as a commodity that represents culture, as well. The take away counter Chen family choses to start is both a barrier and a bridge between the family and the Chinese and English cultures. It is a barrier, in that they have an enclosed area in which they can escape from the others, just as Chen does from the Triads. Chen’s meeting with the Triad man whom he borrowed the money from at the *backyard* indicates the secure domain he intends to keep. He introduces the man as his brother-in-law to Mr. Constantinides and avoids the other family members’ learning the reality. What is more, Chen family cooks typical ethnic Chinese food for English people, and this is the way they distinguish themselves from the rest of the society. It should be noted that they cannot find original Chinese stuff for their food at times, and they have to replace some materials with subsequent ones, but they believe that the English people are not gourmets and they even have a despising attitude towards English people for their way of eating.

When Grandpa decides to invite his old English devil friends to the restaurant, Mui and Lily question the way English and Chinese eating differs:

“ ‘Sweet and sour pork’ is too hard for old person’s teeth, if these English people have any teeth left. Grandpa has gold teeth, of course, but they don’t go in for that. Perhaps congee and minced salty pork would be suitable... Mui was doubtful. ‘Old people may not like Chinese food Lily. Even *real* Chinese food’” (Mo, 1982: 248).

The premise of Chen family’s counter has distinctive features: there are no tables, for instance and the customers are offered a quick-prepared food to take away, which lets them keep the company of the “other” people at the minimum level; in other words, they do not have to be in interaction with them apart from business. Though it is a local restaurant where close relations can be easily set up, Mo shows the insular attitude of Chens also through the type of the restaurant.

On the one hand, it is a barrier between the Chens and the others; on the other hand, the take-away food also becomes a bridge for the family because more or less, they make their position in the society through this company. Chen works in a restaurant as a waiter, and he learns only the necessary language to take orders and to sustain his job. Upon running their own business, they need to search ways of selling their products. They advertise the shop in the local newspaper; Mr. Constantinides provides a telephone connection for them to take the orders of the lorry drivers. “So now, at odd times of day and night, the telephone Mr Constantinides had installed for them double-quick, would ring” (Mo, 1982: 105). Also, Lily and Mui’s performance outside the home becomes possible through the food they served. That is why, it is a setting that lets them find themselves individually and set up a different social identity in the target society.

All in all, Mo’s *Sour Sweet*, a novel set in 1960s of London, provides a true medium for analyzing the post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions. The clash between the English and Chinese culture is accompanied by the contrasting features of the characters, settings and plot structure of the novel. Paul Vitos defines Mo as “a privileged insider ‘lifting the lid on the Chinese mind’ for a non-Chinese readership” (2018: 10). Mo touches upon the most distinctive illusion of a new life that is imbedded in the minds of almost all the immigrants’ psychology through the characters in the novel. The adaptation process and the struggles of the Chen family members present a chance to have an insight into the illusionary world of the characters and the harsh realities they have to put up with, which appears to be the main source of the juxtapositions in the novel.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MONKEY KING

Timothy Mo makes a deft blend of cultures in his works. He takes the readers deep inside into the characters' experiences within new cultures as well as the cultural clashes, which enables him to uncover the terra incognita or "the third space" in Bhabhian terms. Since he is mainly concerned with the themes of ethnicity, identity and cultural conflicts, Mo's works fit into the post-colonial discourse and the present chapter deals with the illusions and juxtapositions in his debut novel, *The Monkey King* within this discourse.

Similar to *Sour Sweet*, *The Monkey King* (1978) is an account of the Cantonese culture and family life. The novel is set in Hong Kong in 1950s and recounts the story of Wallace Nolasco who marries a merchant's daughter in Hong Kong and lives together with an insight into Chinese family. The family of his bride, known as Poons, is known to be living in welfare; whereas, it does not take long for Wallace to find out that the case is a bit different from the rumors. He is startled to see the unfamiliar family traditions while he is trying hard to get adapted to the longstanding hierarchy of the house. Mr. Poon, who is the tyrannical head of the crowded Poon family, hegemonizes the family as well as Wallace and May Ling's marriage. That is to say, just like all the business matters that are under his control, Mr. Poon is the one who steers the events for Wallace, his wife and all the other family members. With his marriage, Wallace is drawn into a different family order, and he is given a job in a remote, problematic place. Following this, the couple- Wallace and May Ling- leaves Hong Kong for a small village in order to catch up with Wallace's business dealings. The shift in place contributes much to both Wallace's personality, business performance and the couple's relationship. He returns as a man who has accomplished himself, although he used to be a passive man who does what he is told before his journey. Towards the end of the novel, following Mr. Poon's death, it turns out that the Poon family's hierarchy is reconstructed under Wallace's control. Unlike Mr. Poon who was a tyrant, Wallace dignifies individual values and becomes a leader whom everybody approves of for his witty, reverential and modest way of behavior.

Before a detailed analysis, it is worth providing the information that when Timothy Mo narrates the story of Wallace and Mr. Poon in *The Monkey King*, he adopts a rather humorous way. In other words, the arduous issues within the family are juxtaposed directly with the absurd or funny instants, and the reader is relieved of the sober mood accordingly. For this reason, the style Mo uses in the novel creates a perfect medium for studying the



juxtapositions. In *The Independent*, Mo himself writes: “looking back on *The Monkey King* is as painful and farcical as looking back on first love” (Mo, 2011). Therefore, as Mo claims the two contrasting feelings *pain* and *pleasure* go hand in hand in the novel. Timothy Mo makes use of these collocations through Wallace’s identity process. That is to say, while Wallace feels the discomfort of nonbelonging at first hand, he achieves a fulfilled self at the end of his course of identification. This post-colonial juxtaposition of attaining a different self reinforces Mo’s use of contrasts.

Thanks to his sharp eye on the details, Timothy Mo creates realistic character types. From the feelings to the physical details, he sets before the reader’s eyes a protagonist who strives to come through a tough period. Thus, the reader has no choice but be gravitated by the fact that the characters in the novel are non-fictional, and they exist in reality. Mr. Poon, for instance, “was modelled on Mo’s grandfather” (Jaggi, 2000). As the reader witness the events, s/he feels the sorrow of Mr Poon’s illness while feeling pleased for Wallace’s glory. This realistic tone of the novel lets the reader identify themselves with the characters, which contributes to the novel’s credibility. As the course of the events changes for Wallace, for example, there appears a parallel uneasy mood for the upcoming events he is apt to live.

In fact, the novel’s realistic tone also contributes to display the post-colonial juxtapositions, especially when it denotes the weirdness of another culture for an outsider. To exemplify, Wallace’s first encounter with the little child’s feeding by the amahs both startles and creates an irony that stems from cultural clash:

“The amahs...were dropping morsels into the child’s mouth from their chopsticks. They first took a tit-bit from the dish and put it in their own mouths, masticating slowly and thoroughly. Then the mashed nourishment would be shaped into a ball by rolling it with the tip of the tongue against the barrier of the front teeth. The amahs forced the food out through pursed lips, gathered it in their plastic pincers and transferred the pre-masticated pellet into the child’s mouth” (Mo, 1987: 12).

This experience is such weird for both the reader and Wallace that though he is about to say something crucial, “he almost forgot what he had come to tell May Ling” (Mo, 1987: 12). Similar to this ritual, Wallace experiences many instants that he cannot make sense. At first, he despises the heritage he is confronted with; however, his coming to terms with the Cantonese culture and his potential to get out of the troubles in the family let Mo have “a pitiless eye and a darkly comedic sensibility” (Foran, 2018) within the novel.

The contribution of Timothy Mo’s bicultural life into his writing can explicitly be seen in his works. In other words, having been a member of two societies, he knows what

it means to be a stranger or a new comer; therefore, he has much to say about their feelings, hopes, sorrows, desires and disappointments. In the novel, through Wallace's character as a new comer to Poon family, Mo depicts the initial discomfort of a new life together with the Post-colonial illusionary worlds of all the immigrants that they dream of. He pinpoints the adaptation process; in other words he depicts the feeling of gradual warming to the others and the sense of non-belonging. Mo shows the difficulty of adaptation which is defined as "a state of reconciliation and of coming to terms with the new socio-cultural environment by making 'adjustments' in one's cultural identity" (Akilli, 2001: 3). While Wallace tries to find a place in the family, he also feels like an immigrant, and passes through similar stages experienced by all immigrants.

The most distinctive juxtaposition in the novel is the cultural clash between Wallace and the Poon family. Though he does not leave his hometown and emigrate to another country, his new life in Poon territory also catches him in the trap of post-colonial illusions and juxtapositions. The main post-colonial illusion is that the immigrants have the motivation of having a better life, which is also the basic urge of Wallace to get married with May Ling. The immigrants are commonly torn between the ambivalence of getting rid of their new life to go back to their roots and trying to adapt themselves to the new life for their dreams. This vicious circle is what Wallace experiences in the Poon house. In other words, he both wants to be like Mr. Poon and to subjugate him. He is fed up with Mr. Poon's despising behaviors against him; at the same time, he feels a kind of longing and sympathizes with him during the last moments of him before his death.

In addition to the individual experiences he has accumulated due to his Anglo-Chinese background, Mo also borrows much from the cultural heritage of Chinese culture in his works. To be more precise, *The Monkey King* originally appears as a character in Wu Cheng-en's book *Journey to the West*, a well-known Chinese novel. The Monkey King has also become a renowned and inspiring figure through this book. In Wu Cheng-en's book, it is the story of heroes that reach salvation at the end of a long journey; similarly, what Wallace lives in his new life after his marriage recounts "the adventures of the legendary Monkey King as he wends his way toward enlightenment via heaven, hell and all manner of earthly places in between" (Feldman, 1987).

As for Timothy Mo, the use of this famous Chinese figure, Monkey King, in his book is both an intertextual borrowing, and it is a way of mingling the cultural credentials. Kristofer Schipper, in his "The Gene Bank of Culture" states that

“history shows that whenever new forms of culture have emerged, these always were the result of the interaction between different civilizations, obtained through the combination, the mixing, the hybridization of elements from various origins” (Schipper, 2000: 3).

As Schipper explains, though it is of Chinese origin, Monkey King turns out to be the prevailing embodiment of the quest for finding one’s true self in literature, and it also connotes Wallace’s quest for becoming a different man, which will be analyzed in detail in the following parts of this chapter.

### **5.1 Legendary Monkey King**

In order to construct the basis of this chapter on the juxtapositions and illusions within Post-Colonial context, it is crucial to keep the story of the legendary Monkey King figure in mind. In *Journey to the West*- the book to which a chapter named *Monkey King* is mainly devoted, there are four sections. It mainly raises the questions about identity issues and gives the universal morals that the evils should be punished while the kindness is promoted in a way conformed to the Chinese life. Monkey King as a character is introduced as a mythical figure in the first part. The legend says that the monkey that is referred to as the king is believed to be born from a stone placed on a mountain. “The Monkey King’s mischievous nature could perhaps be traced from the fact that he was born from a mythical stone formed from the primal forces of chaos” (Raitisoja, 2010). He is called Monkey “King” since he guides a clan of monkeys to a place hidden behind a waterfall. In a way, by giving them home and teaching how to live there, he creates his own kingdom of monkeys. However, it does not take long for him to look for more due to his intrinsically adventurous nature.

Upon his encounter with Bodhi, a Buddhist monk, Monkey King is given the name Sun Wukong (Sun- means monkey, Wukong- is being aware of emptiness). The Monkey King is described as having some magical gifts like changing his shape and flying above on the air. Bodhi is initially impressed by the monkey’s determination and ambition to reach more all the time. However, he is sent away when his unruly behaviors start to spoil the order and disturb the other disciples. According to the legend, with the aim of getting revenge, Sun Wukong- or so called Monkey King- looks for a special weapon that will empower his magical abilities, and he acquires it under the sea.

According to the legend, The Monkey King, who looks for more all the time, is not allowed to go into Heaven at once since he does not wear shoes. Feeling humiliated, he goes back up on the mountain of Flower Fruit and deeply feels the remorse that he is not a human. Consequently, he decides that he should resemble to humans, and he changes his

physical outlook and gets rid of his monkey fur. There is a clear fact that he is created as a monkey; whereas, he wants to be like human, and this outrages him and he unleashes bad deeds on the others.

“When the Monkey King refuses to accept the monkey aspect of his identity, he is punished by being trapped under a pile of rocks and a seal that prevents him from practising his kung-fu martial arts skills. The Monkey King’s refusal to acknowledge this aspect of himself results in the loss of his freedom” (Ho, 2010: 36).

In the second and third parts of the novel, Xuanzang, a monk, goes West and searches for *sutras* known as the collections of scriptures that contain teachings of Buddhism. It is commonly believed that these sutras are destined to be brought back by some brave people. Thus, Xuanzang sets out the way accompanied by three main characters, one of whom is The Monkey King and two other disciples who have the necessary abilities to overcome this long and difficult journey. On this journey, they fight against monsters and cope with numerous obstacles. However, thanks to their cooperative and brave performances as well as intelligent choices, they can manage to come to the end of the almost nineteen years’ journey and reach sutras. Their journey can be perceived as a pilgrimage representing the disciplines of Buddhism. Except for the other characters he launches the journey with, what makes this quest special for Monkey King is that he is in war with his own nature which is accepted as rather mischievous as well as the external conditions. In the last part of the novel, the heroes are presented with enlightenment upon their arrival back to China. Thus, having completed their quest successfully, they are awarded with a blessed life in the end.

The fact that Mo chooses *The Monkey King* as the title of his novel might be because he draws the character of Wallace bearing many traits of its substitute in *Journey to the West*. To begin with, as a man of Portuguese origin, Wallace goes on his life among the Chinese people. In a way, it is possible to say that coming from Macau- Portuguese background, he defines himself as belonging to Western civilization and he sees “the Chinese and himself as prisoners together in a long chain gang” (Mo, 1987: 12), and just like the Monkey King born as a monkey looking for ways of going beyond it, Wallace is not willing to be with the Chinese people: “on the whole Wallace avoided intimate dealings with the Chinese” (Mo, 1987: 12). What is more, though he is not willing to accept, his physical features also look alike those people: it is “difficult to tell them apart from the Chinese neighbours” (Mo, 1987: 13). Therefore, he needs a way out of this circle

and his marriage can be accepted as the first step for this. He is just like the Monkey King who heads for more and leaves the other monkeys for the sake of this.

In his novels, Mo pictures the characters having different personalities initially, the changes they undergo and the resultant identities they gain. However, *The Monkey King* is not focused on a multi-plotted story, but mainly on Wallace Nolasco's experiences:

“Rather than position the plot to drive Wallace forward, Wallace drives the plot. Wallace is the focal point of the text, and it is he and his discoveries-facilitated and made possible by the picturesque adventures he experiences—that are best focused on” (Hooper, 2000: 85).

Wallace, just like an immigrant who reaches a remote soil, initiates a new life in an alien culture- in the Poon house. In *The Monkey King*, the consequent identity Wallace is to attain can be referred to as a mingled version of Chinese and Portuguese cultures. In a way, the process is very much similar to the hybridized subjects in the third space:

“hybridity involves the fusion of two hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles, or identities, cross-cultural contact, which often occurs across national borders as well as across cultural boundaries, is a requisite for hybridity” (Kraidy, 2005: 5).

As it is also claimed by Homi Bhabha, it is inevitable for the societies not to have interaction and get mutually affected from one another as they are not reserved entities placed in a jar. This is the sphere where the third space emerges due to the encounter and interaction of cultures. Individually, Wallace also cannot refrain from this mutual interaction, and though he is reluctant due to her partner's ethnic identity, he gets married to a Chinese girl. His marriage to this girl whom he *was instructed* to marry changes his life and his self completely. In fact, the true reason for his marriage is very simple: “what the Poons- more accurately Mr. Poon had was money” (Mo, 1987: 5). Just like Monkey King, who has a thirst for power, Wallace accepts that “the Poons would not have been his ideal choice” (Mo, 1987: 5); yet what Wallace wants are money and power, too.

Wallace's wife, May Ling, introduced as “not a proper Poon” (Mo, 1987: 13), does not have a much influential role within the household. A number of reasons can be counted for her self-effacing position. To begin with, May Ling is not the legal daughter of Mr. Poon. This means that she does not have equal rights with Mr. Poon's other children because of her status. “The first concubine was accommodated, with her children, in a tenement in Kowloon (Concubinage as an institution lacked glamour.) May Ling and her family had originally been housed in Canton” (Mo, 1987: 13). Their living places are inferior compared to the *real* Poons who are naturally defined higher in terms

of their place. May Lin arrives at Poon house when Mr. Poon pays a visit to May Ling's mother and takes her with him without any prevention. As an inferior concubine, her mother is not unsurprisingly authorized to make any protest against not giving her daughter.

The other reason for May Ling's status is that she is conventionally passivized by the patriarchal order of the society due to her gender. As a female, she is not given the same rights with her brother or the other males at home. In the novel, Mo clarifies that it is the males that

“attempt to destroy her points of reference and stability, leaving her at the very mercy of the prevailing current of barbarian culture, in the sure knowledge that if it did not sweep her into her husband's arms, fright would” (Mo, 1987: 36).

Like all the male-dominant societies, the Chinese patriarch oppresses the females and denies accepting them as individuals. Spivak, in her article *Can the Subaltern Speak?* points at the double oppression females are exposed to in the patriarchal societies. Her claim is that the colonized people are expected to submit and not given the right to take an active part in the society just like women who are not given the right to speak in patriarchies. Spivak's theory is grounded on an Indian woman- Sati and she asks

“‘What did Sati say?’ Can the subaltern be understood? Or is it always a ‘speaking for?’ Sati was understood either, through the English, as the slaughter of innocent women or, through the male Hindus who spoke for the female Indians, as a voluntary act. In other words, the subaltern in this instance, the Indian women, have no voice” (Maggio, 2007: 424).

Therefore, it cannot be denied that women do not have voice in patriarchs; even their basic rights are violated. When May Ling's being an illegal offspring is also added, her case even goes further than Spivak's argument of double oppression.

## **5.2 Pre-defined Identities**

In *The Monkey King*, there is a great number of juxtaposing cases that paves the way for the reader to question the pre-defined identity traits of individuals and their illusionary ideals they go after. “Wallace undergoes something of an identity crisis during his adventures; his journey from naivete to mature perception, from illusion to insight” (Hooper, 2000: 84). Namely, in the novel, the reader is given a chance to see a man who launches a path to disclose his true self just like The Monkey King that tries to break the shell of its given identity as a monkey. The monkey king figure goes through many phases and procures something at the end of each affair in the Chinese version; Wallace also grabs similar traits; he especially observes Mr. Poon- the super power at home- to

compete with the others and survive in this new environment. The Monkey King is different from the other monkeys because he does not hesitate to take the plunge to get what he wants. Similarly, Wallace takes immediate action due to his rebellious nature who can even say “you couldn’t behave like this in the modern ages. You thought you was the God of us all or something? ... You would never oppress anybody with that again” (Mo, 1987: 21) to Mr. Poon, whom anybody would not dare to. Gayle Feldman defines Wallace’s struggle as follows:

“To survive life among the Poons--two unmarriageable harpies of spinster sisters; an idle, emasculated and bullying son heir, Ah Lung; the latter’s much put-upon wife, Ah Fong; their two children, “Hogan” and “Clarence”; Mr. Poon’s wife and her assortment of sour and disobliging servants--Wallace, the outsider, and May Ling, his not entirely willing accomplice, must devise stratagems worthy of the Monkey King himself” (*The Monkey King by Timothy Mo, 1987*).

Similar to Monkey King, who tries to learn the ways to defeat his counterparts, Wallace also learns to comply with the supreme power, and he gets around Mr. Poon. Strikingly, while Mr. Poon looks down upon Wallace for his status and his poverty at the beginning, it is Wallace who becomes the successor for his business in the end, rather than Mr. Poon’s unfilial son or anyone else. This ultimate change of the power holder is foreshadowed when May Ling tells the story of the village people who were once the slaves and gained the power of the settlement: Wallace asks:

“May, you must be more stupid than I thought. You thought I could make myself boss of your father house just like you were saying? Things just didn’t ever happen like that. May Ling was quite obstinate ‘No, it could happen’” (Mo, 1987: 150).

It was the time that Wallace has not been able to find a chance to have a word in the society and the Poon house yet. However, May Ling’s conviction lets the reader question the possibilities at his point and reminds the Post-colonial illusion of achieving more than you dream in the new territories.

Another juxtaposition of the old patriarch and young protagonist reminds the reader of the clash between the colonizer and the colonized. Mr. Poon stands for the established, institutional order of the society that is not questioned but submitted while Wallace is the marginal and individualistic part. The power of Mr. Poon oppresses the others in the family, which follows the same path with the Essentialist ideology of the colonizers. In fact, it is Poon’s dominance that marginalizes Wallace and keeps him as Other in the territory.

“The Poon family is mobilised and rejuvenated by the injection of Wallace’s ex-centric vitality, and Wallace, in turn, liberalises the hierarchical order of the family, and releases the natural bond of kinship into the flow of reciprocal sympathies” (Ho, 2000a: 4).

This claim is strengthened with Wallace’s triumph over the challenge he experiences in the village he is exiled because it is the time he slips of the boundary of Mr. Poon or the social expectations.

In Poon house, Wallace has to compete with both the current conditions and the inhabitants of Poon family in the house. Initially, there are certain predetermined codes existing within the family. Edward Said claims in his book *Orientalism* that “the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident” (1978:20). He argues that there is a stereotypical Western perception of Oriental which is mainly negative or inferior. Their behaviors are not accepted as conforming to the rules of civilized West. Likewise, in the Poon house Wallace’s position is like that of the Orientals. To make it clear, Wallace is not a native Chinese, for this reason he is chosen as a partner for May Ling to get married because “to have married May Ling, the daughter of a second concubine, into a Cantonese family would have been an impossibility” (Mo, 1987: 15) if he were a wealthy and real Chinese man. To make it clear, a Chinese would not marry a concubine’s child. His position in the house is defined inferior to the other members for this reason. Therefore, it would not be daring to take the real Chinese members of Poon family as The Occident in this context, and the children of concubines, the servants and Wallace as an outsider as the Orient.

When Mr. Poon declares to Wallace his decision on sending them away to his “own family village” (Mo, 1987: 131), Wallace “through watery eyes thought he saw a shadow or a small animal in the corridor” (Mo, 1987: 132). Though he is alarmed and hesitant about this journey, in fact the village in the New Territories will turn out to be a dream land in which the Post-Colonial illusion of a new life can be achieved for Wallace. Taking Wallace’s psychology into account, the *shadow* and *animal* image Wallace sees can also be interpreted as his fears on this unknown path he is about to launch.

### **5.3 The Clash of Individual Values & Established Practices**

Another juxtaposing situation that Timothy Mo touches upon is the clash between the individual values and the established traditional practices.

“If identity construction is a work of negotiation between discursive and material structures and subjects positioned within those structures, instances of power must be juxtaposed with those of resistance. The former invariably creates conditions for the latter to exist” (Kumar, 2010: 171).



Under Mr Poon's reign, which might be accepted as accounting for the dominant ideology, Wallace can be referred to as failure because he does not have much achievement in terms of the ideals and the perspective of the society. However, when May Ling and Wallace get rid of the social pressure imposed on their selves in the village they settle in, they get the chance to discern their true nature. In other words, having freed themselves from the social boundaries and the other Post-Colonial illusionary world drawn by Mr. Poon; they find their true selves. The world Mr. Poon draws is a traditional one in which the colonized ones or the members of the Poon family in the novel are expected to submit without questioning Mr. Poon, or the colonizer. When he finds a chance, just like the Monkey King figure that creates a kingdom of monkeys, Wallace gains a new identity as a leader who manipulates the people around him. In a way, Wallace is liberated and launches a "long, exhilarating walk" (Mo, 1987: 106) into another life when Mr. Poon's pressure is gone.

The village Wallace and May Ling are exiled is a pastoral county that does not attract much attention; on the contrary, this rural area has some social handicaps like the hostility people have against one another and physical challenges due to the location of the village. The physical conditions are too harsh with the storms that cause the paddy fields to remain under water. "The marshy fields had become a lake, an island with real waves pitching sluggishly in rolls and hollows" (Mo, 1987: 161). However, Wallace turns this into an advantage and depending on his prior knowledge together with his determination, by taking out the water caused by the flood, he makes a man-made lake. Therefore, Wallace's entrepreneurial ideas are the key to the transformation that this undesirable village undergoes drastic changes and becomes a lovely place to spend good time.

"No one had ever thought of siting a recreational center so far out in the most inaccessible part of the agricultural, the – as it were- functioning New Territories... The commercial possibilities of the idea were rapidly apprehended by the elders" (Mo, 1987: 199).

As stated in the novel, Wallace's accomplishment is appreciated by everyone. Mo likens Wallace's individual transformation to "a snake shucking its skin" (Mo, 1987: 133) noting the remarkable change he has been able to achieve there. This change is not only individual, but it can also be clearly seen by the others, as well.

Timothy Mo's novel, *The Monkey King* offers an insight into the politics of family, and social order. On the micro level, the Poon family can be likened to the colonial powers that attempt to exploit their colonies at their best. That is to say, rather than a

family attached to each other with emotional bonds, the existing order of the house is similar in many ways to the systematic operations of colonialism. Mr. Poon is the supreme power in the house. There is also a hierarchy that draws clear-cut lines which define the positions of every member to such an extent that it is possible to see the reflections of the social order of the society within the borders of the house. Timothy Mo judiciously gives information through Wallace's eyes because Wallace, who is an outsider, has a better chance to observe this order better:

“the reader is told how ‘the servants held the household to ransom’ (11) by withholding all but the worst food from those lowly members in the family hierarchy who include May Ling, sons- or daughters-in-law like Wallace, and minor dependants like the child who is the son of May Ling's mother, a lesser concubine, from another marriage” (Ho, 2000a: 30).

It is clear that the positions and rights of the members of the family are determined in terms of their place in the social order. There are legal children of Mr. Poon like Ah Lung, who can behave as he wishes; and also servants and the children of concubines like May Ling who are *those lowly members*. Under this hierarchy, Wallace tries to find a place for himself which was not the way he wanted to live when coming to Poon house.

Of his attempts to define a new identity in Poon family, the first drawback for Wallace is the servants and amahs. Since they live in the house even longer than the eldest child, the servants “freely ignored or insulted sons- or daughters-in-law, to which dismissive category they relegated May Ling as well as Wallace” (Mo, 1987: 20). For Mr. Poon and the others Wallace was an “additional mouth” (Mo, 1987: 15). They neither give any space for him, nor can he feel that the family has affection for him and for each other.

There is a big problem of trust that is a prevailing theme within the novel. The Poon house is depicted as a place where members of the family have to live so that their needs are fulfilled. For instance, Wallace is startled to see when Mr. Poon puts the gold pocket watch he gives as a gift back to the drawer, saying “Now, I keep this for you, safe and sound in my drawer” (Mo, 1987: 18). It is weird for Wallace, but comic for the reader to see Mr. Poon show and reserve the watch for himself again. When Wallace attempts to get the watch and take it to a bank, Mr. Poon says:

“and you know, the home really safe place of all. Some of these fellow all in big suit and tie in bank were the biggest rascal them all. You never could trust anybody, Wallace. I would hope you didn't forget that advice. Still, you could always be proud of the watch” (Mo, 1987: 18).

Mr. Poon's statement points out a clear juxtaposition that while Mr. Poon stamps the *men with tie* as unreliable, he is both one of those people and the life in Poon family relies mainly upon the money he earns through his dealings with those man. In fact, the underlying message for Wallace is not to trust anybody, especially to the one who utters those words, Mr. Poon. Another juxtaposing situation is that Mr. Poon shows the house as the safest place; whereas, Wallace's observations on the relations within the family and even Mr. Poon's unwillingness to give Wallace the watch proves that the case is not as he claims.

The basic needs in the Poon house are under the control of Mr. Poon. "The midday meal was served every day of the week at precisely five minutes past twelve" (Mo, 1987: 22). Although they are rumored as a wealthy family, the Poon resources are not consumed affluently. The New Year, for example, is defined as "one of the few days in the year when the family fed well" (Mo, 1987: 34). The amahs in the house have a routine hour to set the fire no matter how cold it is. One day, getting cold in the house, Wallace tries to "have the fire lighted before, without success. The amahs ignored him" (Mo, 1987: 27). He does not dare to get wood from the kitchen, but determinately goes and buys "bundles of sticks and a brown paper sack of coals" (Mo, 1987: 28). Wallace and May Ling go into the reception room and light a fire in the fireplace. Mr. Poon goes in a rage right into the room and "scrabbled chimney, swearing as he scorched his hands on the hot bricks" (Mo, 1987: 29). The reason why the room is filled with smoke and Mr. Poon's wrath is that Mr. Poon secretly keeps golds in the chimney. Wallace, feeling resentful, says "any fool would tell you gold not melting till about eight hundred degree. It serve him right for not trusting anyone and keep it up chimney"<sup>8</sup> (Mo, 1987: 29). What Wallace does is in fact symbolically setting the fire of rebellion like Prometheus. He takes his first active step against the Poon hegemony, which will change his and the family's entire life later on.

There is a permanent sober atmosphere in the house. The little child with a worsening health dies, and even upon its death, rather than coming together and feeling an explicit sorrow; there is "circumlocution and euphemism" (Mo, 1987: 16) among the family members. Wallace can only grasp that the child is dead only when Mr. Poon makes a shadowy claim. Though it seems as a small detail, the child's death is striking for the reader because Wallace's position in the house can be likened to that of the child in many

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<sup>8</sup> Grammar mistakes occur in the original text.

ways. He is also an inferior member who is not cared for, and he is also not seen as having a potential for a better future. The fact that the child's death does not create any sentiment within the house makes the reader feel anxious for the upcoming events Wallace will be living there, too.

The institution of marriage in Mo's novels appears as the medium where the couples' identities are evolved into different forms. Literally, two distinct items are put into the same bowl and create a new taste; it is like the hybridization process of the individuals within the Post-colonial frame. In his works, Mo mostly draws the characters of both spouses, as having various motivations in their illusionary worlds and ending up in a world different from the one they headed for. As his works fit into Post-colonial analysis, these marriages let the reader catch on the Post-colonial illusion of having another life. Thus, Mo uses marriage as a way for depicting this illusion. In other words, the individual transformations of the characters like Wallace in *Monkey King* or Lily in *Sour Sweet* are achieved through their marriages to people from other cultures.

#### **5.4 Village**

The Post-colonial illusion of Wallace is distinctly revealed when he reaches a real remote soil, the village he was attained for business. "The inhabitants play[ed] little part in the traditional life of the settlement... and the newcomers had no voice in the running of the village" (Mo, 1987: 142) where Wallace and May Ling are expelled. Although the sense of non-belonging is something familiar for the couple from the Poon house, the colony they have just arrived has had another longstanding problem: the rivalry between the people of the settlement and the Hakkas. Both groups were conventionally hostile to one another. Their hostility has become something like even ritual for those living there. Wallace makes use of this ritualistic pattern for letting the two opponent groups be together in "a form of restricted warfare" (Mo, 1987: 207).

Wallace's entrepreneurial ideas contribute to the village's physical improvement as well as the people's relation to each other. Wallace organizes a game similar to hockey between The Hakka and the village men and he bears "a roving supervisory role" (Mo, 1987: 208) in the game. In a way, the game serves as an illusion or as Baudrillard's idea of simulacrum suggests a pseudo real setting that the two groups can interact. As he explains in his *Simulacra and Simulation*, the real has been replaced by the signs and "it is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real" (1994: 2). With this illusionary medium, Wallace provides the villagers a new and unconventional way of rivalry. In other words,

he gives them a chance to change the already existing order of the village that is based upon hostility. As the groups play the game, the ongoing feud is loosened with the ball's movements. Although "the contestants had solved nothing... the game had been cathartic at the least" (Mo, 1987: 216). "The dispute settled and the lake a solid success" (Mo, 1987: 217), Wallace's quest proves to be an accomplishment and it is the time to see the results of this accomplishment in real. He longs for going back, because "he was, he realized with awe, homesick. Homesick for the Poons!" (Mo, 1987: 217).

The village has become a true illusionary place for Wallace because he has achieved his self-confidence, and he helped other people as well as his wife and himself; he is also enriched by the fruitful ideas he has given for the village and the inhabitants. Therefore, the village might be interpreted as a dreamland he has acquired his self-fulfillment and self-realization. However, he has one more challenge that awaits for him to get over; that is going back to the Poon house.

Upon his return home, Wallace feels that something invisible has made everything changed completely for him and for the others. Mr. Poon, who is sick, "had begun to absent himself from meals soon after Wallace had come back, almost as if he had been holding a position until relieved" (Mo, 1987: 227). Mr. Poon's absence around the table might have created a dispute between Wallace and Ah Lung:

"Ah Lung, who had grown moustache, had wished to assume his father's place at the round table, next to the wireless. It did not occur to Wallace to challenge him. He had nodded to Ah Lung and placed himself, as he had been doing, in his old seat" (Mo, 1987: 227).

The fact that Wallace reacts with dignity and maturity might be accepted as something he has acquired during the time he has spent in the village. If it were the same before Wallace's journey, it would be possible for him to compete against Ah Lung to the last moment. However, gaining his self-confidence, Wallace knows that it is no use because neither Ah Lung can catch up the reality, nor he has the potential capacity to dethrone Mr. Poon. Wallace, just like the Monkey King on his return from the journey, is bestowed with a unified self and confidence.

The circumstances change drastically upon Wallace's return. Homi Bhabha claims that colonized people experience fluctuation and feels ambivalent for their colonizers. That is to say, they both want to be like their oppressors and get rid of them. Mr. Poon, who was once the tyrannical head of the family, is seriously sick to the end of the novel. Thus, Wallace finds himself in an ambivalent mood that he cannot define clearly. "It [i]s

difficult for Wallace to reconcile the shriveled old man before him with the domestic tyrant he had once feared” (Mo, 1987: 228). To put it in another way, Wallace used to fear Mr. Poon once; however, he also idealizes Mr. Poon and picks up many of his ideas especially on trade and governing. Thus, it is possible to liken Mr. Poon to the colonizer for his powerful position and it is Wallace in this context that replaces the colonized and feels ambivalence.

Mr. Poon makes a very sincere speech with Wallace for turning over all the business matters. He emphasizes the fact that Wallace is a promising man:

“I would hide nothings from you. I needed your helps now in all thing. I knew about the thing you could do. So no need for modest. You already prove yourself. I ask you to return so you could look after thing for me” (Mo, 1987: 228).

From that moment on, Wallace got “the keys to Mr. Poon’s desk, drawers, and chests” (Mo, 1987: 228). Including the keys of the drawers in which the watch Mr. Poon reserved for him takes place; Wallace has taken over not only the household, but also the business dealings. Soon after this take-over, “Mr. Poon died... [which] caused minimal disruption to the fabric of the everyday life in Robinson Path” (Mo, 1987: 234).

After Mr. Poon’s death, thanks to his witty policies that he also learnt by observing Mr. Poon, Wallace makes such a great profit both with the business he has set up in the village and the family premiums that “he really needed someone with a head for figures to help with conversions and calculations of interest” (Mo, 1987: 260). The wife of Mr. Poon’s prodigal son- Ah Lung- Fong proves to be the best candidate for this. The reader should be reminded that she is the daughter-in-law who attempted to commit suicide at the beginning of the novel because such attempts have been commonly perceived as “the conventional revenge of harassed daughters-in-law in olden China” (Mo, 1987: 82). It would be a dream for Fong or any other female to attain such a profession because; she did not use to have a word even in the house. However, she is unsurprisingly launches a similar identity progress like Wallace within the new social order of the house since “her speed on the abacus was extraordinary. She reeled off complex calculations of compound interest in a moment” (Mo, 1987: 261). While she was the passivized female under the reign of Mr. Poon’s conventional hierarchy, as Spivak exemplifies as a subaltern in terms of her position, now that she can speak both in real and literally. Thus, her initial position in the traditional order is directly juxtaposed with her eventual accomplishment through the individualistic policies of Wallace that allows her to display her competence.

In the new order of the house with Wallace's management, his attempt to repaint the exterior of the Poon house is the explicit sign that the color of the events will not be the same from that time onward. As for all the innovative ideas that appear in traditional regimes, "he had to overcome resistance" (Mo, 1987: (262). In contrast with, Mr. Poon's compelling disposals, Wallace's Post-Poon policy provides them a democratic vote. It is also similar to a colony that regains its independence after a long time of being colonized. This attitude again underlies Wallace's policy that values individual rights rather than rituals or tradition. Therefore, the new reign of Wallace stands as a perfect sample for the Post-colonial juxtaposition between the traditional and modern.

Although many things have changed with Wallace's reconstructed family order, it is not so easy for the family members to become adapted and get rid of their conventional thoughts instantly. May Ling, whom the reader learns to be pregnant, exemplifies one of those institutional assumptions. Wallace does not care whether their baby will be a boy or a girl and says "any type baby OK, May" (Mo, 1987: 268). However, there is a sociological oppression that the females experience in patriarchal societies. May Ling feels anxious for her baby's future and says that she desires to have a *baby boy*. The Post-Colonial illusion that every immigrant wants a place where they will live in welfare is once more justified with the baby's birth. As Edward Said claims "domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals" (Said, 1978: 33). May Ling's anxiety for her baby is not only for its gender, but as an Oriental, she also has a discontent for the exploitative order of the society she is born into. The fact that even Wallace as a male cannot achieve success without getting rid of the borders of this social order makes May Ling's doubts for the future of her baby further.

The baby's name connotes the aspirations of May Ling and those in her case, which can be defined as exploited members of colonial societies. The couple calls the baby "Cheung Ching, 'Runner through the Universe'" (Mo, 1987: 269). The baby's name can be interpreted as the desire for searching their ideals all over the universe. This also reminds the reader of the illusionary world the immigrants go after for a better life. Just like the prisoner who left Plato's cave can see the difference between the real objects in the day light and the shadows, the post-colonial societies that set themselves free of the oppression of colonial power agencies set sight on new ideals. However, it is a bit different from their ancestors since the third generations become more flexible about the rituals.

Despite the flexible way of living Poon family members are introduced with Wallace, they also partly keep their attachment to the tradition, and the family rituals have been fulfilled as usual at the lunar New Year. “While Wallace sat on *the throne* and drink tea the adults *respectfully* left him with his thoughts” (*my emphasis*, Mo, 1987: 273). These thoughts most probably include Wallace’s first arrival at the house and how the affairs evolved him into his current position. Wallace, in a way, seems to have dethroned Mr. Poon. These two men who become the leaders have contrasting features, thus the other people’s attitudes against them also differ. While people used to get full of fear when they are with Mr. Poon, they respect Wallace, not for fear but for his dignifying attitude.

“The new year celebrations could be seen to end an era. It was as if an interregnum had expired.. there was a new rhythm to the life in the household with a set of evolving and rapidly established precedents” (Mo, 1987: 273).

Wallace’s reign after Mr. Poon is named as “a new rhythm” for the Poon. This process can be explained in accordance with an immigrant’s experience as well as The Monkey King’s journey. In all these samples, the figures pass through similar phases. Just like Monkey King figure in its original version, Wallace becomes another man upon his arrival back to Poon house and his quest ends up as a success like that of Monkey King’s. Timothy Mo, through the character of Wallace, poses all the answers to an outsider’s identity process. As Hooper suggests:

“In spite of the fact that he is considered to be an outsider, Wallace Nolasco succeeds in developing his own identity and character. He succeeds Mr. Poon as family patriarch, he has a happy and successful marriage, and he makes a great deal of money in business. He overcomes difficulties and adversaries through his own pluck and initiative” (2000: 88).

Wallace becomes a hybrid individual that masters the two worlds and goes through the immigrant experience within the Post-Colonial context successfully.

All in all, Timothy Mo’s novel, *The Monkey King* can be read as an account of a cultural outsider’s development into a different individual. Set in 1950s Hong Kong, the novel portrays Wallace Nolasco as an in-between man who is in search of his identity. In accordance with the Chinese counterpart, Monkey King, Wallace goes through a difficult path that lets him gain a different, but complete self. During his journey Wallace has to put up with Mr. Poon, who can be accepted as representing the traditions, patriarch and rituals; as well as the other social boundaries that oppress the individual. In order to set up a new identity in this new context, Wallace has two choices; either to be assimilated



and assume a submissive attitude like the other Poon members; or get adapted but keep his true nature. Assimilation and adaptation are the two terms that are commonly mistaken for one another; for Wallace's experience it is better to name it as adaptation since he does not take up Mr. Poon's way of living as it is and accept them without any modification. The key to Wallace's triumph over the challenges he has experienced is his ability to get adapted to the circumstances and make use of his initiations as leading his new life. In reality, the colonial world which is based on exploitation fades away with the nations' becoming aware of their powers and fight for their independence. What Wallace experiences in Poon house is just alike; Mr. Poon's exploitation is shattered just as Wallace notices his potential and takes over the control. As a Chinese novel that touches upon the issue of identity, the Post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions are imprinted within *The Monkey King*, as well.

## CONCLUSION

As an author of post-colonial period, Timothy Mo's bicultural life starting in Hong Kong and going on in England is reflected in his writing. In his novels, he mainly addresses the post-colonial themes like migration, ethnicity, social and individual troubles of living as an outsider, assimilation, hybridization process and the reconstructed identities. His fiction contributes much to post-colonial literature and enables the readers to see the events also from the marginalized people's view. The main argument of this dissertation revolves around this reversed perspective that causes juxtapositions and the accompanying illusions arising from the different world view of minorities in diaspora. Thus, Timothy Mo's use of post-colonial juxtapositions and illusions has been brought into light in this dissertation in *The Redundancy of Courage*, *Renegade or Halo2*, *Sour Sweet* and *Monkey King*.

The juxtaposition and illusions such as the urge to have a new life, the dilemma of whether to get involved or to escape from the new society, the threat of assimilation, the trouble of integration and reconstructed identities are abounding in Mo's novels studied in this dissertation and some fundamental themes have been derived from these novels to justify this argument. To begin with, changing the living places can be regarded as crucial because Mo's writing is mainly about the immigrant experience. As stated throughout the dissertation, the major cause of migration is mostly the post-colonial illusion of a new life as a more prosperous future. Though it seems something desirable, the concept of new life takes various forms for each character. While migration is a kind of liberation from the local codes for Adolph Ng. in *The Redundancy of Courage*, it appears as a disempowerment for the Chen family since their Chinese way of living does not compromise with that of the English. At first sight, migration is the only way for all the characters to have better conditions; however, it turns out to be their confinement within an alien culture at the same time. This post-colonial juxtaposition is prevalent in all the novels within this study. Another character, Rey Castro, refers to his Jesuit education as the main reason for his emancipation from the tribe, but he cannot escape the reality that his non-belonging to any specific groups both sets him free and condemns him to a constant exile.

Since tradition and ethnicity turn out to be in a striking contradiction with their new life style, they have a significant role in figuring out especially the juxtapositions

experienced by the characters in the novels. In each novel, these themes are treated in different ways. While in *Sour Sweet* Chen is a man of tradition who gets lost in the new order he lives in, in *The Redundancy of Courage* Adolph Ng.'s survival is only possible by retaining from the local culture. While his patriotic friends pass away to defend their soil, Adolph's rootlessness keeps him alive since he does not have strong traditional ties with Danu nation. Similarly, in *The Monkey King*, it is the mixed-blood of Wallace Nolasco to take the family one step further, not Mr. Poon's conventional way of handling the affairs that cling to the traditions. In addition to traditional aspect, ethnicity appears to be something that excludes all the characters analyzed within this dissertation out of the societies they are made to live in. The reason lying under this exclusion is that the dominant ideologies deny and neglect different ethnic backgrounds since it bears a high risk for the continuity of their hegemonies.

Timothy Mo's most commonly encountered figure in his novels is the outsider characters. He draws attention to the people who cannot feel belonged to anywhere. These are mostly the immigrants who have difficulty in adapting to the new setting they move into. Chen family in *Sour Sweet*, for instance, feels the drawback of being minority among the British, and they have to try hard to be included in the society; the take-away business proves not only their economic endeavor but it is a way to make a bridge with the rest of the society. In *Monkey King*, Wallace dives deep into the weirdness of Poon house as a stranger. His way out of this can only be possible when he and his wife leave for a completely foreign setting in which they are able to make up a new life and identity. In *The Redundancy of Courage*, Adolph is a complete foreigner to Danu and the national struggle of the people living there. Though he hides himself behind the disguise of being a man of global standards, in every circumstance he experiences, he cannot help being an outsider. Rey, in *Renegade or Halo2*, finds himself in a variety of places under the name of different professions and the only unchanging thing about his life is that he is also in exile wherever he goes. As stated in the novel, his "tribe is that of the 'despised outsiders'" (Mo, 1999: 190) just like all the other characters in Mo's fiction. What Timothy Mo accentuates through all these characters is that in the post-colonial world the minorities are "othered" in one way or the other. The initial motive for their moving to another place is the post-colonial illusion of a new life; however, all these characters find themselves in a cast away position that is ensured by the majorities.

In the post-colonial context, in order to feel more settled and integrated into the society, it is almost an obligation for the individuals to redefine themselves. When they resist accepting the current conditions by sticking to their past and traditions, they end up as failure and become alienated. Mui, in *Sour Sweet*, is a true example with her attempts for adaptation. As she tries to give meaning to the events happening around her, she has to redefine them in terms of her own codes. Just like Baudrillard's idea of "substituting the signs of the real for the real" (1994: 2), she even gives the characters in TV serials the "names of her own devising; Boy, Hair-net, Drinker, Cripple, Crafty, Bad Girl" (Mo, 1982: 10). As well as the individuals, the nations might also have to redefine themselves so that they can attain their goals in post-colonial context. They need to redefine the "others" who reside under their reign so that they can regulate the social order steadily and keep their dominance safe. For this, they can even create pseudo-real facts just like the *malais* people's reinvented history in *The Redundancy of Courage*.

Timothy Mo focuses on the social constructions of the nations as well as the personal relations in his novels. In *Sour Sweet*, the Triad society stands for the corrupted people within the social order and for the extent which people's cruelty can reach. In *Renegade or Halo*, Rey encounters such violent instances as rape, bribery etc. all through the novel, and in *The Redundancy of Courage*, Adolph witnesses the aggrievance of the invaders and their tyranny against local people during occupation. Mo reveals all these through the oppression of weaker people. That is to say, the protagonists are commonly the victims of dominant ideology of the colonial powers or the global mechanism that denies the existence of the "others" and behave unequally. However, Mo gives a different angle to the issue of power. "Society where you're taken off in the middle of the night for torture, or your kids fail an exam at school because you don't pay a bribe to the teacher: they are inferior societies" (Mo, 1999: 9). Mo takes a non-Western point of view that does not accept the powerful one as civilized. Rather, he narrates his novels in an objective way from both the colonizers' and the colonized people's view point. Contrary to the stereotypical protagonists that are powerful and courageous, his heroes have faults, ambitions and even fears. Thus, together with these juxtaposing features in his novels, he provides a new insight into the post-colonial world through the bottom line.

One of the basic themes in the novels analyzed in this dissertation is the characters' striving for survival. Even though almost all of them have similar illusionary

goals, the immigrant experience is a tough road which does not promise a ready-made welfare for those who set off for a new life. In *Renegade or Halo2*, these people are called as “victims” or “slaves of century” because there is a constant struggle waiting for them to survive. On their quests, they encounter many troubles due to their ethnic background, language, skin color, traditions and social codes. In addition to all these, they mostly have to deal with economic problems. Even those who are educated properly are exposed to above mentioned prejudicial treatments. Thus, these characters are obliged to find a way to sustain their lives on both social and economic level. In *The Redundancy of Courage* and *Renegade or Halo2*, Adolph Ng. and Rey Castro makes it through submitting to powerholders. In *Sour Sweet*, Chen messes everything up when he borrows money from the illegal Triad society, and he is killed for this reason. As a family, the Chens try to survive by having an insular life style isolated from the others, but this does not prevent them from earning money by selling food to the people they try to abstain from. In *Monkey King*, Wallace has to defy the authoritative Mr. Poon to find himself a place and he can do so only through his strong personal traits in an alien setting. It is clear that Timothy Mo depicts the endeavors of people living in margins in the post-colonial world from every aspect.

Timothy Mo’s choice of his settings for his novels is also rather meaningful. Locations like Danu and Bohaiden and the Arabian peninsula are the fictional places in his novels. His use of non-real settings should be noted because Mo, who is closely acquainted with the world of immigrants due to his bi-cultural life, is also aware of the illusions these people are likely to experience. Therefore, the fictional places make his fiction more powerful and, by doing so, he unveils the post-colonial illusions through his fictional settings much more effectively. Also, these fictional places signify the basic part of the juxtaposition between the illusions and realities. Though there are imaginary settings, Mo deals with harsh realities to such an extent in the plot stories of the novels that this is also something that creates other juxtapositions for the characters as well as the reader.

Timothy Mo has a highly engaged use of food culture in his novels. As a novel that can be analyzed under this category, *Sour Sweet* is an account of the juxtapositions within a culture represented by these two different tastes. In *Renegade or Halo2*, halo-halo is also a food explained as having ingredients that are not preferred separately, but

becoming tasty when consumed together. Both novels deal with the food culture as the markers of identity. While Chen family's food court is a bridge between the Chinese and English cultures, it is also an enclosure for them to be in touch with their native customs since they cook their traditional Chinese food for English people. In *Renegade or Halo 2*, fish is presented as the immigrant community's symbolic food. It is indicated as a signifier of being outsider in the society. Furthermore, the meals in both novels provide true conditions to reveal the presupposed characteristics of their nations. In *The Monkey King*, Wallace is referred to as an "additional mouth" which emphasizes the traditional perspective of the family. Also, he meets most of the weird practices of the family in food related contexts like feast, supper times or feeding rituals. Therefore, the concept of food in Mo's novels is not only to fulfill the bodies, but it bears a significant role literally as well.

In the novels within the scope of this study, Timothy Mo applies two different types of narratorial voice, which again contributes much to his depiction of illusions and juxtapositions. In *Sour Sweet* and *The Monkey King* the events are told by an omniscient narrator, and the third-person narrative technique gives Timothy Mo an objective way of presenting the events from an outsider's view. Nonetheless, in *The Redundancy of Courage* and *Renegade or Halo 2* there are narrator protagonists. Contrary to the authorial third-person narration in the other two novels, the first person narration makes these novels wide open to interpretation. The inconsistent individual perceptions of the protagonists help Mo to dwell upon the post-colonial illusions in the novels. Adolph Ng, for instance, takes part in both the invaders' and defenders' side during the conflict. Thus, the fact that he perceives the events in a two-fold way lets him see the same phenomenon from different aspects. Another striking point about Mo's narrations is that the third-person narrated novels are predominantly related to family issues while Mo prefers the first-person narrative for rather national or global themes. It is clear that Mo also juxtaposes the narrative techniques and the subject matters in his novels.

All in all, in addition to his subject matter, setting, characters and rhetoric, it is Mo's distinct use of juxtapositions and illusions that makes his writing distinctive in the post-colonial discipline. He writes about the grievance of oppressed, assimilated, discriminated people as well as their aspirations, hopes and illusionary world. Rather than presenting the issue from a single authoritative viewpoint that prescribes the things

happening in his novels, he makes use of real-life reflections on the livings of his characters in post-colonial context. For this reason, unlike many contemporaries of his time, he does not write to be post-colonial; his writing is post-colonial in every respect with the juxtapositions and the illusions.

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