

**SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES**Journal homepage: <http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/>**Pre-Colonial Residuals in Toni Morrison's *Recitatif* and Alice Walker's *Everyday Use*****Abdalhadi Nimer Abu Jweid<sup>1\*</sup>, Arbaayah Ali Termizi<sup>1</sup> and Nahid, S. M.<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Department of English, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia<sup>2</sup>English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Semnan University, Sookan Park, 3513119111, Semnan, Iran**ABSTRACT**

This article examines Toni Morrison's *Recitatif* and Alice Walker's *Everyday Use* as post-colonial texts. Morrison's short story moves beyond the postcolonial aftermath to maintain pre-colonial cultural conventions. The discussion begins with how *Recitatif* is considered within the field of postcolonial studies, demonstrating such postcolonial concepts as diaspora, nativism and chromatism. The study also focuses on Alice Walker's short story *Everyday Use*, and discusses how various forms of Filiation/Affiliation and Synergy contribute to the conventions of pre-colonial culture. *Everyday Use* aims precisely at ethical propensity within colonial circumference. Thus, Walker self-consciously illustrates the level of its pre-colonial features, which expose the colonisation dispersal of identity.

*Keywords:* Chromatisim, diaspora, fantasy, filiation, affiliation, nativism, postcolonialism, synergy

**INTRODUCTION**

Homi Bhabha's (1994) inclusive insight "colonial ambivalence" has been of paramount interest in postcolonial critiques. The postcolonial formulation of "colonial enunciation" does not extol "entertaining

colonization" since hybridity and all related colonial critiques oppose colonialism in all its aspects. Thus, the derived discourses of colonial imperial aphorism have been legitimised by anthropological scorches and commentaries to uncover a prerogative elixir for the on-going "overlap and displacement of domains of difference" (p. 10). They are gradually replacing the common view of the colonised i.e. the necessity to render cultural engagements, which "whether antagonist or affiliative, are produced

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performatively” (p. 12). The extension of postcolonial over national or international territories lurks behind wishful conquest or an amorous desire to expose latent amorous representations of the colonised self.

The reality, though, is a divided vision of the colonised, perhaps within national confines where “national sovereignty had finally been achieved” (Young, 2003, p. 3). On the other hand, all-embracing colonialism finds its path, passing over the threshold of other entities. Henceforth, colonial nations are to be touted to change their inherent identity and “lose their origins in the myth of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind’s eye” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 1). Thus imperial forces propel different and various anthropological patterns. Such patterns are shaped and constructed in light of the colonisers and their catchall hegemony. The result will, inevitably, lead to a new identity, whether that of colonised or coloniser. As Laura Chrisman (2003) simply argues, a considerable evaluation of the “national identity crisis has long been recognized” (p. 5) from a different historical perspective.

The colonial produced mystique lies in a fundamental and principal judgement of the “self”. Being so, the colonised “territory” awakens and absorbs its conscious recognition of the colonial impact on a very congruent place. The constantly deteriorating traditions before colonialism are apparently letting the new “other” colonial traditions dominate. The demystifying change to a new colonial world requires an internal change to the “self” to perceive the relevant identity and

dominant “nostalgia for a lost wholeness and a new stage in the evolution ... and the latest developments at knowledge’s ever expanding frontiers” (Klein, 1990, p. 12). As such, the postcolonial world entails a cartographic wholeness connecting colonised and coloniser in a new territorial entity. Nevertheless, it leads to a risky departure towards global predominance. The fear of global dominance, argues Klein, “examines both imaginative and material possibilities for individual and collective transformation in an increasingly globalized world” (p. 15).

The geo-historical continuum evokes an all-encompassing appraisal of the geographical culture of both colonised and coloniser. Notwithstanding this, the new colonial world has a detrimental effect on the course of colonisation. Spivak (1999) found that redefining the destabilised “world order” leads to “transnational literacy that keep[s] assiduous track, without assuming illusory command, of the changing relationship between global events and local trends in the current world order” (parentheses added) (p. 76). Moreover, colonisation’s great influence evinces a human phenomenon which stands in need of a mutual exchange of colonial roles. That is, the hegemony of the coloniser forces the colonised to adapt the regular socio-historical conventions inherited from the antecedent period. In this way, the earlier social conventions change in the history of the colonised.

Spivak’s remarks on how the “world order” entangles a common feeling of some fashionable conceptualisation. The implicit

deception of colonisation originates in a sweeping human quandary of different origins. The supportive colonial powers, likewise, come to challenge. The main burden of this challenge is felt by the colonised. In the long run, a discriminatory line-up comes to terms with a number of colonial concepts, such as chromatism, diaspora, fantasy, nativism, synergy and so forth. The conspicuous plurality of these concepts goes along in the new colonial powers practised in the “new territories” where the “colonized was henceforth to be postulated as the inverse or negative image of the colonizer” (Ghandi *et al.*, 1998, p. 15). The schematic re-inscription of the colonial world, then, to put it simply, emerges in a fetishisation of the “other”. The tremendous colonial efforts of the coloniser are executed in heterogeneous attempts when “anti-colonial nationalism responds to this painful symbiosis between imperialist and nationalist thought in a variety of ways” (p. 118).

The purpose of the present article is to examine Toni Morrison’s “*Recitatif*” and Alice Walker’s “*Everyday Use*” as postcolonial texts. Presumably, these short stories present colonial change within a colonised nation. Such concepts as chromatism, diaspora, fantasy, filiation/affiliation, nativism and synergy pervade the textuality of these short stories. In the main, the article argues for a pre-colonial vernacular identity and social life, and that this identity is changed over time by heroines being displaced to diasporic places other than their normal national territories.

### **FEATURES OF DIASPORA, NATIVISM AND CHROMATISM IN TONI MORRISON’S *RECITATIF***

This section discusses Morrison’s *Recitatif* by applying postcolonial literary theory. Such postcolonial concepts as diaspora, nativism and chromatism will be used throughout the analysis of *Recitatif*. Various forms of colonial cultural concepts, such as diaspora, nativism and chromatism, have been productively and extensively explored in postcolonial theory. These concepts are associated with colonialism and its aftermath and have become central topics of postcolonial discourse.

Morrison’s *Recitatif* recounts the story of two girls: Twyla and Roberta. They are taken from their mothers and put at St. Bonny orphanage for care in a diasporic environment. During their life in the orphanage, they are continuously visited by their mothers. But the story whimsically identifies the mothers as not the girls’ true mothers. The girls become the heroines of the story and they develop an intimate relationship like sisters. As they encounter other girls at the same orphanage, they are cruelly treated until this experience renders for them new identities. Their new identities are culminated when they finally get married and cope with different, socially prestigious lives.

In *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, Ashcroft *et al.* (1998) discussed the historical perspective of diaspora. They argue that the spatial attributes of diaspora participate in shaping the “colonial” world. Accordingly, diaspora is a historical

phenomenon resulting in a human movement from one place to another. This movement is “voluntary or forcible” dispersal made by colonial powers and “is a central fact of colonization” (pp. 68-69) made by colonial powers. This is seen to be in harmony, in *Recitatif*, with Morrison’s view of the relevance of “shelter” as an embodiment of the “movement” of the heroines, Twyla and Roberta, to the orphanage. From the very beginning, the story introduces St. Bonny’s where these heroines are kept: “My mother danced all night and Roberta was sick. That’s why we were taken to St. Bonny’s” (p. 2253).

Moreover, Morrison, viewing positive cultural traditions before colonialism, describes the fragmentation of such traditions into new cultural restrictions. This is true of Twyla’s recollections of their — her and Roberta’s — bad experience with other girls in the orphanage. Big girls’ maltreatment of Twyla and Roberta reflects the great extent of colonial impact. The advent of colonialism impinges on these conventions and changes them for the worst. Everything seems very different from their lives before being brought into the orphanage. The core transformational change in the heroines’ personality is their adaptation to a new and different cultural environment.

Cultural transformation is relevant to Igor Maver’s (2009) treatment of diaspora in *Diasporic Subjectivity and Cultural Brokering in Contemporary Post-Colonial Literatures*. Maver contends that Diaspora pursues the social or human “departure” to

form a different entity. As Maver comments, “Historically speaking, Diaspora ... refers to a communal experience of displacement and relocation as an ethnic collectivity” (p. 2). Displacement, therefore, is the regional periphery where diaspora takes place. It is decisive in shaping any new colonial identity. In *Recitatif*, Morrison implicitly exposes the diasporic implication when she opens her short story with a description of St. Bonny’s, which is the place where Twyla and Roberta were taken. St. Bonny’s is strikingly the colonial displacement field, especially in the opening statements since Twyla is surprised by St. Bonny’s unusual furniture where there was “No big long room with one hundred beds like Bellevue. There were four to a room, and when Roberta and me came, there was a shortage of state kids, so we were the only ones assigned to 406 and could go from bed to bed if we wanted to” (p. 2253).

Maver, furthermore, approaches the “Diaspora paradigm.” Here, Maver draws on his observations of the postcolonial perspective in different stages of cultural encounters: “representing the mobility of migration and then resettlement in a new country while maintaining cultural, religious and even political attachments with a homeland across the borders of nation states” (p. 2). In *Recitatif*, Morrison emphasises the need to regain the lost but positive manners of the past. Cultural manners are deformed by colonialism and its discriminatory practices. The heroines do not recognise their lost identity except when they leave the orphanage. Their settlement

in the orphanage blurs their normal cultural manners.

James Clifford and Mark Albey (1997), in *Routes: Travels and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, share the view seen in Maver's description of diaspora. They contend that diaspora comprises supportive discursive "dialogues" among colonial domains leading ultimately to "a predicament of multiple locations" (pp. 255-266). In the same manner, Twyla, after leaving the orphanage, contemplates her detached living state which causes suffering. Twyla's predicament indicates a twofold experience i.e. her previous experience at St. Bonny's and her present alienated one. This experience manifests among Howard Johnson's "blacks and whites" interlocutions. Accordingly, Twyla feels personal alienation, as she recounts: "But I didn't know. I thought it was just the opposite. Busloads of blacks and whites came into Howard Johnson's together. They roamed together then: students, musicians, lovers, protesters" (p. 2265). The symbolic vehicle for colonial location is the car by which Twyla goes shopping to different locations, meeting people of various cultures.

In *Post-Colonial Studies*, Helen Tiffin *et al.* (2000) tackle the issue of cultural authenticity. In the main, diasporic implications can be traced through the cultural authenticity of the colonial environment. The colonial environment is contiguous with "cultural conventions" (p. 17). Morrison reveals her indigenous culture by foregrounding her pre-colonial authentic

traditions. She purposefully 'silences' the postcolonial cultural impact by allowing traditional customs to subsume colonial dominance. The historical circumstances of social change and colonialism have made the "diasporic" experience an aspect of cultural phenomena. Thus, it (the diasporic experience) mostly belongs simultaneously to more than one culture. In *Recitatif*, Morrison is erudite in depicting such social phenomena. Obviously, she portrays a cogent displacement and, consequently, the effacement of pre-colonial traditions. This is evident in Twyla's description of Roberta's welfare: "There she was. In a silvery evening gown and dark fur coat" (p. 2269).

The diasporic paradigm forthwith prefigures and determines cultural nativism. Ashcroft *et al.* (1998) define the concept of nativism in relation to postcolonialism. Nativism, contend Ashcroft *et al.*, seeks nothing less than to reclaim pre-colonial positive residuals. Ashcroft *et al.* define nativism as a concept formulating the colonised ethnic group to go back to the "indigenous" and national sense of social customs. In colonial societies, the sense of indigenous social customs disappears completely and leaves the colonised nation empty of a sense of relative traditions. The process by which any society loses its original social traditions falls into a deep-seated colonial agenda. As such, colonised nations could not escape the inevitable loss of "pre-colonial indigenous traditions" (p. 159).

In *Recitatif*, Morrison exposes nativist features through Twyla's words. Twyla longs

for positive traditional maternal care. This care is lost when she is put in the orphanage. Morrison portrays Roberta's mother's maternal state, which is characterised by a cultural commitment to pre-colonial social traditions. Twyla talks about Roberta's mother's relationship with her and Roberta. The mother warmly hugs the two children in care and passion as if they were really in their domestic house. In the context, Morrison describes the mother's encounter with the children through a biblical statement. When Twyla and Roberta develop an intimate relationship, they express nostalgic longing for family life. Such nostalgia is enunciated in the imaginative "apple blossoms" (p. 2259), which reveal benevolent for children attentiveness. This imaginative need for a mother's care goes along with Twyla's comments on her life in the orphanage: "I still go soft when I smell one or the other. Roberta was going home. The big cross and the big Bible was coming to get her and she seemed sort of glad and sort of not" (p. 2259). In so doing, she accentuates the religious dimension of resisting racial discrimination and the need of loving others. This is sweepingly evident in home life, rather than in displacement. Morrison provides a stereotypical maternal concept implying the presence of an essentially benevolent universe before colonialism. She repeatedly evokes this idea in *Recitatif* and faithfully alludes to the native indigenous manners prior to the advent of colonialism.

Fanon (1965) approaches the idea of native resistance to colonial confines because it has a close relationship with

pre-colonial original identity. Fanon builds this posit on the concept of the "intellectual battle" (p. 170). Morrison expounds the transformation of the characters' status at the time of the pre-colonial world. Consequently, she maintains that positive culture will cause it to emanate again in the future. This is carried out by Twyla's observation of Roberta's change into a new social state: "Roberta had messed up my past somehow with that business about Maggie. I wouldn't forget a thing like that. Would I?" (p. 2262). Furthermore, Morrison evokes the same idea. This is evident when Twyla meditates on people's conversion of their stable "signs." Twyla and Roberta, however, do not undergo such change.

In *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, Castillo and Schweitzer (2005) consider the ethnographic attributes of otherness. They, furthermore, maintain that the colonial impact on social groups results in "removal" of the past convention before the appearance of colonialism. Here, the other is to be inadvertently forced to accept and adapt to this new social change. Consequently, Castillo and Schweitzer define alterity as a phenomenological term for "otherness" (p. 25). Alterity, thus, becomes a subject for transformation and deviation of the pre-colonial life.

To clarify this, Morrison articulates the sociocultural life prior to colonialism. During the change to native cultural conventions, many ethnic traits develop and disappear. Twyla and Roberta, for example, ask each other about their lives after marriage. They talk about the ways in

which Roberta's husband lives his life. This life circulates in its entirety and incarnates life after colonialism. Thus, it leaves its cultural impact on colonised societies. Twyla and Roberta are getting immersed in an "otherness" culture and change over time.

In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, Spivak (1999) argues that the "other" undergoes a process of change. This cultural transformation, through colonial negative practices, becomes undermined and altered over time. Spivak also contends that the coloniser's power leads to the "other's" full cultural autonomy (pp. 2200-2201). Consequently, the temporal alteration is referred to as "historical" since it increases through different time phases. The "other's" culture, therefore, turns to a new social existence far from its traditional one.

In *Recitatif*, Twyla and Roberta get married. This new life is completely different from their previous harsh one. Here, Morrison reveals the notion of cultural transformation into other states. Her characters, once alienated and poorly cared for, enjoy prosperity. Twyla is depicted as being as prosperous as the rich. She celebrates Christmas Eve with the rich in a hotel and eats the finest food. This cultural shift from "pre-colonial traditions" does not satisfy her as much as did the past. Now she drinks coffee and enjoys driving cars which is a qualitative token of the coloniser since in pre-colonial societies people do not celebrate such prestigious life: "I stopped the car and went in. Just for a cup of coffee and twenty minutes of peace before I went

home and tried to finish everything before Christmas Eve" (p. 2257).

Ashcroft *et al.* (1998) discussed chromatism in relation to postcolonial discursive studies. They maintained that chromatism refers to a "colour bias" in postcolonial societies; Ashcroft *et al.* argued that chromatism is determined through its manifestation in colour and gender, which appear physically on the "genital organs" (p. 37). Morrison is concerned with the representation of colour bias inherent in her characters. She describes the position of Twyla and Roberta among other kinds of people in New York and other places. They contemplate upon their skin colour as different from other people's. Here, Twyla talks about Robert's new situation in the orphanage. This indicates Morrison's mature and confident use of a racial stereotype in seriously tackling such an idea. The heroines recognise their colour when they interact with other people in a place they call "strange", which is Howard Johnson's: "we passed like strangers. A black girl and a white girl meeting in a Howard Johnson's on the road and having nothing to say" (p. 2253).

Edward Said (1979), in *Orientalism*, presents a provocative objective statement about the spatial dimension of a domestic milieu in what he calls "the poetics of space." As a postcolonial practitioner, he is a faithful representative of cultural notions. He tackles the relation between two different cultural or world groups, based on inferiority or superiority dominating this

relation. Therefore, he creates a cultural meeting within a universal spatial entity. As such, he aims to ease the tense relationship between these two groups. The superiority-inferiority relation is constructed through an “arbitrary” conceptualisation of specific geography. Said, proportionately, ascribes the colonial typography to the concept of “barbarian distinction” (p. 54).

Through projecting the concepts of diaspora, nativism and chromatism, Morrison successfully reveals the cultural effects of postcolonialism. The nostalgic textual representations refer to her aim to restore the socio-cultural residuals in colonised societies. In so doing, she gives inferior cultures a strong voice to express their suffering after the appearance of colonial dominance. She further aspires to reconstruct the lost cultural conventions in *Recitatif* to cope with the ever-changing world around her.

#### **NOTIONS OF FILIATION/ AFFILIATION AND SYNERGY IN ALICE WALKER'S *EVERYDAY USE***

Alice Walker is opposed to the postcolonial world that serves merely as empowerment for cultural prosperity's sake. *Everyday Use* focuses on the main character, Maggie. The story is told from Maggie's point of view. She tells the story of her life and her family. In the course of the story, she decides to change her name to Dee because her previous name is the same as her oppressors'. Dee develops out of her rural life and enrolls in an academic life that is completely different from her domestic

living. All her previous cultural traditions contradict her new academic schooling. In the beginning of the story, she describes her peaceful family life. However, at the end of the story her family becomes rather harsh and different in comparison to the life she formerly led. This negative transition is brought about through colonial practices in the story.

Viswanathan (1989) discusses colonial attempts to construct historical “events” by the coloniser. Viswanathan measures the coloniser as an “agent of historical change” (p. 12). In colonial systems, the whole cultural subjugation lies at the heart of history as it changes and imprints various societies with inexperienced advancement. The inexperienced cultural development originates in a colonial transformation.

Walker's *Everyday Use*, recalling postcolonial concepts, also highlights the concern of the colonised that culture should serve as empowerment. It is a closely woven pattern of discourse relationships in which filiation (heritage or descent) and affiliation (relations based on a process of identification through culture) between discourse segments interact and reinforce one another (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998, p. 105).

Walker emphasises the sense of colonial alienation. In the story, the father and mother clean the house and bring up their children as a household responsibility. They sing lullabies and cheer up their babies at night with folk tales and chants. All this indicates a very traditional, domesticated life. Here, “descent” relationships between Maggie's family members involve a whole human



group that stands for a cultural paradigm. This increases the recognition of collectivity which circles family life, and further sustains the crucial need for heritage. In addition, the concept of heritage is incarnated in the female protagonist Wangero's decision to change her name to escape her family's oppression. In so doing, she constructs an authentic "heritage," which she thinks of as a proper manifestation of her real "African" heritage. Dee, thus, changes her name into Wangero. When she is asked by her mother, "What happened to 'Dee'? I wanted to know" (p.2), Dee replies, "She's dead," Wangero said. "I couldn't bear it any longer, being named after the people who oppress me" (p. 2).

Said (1983), in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, discusses authorial intrusion into literary work. He describes affiliation in texts as being similar to historical development. Moreover, Said asserts that authorial "intrusion into work" is a depiction of the "historical aspect of affiliation" (pp. 174-175). This pertains to Walker's "perception" of the historical period prior to colonialism. In *Everyday Use*, Maggie's mother reports how her daughter acts sensitively. This sensitivity manifests itself as a contradictory state from her previous manner. She speaks in a forceful voice and treats the children without pity. This contradicts sharply with the authentic innocuous treatment of children in pre-colonial life.

Furthermore, Walker's work has some sociocultural implications for her society. She exposes social life at times when non-existent negative practices reign. This is

clear in relation to Maggie's mother when she says that she feels differently towards Maggie. She always loved her, but now she hates her. She speaks with her harshly and does not show pity towards her as she did before. The awkward feeling resulting from this paradox is also projected in Dee's personality when she changed her name. She feels free when she recognises her authentic native name. This is obvious when her mother tells her the reason behind her name: "you know as well as me you was named after your aunt Dicie" (p. 7). This runs concomitantly with Said's conception of affiliation. Said (1983) argues that "affiliation" contributes to the author's social perspective. Furthermore, the author can make his work appropriate for the public's grasp of the text and the cultural changes in social groups.

In *The Gothic Colonial*, Arwa Mohammad Malaibari (2008) claims that there are a number of ways to combine inter-relations among postcolonial discourses, which are encoded into the authentic relationship between colonised and coloniser. Malaibari formulates the colonial encounter as a "fundamental concept of postcolonialism" (p. 29). What is particularly interesting here, however, is that from this relation a whole range of different colonial encounters emerge. Walker, in *Everyday Use*, foregrounds this idea in light of the treatment of women within colonised societies. Maggie contemplates her life, which embodies a similar pre-colonial social life where women are equal to men in domestic affairs.

Walker exemplifies these arguments with a textual observation centring on the importance of pre-colonial traditions. Walker is a cultural observer, and in the context of what is termed postcolonial literature, her systematic and detailed account of its textual properties is closely related to her conception of colonial discourses. Thus, Walker enhances the pre-colonial world. Her commitment to these discourses is influenced by the notion of cultural legacy.

In *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer (2005) tackle cultural dimension in terms of history. Castillo and Schweitzer claim that this notion is “relativistic to the author’s gender” (p. 270). Additionally, they argue that history runs through regional places and spreads over relatively different typographies to specify the author’s gender. By the same token, Walker highlights Wangero’s position. Her mother remembers Dee’s (her previous name) domestic habits as always being casual and simple. After enrolling in college, she becomes different and longs for novelty by maintaining her commitment to her family life.

López (2001) suggests a sociocultural periphery which may be amplified in colonial societies. The process of amplification may undergo “psychic” development to defy the dispersal of the “pre-colonial past”. López contends, “Much of the process of psychic decolonization depends upon a sort of ‘repigmentation’ or ‘unbleaching’ of suppressed cultural histories to reflect both the precolonial past and the ugly truths of colonial violence and oppression” (p. 89).

In this regard, the idea of “cultural construction” has a strong contiguity with Ganguly’s (2001) sociocultural constructive notions. Ganguly claims that cultural constructions need to be “examined” to expose the real presence of societies, stating that “the knowledge that cultures are “constructed” does not obviate examining the actualities of those constructions. One cannot assume that the surprises of a given cultural construction are inherently mirrored by the structure of analytic propositions posited to explain it” (p. 38). In *Everyday Use*, the idea of coherent societies incarnates stable societies. Maggie exalts her hash life because she has already left civil war behind and has a stable living: “I probably could have carried it back beyond the Civil War through the branches” (p. 8).

Synergy is another representative concept of chromatism. Synergy is the formulating force of “hybridity” (Ashcroft *et al.*, 1998, p. 229). This force is produced by “reducible” anthropologic practices that foreground new human identities. In *Everyday Use*, hybridity and identity transformation conform to colonisation and its cultural aspects. Dee, for example, is affected by the coloniser’s academic mentality, and thus, her domestic affairs gradually disintegrate.

Walker is consciously concerned with regaining the pre-colonial identity of colonised societies. In so doing, she exposes the passive image of the postcolonial world, which changes relatively, according to the coloniser’s mentality. She eruditely critiques the detrimental colonial impact on societies.

Colonialism, and all its inclusive practices, leave iconoclastic and stereotypical images of both the coloniser and the colonised. Thus, cultures and societies dissolve in loss and human disintegration.

## CONCLUSION

Morrison and Walker are two postcolonial icons who have explored various issues in a postcolonial discourse. They have offered fictional critiques which hold different interpretations and understandings of colonialism's aftermath and all that engenders in an ever-shifting world. They expose the ethnicity and indigenous representation of ethnic binarism, which centrally involves marginalised cultural groups. In so doing, the radical changes occurring in a postcolonial environment are merely depicted and formulated according to a certain experience undergone by the authors or similar individuals having the same fate. Throughout *Recitatif* and *Everyday Use*, there is a seemingly multifarious contradiction between life before colonialism and the incompatible imperial practices after that. The conviction of colonialism and its suppressive nuances brought a deep-rooted consciousness for the colonised to recognise the calamity of subjugation.

Colonial and postcolonial practices usher in a tremendous formulation of new societies on the verge of indispensable cultural development. The interplay between the centrally discursive hegemonic ideology and the voice of the suppressed is now seen in "a variety of political and cultural

activities on campus" (Parekh, 1998, p. 19). The prolonged factor of colonialism involves inescapable adoptions in the course of the interplay among ethnic groups in the postcolonial world. As Said (1993) construes it, this is the exploration of strange regions in the world. Thus, naturalised segregation and separation find their path in the generating forces coming from the colonised, and the colonisers struggling to affirm their sociocultural goals. Yet, there is massive resistance on both sides of the colonial story. Critical endeavours, consequently, warn of responsive caveats to the potential subversion of human identity and ethnicity. In their short stories, Walker and Morrison favour such critical endeavours as complicated and justify nostalgia for life before colonialism.

Colonialism's ensuing nostalgic predilection represents cultural propaganda for the almost disappearing pre-colonial residuals. The primary interest and obsession with cultural traditions and social manners are now neglected in the bias of colour segregation, gender, social class and the like. With lavish descriptions and textual erudite portrayal, *Recitatif* and *Everyday Use* revive the need for a pre-colonial life, which is imperative for national identity. As such, they preclude colonial hegemony in human cultural practices i.e. fiction. The questionable principle of fictional writing is the expository utilisation of "the very tools of possible [cultural] redress" (parentheses added) (Achebe, 1988, p. 261). The tools of redress in *Recitatif* and *Everyday Use* are the concepts of diaspora,

nativism, chromatism, filiation, affiliation and synergy, which constitute decisive rectification and resurrection of spoilt national identity in colonised peripheries.

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