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Out in Africa: The Ambivalent Relationship between the Colonizer and
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Blixen and Elspeth Huxley

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I confirm to have conceived and written this Diploma Thesis in English all by myself. Quotations from other authors are all clearly marked and acknowledged in the bibliographical references, either in the footnotes or within the text. Any ideas borrowed and/or passages paraphrased from the works of other authors have been truthfully acknowledged and identified in the footnotes.

Amel Zairi

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Abbreviations

<i>CPI</i>	Lomba's <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> (1998)
<i>CPII</i>	----. <i>Colonialism/Postcolonialism</i> . 3 rd ed.
<i>FTT</i>	Huxley's <i>The Flame Trees of Thika</i>
<i>RS</i>	----. <i>Red Strangers</i>
<i>NFK</i>	----. <i>Nine faces of Kenya</i>
<i>OA</i>	<i>Out of Africa</i>
<i>WP</i>	Ngugi's <i>Writers in Politics</i>
<i>MC</i>	----. <i>Moving the Centre</i>
<i>O</i>	Said's <i>Orientalism</i>
<i>CP</i>	----. <i>Culture and Imperialism</i>
<i>SDC</i>	Fanon's <i>Studies in a Dying Colonialism</i>
<i>FB</i>	----. "The Fact of Blackness"

1. Introduction

The perception of the Other in colonial literature has created a heated debate among postcolonial critics. It has been very often perceived as a very racist body of literature; questioning the degree of racism has often been treated like a yes/no question. For instance, while Ngugi argues that “*Out of Africa*, [for example], is one of the most dangerous books ever written about Africa” (qtd. in Brantly 75), Gina Wisker sees “Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1902) as an early anti-colonial text” (Wisker 10). However, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized appears more complicated than its depiction in colonial literature, especially in the autobiographies and the fiction of two early white settlers of Kenya, Karen Blixen and Elspeth Huxley. The works that the thesis analyzes are Blixen and Huxley’s autobiographies *Out of Africa* (1937) and *The Flame Trees of Thika* (1959) respectively, and Huxley’s novel *Red Strangers* (1939). The questions that the thesis addresses are: to what extent can the selected literary works¹ be considered racist? How do the writers represent the opposing stereotypes of both Europeans and Africans in their works? To what extent do they approve/disapprove of colonization and the mission of civilization? Does the settling experience change the writers’ perception of the Other?

The first part will be devoted to the history of Kenya’s colonization, as well as the specific circumstances that have brought both writers to the region. The second section will study the western fantasies about the Orient, as it attempts to show how the western mind will operate in what is called ‘the primitive land’. This part will shed light on the role of science and religion in enhancing the stereotypes of the Other. In fact, this part functions as an introduction to the settlers’ way of thinking that will be reflected in their treatment of ‘the natives’.

The third part will investigate the indigenous people’s ambiguous response to ‘the new culture’ and their equivocal attitudes towards the settlers. The reception of the western culture will be studied from Homi k. Bhabha’s notions of mimicry and hybridity. Therefore, this part will provide a depiction of the mimic Man, as well as the hybrids in the novels. Furthermore, Bhabha’s concepts of mockery and menace will be employed to analyze and discuss these people’s resistance to the colonizers’ ideals and beliefs. Furthermore, this part will look closely at these people’s notion of ‘the good European’, as they internalize the European

¹ “The selected works” always refer to *OA*, *FTT* and *RS*.

rules. The issue of Kenyan women between colonialism and their patriarchal society will also constitute a part of the discussion.

The last part will provide an illustration of the colonial settlers' ambivalent position versus the natives. It will explore mainly the relationship between the settlers and their close servants. In fact, this part will attempt to prove that Blixen and Huxley's works do represent romanticized racism. The first chapter will study Bhabha's concept of the stereotype to show how the colonizers' anxiety results in their obsession with the idea of the superiority of the white race, as they insist to stand in the centre. Then, the thesis will examine the hierarchic organization of the various local tribes, mainly in *OA* since among the selected books, it is the sole book that introduces a detailed description of the different clans. This classification is actually made according to the degree of resemblance of the local mentality and behaviour to the western mind. The second chapter will deal with the romanticization of the Other and the fear to go native, by/through applying certain features of both the gothic and romanticism. Afterwards, the thesis will offer an analysis of the colonizer's attitude that ranges between the love of African nature and the perception of the local inhabitants as elements of this nature.

2. The British colonization of Kenya

2.1. Kenya Colony

The history of colonial Kenya started when the Imperial British East Africa was established in 1888.² The British-German imperial competition over Zanzibar marked the beginning of the British colonialism in the region. Germans were the first to be interested in the Sultan Bargash's territories, Zanzibar. Thus, they, the troops sent by Bismarck, threatened him to surrender the selected dominions to the German emperor by mooring their warships in the Zanzibar lagoon and by showing off their weapons in the royal residence. As the British heard of the matter, they attempted to work out an agreement with the Germans as well as with the helpless Sultan. In November 1886, the Sultan's land was snatched up, solely a ten-mile coastal piece was fallen from the booty. "Behind that line is drawn to Mount Kilimanjaro and on to Lake Victoria at latitude 1° S. The British sphere of influence is to be to the north, the German to the south. The line remains to this day the border between Kenya and Tanzania" (ibidem.).

² History of Kenya. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad21>>.

As South Africa was more appealing to the British than East Africa, they authorized a trade firm to look after the colonized land (ibidem.). By the third of September 1888, the Imperial British East Africa Company was “founded by Sir William Mackinnon, [which received] a royal Charter to open up ‘the British sphere’ to ‘legitimate commerce’ ” (Huxley, *NFK* xviii). When the empire ‘on which the sun never sets’ feared the expansion of the Germans in the region, the Prime Minister Lord Salisbury suggested to Germany an exchange of territories: the British government will give up the island of Heligoland on condition that Germany acknowledges the British dominions in Zanzibar, Uganda and Equatoria.³ Five years after the establishment of the Imperial British East-African Company, Buganda became under the protection of the British empire, and “two years later British control was extended to cover the western kingdoms of Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro – to form, together with Buganda, the Uganda Protectorate” (ibidem.).

As for Kenya, the British East Africa was not playing a remarkable role there like it did in Uganda. But when the British thought it was necessary for this territory to have a view of the sea, Kenya was the solution, and therefore it was annexed to the British protectorates, and was called the East Africa Protectorate in 1895 (ibidem.). These territories were in fact under the control of The British East Africa Company which during that period had been facing some financial problems. When the administrators of the company realized that it was on the brink of bankruptcy, they sold it to the Crown in 1895.⁴ The company was not any longer able to keep the business with the Indian traders (Rashid 10); “the income from custom revenue was inadequate to support even a rudimentary form of western government; agriculture development was impossible without railway construction that the company, with its limited resources, could not afford” (ibidem.). A year later, the building of a railway started, and thanks to the “labour brought from India”, The Uganda Railway “reaches Lake Victoria at Mile 582”, in the twentieth of December, 1901 (*NFK* xviii). The British officials in Kenya worked to build a railway, in order to make it more attractive for the future European settlers.⁵ The White Highlands was considered a suitable area for European farmers (ibidem.). Undoubtedly, it was solely specified for the white people (Nixon 223). This achievement was celebrated by Elspeth Huxley as follows: “[t]he railway opened the doors of eastern Africa to the rest of the world, and changed forever the country’s destiny and way of life of its peoples” (*NFK* 45).

³ History of Kenya. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad21>>.

⁴ British Empire: Kenya. <<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/kenya.htm>>.

⁵ History of Kenya. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad21>>.

Definitely, it had changed everything, as the indigenous population were forced to live in reservations. They were also obliged to work as squatters in their own land. The fertile pieces of land were offered to the Europeans, and what was useless to them was granted to the original owners to live on.⁶ Furthermore, The Crown offered leases running out in 999 years “in a gesture of apocalyptic hubris” (Nixon 223). These financial facilities and the low-priced lands resulted in purchasing land but not cultivating it, since the possession of the land turned out to be more remunerative (Lewis 119). Consequently, 64.8 percent of the land was left uncultivated (qtd. in Lewis 119). Ironically, the colonizer justified the seizure of the native land by “the idea that lands (and by implication economic resources) that are not being effectively utilized by the indigenous population ‘could legitimately be expropriated and developed by a superior invading nation’ ” (Steinmetz 84).

It is worth mentioning that when the building of the Uganda Railway facilitated an agreeable transport of the Foreign Office officials and members of the British parliament to Equatorial East Africa and enabled them “to see the country for themselves”, the idea of official colonization had been crystallized (Johnston 29). Alex Johnston also reported that the settlers from both Britain and its colonies, especially from South Africa, headed to Nairobi and its suburbs, before the end of the works in the Uganda Railway (30). The complete distribution of the land over European settlers in 1915 was planned to pressure the native population to come looking for work in what is supposed to be their farms, and therefore they made of the desperate people “the cheapest [labour] in the world” (Nixon 223-224). Settlement was a crucial feature of colonialism. Following the World War I, the soldier-settlers were granted three million acres of land (Lewis 87), whereas the local inhabitants who were forced to fight their colonizer’s enemies received nothing but death and sufferance.

⁶ History of Kenya. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad21>>.

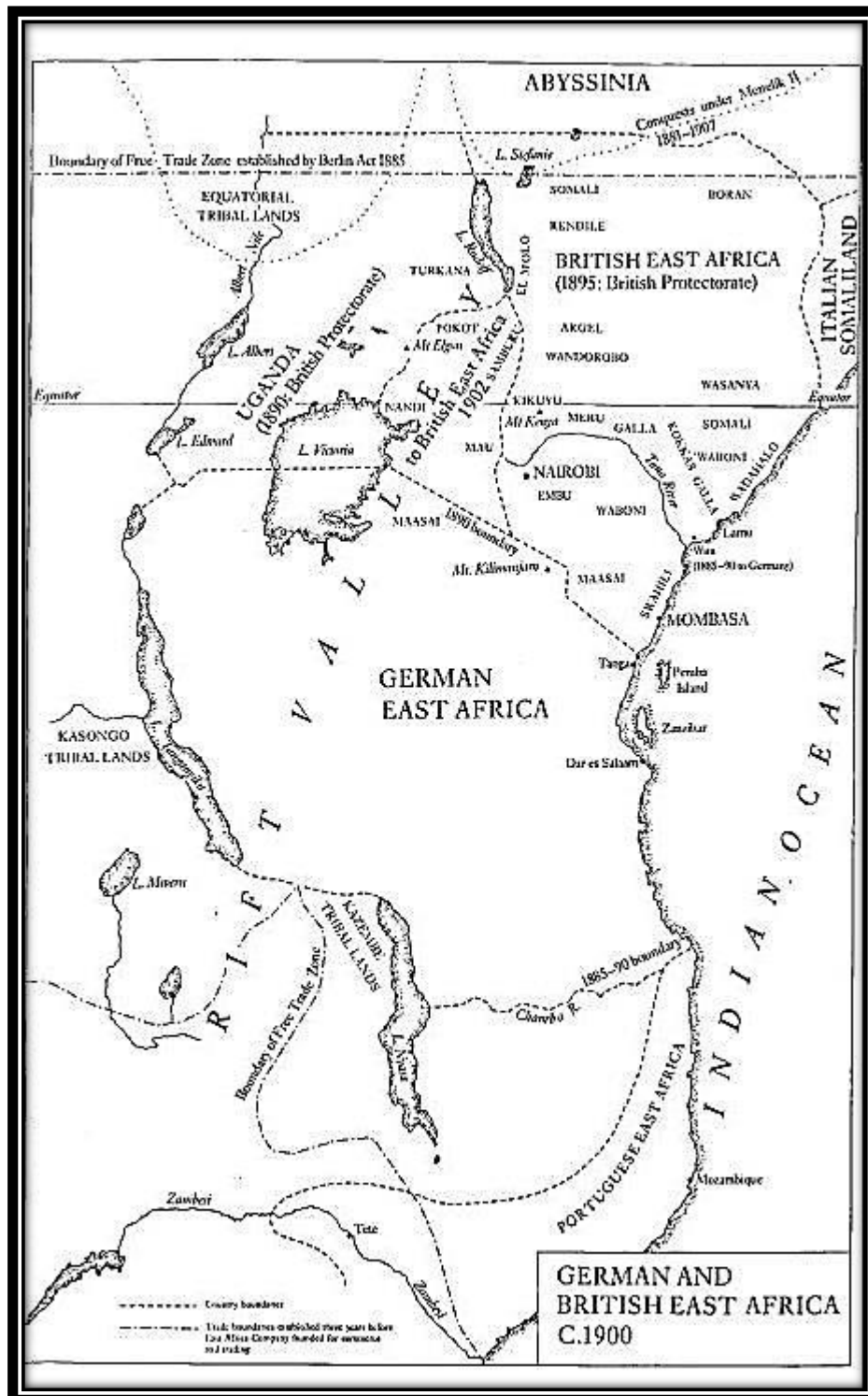


Fig. 1: German and British East Africa C.1900.

Source: Elspeth Huxley's *Nine Faces of Kenya*, ix.

Certainly, these people did not stay with arms folded. In 1904, the tensions were exacerbated between the colonizers and ‘the natives’.⁷ What added fuel to the fire was the fast increasing Indian population calling for their political and economic rights, which was estimated twenty-three thousand by the 1920s.⁸ When reporting this event in her book *White Man’s Country*, Elspeth Huxley wrote that “[w]hite civilization [...] would be swamped in a brown, enfranchised flood” (qtd. in Jackson 347). Comparing to the Europeans, “[t]here were only about ten thousand white settlers in Kenya in the 1920s, but they had both the traditional settler desire for domination and self-rule and a very upper class social tone, with an abundance of aristocrats and Brigadier-Generals in their ranks” (Duder 427). In fact, Indians asked for their share from “those fertile uplands between Machakos and Fort Ternan that since 1903 had been reserved for occupation by those only of ‘European’ descent” (Jackson 347). At that time, in 1920, East Africa Protectorate was announced Kenya Colony, a colony which was depicted as Britain’s “most troublesome colony” (qtd. in Jackson 346). The government’s decision to include Kenya among its colonies has been pushed by the white settlers who were looking for further privileges, and by the will of the government itself to control its expenses which had tremendously increased during the World War I.⁹

Kenya was the sole African colony that was managed from Whitehall, since it became an important area for European settlers (Jackson 346). Unlike the Spanish and the Portuguese, the British colonizers followed the strategy of “not officially mixing with the native populations” (Loomba, *CPII* 24). To summarize what the colonial officials did in Kenya: they came up with the system of reserves for the native population, encouraged the squatting system, imposed taxes even on huts, allotted certain local inhabitants as chiefs to ensure the application of the rules, established the pass system like they did in South Africa, and even used the prisons for instructing them in work discipline (qtd. in Lewis 87). These colonial strategies were actually pointed out in the selected works. In *RS* and *OA*, the colonizer profited much from polygamy; since every wife had her own hut, the husband had to pay twelve shillings for every hut. Blixen herself was ‘a fermier général’; in her book *Shadows on the Grass*, she announced: “in order to save the Government trouble I collected the taxes from my squatters locally and sent in the sum total to Nairobi” (Lewis 119). Among the European settlers were the writers the thesis is concerned with, Karen Blixen and Elspeth Huxley. This was an overview of Kenya Colony’s history from the late of nineteenth century till the end of

⁷ History of Kenya. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad21>>.

⁸ This statistics can be found in C. J. D. Duder’s article, on page 428.

⁹ British Empire: Kenya. <<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/kenya.htm>>.

the thirties of the twentieth century, a country in which the events of the selected works took place.

2.2. The white settlers and writers in Kenya Colony

Advertising Kenya as an exotic destination which combines wilderness with civilization was meant to attract “tourists” as well as “prospective settlers” (Jackson 349), especially the settlers. From the very commencement of colonialism, Kenya had been employed as a commodity: first by Thomas Cook who organized touristic tours to east Africa between 1903 and 1908, including “the St. Pancras of East Africa” which ends in Nairobi, and “Highlands of British East Africa” which is designed to make the tourists experience the Victorian explorers’ adventures (ibidem.). Theodore Roosevelt, shortly after agreeing with William Howard Taft to be his successor in the American presidency, made a safari to the region in 1909, accompanied by his son.¹⁰ It was claimed that this safari “set the standard for the champagne safaris of the interwar years” (Jackson 350). Kenya was actually known among “the wealthy European aristocrats and American millionaires” for “big game”, a race of hunting which became a culture at that time (ibidem.). Kenya was more than this: it was a destination for freedom. It had taught the “[m]en of good British stock” how to forget about “the tedious class-bound conventions of life back at home” (ibidem.). According to Historians, “Kenya was Britain’s most aristocratic imperial possession” (Jackson 344). Will Jackson reported that “[b]oth C.J.D Duder’s and Dane Kennedy’s own research into the social background of European immigrants during the first thirty years of settlement show a disproportionate number of lords and ladies, dukes and earls” (ibidem.). Elspeth Huxley and Karen Blixen belonged to these upper-class immigrants as well as to the first period of European settlement in Kenya which began with the construction of the Uganda Railway 1901.

Huxley’s first encounter with an African country was in December 1913, when she joined her parents Jos and Nellie Grant in Thika, accompanied with a governess and a maid (Githae-Mugo 13).¹¹ The parents arrived first in Mombasa in 1912, in order to obtain a farm that they

¹⁰ On Safari with Theodore Roosevelt, 1909. <<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/tr.htm>>.

¹¹ See also Ondaatje, Christopher. <<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/books/cruel-cuts-for-excising-pm/170373.article>>.

thought it would pave the way to increase their wealth.¹² In 1915, a year after the start of the World War I, the family decided to dispose of their farm and leave Thika to Njoro, which is located in the great Kenya Rift Valley (Githae-Mugo 14). The family was settled precisely in the Kenyan highlands, home for a great population of Kikuyu, and “where Mrs. Huxley grew up from adolescence, and also it is the general scene of *Red Strangers*” (ibidem.). She was first educated in Nairobi’s European school, and then she pursued her higher studies in Britain and America (20). Her marriage with Gervas Huxley who held various positions under the British Colonial Administration enabled her to stay connected to Africa, particularly “through extensive travel” (ibidem.). As she was regarded as a reliable expert in African affairs, she was appointed as UK’s Independent Member of the Monckton Advisory Commission on Central Africa, in 1959 (ibidem.).

As for Karen Blixen or Isak Dinesen (her real name), she had the chance to discover Africa when she was twenty eight-years-old (Brantly xiii). After almost a year of her engagement to Baron Blixen-Finecke, she left Denmark on the second of December 1913, to join him in British East Africa (ibidem.), the same year when Huxley first arrived in Kenya. Actually, her fiancé came to Kenya in 1912 for the purpose to run a coffee farm, financially supported by Isak’s family (ibidem.). Then, she married him in Mombasa on the fourteenth of January 1914 (ibidem.). Marrying Baron Blixen and giving up her love for his brother was a beneficial affair that promoted her to rise in the social hierarchy; being a bourgeois did not meet her high expectations, she married a man she did not love and helped him to acquire a farm in Kenya in order to become a baroness, a title she lost by divorce which saddened her (Nixon 218). Karen Blixen spent about seventeen years and six months in Kenya. During this period, she kept visiting her country several times. In 1931, she realized that nothing was left to live for in Africa; she lost both her farm and her boyfriend Denys Finch Hatton, and therefore she left immediately the continent (Brantly xiv). The loss of her farm, according to the sarcastic tone of Nixon, was due to the fact that “she was at heart a good aristocrat and a poor entrepreneur” (218). She wanted to come back to Kenya after twenty-two years, but as a correspondent (Brantly xv). Unfortunately, her health deteriorated, and therefore she could not see Kenya again (ibidem.). What made these settlers distinctive is that they both shared several aspects: they were settlers in the same country, they both wrote about their experiences and memories in Kenya, and both their autobiographical works were adapted by visual media, a matter that will be discussed in the following sections as well as other similarities/differences.

¹² Ondaatje, Christopher. <<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/books/cruel-cuts-for-excising-pm/170373.article>>.

3. The western stereotypes of the Orient

The western racist perception of the Orient is reflected in the European treatment of the Other. The white Man perceives this Other as a completely opposite version of them. These beliefs have been nurtured constantly during three centuries since the commencement of the slave trade (Hall 239). Said argues that “[o]rientalism, [...], is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment” (6). In order to make his point clear, Said employs perfectly the concept of discourse developed by Michel Foucault as he strongly believes in the great ability of this concept in explaining Orientalism as “the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period” (3). It is very apparent that both religion and science have played a significant role in enhancing such racist beliefs.

3.1. The role of science and religion

The black Man is perceived as a wild animal which can be tamed, but cannot be trusted, just like lions and tigers, because “underneath the [domesticated] slaves remained by nature savage brutes” (Hall 243). Ironically, science proves this idea. In *Preface to the Origin of Species* (1862), the translation of Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*, the scientist Clémence Royer affirms that racial groups are “not distinct species”, they are “quite unequal varieties”.¹³ Previously, Samuel Morton publishes a book *Crania Americana* in 1839, in which he claims that the form of one’s skull defines his/her race, and therefore defines his/her hierarchal position on the human scale (ibidem.). The cranial test is also applied to Europeans traveling to ‘the dark places’; Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* which is based on his Congo diaries talks about his personal experience with this practice. The Belgian Company he is employed by requires a medical examination before leaving to Congo. Marlow, the character that represents the writer, learns from the conversation that takes place between him and the doctor, that the latter believes that the European people living “out there” are highly exposed to undergo mental changes, and most probably cranial changes (Conrad 13). Thus, it is very possible that a European settler can go native. The abundant publication of such scientific works has had a profound impact on people whose racist attitudes become inflated.

¹³ Newitz, Annalee. <<http://io9.gizmodo.com/the-9-most-influential-works-of-scientific-racism-rank-1575543279>>.

Scientists have been very proud of their achievements; they have been working to develop theories by drawing on other theories such as “Darwinian theories [which] gave the basis to the concept of racial, cultural and social degeneration” (Reid 61). A scientist like Max Nordau is so content of his book *Degeneration* (1895) that he “dedicated [it] to Cesare Lombroso whose *L'uomo delinquent* (1876) marked the course of criminal anthropology” (ibidem.). They go farther with these banal evidences to approve the fact that ‘the primitives’, as well as children and delinquents are alike in terms of the mental capacities (Reid 62). Evidence establishes that “the savage has the mind of a child with the passions of a man” (ibidem.). Actually, this thought is reflected in *FTT*, in which Huxley refers to the indigenous people working in the family’s farm as “boys”. Additionally, this idea is echoed in *OA* as Karen Blixen also considered them her boys.

It is worth mentioning that it is remarkable that almost all the well-known writers believe in the superiority of the white race, but with varied degrees. For example, both Conrad and E.M. Forster mock certain scientific approaches in their literary works. The dialogue between Conrad and the company’s doctor shows how the writer ridicules the medical test as well as the doctor. Regarding Forster, the triviality of racial science is introduced in his novel *A Passage to India* (1924). In the trial of Aziz, the protagonist who is accused by the British lady Adela of attempted rape, the District Superintendent of Police Mr Mc. Bryde starts lecturing the people about the theory of “climatic zones” (156). “The theory ran: ‘All unfortunate natives are criminals at heart, for the simple reason that they live south of latitude 30. [...] – we should be like them if we settled here.’ Born at Karachi, he seemed to contradict his theory, and would sometimes admit as much with a sad, quiet smile” (ibidem.). In a later trial, he adds “the darker races are physically attracted to the fairer, but not vice versa – not a matter for bitterness this, not a matter for abuse, but *a fact which any scientific observer will confirm*” (ibidem.; emphasis added). Aziz’s lawyer wittily comments: “even when the lady is so [sic] uglier than the gentleman” (ibidem.). Forster selects an Indian character to ridicule the superior white scientist as well as everybody who believes in such assumptions. It can be noticed that the idea of the white woman /man cannot be attracted to the black man/woman is invented to classify anyone who has a sexual relationship with ‘a savage’ as an abnormal person who has been contaminated, and this contamination will classify him/her as native, and therefore mad. It can be also interpreted that it is a tool to prevent the white race from miscegenation and ‘pollution’ of the white blood. Science, whether being challenged by faithful Christians or by certain novelists, proves to be stronger than any confrontation,

because it has demonstrated and convinced the people of the truth of the superiority of the white race, which almost every white man believes in and likes to believe in. However, racism is very connected to the social class in Europe, as the elite of the European society see that the sole distinguishing feature of “poor whites” and the Other is the skin colour (Jackson 344). This elite think that “nothing can be more damaging to the racial ideologies separating colonizers from colonized than the appearance of a white man with nothing but the colour of his skin” (ibidem.). Thus, in the west, the binary opposition of rich/poor almost equates the white/black.

On the other hand, The Bible does not consider the different races as equal; for instance, “Africans were declared to be the descendants of Ham, cursed in The Bible to be in perpetuity ‘a servant of servants unto his brethren’” (Hall 239). Missionaries have been established everywhere in the colonies working to enlighten the ‘ignorant people’, where thousands of people have been Christianized. Despite the fact that The Bible was challenged by the racial scientific movement, the influence of its racist statements on people does not decrease; the proof is that The Bible was employed to justify slavery in the United States, specifically during the civil war (Luse 383). When the revolutionary science challenged the Christian theory of monogenism¹⁴, the Church saw the advocates of polygenesis as disbelievers (ibidem.). It could be assumed that the mere thought that the white Man is an evolved version of the black Man, who himself was a developed monkey, was somehow unacceptable and irritating. Thus, their belief in monogenism was enhanced, because they were reassured that the white race origin is human by nature. As for the advocates of polygenesis, it could be presumed that they were satisfied with their dissimilarity to the monkey, unlike the black man whose appearance, in their view, is closer to the monkey than to the human. This conflict between religious and scientific perspectives appeared not powerful enough to drive the people to question the issue at that time. On the contrary, both religion and science have contributed to a great extent to the justification of colonialism.

3.2. An overview of the different contexts of the racial stereotypes

As the empires’ capitalist system demands more natural resources and new markets, the acquirement of new territories is the effective solution to build a stronger empire, economically and politically. Karl Marx is one of the most influential philosophers who

¹⁴ Monogenism is a belief that all humans have one origin, like it is stated in the Bible (and the other two Holy Books). Polygenesis, on the other hand, is the counter- theory of monogenism which means that the different human races come from different origins.

defends the issue. He most probably inherited the mentality of his father who was “a man of the Enlightenment, devoted to Voltaire and Kant”.¹⁵ He is mostly interested and driven by “the critical, sometimes radical social policies of the Enlightenment” (ibidem.). Although he does not mainly focus on imperialism in his works, he sees that “European colonialism [is] a necessary evil” (Steinmetz 86). In 1867, Marx expressed his optimism about the British occupation of India that will improve the country’s condition (ibidem.). This is the role or the duty of the superior and civilized countries, which is later defined by Kipling as “the white man’s burden”. Most interestingly,

[he] adumbrated a theory of settler colonization. The fact that the “bulk of soil” in a “free colony” like the United States is “still public property”, because it has been expropriated en bloc from its indigenous owners, means that “every settler” could “turn part of it into his private property and his individual means of production”, thereby resisting his own “(re)proletarianization”. (ibidem.)

It is very obvious that the era of colonialism is accompanied and constructed by a culture that all its various institutions have worked together to crown the white Man on the kingdom of humanity. Racism has been taught in schools, in universities, generation after generation has been brought up to a discriminating mentality. Racism circulates everywhere even in advertisements or what is called “commodity racism” (Hall 240).



Fig. 2: Pears Soap advertisement 1783

Source: <http://faculty.tlu.edu/svrooman/race/RACE.html>

Pears Soap is one of the most laughable and pitiful ads that humanity has ever known. A white child gives Pears soap to the black child to bathe or to clean himself, because blackness was associated with dirt, and in order to emphasize this dirt, the maker of the advertisement presents the result as a surprise: the head remains black, unfortunately, but, the black child is

¹⁵ McLellan, David T. <<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Karl-Marx>>.

happy. This can mean two things: either he forgets to use the soap on his face, and therefore the magical effect does not appear, or the soap, unfortunately, does not have that miraculous power to entirely whiten the black, nothing is able to turn ‘a savage’ into a white man or a human. Anyway, the black child appears satisfied with the white part. This caption of the black child’s happy face can be related to Anthony Trollope’s statement “[the African] despises himself thoroughly and would probably starve for a month if he would appear as a white man for a day” (qtd. in Ngugi, *WP* 14). This advertisement is very representative of certain ideals of the Enlightenment.

The great influence of the Enlightenment in Europe conduces to the fixation of the racist perception of the Other. Several thinkers of this movement believed in the inferiority of the darker races, including David Hume, Immanuel Kant, François Marie Arouet Voltaire, and John Locke. In the 1740s, David Hume declared that the white Man proves he is the superior race; he says: “I am apt to suspect the Negroes, and in general all other species of men to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was any civilized nation of any other complexion [sic] than white, nor even any individual eminent in action or speculation”¹⁶. This statement can be interpreted that he enviously denies the other peoples’ civilizations and great legacies that some of them still till this day considered as the world’s wonders, or he is simply ignorant or pretending to be ignorant of other histories and significant prosperous eras in all domains such as the Abbasid era. Voltaire also adopts the idea that the Africans’ intellectual capacity is inferior to the whites’, even though he disapproves of slavery (Ludwig and Adogame 4). Immanuel Kant once discredited an interesting report simply because it was written by an African student, claiming that “this fellow [is] quite black from head to toe, a clear proof that what he said was stupid”.¹⁷ As the Enlightenment is basically constructed on logic and science, it supports the racial science, and therefore it implants more the notion of the whites’ superiority. However, these thinkers have betrayed the principle of the logic of their movement, even though logic at that time has a different meaning.

It should be mentioned that the European missionaries and/or the European settlers have been more concerned with the traditional African religions; the Muslim and the Jewish communities have been left aside. It is recorded that Heinrich Barth the German traveller counsels the missionaries that all the efforts should be directed to the “traditional societies” or

¹⁶ Justin E.H. Smith’s The Enlightenment’s ‘Race’ Problem and Ours.
http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/10/why-has-race-survived/?_r=0

¹⁷ Justin E.H. Smith’s The Enlightenment’s ‘Race’ Problem and Ours.
http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/10/why-has-race-survived/?_r=0

animistic¹⁸ societies, and not to interfere with the Muslims, as he holds an affirmative opinion on them and Islam in general (Ludwig and Adogame 6). It appears that the missionaries have taken Barth's advice into account. His book *Travels and Discoveries* (1857) is a typical example of travel literature since it was based on the degradation of Africans as well as the racial classification of the various oriental societies. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the missionaries found The Acts 16 a "key biblical text" for their civilizing mission; it states that like the Macedonians, Africans are impatiently longing for the Europeans to "come over and help [them]" (5). This fits Wilhelm Blumenbach's classification of the races which puts the Africans at the foot of the racial pyramid, while the "Caucasians" at its peak (4).¹⁹ This explains why much emphasis was put on the traditional African features.

The Oriental or the Other was often portrayed in the European mind as everything opposing to the 'good' white Man. This dreadful depiction of the Other was reported by the European explorers of America, Africa and Asia, whose observations are taken for granted. People in Europe were eager to hear news and stories about the tribes living in the other worlds. The curiosity to encounter and know more about these peoples made the Other exotic. This culture was based upon fallacious observations of certain people who think that their experiences in the other peoples' lands have allowed them to understand well their cultures. The majority of these observers do not at least understand or speak their languages. These incorrect observations stereotyping the Other have been received as a general truth like the racist scientific evidence. It comes as no surprise that orientalism was more and more intensified by the beginning of the nineteenth century; the period between 1800 and 1950 witnessed a publication of approximately sixty thousand books about the Near Orient (Said, O 204). "The increasing influence of travel literature, imaginary utopias, moral voyages, and scientific reporting brought the Orient into sharper and more extended focus" (117). The accounts of travellers including Cook, Bougainville, Tournefort, Adanson, the Président de Brosses, William Dampier, in addition to certain traders and missionaries determined the public opinion on the east by the end of the eighteenth century (*ibidem.*).

But all such widening horizons had Europe firmly in the privileged center, as main observer (or mainly observed, as in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*). For even as Europe moved itself outwards, its sense of cultural strength was fortified. From

¹⁸ It was Edward Tylor who defined the "African traditional religions" or the African "belief in spiritual beings" as "animism" in 1871 (Ludwig and Adogame 5).

¹⁹ Ludwig and Adogame mention that later Wilhelm Blumenbach has relatively revised this classification, stating that "he concluded that Africans were not as stereotypical as he had previously assumed" (4). But, this slight modification of his position does not cease to be racist.

travelers' tales, and not only from great institutions like the various India companies, colonies were created and ethnocentric perspectives secured. (ibidem.)

This definite period is what Said considers the beginning of "modern Orientalism". In addition to science and religion, travel literature has significantly contributed to found orientalism or racism. In his article *An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*, Chinua Achebe points out to the inaccuracy and the unreliability of travellers' literature (Achebe 1792). He talks about Marco Polo, a traveller of the thirteenth century who has lived in China for twenty years, passing this period specifically in the court of Kublai Khan (ibidem.). Achebe notices in the traveller's book *Description of the World* that he does not refer to two things out that it is very strange for such a traveller not to remark them; the first is the flourishing of the printing art which remains unfamiliar in Europe until the next century, and the second is the Great Wall of China which is about one thousand years old at that time, and surprisingly, it is the sole construction that can be seen from the moon as Achebe says ironically (ibidem.). It can be assumed that Marco Polo avoids mentioning them because he wants to deny the Orient its glory. Hiding these achievements is meant to enhance the prejudices about oriental laziness and backwardness.

The orientalist infection has also been extended to the painters. The orientalist painting reached its peak in the nineteenth and twentieth century. The famous tableaux include Eugène Delacroix's, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's, and Long Edwin's. While Delacroix has been known for his portrayals of the Harem in North Africa, Ingres has been celebrated for "his nudes".²⁰ His painting *The Turkish Bath* (1862) erotically represents several naked women craving for "the West's penetration" (Ma 16). Delacroix's depiction of the harem in his tableaux mirrors the western man fantasizing about entering that mysterious space in which no male stranger is allowed (15). As for Edwin, his artistic reputation has been settled by his *Babylonian Marriage Market* (1875), a painting that portrays girls in a marriage market literally waiting to be purchased, but metaphorically waiting to be saved by the European men to whom they will submit their bodies. It is implied that the most attractive girl to the white man is the one holding a mirror reflecting the light on her face. Hall sees that the focus on her white face "approximates most closely to the western ideal, the norm" (Hall 260). The harem also has been perceived in the same way; on the surface, the western man shows sympathy for the women there who are victims of polygamy and patriarchy, but the fact is that this man secretly longs for them in his sexual dreams: "Women's bodies were the metaphoric

²⁰ Shelton, Andrew Carrington. <<http://www.britannica.com/biography/J-A-D-Ingres>>.

battlegrounds for European domination of North Africa. Ultimately, trespassing into the harem and penetrating the women demonstrated manly European conquest” (16). Painting the Other, in fact, reveals “the West’s self-identification” (ibidem.), and therefore the misleading depiction of the Orient.



Fig. 3: *The Babylonian Marriage Market*, 1875

Source: Babylonian Marriage Market²¹

The western definition of the Other is created from “a battery of desires, repressions, investments and projection” (Said, O 8). Fantasizing about the Other results in a dual perception of him/her as disgusting, but appealing simultaneously. Although the Orient is always considered inferior, it is a dream for westerners to discover this mysterious world, to experience exoticism to the fullest. The oriental is found disgusting, but enjoyable. Such assumption is reflected in Gustave Flaubert and Kuchuk Hanem’s story, a story he reported after his travel to Egypt (186-87); despite the fact that Flaubert sees with contempt this oriental prostitute as a sex machine, he somehow likes her. He despises her, but sleeps with her: a schizophrenic fascination. This ambivalence is highlighted in the description of her scent; “the ‘nauseating odor’ of her bedbugs mingled enchantingly with the scent of her skin, which was dripping with sandalwood” (187). Flaubert’s abject view of the Oriental woman diminishes her to the state of “neither subject nor object” (Kristeva 1). This Egyptian woman

²¹<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/aboutus/artcollectionandpicturegallery/explore/babylonianmarriagemarket.aspx>

as abject “has one quality of the object—that of being opposed to I [the European]” (ibidem.). Similar to the abject, the Other is “what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, rules [of the western culture]. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (4). This is how Flaubert perceives an Oriental woman, and what probably makes her mysterious in his eyes is her ability to generate these two opposite feelings inside him at the same time. It can be concluded that (from Flaubert’s point of view) the white Man stands at the border of the western culture, Hanem Kuchuk at the border of the Other culture and Flaubert is in between, as he has transgressed the border of his own society, and now he fears to cross the frontier of the Other, since the mere desire of the Other is not allowed in his culture. As a typical western man in the colonial era, it is very possible that Flaubert has somehow felt ashamed of such desire. Being ashamed of that experience is abject, and “abject and abjection are his safeguards. The primers of his culture” (2). In other words, the abject’s function is to protect him from degradation; in order to save his identity, everything opposing it has to be excluded.

The Other as abject, threatens with the breaking of the barriers, for example, miscegenation is feared in the European colonies, because it is considered as one of the most intolerable sins, for it results in the pollution, and therefore in the possible extinction of the pure white blood. To them, the blood mixture will turn them into what they have abhorred most all their lives: they and the ‘natives’ will become equal. In fact, this western abject perception of the Other explains the ambivalent attitudes towards the Other, which will be dealt with in the next chapters. As Flaubert was one of the notable figures of Eurocentrism, Said devotes a considerable part in *Orientalism* to this French novelist for discussing his orientalist works. From an experience with an Egyptian prostitute, he superficially concludes she is “typically oriental” (Said, O 6). In a letter to Louis Colet, talking about this experience, he states confidently that “the Oriental woman is no more than a machine: she makes no distinction between one man and another man” (187). It appears that Flaubert has forgotten that this is the job of all prostitutes all over the world; it is not exclusive to the Oriental prostitutes. When he talks about the latter, he gives the impression that Europe is devoid of brothels which he finds them immoral, and therefore he projects this European immorality on the Other, by generalizing all the Oriental women being as prostitutes. Thus, Flaubert confirms to the western audience the Oriental stereotypes. This is what Said condemns in such representation of the Oriental women.

Later in 1995, Naguib Mahfouz published a book entitled *Midaq Alley* in which he deals with the issue of prostitution in colonial Egypt from the point of view of the Oriental man who also tells the readers about the colonizer's relationship with the oriental prostitute. This work actually fits Spivak's notion of the subaltern²² that can be fully applied on the representation of the Egyptian woman; it is not clear whether the writer attacks "the fallen woman" (Gohar 51) or criticizes the society's notion of this woman while mirroring the Egyptian patriarchy. If the writer is anti-feminist, it adds to the burden of this woman and makes her triply colonized: by her society, by the British colonizer and "by a phallogocentric narrator" (ibidem.). Driven by her desire to dominate man and by her will to become rich, Hamida, the protagonist, chooses to work as a prostitute. It is claimed that she is "a whore by nature" (ibidem.). The critic Saddik Gohar summarizes the submissive position of Hamida as "suffocating the voice of the voiceless" (52). Throughout the novel, almost every male character is a sort of a protagonist, but the female protagonist, as the focus has been directed at the male actions (ibidem.). He thinks that Mahfouz punishes the fallen woman by banning her marriage with Salim Alwan by transforming him into an impotent man, because she abandons her fiancé Abbas Alhilu, by making her fall in love with Farag who turns to be a prostitute-recruiter, and by keeping Farag alive when she wants to get rid of him. The fate of the fallen woman is portrayed as tragic; whenever she tries to liberate herself from the constraints of her society and the dreadful circumstances she experiences, she is somehow pulled back and prevented from moving forward. She has been doomed to be caught between three options: "to live in poverty with Abbas, the barber or be enslaved by local patriarchy represented by Salim Alwan or become a harlot prostituting her body and entertaining the colonizer" (65). For the sake of the British soldiers, Hamida is ordered to learn what satisfies their orientalist imagination; "She had now learned Oriental and Western dancing and she also showed a quicker ear for learning the sexual principles of the English Language" (qtd. in 56). Thus, she represents the very embodiment of Spivak's statement "the silent or the silenced subaltern" (ibidem.).

To reduce two extremely different worlds or cultures in a binary opposition is the most illogical and the most dangerous mistake that entails the most ferocious wars humanity had ever known. Actually, the term binary opposition was brought into use from linguistics in poststructuralism by Jacques Derrida to develop his concept of deconstruction (Murfin and Ray 39). The concept shows how "people in western culture tend to link and express their thoughts

²² The concept will be dealt with in further details in the chapter "A doubly- colonized Kikuyu Woman".

in terms of contrary pairs” (ibidem.). Obviously the stereotypes hold an abject meaning since it does not represent, as Derrida says, “a peaceful coexistence but rather a violent hierarchy” (qtd. in Hall 258). This brutality of such a hierarchy is imposed by the Ethnocentrism (ibidem.). In order to establish this culture, stereotyping is naturalized to effectively “[maintain the] social and symbolic order” (ibidem.). Hall explains this idea as follows:

It sets up a symbolic frontier between ‘the normal’ and the ‘deviant’, the ‘normal’ and the ‘pathological’, the ‘acceptable’ and the ‘unacceptable’, what ‘belongs’ and what does not or is ‘Other’, between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, Us and Them. It facilitates the ‘binding’ or bonding together of all of Us who are ‘normal’ into one ‘imagined community’; and it sends into symbolic exile all of Them – ‘the Others’ – who are in some way different – ‘beyond the pale’. (ibidem.)

Like the concept of abject, the stereotype is meant to preserve the western principles and anyone who dares to dance outside the prescribed path will be immediately sent to the Coventry. As Hall argues, the racial stereotyping is the very embodiment of the white man’s desires, fears and anxieties. It functions as a projector of the westerner’s psyche regarding the Other; it projects the ambivalent abject. While sometimes it is used as a strategy to prevent the horrors of losing one’s identity, it is sometimes viewed as a serious enemy that can turn the western world upside down. Black slaves, for instance, were castrated literally and metaphorically because the white masters worried about the big black penis which was “secretly envied” (262). Fantasizing about a deluge of black rapists, castration becomes a dire necessity to uphold the white honour (ibidem.), more precisely, to get rid of the feelings of inferiority towards the black Man. While this profound reading of the binary oppositions reveals the western way of constructing the world, it demonstrates how they are employed to fix the other in his/her otherness.

One of the most significant binaries is centre/periphery which is defined by Annedith M. Schneider as “a fundamental concept of colonial discourse” (Schneider 85). Considering the relationship between the benevolent and the malevolent, the centre finds itself obliged “to protect both [itself] and the periphery from itself” (ibidem.). This exposes how the West has been living in/treating a world that exists solely in its imagination. The white man’s ‘burden’ appears as an inevitable result of such fantasies, and it is needless to say that the distortion of the Orient’s image is advanced as an excuse to suck the bounties of the Other’s lands. Colonialism was an investment in the great empires’ future. Similarly to the Pharaonic civilization, “C.L.R. James, Eric Williams, W.E.B. Dubois and others have documented the fact that many of the wealthiest cities in Europe were built upon the flesh of millions of

Africans” (Ngugi, *MC* 130). As a product of their age, the selected books of the thesis cover how “the Men of God”²³ flow to the colonial territories, as the duty calls to enlighten the dark minds; churches of different religious orientations are constructed. They share the same principle, even though they do not approve of slight matters. In *OA*, Blixen favours the French mission over the Scottish mission which focuses on the necessity that the indigenous people should wear European clothes, because she finds this practice useless (*OA* 35). Several churches build their own hospitals. Both the church and the school mirror the fact that solely education can make the local inhabitants believe in the benevolence of the colonizer. This idea can be traced in *RS*, when Kaleo’s father sadly confesses “his heart is there; and do not know how to speak to him” (368). On the other hand, the educational system is meant to cause a permanent amnesia to the native inhabitants and to make them forget about their cultural and traditional conventions.

In the introduction of *Orientalism*, Said discusses the Europeans’ clinging to those fantasies about the exotic Other. He mocks a French journalist’s article about the Lebanese civil war 1975-1976 in which he mourns a demolished place that “had once seemed to belong to ... Orient of Chateaubriand and Nerval” (qtd. in *O* 1). The destruction of such place means the fantasies that are built upon it have evaporated. To the journalist, it does not matter whether there are victims or not, the sole thing that matters is the safety of that exotic fantasy he carries in his mind. In fact, the idea of protecting such fantasies is also present in the minds of the French colonizers of Morocco; in an attempt to protect the Berber from “Arabization and Islamicization”, the French have introduced various policies in the colony for the sake not to destroy those “romantic stereotypes about Algerian Kabyle society” (Steinmetz 88).

After decolonization, the fantasies about the Oriental Other are still being continuously revived by travel agencies, in films, and in TV series. Such revival can solely be interpreted as nostalgia of ‘those great days’. *OA* and *FTT*, as perfect products of the colonial age, have been adapted for film in 1985 and TV mini-series in 1981, respectively. The period between the releases of these works reflects that the reminiscence about imperialism and colonialism was quite fashionable by the end of the twentieth century. Since Blixen appeared better known than Huxley in the audiences’ minds, the film adaptation of *OA* directed by Sydney Pollack was more successful than the BBC series; “an obscure Danish writer who ran a failed coffee farm in East Africa in 1920s seems a scarcely powerful enough subject for a film that would gross \$27 million in its first three weeks” (Nixon 217). Furthermore, the film was supported

²³ I have borrowed the title of the fifth chapter in the second book in *RS*.

by various reviewers and critics and even her biographer Judith Thurman (220). The famous newspaper, *The New York Times* was so excited about the film adaptation that it devoted four pages to Kenya in the travel section (ibidem.). Many people had been unaware that they were celebrating the “bottomless settler jingoism” (ibidem.). The TV mini-series, as “one of the imperial nostalgia” achieves “quieter successes in the BBC/ PBS version” (ibidem.). In his article, *Twice Bitten: The Fate of Africa’s Culture Producers*, Wole Soyinka attacks both adaptations, as he describes them as “sundowner [pieces] of colonial nostalgia” (Soyinka 116). What is most striking is that no Kenyan author condemned such works, and the most shocking response comes from the Kenyan government that has bought the series (ibidem.). While the Europeans are reminiscing about their great days in Africa, the ‘government’ of Kenya, surprisingly, appears to have missed its colonial past and/or serve the former colonizers’ benefits.

Furthermore, the back-cover of *OA* reprinted in 2001 consists of romantic statements: one by *The Times* and the other one is a kind of summary of the book, and both of them celebrate the passionate writer. The sentence “*Out of Africa* describes her strong friendship with the people of the area” (*OA*, back cover) is misleading: either the writer of this statement is blind to the racism in the book, or he is trying to cover it for obvious reasons including the aim to embellish the former colonizer’s image. Unfortunately, the colonial racism still circulates nowadays through such revivals. It is very regrettable that today we have witnessed the revival of the misleading conception of Islam as “the anti-religion of Christianity” (Ma 15) in some media’s constant representation of the binary opposition Christian westerners/Muslim Arabs, for example Fox News, especially with the growing terrorism which is actually the first enemy of Muslims before anyone else.

4. The ambivalent attitudes of the indigenous people towards the colonizer in Karen Blixen and Elspeth Huxley

4.1. The mimic Man²⁴

The encounter with the white man was in itself a culture clash for the Africans who the majority of them saw a white man for the first time. When they realized that this man was looking for exploiting them and their lands, they resisted him, but then they gave up as they

²⁴ This title is originated in V.S. Naipaul’s *The Mimic Men*.

were convinced that he was undefeatable, and the spears and arrows they used to fight with were no longer useful. Thus, colonialism succeeded in establishing itself in the region. The colonizers worked hard to develop ‘the primitives’ and bring the European civilisation into practice. The Africans had internalized the idea that they are inferior to these colonizers, and therefore they started to see themselves in need of the Europeans. They were extremely curious about anything which is European, the train, the bicycle, the plane, the ship, and the lamp light. Everything was strange and appealing to them. This overwhelming fascination and the belief in their inferiority resulted in their will in mimicking the white man, as they saw in him the right model to follow.

Mimicry is a concept that Homi. K. Bhabha introduces as an elaborated study of this cultural phenomenon. Drawing on Samuel Weber’s notion of castration, 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*” (86). To the colonizer, whatever the Other does in the attempt to resemble the European man, he cannot and will not rise to the level of their white masters. On the other hand, the colonized people as victims of colonial demagoguery are desperate to achieve that status. The purchase of certain European things becomes a must do to prove to themselves that they are capable of acquiring such things. The colonized uses these possessions to show off. Kamau, one of Huxley’s family servants in the memoir, is very much influenced by the European life style; he “[wishes] to copy [them]” (*FTT* 134). Njombo also “[has] long desired a watch” (263). Sammy, another servant of the family, buys a bicycle and a watch which any native cannot afford; he thinks that these European things will bring him respect and make him like a European, and therefore superior to his own people. The close servants appear to be more fascinated, even obsessed sometimes with the new culture than anyone else. It can be concluded that “the discourse of mimicry is constructed around *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continuously produce its slippage, its excess, its difference” (Bhabha 86). David Huddart explains that “colonial discourse wants the colonized to be extremely like the colonizer, but by no means identical” (Huddart 59).

The selected works contain all that scenes of Christianized locals who exaggerate to look like Europeans. “In fact, mimicry as Bhabha understands it is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas” (57). In *OA*, Kamante, Blixen’s cook, is more Christian than Christians. He is the sole servant who takes care of Knudsen, the fellow-compatriot of the writer, despite his violent behaviour (*OA* 60), because he thinks it is his duty to help his

Christian brother. Whenever he has a chance, he wants to prove to his msabu²⁵ and to other Kikuyu that he is a good Christian (61-62). His attempts to show off his Christianity can be interpreted that he is not convinced that his master considers him a (true) Christian; to her, it is strange or it is hard to believe that a black Christian can equate a white Christian. Ordering him to bring Farah to help her move the deceased Knudsen, Kamante feels offended for she forgets he is Christian, and unlike the ordinary Kikuyu, he does not fear the evil effects of touching a corpse. Reminding her of this incident after a considerable period of time reveals the fact that he is very aware of the writer's indifference to Christianized blacks and that he needs her acknowledgement to feel the complete satisfaction, or most probably to help him believe himself that he is a true Christian. This can also be traced in her statement that she "[does] not sympathize with the missions" (33). Thus, she finds that the missionaries' efforts in civilizing the 'savages' are not that fruitful, and it is impossible for a native to be like a European in being Christian.

In her memoir, Huxley reports on one of the settlers' tongue, Hereward's, that "mission boys [...] are [t]he ruin of perfectly good natives" (126). In other words, Christianity does not work with indigenous people. The same idea is reflected in *RS*; Karanja wants to get rid of his Kikuyu name as he is going to be baptized under a European name, Harrison (387). A considerable number of indigenous people are ready to do anything that promotes them to be like the white Man. By mimicking the colonizer, these people make themselves camouflaged beings. In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha quotes Jacques Lacan who states that "[t]he effect of mimicry is camouflage.... It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background, of becoming mottled – exactly like the technique of camouflage practised in human warfare" (qtd. in Bhabha 85). The colonial discourse has achieved nothing in the colonies, but disfigured versions of the colonizer that will rebel against their oppressors sooner or later. As Fanon's book *Black Skin, White Masks* constitutes the source of inspiration in the building of the concept of mimicry, the idea of masks, specifically "their menacing effects", represents a matter of concern in Bhabha's study of the term (Childs, Weber and Williams 79). His examination of the portrayal of camouflage in Fanon's essay *Algeria Unveiled* shows how the colonizer perceives the Algerian women's veils as masks that hide the "terrorist" face (80); this happens when the colonial authorities in Algeria discover that women also participate in the armed resistance to the French. To the

²⁵ It means master in Swahili, and it is used for women.

colonizer, the veil “becomes a technique of camouflage, a means of struggle – the veil conceals bombs” (Bhabha 63).

The European clothes that Benson Makuna wears as well as his closeness to the Europeans considering his work in the colonial government are used as a camouflage of his rejection of colonialism, as a white mask to hide his rebellion against the colonizer. In fact, Bhabha approves with Lacan of the idea that mimicry is similar to camouflage, “not a harmonization of repression or difference, but a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying it in part, metonymically” (qtd. in 81). In this context or/and in simpler words, like mimicry, camouflage is “*almost the same, but not quite*” (86). The colonial discourse imposed on these people is so effective that they internalize the colonizer’s gaze. However, the mimic men represent an ironic version of the Europeans which results in the colonizer’s anxiety. Hence, “it is the colonizer who is haunted by his discourse” (Huddart 61). Bhabha remarks that Macaulay’s beliefs in English as the best language to be taught to Indians have led solely to a body of “Anglicized” interpreters, a body of “reformed colonial subjects” (Bhabha 87). This is what the colonizer wants the colonized to be, to resemble him, but not to equate him. At the same time, the colonizer is also irritated with his inability to produce similar versions of himself. The fact that the colonial discourse has been the dominant humanistic discourse at the colonial age is echoed in Bhabha’s statement that “the great tradition of European humanism seems capable only of ironizing itself” (ibidem.). Actually, Said condemns the humanists’ leniency with imperialism before the colonized peoples start to protest against their oppressors (CI 97).

Bhabha’s concept of the mimic man is inspired from several literary works of Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, George Orwell and V. S. Naipaul (ibidem.). In *A Passage to India*, Aziz can be read as a character embodying being “Anglicized is *emphatically* not to be English” (Bhabha 87), as the processes of “repetition, imitation, resemblance” construct the scheme of taming and enlightening of the native population (Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker 226). In other words, Otherness is the effect of “repetition and displacement” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 103). When Aziz visits Mr Fielding, he is surprised with his untidy room, something he does not expect from a British man. While Aziz comes wearing the British elegance that announces his attention to details, Fielding cannot find his collar stud, and starts complaining about the reason for wearing it. As Aziz gives him his collar stud, Ronny mocks his inattention to details thinking that he forgets it. He says: “Aziz was exquisitely dressed, from tie-pin to spats, but he had forgotten his back collar-stud, and there

you have the Indian all over: inattention to detail; the fundamental slackness that reveals the race” (Forster 75). With or without a collar-stud, Aziz, in the eyes of the colonizer, cannot be considered a real English man whatever he tries to, because with the collar-stud he is the same, but not white, and without it he is ‘almost the same, but not quite/white’.

Naipaul’s novel *The Mimic Men* also deals with the exaggeration of mimicry. Ralph Singh tends often to imitate people, for example, in an evening at the British Council, he “exaggerated the dancer’s movements if [he] had an audience” (Naipaul 25). Due to his feeling of inferiority, he changes his name from Ranjit Kripalsingh to Ralph Singh (113). The narrator’s mimicry reveals a desperate search for his identity as he longs to become whole. He as well as his compatriots “pretended to be real, to be learning, to be preparing [themselves] for life, [they] mimic men of the New World” (175). Throughout the novel, Naipaul keeps using the image of the shipwreck as reflection of his fragmented self. When he comes back home from London to the Caribbean island Isabella, he feels alive (67). Tired of the colonial metropolitan, he experiences a sense of security in the marginal home. In his article *Jasmine*, he refers to “the crippling effect of his English education”, and remembers how the study of English literature is sometimes confusing since he is unfamiliar with certain things (Thieme 6-7). He says:

The language was ours, to use as we pleased. The literature that came with it was therefore of peculiar authority; but the literature was like an alien mythology. There was, for instance, Wordsworth’s notorious poem about the daffodil. A pretty little flower, no doubt; but we had never seen it. Could the poem have any meaning for us? ... Books came from afar; they could offer only fantasy. (qtd. in Thieme 7)

This is a sample of what he pretends to understand, of one of the causes of his shattered identity or identities. Naipaul, in fact, believes that the colonized cannot avoid mimicking the colonizer (Kochhar-Lindgren 297), and for that reason he feels displaced as he “occupies the impossible space between cultures. [...]. Occupying also the precarious ‘area between mimicry and mockery’, the mimic man is therefore iconic both of the enforcement of colonial authority and its ‘strategic failure’ ” (Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker 227). Caught in his anxiety, the narrator appears pessimistic about himself getting out from the bottleneck.

In fact, mimicry is not solely resemblance, but both mockery and menace (Bhabha 86); the mimic Man does not/cannot adopt the European culture like the European wants him to. Here, the mockery is situated in the ambivalent colonial discourse. The contradiction of colonial discourse “does not merely ‘rupture’ the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a ‘partial’ presence” (ibidem.). The colonizer is

no longer reassured by being mimicked as he realizes that mimicry is capable of threatening him and his ideologies. The colonizer finds himself “unable to control the consequences brought about by that difference – particularly the colonized’s agency that is implied by the slippages of meaning” (Huddart 59). The colonizer is anxious as those fantasies about the Other proved to be wrong. The colonized who is thought to be devoid of personal will stands now in the face of his oppressor and challenges his colonial power. The resistance of the colonized becomes the most fearful thing to the colonizer. The mimic men, in the selected books, do not take the teachings of the European man for granted; they question things continuously. Although their questioning is depicted as/often appears banal to the Europeans, they should not be perceived as stupid, because they compare their traditional beliefs with the new ones in an intelligent manner, which sometimes ridicules and even challenges the Europeans’ credibility.

In *RS*, the discussion between Muthengi and the interpreter, after the trial of Matu who is thought to be the killer of Karue’s son, exposes the European corruption in the judicial domain. After asking several questions to the interpreter in order to understand the concept of prison, Muthengi concludes that the European law is unjust, because instead of compensating the victim’s family, the fine goes to “the stranger” (*RS* 202). He then adds “[n]ow I understand how these strangers have become so exceedingly rich; when they sit in judgment they award nothing to the injured person, but everything to themselves” (*ibidem.*). Later in the novel, Benson Makuna is introduced as a militant who resists the European oppression. This person is a special mimic man. Although he is Christianized, he is married to more than one wife (321). He is so brilliant that he is employed in a great position in the European government in Kenya Colony, a job that permits him to know the colonial secrets (*ibidem.*). This character is working hard to make his people aware of the European unjust treatment of them. The education that is meant to enlighten the indigenous people is now turning against the Europeans. Charles Grant has once pointed out to the possibility that Indians might rebel against them, as he was aware of the gaps of their teaching that will someday threaten their colonial authority (Bhabha 87). The colonizer knows that someday the gaps in his perception of the Other will be used against him.

Furthermore, Benson Makuna suggests that the Kikuyu can be both Christians and believers in the Kikuyu traditional customs including the girls’ circumcision. He tells his fellows that the ban of this traditional practice is a European conspiracy that aims “to bring sterility on all young men and women of Kikuyu, in order that the black Messiah should not be born” (*RS*

348). It has been thought among the Kikuyu that the uncircumcised girl is “unclean” and can “most probably be barren” (347). What happens here is that a distorted version of Christianity, a new religious orientation has been created. As the ceremony of circumcision is approaching, the Kikuyu make new songs as well as new dances in order to mislead the colonial officials who are working hard to control these practices. Surely, the European man, when coming to colonize and civilize the indigenous people, has never ever thought about or expected such consequences, even in his worst nightmares. This is the very manifestation of mockery and menace of mimicry. Benson Makuna has transformed from being totally “English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect” (Bhabha 87), but Kikuyu “in blood and colour” (ibidem.), to more partially English. Before working in the government, he has been a ‘good native’ and the proof is that they have trusted him on their colonial issues. It can be interpreted that the mimic Man is a version of the white Man’s ideals; the mimic Man learns from the latter how to see himself inferior, and in doing so, he attempts constantly to imitate him, and then he becomes a European going native, and being seduced by ‘the call of the wild’ is something that the colonizer wants to follow, but rejects at the same time. This is a different angle from which one can see why the colonizer is terrified by his colonial version.

Menace, however, can be dealt with from a different perspective. Surprisingly, certain landmarks of postcolonial studies refer unconsciously to the colonizer as an active agent and the colonized as a passive agent. It can be concluded that Said’s orientalism and Bhabha’s mimicry are dealt with from the western perspective; it can be noted that these concepts fix unintentionally the colonized people in their ‘passivity’, an accusation that has been faked against them. In other words, they do not focus on the destructive effects of the colonial discourse on the cultures of the colonized peoples. The mimic Man adapting the colonial discourse represents actually menace to both the European culture and the original culture. Most of the mimic men introduced in the selected works consider their own people and culture as backward. Juma, a close servant of Huxley’s family, despises the local inhabitants’ ignorance of the European system. When he and his master Robin are trying to explain the concept of employment and wages to them, Juma tells him “[t]hey are too stupid to understand rupees” (*FTT* 23). In the scene of “the lamp”, Robin seizes the opportunity of the Kikuyu’s curiosity about the lamp to drive them to work in his coffee plantation. Throughout the discussion, Juma functioning as an interpreter cannot help hiding his contempt for these people and he “almost shook the toto²⁶ in his vehemence” (25). Juma, as a typical Swahili,

²⁶ Toto means a boy in Swahili.

despises the other tribes, including the Kikuyu and the Masai who themselves reject each other for certain reasons like the Masai eating chicken which he thinks it has caused their cowardice (8), although they are feared for their ferocity in wars. It is true that Juma is indifferent of the various tribes of his race, but he is strongly affected by the European's contempt for the indigenous people to the extent that he helps and approves his bwana²⁷ of mocking and profiting the people's ignorance to pay them a lamp for a month of work. He is even blind to the fact that in the eyes of his master he does not differ from the others.

As the original inhabitants have accustomed themselves to the European clothing and manners, they start to reject their traditional clothes as well as their life style. Karanja, when put in prison for accusing him of conspiring with his friend Karioki to steal money from an Indian shop, feels humiliated, because he is deprived of his European clothes and he is given a blanket instead. In his mind, the blanket becomes associated with "ignorant men who only understand how to cultivate a shamba"²⁸ (RS 334), forgetting that most of the settlers are unfamiliar with agriculture, and in a dire need to the indigenous people to grow the coffee plantations for them and help them make a fortune, and therefore live in luxury from the crops. Muthengi, a respectable Kikuyu warrior, driven by his greediness and the will to be respectable by/like the European, betrays his own people. As he is allocated the position of a chief Njama²⁹, he sends for his Kikuyu fellows to be trapped and taken to participate in the World War I (272), a war which is not theirs, and they have endured it like they have done with colonialism. The indigenous people are enforced to fight side by side with the colonizers their enemies. In *FTT*, Njombo is praying for his English master to defeat the Germans. The World War I breaks out, and the settlers are hurrying to join their national armies. As Njombo bids farewell to Robin, he says excitedly, overestimating his master's power: "may God help you to kill many, many Germans; kill one for me, since I cannot go myself, and slit open his stomach and cut off his head! You will kill them all single-handed!" (*FTT* 261-62). To Njombo, the enemy of his colonizer is undoubtedly his enemy. This internalization of the different European ideas and problems is a manifestation of an unconscious and uncritical mimicry which is itself a result of the lie of blacks' inferiority that the west invents and believes it.

Furthermore, the Kikuyu vocabulary has undergone certain changes, new words have been added from the racist colonial lexical register, such as "ignorant" and "ignorant savage".

²⁷ It means master in Swahili.

²⁸ A shamba is a Kikuyu word that means "cultivated land" (RS 7)

²⁹ Njamas are the local inhabitants working for the colonial government.

Before the invasion of the colonizers, the indigenous people have lived in an organized world in which everybody has his/her own rights and duties. The elders function as the guarantors of justice, and are trusted by their people. They have also a definite set of social conventions to which all individuals adhere. This does not mean that the Kikuyu culture is perfect, no culture is perfect, but every culture is unique despite its unacceptable practices. Before colonialism, they have assumed they live in peace, even though they have certain conflicts with other tribes, as they have been familiar with their enemies. In the first book of *RS*, the Kikuyu are depicted as a special people who are leading a harmonious life until they encounter the “red strangers”, and everything has turned upside down. Their solidarity disappears as the colonial system is violently imposed on them in every detail of their daily life. In fact, this novel recalls Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall apart*, in which the Igbo people in Nigeria have faced the same calamity. Whereas the African writer condemns colonialism, Huxley writing from the perspective of the indigenous people does not hide her approval of ‘the civilizing mission’.

It is argued that mimicry is comic, because while it appears as a manifestation of the inferior’s desperate attempts to rise to the status of the superior European, it threatens the colonial discourse and calls for resistance to colonialism. By relating mimesis to mimicry, Bhabha explains how mimicry as a “low mimetic literary effect” of the colonial discourse laughs “the epic intention of the civilizing mission” (Bhabha 85). Like mimesis, mimicry, does not provide an accurate description of reality. Mimicry, in fact, ends up creating an ironic model of the colonial ideals. Thus, “[t]he desire to emerge as ‘authentic’ through mimicry – through a process of writing and repetition – is the final irony of partial representation” (88), since “[m]imicry *repeats* rather than *re-presents*” (ibidem.). This desire to become authentic results in “being more British than the British” (Huddart 65). As a consequence of that partial representation, the menace of mimicry lies in its “double vision” which exposes the equivocation of the colonial discourse and disempowers it (Bhabha 88). This is what makes of the colonized an “inappropriate colonial subject” (ibidem.).

4.2. The local inhabitants’ notion of the ‘good’ European

One of the catching similarities that the selected books share is the colonized notion of the good European. This notion proves that mimicry is “one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power” (Bhabha 85). The indigenous people believe naively in the benevolence of the colonizer. This belief in the good-heartedness of the colonizer comes from

the settlers' performance of the notion of 'the white man's burden' of which they are very fond. In the works mentioned, the local inhabitants appear to forget that they are colonized, and/or to be unaware of being colonized. In *FTT*, Juma the main servant of Huxley's family has shown nothing but loyalty to his masters. This is very apparent in the previous discussion of this character. What is more striking is Kamau hanging the pictures of the British emperor and empress on the wall of the farm's office. Kamau's pride of these colonial supremacies reveals the success of that colonial strategy in establishing the mentality that the European man seeks to fix in the minds of 'the natives'. In this autobiographical work, the natives appear to love the gentle and mild masters who do not often treat them very violently. Huxley depicts her father Robin as a moderate colonial settler comparing to other fellows, specifically the Dutch settler Mr Roos.

In the scene of the fight of Sammy and Mr Roos, Robin is annoyed with the other settler's abusive behaviour. Although the writer thinks that unlike the Kikuyu, Mr Roos is "not rough or violent" (*FTT* 44), it is very evident that he is not. The description of the quarrel and the use of the whip have betrayed her account, since she considers whipping the workers is a normal practice. This can be traced in her statement: "and although the long whip he cracked continually above their backs stung them like a hornet when he so intended, he did not use it with cruelty" (*ibidem.*). As he tries to break up the fight, he gives the impression that he is defending his employer, and when he throws away Sammy's spear, the Kikuyu help him in keeping it away from his reach. The attention here should be drawn to Sammy's self-pride; he makes himself respectable among Europeans, especially Tilly and Robin who speak to him "as they would speak to a fellow European" (43). Sammy stays loyal to his masters not because he thinks that they respect him, like the writer assumes, but because he believes in their good will. He is not aware of the fact that Robin is solely concerned about the farm's business. It can be understood that 'the natives' like their European master from the incident of the Kikuyu men's refusal of doing women's job that consists of cutting weeds. According to the colonial mind, Robin is supposed to punish severely these disobedient men. But instead, he ponders: "I know what our Dutch friend would do, [...]. Put them down and give them twenty-five"³⁰ (59). Although this aggressive practice is "a sovereign remedy", he rejects it by avoiding "the necessity" as possible as he can (59-60). What distinguishes Robin from the other settlers is his flexibility; when the Kikuyu men do not obey, he does not penalize them, but he brings a group of women to do the work, saying "[w]e can't reform

³⁰ meaning twenty-five lashes.

their customs overnight” (60). He is a realist, but rather cunning; he masters using any situation to his benefit. Definitely, the indigenous people are blind to this attitude.

Karanja, in *RS*, sees Marafu as a ‘good’ European, for he is not aggressive with his workers and/or servants like other Europeans. In the conversation that takes place between him and Marafu³¹ when the latter decides to come back to his country, Karanja says sadly “I do not wish to work for another European. It is now eight years that I have been with you, and I know your customs, and everything that you demand. *How do I know that a new European would treat me well?* I should like to go with you, and continue to be your servant” (*RS* 371; emphasis added). Despite the fact that he takes the land of his own people, and does not allow them to keep their herds on the farm when facing certain financial problems, and despite the “abrupt reminder that the land on which they lived was not their own” (*ibidem.*), these people still accept the European settler and see in them the good master. The indigenous people fear the departure of their master, because they are dependent on him, or rather they are made to believe that they are incapable of doing anything without him by internalizing the belief in their inferiority. To them, this master functions as their protector to the extent that they consider him a sort of a vital need in their life. This recalls Sindiwe Magona’s poem “Fear of Change” that deals with post-apartheid in South Africa; in this poem, she says:

On these people was performed a
National lobotomy that has left them with
No tongue of their own...
No tongue
To call
Their own! (Magona 25)

Considering Marafu leaving the farm as a miniature version of the independence of the colony, the local inhabitants’ senses have been shut off, because of “[t]he psychological wounding of racism [...] that will take a long time to heal” (*qtd. in* Salo 131). On the other hand, the indigenous people who have been under ‘Blixen’s regime’ do not express their anxiety verbally in the book. The writer’s assumption that these people feel they will be lost without her appears to be true. For years, they have been made to believe in their inferiority, and that they can be saved solely by the European. Thus, it is normal that after all this long period of brainwashing they cannot imagine a future in which their master is not right there for them. These moments of despair are described as follows:

³¹ Marafu is a name given by the Kikuyu to the European settler (introduced in the chapter “Marafu”), because he is very tall (*RS* 290).

All the same, they looked to [sic] me for help and support, and did not, in a single case, attempt to arrange their future for themselves. They tried their very best to make me stay on, [...]. At the time when the sale of the farm was through, they came and sat round my house from the early morning till night, not so much in order to talk with me as just to follow all my movements.³² (Blixen 285)

It is very difficult for these people to see in these moments that they can rely on themselves to move on. In her memoir, Blixen states that because of the colonial law in the region which bans the locals' possession of arms, she used to hunt for them in order to provide their nurture. It is worth noting here that they are forbidden from "growing cash crops such as coffee, tobacco, and cotton, effectively curbing any chance they might have for financial independence" (Brantly 77). These harsh colonial decisions make these people forget how to be independent. The colonial officials have implemented forcibly the habit of passivity in these people of whom they used to mock by stereotyping them as submissive people. In this situation, the indigenous people can be compared to a domestic bird when its owner opens the cage to free it; this bird, which is grown up and brought up to years of dependence in a cage, finds itself incapable of looking after itself, and therefore it comes back willingly to the prison and to his owner. Nevertheless, the native population's confusion should not last longer, for they have to retrieve the will of self-reliance.

The farewell scene, in fact, is present in all the selected books. In every departure scene, the indigenous people are portrayed as being sad. They also give their masters different presents. While the native population cannot organize a dance party on the farm because of the Serkali³³ law in Blixen's book, the original inhabitants, in Huxley's memoir, organize a party to "hold a dance to celebrate [the writer's family] departure and bring destruction on the Germans" (*FTT* 266), the enemies of their British masters. In Huxley's books *FTT* and *RS*, these people promise their masters to take care of their lands in their absence hoping they will come back. For example, in *RS*, when Matu realizes that Marafu's wife is crying, he tries to comfort her; he utters: "[w]e will look after the farm when you have gone. As soon as you have obtained more shillings you must come back, and you will find things as you left them here" (*RS* 372). Matu also thinks about offering something to his master to whom he is very grateful for supporting him in his problem with the Serkali and for providing graze for his goats. He decides to give him the dearest thing he has that he has worn since his youth, a sort of a pendant described as a "three-legged stool" that Marufu once likes (*ibidem.*). The moment Marafu receives Matu's gift, he seems to forget about that entire colonial affair. This

³² This quotation also reveals the writer's narcissism.

³³ Serkali means colonial office/officials.

moment reveals the humane side of the settler while shaking the hands of his servant uttering “I shall not forget you” (ibidem.).

However, this does not mean that he is “a good European” (ibidem.) as Matu claims. It is true that certain European settlers have been gentle with ‘their employees’, but the fact of their belief in the superiority of the white race as well as their exploitation of the indigenous people cannot be dismissed. In this context, it can be concluded that the ambivalence of the colonizer is born out of the inner conflict between the humane emotions and the racist mentality that the Europeans have been brought to, depending to the personality of the colonizer, as the majority of Europeans are swallowed up by this mentality. Comparing Robin’s wife Tilly with Marafu, the latter appears to be kinder than her: whereas he distributes some blankets and coats as valediction gifts, she is irritated with the native people’s insistence on organizing a dance party, as she assumes that they aim to use the farewell celebration as “an excuse to extract from her a fat ram” (FTT 266). This is the very representation of the saying ‘the worse becomes sweet when experiencing the worst’. However, this does not mean that one should be satisfied with the dreadful situations by fearing the worst.

It is very obvious that Blixen has a special faith in the idea of the European duty towards ‘the primitive peoples’. This faith is mirrored in her squatters and servants’ attitudes towards her, as these people perceive her as a good European, specifically Kamante and Farah’s brother. Tove Hussein, in *Africa’s Song of Karen Blixen*, reports his interviews with the African people who have closely witnessed the period Blixen has spent in Kenya (Brantly 81). When asked about Blixen’s treatment of the indigenous population, Kamante cannot hide his excitement by claiming that she treats them fairly: she does not favour the whites over the blacks, and also she does not prefer a tribe over another tribe (ibidem.). Farah’s brother confirms this claim:

The Baroness felt that all were equal and that justice and fairness was everyone’s right. In those days, racial discrimination in that multiracial country was similar to a war in which there was no actual field combat. The Baroness always pretended that racial discrimination was non-existent. She knew it existed, but at the same time she knew she could do nothing to remedy the situation. (qtd. in Brantly 81)

Putting aside the explicit racist passages in *OA*, these interviewees’ statements do not contradict with the positive image the writer wants to build about herself. This means that these claims represent the very manifestation of that image, and this proves that her racist ideas have never been expressed loudly. In her memoir, it can be noticed that she has never insulted one local person in his/her face. If she is that kind of settlers who continuously

humiliate their servants and calling them by all that racist words, those witnesses will never praise her in this emotional way. It is worth mentioning that all people interviewed by Tove Hussein affirm that she is not racist (ibidem.). This implicit racism, when dealing with the indigenous people, is faithfully reported in the memoir. All the racist and even shocking descriptions can be found solely in her inner thoughts, or in what is called the interior monologues. In Peter Beard's *Longing for Darkness: Kamante's Tales*, Kamante confesses with a nostalgic tone that Blixen allows them to keep their cattle on the farm: he goes on saying "nobody took the shamba to be of Europeans. We took it to be ours. We found this garden belonging to all of us" (qtd. in Brantly 77). Here, Kamante expresses his gratitude to her as he is completely unaware of the fact that he has been exploited in his own land as well as his own people. The question is: what would be his response, if he knew that she describes him as "a civilized dog" and "a demon" in her memoir?

What can be approved on is that Karen Blixen, unlike the majority of the European settlers, has been kind to the local population, who loves and/or respects her on this basis. In this context, we are informed about the apparent communication with the indigenous people including the way of talking, her general behaviour, for example, she does not beat them. The critic Rob Nixon actually agrees with this assumption, as he describes her as "not as heartless as most settlers" (Nixon 224). He also sees that she has profited much from "the squatter system" (ibidem.), as the squatters have to pay six months of work per year in her coffee plantation for her approval to live on her farm (Brantly 77). It should be admitted that Blixen's status permits her to do whatever pleases her with the original inhabitants, and most importantly, the colonial government has granted her more authority over these people (ibidem.). In the words of Susan C. Brantly, "she [is] highly conscientious about using that power" (ibidem.). Blixen differs from other colonial settlers, because she *romantically* believes in the role of the benevolent European; the belief in her superiority as a European woman results in what is called "noblesse oblige". Conversely to certain critics who condemn this attitude towards the indigenous people, Blixen does not feel that this term is pejorative (81). These people have been sharing their master's imagined romantic world of herself as a colonial settler. The way Kamante reminisces about her resembles the way certain Europeans recalling of colonialism as 'the gold age'. Kamante is a typical mimic Man who believes in the benignity of colonialism, and he might consider himself lucky for having such a kind-hearted msabu.

4.3. The hybridization of the colonized

Besides to mimicry and ambivalence, hybridity has been confirmed as one of the basic concepts of the colonial/postcolonial studies. In his distinguished essay *Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817*, included in *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha defines the concept as “less than one and double” (Bhabha 119). Like all Bhabha’s notions, hybridity is introduced as an ambivalent concept. In fact, this text is considered as the best reference “to deal theoretically with the concept of hybridity” (Kwan 62). It can be noticed that Bhabha links the chapter *Of Mimicry and Man* with this previously indicated chapter by the incident of the missionary’s anger with the Indians’ unexpected response to the Bible in Bengal, in May 1817, as memorized in *The Missionary Register*. He reports how it has been treated in all im/possible ways, but not as a sacred book; they use the copies for wrapping goods in shops and as a waste paper. It also has been given in exchange for definite products. “And the holiest of books – the Bible – bearing both the standard of the cross and the standard of empire *finds itself strangely dismembered*” (Bhabha 92; emphasis added). Then, in the second chapter, Bhabha continues the discussion with a dialogue between a stranger and Anund Messeh, an earlier Indian Catechist, taken from the same source; from the point of view of a Christian person, it is very clashing the way the local inhabitants receive the new religion and the very idea of a book. The people who have just encountered a book find the conception utterly “miraculous” (103). It is very shocking to the Europeans or even to the Christianized people how certain people see Christianity, as they have been challenged with an entirely unimaginative interpretation of what they used to believe in. The stranger’s question of its sacredness implies a feeling of worry and even disgust, because it can be assumed that he thinks that Jesus Christ as well as his followers are a sort of dangerously wild people.

Kwan suggests that this refusal is due to the belief that the act of eating bread and drinking wine is “a kind of cannibalism (eating the flesh of Christ) and vampirism (drinking the blood of Christ)” (Kwan 63). It is disappointing for the people in England who long for news about their missionaries, fantasizing about long lines of people waiting to be converted (Bhabha 122). This is also insulting to the believers, especially the colonizer. And since the Europeans consume cow’s meat, the Brahmins accept to be baptized and to adapt the European lifestyle in condition that they do not take the Sacrament (104). Ironically, the colonizer used to attribute these characteristics, wilderness, primitiveness and cannibalism to the Orientals. Here, the hierarchy of the stereotype once established by the colonizer has been reversed; as

they assume that they occupy the superior position in the hierarchy of the binary oppositions, these Orientals now mock the European logic. The stranger and the Brahmins' perception of Christianity/the Bible make them hybridized, and therefore threatening. "It is through hybridization, an inevitable effect of the administration of colonial power, that the 'denied' knowledge of the colonized enters upon the dominant discourse, which finally culminates in the rupture of the discourse" (Kwan 63). Thus, resistance is shaped by the exposition of the ambivalence of the colonial discourse.

The colonizer is not oblivious about the fact that his discourse can be questioned and can even be twisted by the people who have always been considered as inferior to him. In 1818, Archdeacon Potts angrily states in his sermon:

If you urge them with their gross and unworthy misconceptions of the nature and the will of God, or the monstrous follies of their fabulous theology, they will turn it off with a *sly civility* perhaps, or with a popular and careless proverb. You may be told that 'heaven is a wide place, and has a thousand gates'; and that their religion is one by which they hope to enter. Thus, together with their fixed persuasions, they have their sceptical conceits. By such evasions they can dismiss the merits of the case from all consideration; and encourage men to think that the vilest superstition may serve to every salutary purpose, and be accepted in the sight of God as well as truth and righteousness. (qtd. in Bhabha 99)

Drawing on Said's assumption that "orientalism is a form of paranoia", Bhabha deals with hybridity as a cause of this colonial paranoia (Childs, Weber and Williams 85). Instead of oppressing the Other, the colonial discourse turns against its creator who becomes himself the oppressed. Here, the colonizer's narcissism is injured. The relationship between the hybrid and the colonizer can be analogized with that of a mirror and light; as the light breaks on the mirror which then reflects it back, the colonial discourse shatters when encountering the Other's culture, and then it is thrown back to the colonizer. Actually, Archdeacon Potts' idea is reflected in *RS*, precisely in the discussion between Matu and Kamau about the church and God. It is Matu's first encounter with the new religion. When Kamau tells him that the god of the Europeans has a child without having any sexual relationship with a woman, he says: "'Now I know that this all untrue!' [...]. 'Can a plant sprout from the earth without a seed, or a child grow in its mother's womb without the intervention of a man? All this has nothing whatever to do with God' " (*RS* 235). As Kamau appears very irritated with Matu questioning and disbelieving everything he says, he tells him that he will be sent to hell because of his ignorance, and he will go to heaven. The shocking answer comes as follows: "'[a]re there any cattle and goats in this place as well?' 'No, I do not think so, but there is much singing, and a

kind of musical instrument, bigger than a flute.’ *‘I do not think it sounds a very good place’* ” (236; emphasis added). The clash of cultures results in the trivialization of the sacred of ‘the superior’, and here lies the menace of hybridity.

The exploration of the concepts of mimicry and hybridity proves that they are very interrelated, and in different instants, they cannot be separated. In fact, the similarities these notions share lie in their ambivalence, in revealing the colonizer’s denial of his anxieties, in their menace and mockery, and in their resistance. To put it succinctly, both concepts are “[byproducts] of colonial authority” (Childs, Weber and Williams 85). Actually, Childs, Weber and Williams relate almost all Bhabha’s concepts to hybridity and, all of them are discussed under the title “Bhabha’s hybridity” in their book. This means that ambivalence, stereotype, mimicry, menace, mockery, and the third space constitute the features and/ or the components of the unifying notion of hybridity. Hybridity or the interaction of two extremely different cultures in one mind/place is portrayed in the selected books, though apparently the settler writers do not intend to deal with it, as they tend to narrate, describe and interpret what they see. This does not mean that their works represent a completely honest portrait of their lives in Kenya, but it is understood that they rely mostly on real life experiences. Kanogo’s book *African Womanhood in Colonial Kenya 1900–50* proves that the selected works, especially *RS*, the fictional book, are mostly based on real life; they share a great resemblance particularly in depicting the Kikuyu mentality.

4.3.1. The Kikuyu: “less than one and double”

Whereas mimicry is more associated with one’s appearance and behaviour, hybridity is more related to the beliefs and attitudes. Kamante, Blixen’s cook, is an example of a hybrid; he abandons his own religious faith to become Christian, but he is still attached to his own culture, “rooted in the traditions of his tribe and in his faith” (OA 43). As he works as a cook in a ‘civilized’ house, he has definitely learnt the European etiquette, or how to be a civilized person. However, he finds the European cuisine inedible in a way that Blixen, revoltingly, compares his face when tasting this food to a witch’s after tasting the contents of her cauldron (ibidem.). He also marries in the Kikuyu tradition in which he must pay a certain number of goats as dowry to the bride’s father. This can be justified by his interest in purchasing goats (38). Additionally, like all Kikuyu, the goats represent to him not only a vital need in the tribe’s everyday life, but also they bring him respect and dignity, since they indicate the social class of their owner; the more one possesses goats, the more he becomes honoured among his

people. Like Kamante, Muthengi (in *RS*) is conducting a life with two disparate styles of life, but not entirely. As the colonial mentality has established itself in the region, several native standards have been changed, for example the notion of richness. Possessing a great number of goats and marrying many women are not any longer considered as the sole signs of wealth. Now, to be rich means that one wears European clothes, has as many wives and goats as possible, has a large piece of land, has a bicycle, and specifically a car which is regarded as the ultimate indication of affluence, since it is very rare for a local inhabitant to own a car at that time.

Although he is a young man, Muthengi is already married to three women (*RS* 218). Muthengi will never have this luxurious life including his motor-car, if he is not employed by the colonial government as a chief njama. He has made a fortune from bribery, as his job is to execute the colonial officials' orders when they need some indigenous people to do a work; he is feared for informing on them, if they do not comply with the orders, thus the ones who do not wish to go, they roll off his tongue with a goat (217). Muthengi has been transformed from a notable respectable warrior in his clan into a corrupt chief njama enjoying the new life. Actually, following this way enables him to become the muramati of the clan and "the senior elder of the council of law". In the eyes of his kinsmen, he is like a European, because according to them, all Europeans are rich. Muthengi is "rich and [knows] how to behave just like a European" (317). Before the colonial settlement, he has been known and respected for his bravery in the battles with the Masai, for his strong body and for his good dancing. People who show any sign of cowardice, and who do not dance well are ridiculed in the Kikuyu community. Here, wealth comes second. Many beautiful girls are attracted to Muthengi, and all of them wish to marry him, despite the fact that neither his father nor he is rich. Richness, in the Kikuyu tradition, is not considered as a necessary condition for marriage in this case. To the Kikuyu, nothing can outweigh courage and good reputation.

The colonial culture has not only changed the native concept of richness and the characteristics that a man must have, but also the notion of marriage, more particularly the conditions that the girl and/or the family's girl imposes on the future husband. The bride-price or the number of goats used to vary, most importantly, according to the girl's beauty and strength that ensures she will cultivate well her husband's shamba. But now Christianized and/or educated girls have risen in the social ladder, and therefore the dowry has increased. "[F]athers with Christian daughters were demanding prices that no one but a teacher or a clerk, or a very rich elder, could pay" (397). In the real world, Greet Kershaw reports that the

dowry payment has undergone certain changes: “[u]ntil the end of the First World War 90–100 percent of the bridewealth was expected in goats; by 1925 it had dropped to 30–40 percent. By 1935 only 10–20 percent could be offered in goats, but receivers might ask for cash only, apart from the ceremonial goats” (qtd. in Kanogo 120). Karanja is refused by the girl he intends to marry, because he is not Christian yet. Although Wanjiri is fascinated by his good appearance, his European style, his experiences with the Europeans, and his English, she still insists that he should be Christianized (*RS* 398). Wanjiri appears to be an independent girl whose family does not have much influence on her. This independence is probably due to her father who is leading a quite comfortable life. What can be understood from the selected works that the fathers who oblige their daughters to marry the men they choose are most of them poor, and poor people are despised in the clan, except the warriors. The contempt of these people in need comes of the belief that “God does not like poor men” (240). Thus, these people do not look only for improving their situation, but also for being respected by their clan and loved by their god.

Blixen reports that certain Kikuyu people become rich thanks to their daughters, for instance, the big Chief of the Kikuyu receives a herd of cattle of more than one hundred as dowry for his daughter (*OA* 102). In order to marry Wanjiri, Karanja seeks the solution in a hybridized Christian orientation called “the Independent Orthodox Church” or “the Independents” in which Makuna Benson is a member (*RS* 399), since to become Christian requires several years of study and work in an official church, and he does not wish to marry with just one woman. The Independents are a different type of Christians; they believe that they represent the reconciliation between the local culture and the new culture. They see that Christianity should mostly not disagree with polygamy and girls’ circumcision. Karanja, when Christianized, appears to be aware that this religious orientation is a distorted version of Christianity, the religion that his intended wife follows (402).

The encounter with western culture has resulted in the alteration of several other concepts including the notion of decoration/elegance. In the Kikuyu culture, decoration is solely related with the bodies. The body decoration reaches its highest levels, when the warriors prepare themselves for a battle. As Muthengi is getting ready to meet “the stranger” to make a peaceful agreement after realizing that the colonizer is unbeatable, he decorates himself with the spirit of war:

He rubbed fat and ochre on his limbs and painted his legs with chalk. He tied Colobus skin ruffs to his ankles and rattles to his thighs; he put on an apron of serval skins and tied

monkey tails to his elbows, and wound strings of beads and cowrie shells around his chest. He arranged his hair with great care in ochred plaits and three pigtales, and surmounted it with his ostrich-feather head-dress. On his hip he strapped his red-sheathed sword and in his hands he took his spear, his club and his big white-faced shield with its red and black design. (167)

In the circumcision party, men almost embellish themselves in the same way. As for women in special ceremonies, they grease themselves and they wear “ear-ornaments”, “wire coils” and “leather aprons” (*FTT* 267). They also shave their heads in both the dance party and the circumcision ceremony. In fact, it is a Kikuyu tradition that women should keep their hair shaved all the time. It can be observed that the three selected works approve that men are meant to be more decorated than women; in the farewell party in *OA*, solely the old dancers and other men are enthusiastically described. Huxley claims that “[women] looked gay and festive, but not as decorative as the men” (*OA* 267). In the train station, when Matu is about to take the train for the first time in his life, he is surprised by the change of the people’s looks as he sees the women’s hair “cut and combed into elaborate patterns as is if they had been young men” (*RS* 254).

The local inhabitants do not know other ways of decoration, for example the use of flowers as décor. When he starts working for the European settler Kichui, Matu has been surprised, as he finds his master growing unfamiliar flowers and plants which he should not consume, because he thinks that everything the land gives should be used for a certain purpose, not just for looking at it (204-205). He cannot understand the aesthetic function of flowers. When he has been informed that Kichui plants them to enjoy looking at them, he finds the whole matter illogical, and tries to relate it to other possible uses that are specific to the Europeans (*ibidem.*). In the midst of his wonderment, Matu learns how to plant these strange beautiful flowers and how to take care of them, and “[h]e began to discover a pleasure in watching them bud and unfold their brilliant petals” (205). Now, he sees that some plants are better to be enjoyed than to be eaten or whatever. Hence, he has developed a hybrid notion of flowers.



Fig. 4: *Kikuyu warriors in Meru*

Source: Safari Talk³⁴

Hybridity as “less than one and double” (Bhabha 119), in fact, implies a clash between two cultures as the new culture is continuously questioned by the native mind. Matu and his son Karanja have often disputed about the correctness of certain ideas, for example, the issue of science and magic. Matu representing the second generation in the book which has grown up in/ witnessed the traditional Kikuyu society before colonialism, believes in “the power of magic” (RS 342) as the ultimate power, even though he believes in the effectiveness of the European science. On the contrary, Karanja thinks that magic is an old-fashioned way that has no benefit. However, when the latter’s money has been stolen, and his father insists on bringing a sorcerer, he reacts irritatingly, but then when the sorcerer comes, and in spite of his doubts, he cannot resist his inquisitiveness to see of what this man is capable (343). Although Karanja belongs to the generation that opens its eyes on the colonial era, and has been brought up to a great extent to the European mentality, he proves to be affected by his family’s norms

³⁴ <http://safariatalk.net/topic/1872-exploring-africa-with-martin-and-osa-johnson/page-3>

and customs. It appears that he has a slight faith in the magical powers of the sorcerer, and somehow hopes that he will help him regain his stolen money.

Karanja's uncertainty about certain traditional norms is also depicted after the burial of his father. What is surprising is that when his mother dies, he does not want to purify himself after touching her dead body, but when his father dies he goes secretly to a mundu-mugu³⁵ to purify himself. It can be interpreted that Karanja fears the consequences of touching his deceased father, because unlike his mother, he was a mundu-mugo, a man with special powers that might harm him. "[O]ne day he borrowed a goat from his uncle and visited the mundu-mugu, [...], to vomit out the thahu."³⁶ *It was better, he thought to be on the safe side*" (395; emphasis added). Karanja is torn up between two positions: his ancestors' and the Europeans'. It can also be concluded that he has kept his purification a secret, because he feels ashamed and fears to lose his prestige as a modern young man. Karanja's life/mind is shuttered between two completely opposite voices. He belongs neither to the Kikuyu nor to the Europeans, but to Bhabha's third space.

In the scene of the train when returning to Tetu, while Karanja is sitting peacefully surrounded by all sorts of people, Matu is tormented with his traditional belief that nobody should have a physical contact with strangers, because they might be "unclean", and then they can pass on a thahu to him, or they might be sorcerers who can poison him or lay a curse on him (376). Seemingly, the culture clash goes hand in hand here with the clash between generations, as the effect of the colonial culture on the youth plays a great role in these conflicts. Colonialism has affected more the younger generation, because it comes at a time when this generation is developing its personality; the process has been interrupted by colonialism, and then penetrated by the new culture. The gap between Karanja and his father is huge, as if the latter is an ancient ancestor. The native population/region has been exposed to a highly economic and scientific progressed society and to very fast changes that have deprived these people from an independent and normal development.

³⁵ In *RS*, a mundu-mugu is "a magical practitioner" (8).

³⁶ A thahu is defined as follows: "ceremonial uncleanness, generally resulting from the breach of some prohibition, or of contact with some unclean person or thing" (9). According to the Kikuyu, uncleanness comes, for instance, from touching a dead body, eating wild animals' meat and so on.

4.3.2. Neither Kikuyu nor European

This culture clash resulting in hybridity represents what is called “Third Space of enunciation” (Bhabha 37). This concept is first used by Jameson, and developed by Bhabha to become “third space of enunciation”. He thinks that Jameson simplifies the clash that happens when two different cultures meet. What Jameson does is that he fixes the fragmentation caused by this encounter in time in a way that prevents the interaction between the two parties which he assumes they have already been separated. It can be assumed that Bhabha compares Jameson’s third space with “[t]he bankrupt notion of the melting pot” (218) in which one sees the different peoples/cultures separated, just like the stew’s “ingredients [which] do melt, but some stubborn chunks are condemned merely to float” (218-219). He thinks that the concept is more complicated than that, as this space continuously undergoes both temporal and spatial movements. He states:

What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities: the regulation and negotiation of those spaces that are continually, *contingently*, ‘opening out’, remaking the boundaries, exposing the limits of any claim to a singular or autonomous sign of difference – be it class, gender or race. Such assignments of social differences – where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between* – find their agency in a form of the ‘future’ where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is, if I may stretch a point, an interstitial future, that emerges in-between the claims of the past and the needs of the present. (219)

Karanja’s entrenchment between his traditional beliefs and his new ones is the very embodiment of this interstitial future, of being in-between. Regarding cultures, it can be concluded that Bhabha sees that unmixed cultures do not exist, and this is proved by third space in which “all cultural meaning is constructed, and [...] located” (Childs, Weber and Williams 89). In fact, Bhabha makes a “contradistinction” between “cultural diversity”³⁷ and “cultural difference”; unlike cultural difference, cultural diversity does not recognize hybridity and its processes as one of its features (ibidem.). It should be mentioned here that Bhabha does not employ the concept of third space, only in his discussion of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, but also to the modern societies which are themselves products of such a relationship, revealing the continuous hybridization of cultures.

Generally, Kenya Colony becomes a hybrid space which reflects the local inhabitants’ hybridization. Before the European colonialism, the Kikuyu land has long been a homogenous place. As depicted in the first book of *RS*, women are seen working in their shambas, carrying

³⁷ In this context, cultural diversity goes hand in hand with the notion of the melting pot.

water from the river, children are guarding these shambas from birds, and herding goats. Men's function is to defend their clan from the enemies and build huts. The Kikuyu's lands have been separated by planting itoka lilies (RS 278). This simple view on the local inhabitants' everyday life will gradually diminish as the story progresses. The European settlement has transformed the region into heterogeneous space: houses, schools, churches, hotels, offices and shops have been constructed. Next to the European settlers' farms, the native population still live in huts, except the rich people. Muthengi's son, for instance, has built a "square stone house" (384) for his family. In the Kikuyu culture, people used to believe that buildings with corners are most supposedly to be inhabited by evil spirits (FTT 30). The idea of a garden around a house has also marked its presence in the region. Lands have been fenced in the European fashion, and now are ploughed by oxen or/and by tractors. Concerning animals, the Kikuyu are solely familiar with the animals of the African wilderness, as well as cows, rams and goats. Thus, until the European arrival, they start to discover dogs and horses. Even riding animals is a new challenging practice to them, for they consider it evil.

This shift of the native space is perceived as miraculous, since the indigenous people have never expected that this will ever happen. In fact, the European things which cause the indigenous people's exclamation and bewilderment are thought to have a magical power. The train, cars and bicycles have been beyond their imagination. This fact is ironically reflected in the selected books, however the truth is this wonderment is generated in any human being when facing new things/inventions. The writers appear to forget that the Europeans were not born technologically advanced. The region has been reshaped from a completely rural area to an urban area. In the seventh chapter of the last book of the novel, Matu, in the market of Karatina, expresses his surprise when he sees no man with a spear like he used to in the warriors' time. He is also astonished about seeing "so many women [...] at one time" in the market (RS 377). These women are both traders and customers. It can be assumed that the native space has undergone a change in the gender appearance in the public spaces and gender roles as well.

Bhabha refers to Renée Green's work *Sites of Genealogy* to show how liminality can be related to cultural hybridity. She makes an analogy between the stairwell as a metaphor of the hierarchal space of the binary oppositions the high/ low and white/ black, and the process of the intermingling of cultures; the stairwell functions as

liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. [...]. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha 3-4)

Both liminality and hybridity are concepts that deal with space and time; “the hither and thither of the stairwell” symbolizes “the temporal movement and passage” that forbids, and at the same time, permits the transgression of the border in either way (ibidem.). In fact, the concept of liminality is coined by Arnold Van Gennep in 1909; the term stays unpopular till Victor Turner develops it thanks to the translation of Gennep’s work in 1960 (Wels et al. 1). In his study of certain African tribes, Gennep observes that the initiation rituals of adulthood necessitate the separation of the candidates from the initial culture for a definite period of time, before being admitted as full members in their tribes; the spatial and temporal action marking the very transition from childhood to adulthood Gennep calls “margin (or *limen*, signifying “threshold” in Latin)” (Turner 94). Turner states that liminality or “liminal personae” or what he refers to as “the threshold people” are “necessarily ambiguous”, since they are “neither here nor there”, “they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial” (95). With the initiation into adulthood, the young adults are expected to change the way they think, they behave, to acquire another culture within their culture. Attention should also be drawn to the fact that Bhabha does not suggest with his notion of hybridity that hybridized cultures were once pure, because he thinks that “[c]ultures are the consequence of attempts to still the flux of cultural hybridities” (Huddart 7).

Actually, hybridity appears as a notion questioning the colonial discourse which represents the European culture and the Other’s as (discriminatorily) pure cultures (8). It can be assumed that nothing can prevent and/or stops the hybridization of cultures. No matter what the colonizer and the colonized do to protect their cultures from the outsider, they cannot avoid being affected by the Other, because the boundaries are created to be crossed. Thus, the liminal space between cultures is the real location of culture.³⁸ Bhabha dealing with hybridity and mimicry as cultural phenomena that are results of an illusionary feeling of inferiority does not always mean that all hybrid people have been obsessed with mimicking the supposedly superior others. Being a hybrid man/woman can be a personal choice that is not affected by any feeling of lowliness, for example Kitau in *OA*. In order to choose the convenient religion

³⁸ Here, I have borrowed the title of Bhabha’s book.

for him, he decides to work in both Christian and Muslim houses, and therefore he goes to work in Blixen's and Sheik Ali's, each for three months (OA 53-54). Drawing on Heidegger's definition of the boundary³⁹, Bhabha links liminality to hybridity in a way that proposes that liminality functions as an ambivalent passage to hybridity, as a "bridge [gathering] as a passage that crosses" (qtd. in Bhabha 5). Therefore, to be a hybrid is to live beyond the borderline traversed, and beyond means "neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past" (1). Hybridity as an ambivalent term can be seen as "transgression [that] incessantly crosses and recrosses a line which closes up behind it in a wave of extremely short duration, and thus it is made to return once more right to the horizon of the uncrossable" (Foucault 34). Hybridity is being caught between the past and the present, between the traditional and the modern.

The boundary between the racial stereotypes marked by the slash cannot stand stable; the slash is curbed and takes the shape of a bridge that links two separate and opposite pieces of land, and therefore the binary opposition can be rewritten in the following way: white—black or black—white. It can be read as the comparative suffix 'er' which witnesses the marriage of the black and the white that gives birth to the grey space, the liminal space: this grey space can be either seen as whiterblack or blackerwhite. This also can be interpreted as the location of hybridity, where everything is blurred. This bridge can be wavering, unstable and "dangerous"; as this racial relationship is partially controlled by "disavowal of the Other [which] always exacerbates the edge of identification, reveals that dangerous place where identity and aggressivity are twinned. For denial is always a retroactive process; a half acknowledgment of that otherness has left its traumatic mark" (Bhabha 62). However, "The tension of meaning and being" which takes place in this space is empowering in terms of resistance (ibidem.).

The local inhabitants' experience with the Europeans has altered several notions and practices that once were perceived as normal. The change that the concept of cleanliness has undergone is actually due to "the mission of hygiene"⁴⁰ (Tiffin 41) which itself is considered a civilizing mission. Before the colonizer's invasion, it is normal not to wash the dishes, and these dishes

³⁹ "A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which *something begins its presencing*" (qtd. in Bhabha 1).

⁴⁰ It is worth noting here that this mission has been conducted in both Britain and its colonies; In Britain, it has been directed to the English working class. This explains the British colonials' obsession with race and social class. However, this does not insinuate that dirtiness has not long been associated with blackness.

on which no food is left are considered clean (as Huxley claims in *RS*).⁴¹ But then, this perception has changed, and what is used to be normal turns to be abnormal. The whole notion of the clean and the dirty has undergone a radical change. Towards the end of the novel, circumcision ceremony, unlike their predecessors, “[t]he candidates painted their legs and chests with lime but refused to rub themselves with ochre and fat because they said it was dirty” (*RS* 302). Kaleo, Karanja’s brother, after attending school, he starts to see that the family’s hut is soiled to the extent that he spends every night in the farm teacher’s house, and even rejects his mother’s food (368). Like him, Karanja’s perception of cleanliness has changed since the beginning of his work with Marafu: “[f]or the first time he realised that in his own home there was a great deal of dirt” (300).

In addition to that, Kaleo resents befriending people who are “uneducated, sinful and dirty” (369), the people he used to play with when he was a child. As the notion of cleanliness is related to decency, he begins to despise the traditional dance parties as well as the traditional clothes. “[H]e said, it was indecent to wear only a length of calico, and no shorts” (368). According to him, a typical Kikuyu is dirty. In this context, dirtiness carries simultaneously two meanings: uncleanliness and indecency. Actually, Kaleo’s hybridity comes into sight, when he shows no resistance when the time of his circumcision has been indicated. He once runs away from his family in order to attend the school, but he does not do so when the circumcision ceremony is planned. Still, his mind is vastly and strongly dominated by the new culture; as soon as his father pays the school’s fee hoping that his son will one day become a clerk or a teacher and help the family in the future, he disappears and never comes back (368-369). Most possibly, he will not return, because he abhors his origins, and feels he does not belong there anymore.

The huge gap between the Kikuyu culture and the European culture makes the understanding of the latter quite difficult, resulting in misunderstandings the colonizer does not like. Conversely to the western world’s high value of science and reason, the Kikuyu have great

⁴¹ This does/should not suggest that the indigenous people are unclean. The concepts of cleanliness, beauty, ethics, and so on differ from a society to another and from a definite period to another, and are continuously altered in one community itself. The problem with applying the notions of mimicry and hybridity is that sometimes it might be mistakenly understood as undermining these people, which is not true. Thus, the application of these notions in such cases should be simply perceived as an analysis of what is represented in the selected books. On the other hand, the defence of the colonized should not suggest that the thesis approves of all their cultural practices. As I said earlier, all cultures are unique, despite their unacceptable practices. Girls’ circumcision, polygamy, purification rituals and the whole notion of magic should certainly be condemned by all people. In fact, these cultural practices were and are still used as a justification that colonialism should not be totally demonized. In my opinion, nothing can justify colonialism; all the world’s histories and civilizations have proved that colonization is the peoples’ most fearful and humiliating calamity.

faith in magic and spirits. Certainly, this should not be grasped as doubting the mental capacities of these people. Whenever the local inhabitants encounter European things that are entirely strange to them, they try to figure them out according to their mindset. Indeed, the selected works include various manifestations of this subject-matter, especially Huxley's and precisely, *RS*. This book, in fact, focuses intensively on the life of the Kikuyu before and during colonialism, more than the other selected books. In fact, Blixen rarely deals with it, and if she does, she does it very shortly. In *FTT*, Huxley talks about the Kikuyu seeing the lamp for the first time; they think that it "contains a spirit which obeys Europeans" (*FTT* 25). They also do so with bicycles, horses, and weapons. The way these things work is beyond their understanding, and therefore they receive them as a sort of magic. It is definitely confusing for these people, who are accustomed all their lives to use arrows and spears in their wars, to watch people being killed "with fire at distance" (*RS* 164).

After the fight that has taken place between Muthengi and his warriors and the Europeans, one of the njamas wonders "how can we fight against a noise?" (164). At that moment, the Kikuyu attribute automatically the incident to magic and to the powerful spirits that are obviously stronger than theirs. What leads to this disturbance is that death is caused by something invisible. Even though it is very normal to think in this way for someone who has never known how these weapons work, Huxley insists to depict these people as backward. Ironically, both the traditional and advanced weapons work with the same mechanism. Other things such as the roads and the train are compared to animals. When they see the roads and the railways, they liken them to snakes. The road that has been built for vehicles in Tetu is named "the road of snakes" (222). Matu compares the railways in the same way: "[he] saw the iron road, like two endless snakes twisting along the white-floored valley. [...] a huge black fire-breathing beast went by, making a great noise" (244). In order to familiarize the new things, the local inhabitants always draw analogies between the familiar and the strange, hybridizing the Europeans' concepts.

The hybrids and mimic men are what Fanon calls black skin with white masks.⁴² Childs, Weber, and Williams see that Bhabha employs Fanon's psychoanalytic study of "colonial subjectivity" as "a method of constructing the conditions and effects of colonialism" (Childs, Weber, and Williams 74). These critics refer to Bhabha's essay *Interrogating Identity* in which he discusses Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* as a work representing "a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once" (Bhabha 44; emphasis added).

⁴² Here, the title of one of Fanon's notable books is used.

Bhabha builds on Fanon's book which is mainly concerned with the colonized perturbed psyche, by focusing also on the colonizer's which appears as worse as his counterpart (Weber, Childs, and Williams 74). Dealing with the settler fearing the Other's gaze thinking he wishes to take his place, Fanon confirms the native's fantasy about putting himself in his master's shoes (Bhabha 44). Mimicry and hybridity, in the selected works, reveal how certain characters such as Karanja and his brother Kaleo are desperately clinging to the dream of becoming one day like the European settlers, of becoming a European, superior and rich.

The italicized phrase can be linked to ambivalence, mockery, and menace as the traits that mimicry and hybridity share. Being a mimic man and/or a hybrid challenges the colonizer's authority; to the colonizer, seeing a disfigured version of himself is somehow uncomfortable in a way that leads to think that the Other is probably mocking him. What worries the settler is the possibility of being moved from the privilege and dislodged in the margin. The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is governed by the duality of fear and desire; ambivalence as well as "identification" are structured by disavowal which reveals "a partial acknowledgement of the otherness that is denied" (Weber, Childs, and William 75). This is what is called "the ambivalence of paranoid identification" (ibidem.). The colonizer is frustrated as he discovers himself reflected on the Other and starts to dislike certain things about his being. Bhabha's ideas of the fetish, the stereotype, mimicry and hybridity are "[representatives] of the colonial subjects' attitude towards the Other, which is not a simple rejection of difference but a recognition and a disavowal of an otherness that holds an attraction and poses a threat" (76).

4.4. A doubly-colonized Kikuyu Woman

The Kikuyu woman's invisibility is very apparent in the selected works. This is not because the writers are inattentive to them, but because the Kikuyu society itself is patriarchal. The writers themselves also belong to a patriarchal culture, but with different concepts. These settlers, in fact, deal mainly with men; all their close servants and most workers on the farms are men. Women, especially girls, work in European plantation in few occasions; married women usually look after their shambas in the reserves. This has resulted in books revolving around the Kikuyu/native man.⁴³ Women are solely depicted either while doing their house chores or while working in their shambas. The first time Blixen talks about Kikuyu women in a detailed way, precisely the old women, is in the last chapter of the memoir in about two

⁴³ The region the writers settled in is mostly inhabited by the Kikuyu.

pages and a half. The reaction of these women to the writer's departure is ambiguous. The writer feels that they are "the people of the farm who grieved most at [her] departure" (*OA* 325). She states that they are friends as they used to call her Jerie, a name, she assumes, is given to her as an expression of fondness (326). She also remembers how a woman, who is not well-known to her, bursts into tears when she meets her accidentally, without uttering any word. It is quite inexplicable; the native women in general are indirectly dependent to the colonizer, since their lives are controlled by the directly colonized men. As for the Somali women, she devotes a whole chapter for them. She portrays them as very passive women. "These women cannot acquire a pair of slippers in any possible way except through man, they cannot own themselves but must needs belong to some male, to a father, a brother or a husband" (160). However, she depicts them as living in a better situation than the Kikuyu women, since their men like to pamper them. However, this does not change the fact that these women are doubly colonized.

Like women in *OA*, women in *FTT* are portrayed silent; they do not speak, they solely do the gender roles attributed to them. The relationship between Kikuyu women and the European settlers in general is distant and non-communicative. They are under the gaze of both men and the British colonizers. The hard work including bringing water and wood has to be done by women, because it is considered as an effeminate task in the Kikuyu culture (*RS* 62). In this culture, men have a main job, defending the tribe, and as the tribal wars end up with the arrival of the Europeans, men are seen "either lying under trees, or swilling beer" (*FTT* 108). Matu, when he was young, he has been despised by both his brother Muthengi and his peers, as he used to help his mother with her work. "[T]oiling up a hill with a baby and a load of produce on her back weighing about a hundred pounds" (*RS* 113) is a fixed image of the Kikuyu woman. However, women, in *RS*, are speaking, disputing with their husbands, and even revolting sometimes. This depiction of the Kikuyu women should not be seen as a manifestation of an awareness of their rights, because they are not conscious of the fact that men and women are equal. For example, the girls' rebellion against their fathers who come to school to take them back home for circumcision is not due to the belief that they have the right to decide, but is due to the religious teachings they have received. They say no because it is forbidden, not out of an awareness that this practice is an inhumane violation of their own bodies.

Women, when discussing their husbands who grow angry and impatient with them, are very often silenced by threatening with beating them: "[be] silent, or I will beat you" (58). What

can be understood from Wanjeri and Waseru's, and Wanja and Matu's arguments is that the wife has the right to be treated well by her husband who must provide her with all her necessities such as clothes, but she has not the right to give her opinion and/or to make decisions. Women are considered as mere properties that should be kept in a good shape to keep functioning. It can be assumed that mistreatment according to the Kikuyu is the usual beating of the wife, not providing her with clothes and accessories as she wishes, as well as nurture. The wife in such cases can leave her husband and go back to her clan (260). Wanjeri threatens Waseru that she will report on him to her brothers, "who are rich and strong, [and] will protect her" (58), if he beats her. She is taught not to defend herself, or to think that she is unable to defend herself. Like the colonizer, the Kikuyu men make women believe that they are inferior to them, and therefore they always depend on them, even though almost everyday tasks are done by women.

Daughters are considered the source of wealth in the Kikuyu tribe for the dowry goes to their fathers. In this patriarchal society, everything matters but the woman herself, as she can be married against her will, and as an old man can buy a wife. Matu, for instance, pushes his daughter Wamboi to marry a man she rejects, because the latter has significantly increased the bride-price when he asks for her hand again (339). A 'blessed' father is who has many beautiful and strong daughters, since these characteristics allow him to impose high bride prices, and therefore he can become a rich man in a short period of time. It is believed that "[a] daughter is like a bank and it is only a right that her father should be able to draw on her from time to time" (qtd. in Kanogo 104). A daughter who is known for her good and persevering work costs much to the extent that her suitor cannot pay cash for the dowry, and therefore he can agree with her father to pay "on the installment system" (ibidem.). To them, such girls are definitely worthy paying higher bride prices. What is more striking is that fairer girls attract generous suitors offering higher bride prices than they will do with darker girls, and therefore "[a] native with several 'fair' daughters is considered to be a most fortunate man and to possess a sort of walking bank balance" (qtd. in 115). Then, married women are expected to work in their husbands' lands. It is a kind of enslavement. Hence, it is "the delivery of livestock by a suitor to the father of his prospective bride *in exchange for the woman's reproductive and productive labour*" (105; emphasis added). When a wife finds herself unable of cultivating the land, she asks her husband to marry another woman in order to help her in the work. Unaware of the fact that polygamy is a violation of her own rights, Wanja discusses the matter with her husband Matu: "[t]hen I hope you will get another wife

[...]. The weeds here are such that I work until sunset and still they outstrip me” (*RS* 263). Thus, he should buy another worker. Polygamy can be viewed as a profitable institution to the Kikuyu.



Fig. 5: *Kikuyu girl near Nairobi, 1936.*

Source: <http://nairobiairportohotel.com/tag/kikuyu/>

The representation of women in the discussed settlers’ works fits Spivak’s concept of the subaltern. The Kikuyu women/men have realized that they have no voice; when their masters leave, they feel anxious and lost, because the master is their voice. This idea is actually portrayed in *OA*; the departure of Blixen, who used to protect them and deliver their voice to the colonial office, saddens them. The inability of the subaltern to speak and the need to be represented by the intellectual is not only restricted to women, but also to men. The male characters in *RS* can be claimed subaltern; nobody decides to be a rebel against the colonial institution until Benson Makuna appears and constructs with them ‘The Independents’. Spivak thinks that an “elite native man may have found a way to speak, but she suggests, for those further down the hierarchy, self-representation was not a possibility” (Loomba, *CPI* 234). Thus, Makuna’s status as a member of the elite has allowed him to speak. As for women, Spivak sees that the complexed overlapping of the colonial and local patriarchal discourses has complicated matters for the sati woman to surface (*ibidem.*). Certain Indian

women have been aware of this fact and have resisted colonialism on the basis that they cannot be freed from the patriarchal manacles before the country's independence; they believe "unless colonialism were ended, it would be hard to tackle inequality" (Leonard 448). The colonizer alone plays two contradicting roles regarding women; on one hand, "white men are saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak 92), on the other hand, they fix them in their submissive situation.

It is true that the colonial administrators have worked on improving the woman position in Kenya Colony, but this does not mean they have worked on liberating them; they have acted like they are dealing with their women from the perspective of gentlemen, and this due to their belief in the heroic role of civilizing the primitives, and therefore they have acted as colonizing gentlemen. In his book *African Womanhood in Colonial Kenya 1900–50*, Kanogo talks about how the colonial officials have treated the issue of rape seriously in a way that values girl/woman as a human being, not as a property. The Kikuyu laws regarding rape have been very lenient at that time; as a punishment of a rapist, he must pay a certain amount of bulls and goats to the victim's family, and this amount varies according to the marital status of the victim (Kanogo 56). In contrast, "[a] sentence of 5 years imprisonment with hard labour and 'twenty strokes of the whip' " (59) is what the judge of "Criminal Case No.158 of 1939" sees as a fair penalizing of a rapist of a girl of eight . This is how such matters should be dealt with, but the colonizer's attempts to enlighten these people do not make colonization a blessing, because the Europeans have not come for humanitarian reasons, but for exploitation of black humans and their lands, except the anti-colonial Europeans who are a minority of the minority in that era. While educating, nursing, helping, being kind to Africans, the westerners consider them savages and contempt-worthy. Under the illusion of doing good, the colonizers have brought much destruction to the region. When it comes to the protests of the indigenous people of both sexes against the policies of the colonial office, the colonizer shows no mercy.

Women who have resisted colonialization under patriarchal societies cannot be seen as subjects that are doomed and destined to be dumb. Regretting and blaming the digestion of the woman's right in history, Virginia W. Leonard writes the article *Woman in Anticolonial Movements* (approximately in 1998) in which she states that women's opposition to the colonizers in the European colonies from the sixteenth century onwards has lately started gaining interest (Leonard 447). It can be noted from the article that from all the African and Asian colonies, solely Algeria and India have given birth to significant women in the resistance of the colonial powers whose names could not be buried. The patriarchal culture of

the British colonizers has resulted in issuing contradictory laws regarding women in the colonies such as India and Kenya. In Africa, the different European empires aggravate the patriarchal system in the African societies, as they order the chiefs they allotted to help them exercise the colonial law to control women, by preventing them from fleeing their homes to the city seeking freedom and self-reliance (450).

In Kenya, women participate in Mau Mau Rebellion; by the side of men, they bind themselves to the oath of secrecy which has initiated them into “the secret society of Mau Mau” (451). Women gather from all social classes to liberate themselves and their countries. However, the Kenyan women’s opposition to the colonizer is hardly noticeable. Among all the African women, solely the Algerian woman has succeeded in leaving an indelible imprint in the African history. Bhabha notes that “she crossed the Manichaean lines” literally and metaphorically in order to be seen and recognized as the equal counterpart of man (Bhabha 63). Her veil has been transformed from a submissive barrier between the interior and the exterior colonizers into a revolutionary barrier. Her rebellious spirit creates what Fanon calls “revolutionary war” (Fanon, *SDC* 66). In an attempt to destroy the Algerian culture by unveiling Algeria ⁴⁴ as well as to prevent any rebellious actions, the colonizer finds himself endangered by the unveiled Algerian woman “[moving] like a fish in the Western waters” (58), “carrying revolvers, grenades, hundreds of false identity cards or bombs” in their bags and suitcases (*ibidem.*). The glory of the Algerian female militant lies in the fact whether veiled or not, “the colonial police sees everything and nothing” (Bhabha 63). For a definite period of time, the colonizer has not realized that this woman has been undergoing a liminal transformation that reconciles the traditional with the liberal thanks to his oppression.

It is true that the educated people have played an important role in raising their compatriots’ awareness of the necessity of fighting the colonizer, but it should not be hinted that the uneducated people who believed in the issue have followed them unconsciously, as if they have been hypnotized. These people have acted out of free will, as they have trusted the cultivated people. To claim these individuals as subaltern who are unable of speaking until an elite appears to enlighten them is discriminating. In fact, they have been guided by the educated people who often stay out of face to face confrontations with the European soldiers; this risk has been taken by the uncultivated people who have been very aware of the dangerous consequences of such intentions.

⁴⁴ Actually, it comes from the title of the first chapter “Algeria Unveiled” in Fanon’s *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*.

After independence, the privileged elite turn out to be corrupt and hypocritical; the leaders of the anti-colonial movements, who have profited from their militant carrier and become high governmental members, have later dropped their revolutionary masks showing their true faces. Women have been deprived of their political share in the new governments by men forgetting about their promises of equality (Leonard 448). It goes against their notion of manhood and their interests to acknowledge the fact that “[e]very anticolonial movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America enlisted the support of women in various ways and would not have been successful without their help” (ibidem.). Today, Africa’s greatest dilemma is the corruption of its puppet politicians which contributes to a large extent to the continent’s underdevelopment. As long as these people give priority to their greedy needs over their nations’ demands, Africa will always be a symbol of severe poverty, famines, epidemics and dependency.

Spivak thinks that “the subaltern is only produced by the subject effects, the inscriptions, found in colonial historiography: ‘ “the peasant” is marked only as a pointer to an irretrievable consciousness’ ” (Childs, Weber, and Williams 100). It is stated that “there is no subaltern voice that can be retrieved or made to speak, only the designations of texts that construct peasant resisters as ‘criminals’ or ‘mutineers’” (ibidem.). The subaltern is not only silenced but is trivialized; whenever he/she speaks, he/she is ignored because her/his voice does not matter to the powerful class. The African female protestors have been called “loose” and “whores”, and this is due to the patriarchal political discourse which sees women as sexual bodies (Leonard 448). Colonialism has brought “[African women] more under male domination” (450). For instance, in courts, the judges discriminate against the female subject (ibidem.). As Nairobi becomes a destination for prostitution, the colonizer issues strict rules that limit women’s freedom (Kanogo 33-34); “[i]n Meru, in 1947, the practice was that ‘girls may not leave the District in a taxi without the written permission of their chiefs’ ” (34). It should be mentioned that women in the Kikuyu culture, as described in the selected books, have the right of property; a Kikuyu woman can possess a small piece of land, granaries, and her own livestock. She is free to trade in them and do whatever she pleases with her money. In the scenes of the markets, women are depicted selling their goods. This is also proved in Kanogo’s book in which he talks about the studies that confirm “women’s usufructuary rights in livestock and land, which were clearly defined and well protected” (43). However, when it comes to “the inheritance of immovable property”, women are treated like minors by charging the closest male relative as her guardian, who is responsible for this kind of property of which

she is deprived to possess; it can be her father or even her brothers-in-law in case of the absence of her father and/or husband or both (ibidem.). The traditions concerning women are ambiguous and complicated in this region.

5. The ambivalent attitudes of the colonizer towards the indigenous people in the selected works by Karen Blixen and Elspeth Huxley

5.1. The stereotype and the hierarchic organization of the different tribes in Kenya Colony

“The discourse of stereotypes” (Huddart 35) has been created and established to convince people that colonialism has become an obligation. In addition to the political and economic reasons, colonialism needs “cultural structures for its coherence and justification” (ibidem.). In the third chapter in the *Location of Culture* “The Other Question: Stereotype, discrimination, and the discourse of colonialism”, he constructs “a theory of colonial discourse” by mainly concentrating on ambivalence since it represents a principle feature of the stereotype (Bhabha 36). Since this discourse of stereotypes is based on falsified ideas and evidence, it cannot remain balanced; the gaps started to be sensed, and this results in the colonizer’s anxiety. In fact, the very construction of such discourse has manifested this anxiety. Bhabha likens the ambivalence of the fetish to the ambivalence of the stereotype; he writes:

Within discourse, the fetish represents the simultaneous play between metaphor as substitution (masking absence and difference) and metonymy (which contiguously registers the perceived lack). The fetish or stereotype gives access to an ‘identity’ which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defence, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it. (Bhabha 74-75)

Bhabha also traces ambivalence in Lacan’s concept of the mirror stage in the Imaginary phase. The mirror stage marks the moment of both the separation from the mother’s body and the initial establishment of the child’s selfhood, as he realizes that the mother and the world are not one body. The discovery of this fact creates a feeling of worry as he feels different and lost. “ ‘Like the mirror stage’ ‘the fullness’ of the stereotype- its image as identity- is always threatened by ‘lack’ ” (77). Besides, the self-identification with the child’s reflection on the mirror is unreal since the image represents a copy of the self. This identification in the Imaginary is characterized by “narcissism” and “aggressivity” which lies in the “confrontational” recognition of the self (ibidem.). Bhabha concludes that narcissism and

aggressivity are “two forms of identification that constitute the dominant strategy of colonial power exercised in relation of the stereotype which, as a form of multiple and contradictory belief, gives the knowledge of difference and simultaneously disavows or masks it” (ibidem.). The colonial ambivalence lies in the violent representation of the Other and “evidence of narcissistic anxiety about the self”; while the colonizer violently imposes “his superiority” on the colonized, he secretly worries about his identity, and this anxiety contradicts with the strength he shows to the colonized with his “aggression” (Huddart 43). Therefore, the “masking” of the “lack” fixes the stereotype and “its phantasmatic quality” (Bhabha 77). In order to stabilize his identity, the colonizer anxiously works on continually repeating “the same old stories of the Negro’s animality, the Coolie’s inscrutability or the stupidity of the Irish” (ibidem.), which are secretly desired but feared at the same time. This is exactly what Blixen has done by the classification of the different native tribes in *OA*. This will be dealt with later in the discussion.

Bhabha’s study of the theory of the stereotype is also indebted to Fanon’s exploration of the “visualized stereotyping” and “its focus on skin” (Huddart 43). In his essay *The Fact of Blackness*,⁴⁵ Fanon deals with the white man’s gaze. As blackness brings infinite condemnations to its holder and generates constant fears in the white man, he states that certain laboratories have been seriously working to come out with a cure for “denegrification” (Fanon, *FB* 3). To demonstrate how the white man’s gaze operates when encountering a black person, he writes the following passage which is quoted by Bhabha in his previously-mentioned chapter:

My body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, re-colored, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it’s cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother’s arms: Mama, the nigger’s going to eat me up. (*FB* 4)

This is how the child’s shouting “Look at the nigger! ... Mama, a Negro! ... Hell, he’s getting mad” (ibidem.) reveals what the stereotype revolves around; ‘the negro’ is necessarily evil and cannibal. Bhabha employs this passage to introduce “the scenario of colonial fantasy” (Bhabha 82). The stereotype, in fact, has incarcerated both the colonizer and the colonized in

⁴⁵ This essay is, in fact, a chapter in *Black Skin, White Masks*. As Huddart states, the title of the chapter has been deceptively translated; the original title in French is “L’expérience vécue du Noir” which should be translated as “The Lived Experience of the Black Man” (Huddart 42) has been paraphrased to “The Fact of Blackness”.

this fetishistic culture; while the colonized/the black is “unmercifully imprisoned” by the white gaze (FB 3), the colonizer has confined himself in the unnecessary discourses of the white man’s burden and the civilizing mission. Fanon’s analysis of how the black skin functions in the white mind as a signifier of the blacks’ demonic nature can be summarized in his phrase “racial epidermal schema” (ibidem.), which Bhabha defines as “the fetish of colonial discourse” (Bhabha 78). Here, he differentiates between Freud’s sexual fetish and the colonial fetish; the latter differs from the sexual fetish in that it is not “secret”, but it constitutes a “common knowledge” (ibidem.). It can be concluded that like the absence of penis in the mother which generates in the little boy the fear of castration, the black skin is what creates the white man’s anxiety as he assumes that all people should be white, and for this reason he continually attempts to suppress his anxiety and his fear of turning black/native by inventing a whole discourse of the stereotype. Actually, by quoting the previous passage, Bhabha builds on Fanon’s understanding of the stereotyping as a mere misrepresentation of the black people by concluding that “[i]t is a much more ambivalent text of projection and introjection, metaphoric and metonymic strategies, displacement, over-determination, guilt, aggressivity” (81-82).

The obsession about the notion of civilization is a manifestation of being obsessed with the fear of going native and the necessity of preserving the white European identity. Blixen in OA writes: “[t]he barbarian loves his own pride, and hates, or disbelieves in, the pride of others. I will be a civilized being, I will love the pride of my adversaries, of my servants, and my lover; and *my house shall be, in all humility, in the wilderness a civilized place*” (223-24; emphasis added). Here, she is attempting to suppress her fears, by working on the protection of her identity. Her sarcastic claim “[l]ove the pride of the conquered nations, and leave them to honour their father and their mother” (224) further betrays her account. As the self-defence continues, she depicts herself as more tolerant than the local inhabitants.

In addition to Wilhelm Blumenbach’s classification of the races, the settler writers appear to have their own racial categorization of the Kenyan tribes. Certainly, their classification is not based on the degree of lightness of the skin colour, since they are all blacks; they have ranked these tribes according to the degree of likeness of the native mindset to the European mind. During their stay in Kenya, the settlers Huxley and Blixen have lived in Thika and on the Ngong Hills, respectively, which are mainly inhabited by the Kikuyu. This explains why the contact with these people is prevalent in the memoirs. Almost the workers in the plantations are Kikuyu. The close servants vary between Kikuyu, Swahili and Somali: Blixen’s closest

servant is a Somali (Farah), her cook is a Kikuyu (Kamante), and the “cook-cum-houseboy” (*FTT* 8) of Huxley’s family is a Swahili (Juma), their headman is half Kikuyu, half Masai (Sammy). It can be noticed that the Masai are rarely employed by the settlers. In *OA*, Blixen reports that at the beginning of World War I the British government has refused to recruit the Masai to fight by its side the Germans, because it finds it quiet shameful “to organize the Masai to make a war on white men, be they even Germans” (*OA* 189). But, by the end of the war, as the circumstances have changed, the government compellingly turns to them. On the other hand, the Kikuyu have been welcomed from the very beginning to participate in the war. It is very clear that the colonial officials prefer the Kikuyu to any other tribe.

The fact that the Kikuyu are more adoptable to the European lifestyle is more reflected in *OA*. Actually, Huxley also approves of this idea (*FTT* 192). The Somalis are depicted as less influenced by the Europeans than certain tribes, and more attached to their culture and religion.⁴⁶ Here, the comparison can be made between the Kikuyu and the Somalis, since Blixen deals to a considerable extent with the Somalis. She remembers that she often visits the Somali village with Farah and how she enjoys their feasts and marriages (*OA* 21). Her phrase “Natives and Somali” (189) reveals that she places the Somalis in a different category of the Kenyan inhabitants, a superior category to ‘the natives’. The description of both peoples throughout the memoir shows that the Kikuyu lifestyle is not appealing to Blixen, for example, their cuisine, their superstitions and their belief in the ancestral spirits: for instance, they drink mixed blood with the content of goats’ intestines for purification prepared by mundu-mugos. As for the Masai, Blixen holds a low opinion of them. She compares between the Somalis and the Masai in the following passage: “[T]he Somali are a religious people, and the Masai have no religion whatever, nor the slightest interest in anything above this earth. The Somalis are clean, and take much trouble over their ablutions and hygiene, while the Masai are a dirty nation” (133).

When Farah informs her that in the past the Somali men used to marry Masai women, she finds the matter confusing and the answer more striking, as he justifies his people’s choice that solely the Masai have not been enslaved and cannot be (*ibidem.*). He adds that the Masai cannot bear being imprisoned to the extent of death, and for this reason, the British government fines them instead of imprisoning them, when they deviate from the law. Blixen finds this ironic, as their “stark inability to keep alive under the yoke” is the sole characteristic

⁴⁶ It should be mentioned here that the fact of not being considered a target for conversion and European education facilitates preserving their beliefs and customs.

that makes the colonial government inconveniently classify them from all the other tribes “with the immigrant aristocracy” (ibidem.). It can be interpreted that she despises them for being too wild, and therefore all the civilizing attempts with them will be in vain. Furthermore, the Masai are usually depicted in both memoirs, and even in the novel, as wearing spears and shields; they do not put on European clothes, except Sammy who is half Masai. In terms of hygiene, the Europeans do not also find the Kikuyu clean, for example, as previously mentioned, they do not wash their dishes in *RS*.

Concerning the Swahilis and Arabs, it can be concluded that they come last in the writer’s classification of the native tribes. She writes that the Swahili town has not a good reputation (20). She portrays it as a “dirty and gaudy place” which is constructed in a quiet primitive and unorganized way (ibidem.). She refers to it as the town “from which the spirit of the advancing civilization was steadily fleeing” (ibidem.). While she describes the Arabs as “impetuous, quarrelsome, abstinent, and greedy”, she depicts the Swahili as “[they go along with the Arabs], slaves themselves and slave-hearted, cruel, obscene, thievish, full of good sense and jests, running to fat with age” (132). Among the reasons she prefers the Somalis is that they have “a keen sense of gratitude” (115), as the settlers often complain about ‘the local inhabitants’ ingratitude’. The loyalty of her servant Farah and the close relationship with him also play a significant role in her appreciation of the Somalis. Whenever Farah’s tribe, which is called Habr Yunis, has a conflict with other people, she defends his clan, simply because it is Farah’s people (21). This shows how her love for Farah encompasses his whole tribe. Not only the Somalis have a sense of gratefulness, but also the Masai do, but ‘in their way’; she writes: “[t]hey remember, they can thank you, and they will bear you a grudge. They all bear us all a grudge, which will be wiped out only when the tribe is wiped out itself” (115). This proves her strong contempt for these people, comparing to other tribes. As for the Kikuyu (and Wakambas, or kavirondos), they “know nothing of gratitude” (ibidem.). Although she finds this feature offending, she appears quite lenient with the Kikuyu in this matter; while she praises them for being “unprejudiced” people, she justifies their ungratefulness by claiming that they “look upon [the Europeans’] activities as upon those of nature” (116). What is more striking is that she likens the Kikuyu to the impoverished Europeans (ibidem.)⁴⁷, and this proves that the European lower classes are ranked with ‘the natives’. This hierarchic organization of the native tribes is merely stereotypical, as it is founded on obvious

⁴⁷ This can be related to Will Jackson’s statement “Certainly, the aversion to “poor whites” in Kenya was unequivocal: Nothing was more damaging to the racial ideologies separating colonisers from colonised than the appearance of a white man with nothing in his favour but the colour of his skin” (344).

generalizations that are themselves based on the writer's prejudices and on what she hears from other settlers. Phrases such as "all Natives"⁴⁸, "all Africans", "the Masai", "the Somali", and so on are very recurrent throughout the book. Dealing with Kamante as an exception that challenges her stereotypical view of the Kikuyu enforces the stereotyping of this tribe, especially when she explains this exception as a rare natural phenomenon, uttering that "Nature had here taken a leap and cut away from the order of precedence of faculties and talents; the thing now became mystic and inexplicable, as ever where you are dealing with genius" (40-41). It is difficult to her to absorb that what she considers a savage can have 'the mental characteristics of a European'. Knowing an African who is intelligent, has a good memory, and learns things fast stimulates her defence mechanism, and therefore comes this explanation, revealing her "anxious colonial knowledge" (Huddart 35).

The European belief in their mental superiority is uncovered whenever this idea is challenged. Blixen cannot hide her surprise whenever she meets clever, or well-mannered indigenous people. She observes the boys who often come to see her cock-clock as follows: "[t]hey behaved very well, and *kept up a sort of self-made ceremonial for their visits*, which came to this: that they could move about freely in the house so long as they did not touch anything, nor sit down, nor speak unless spoken to" (OA 49; emphasis added). The boys' behaviour challenges her prejudices about the Africans being barbarians. The italicized phrase reveals that she does not believe that they always behave in this way. It is clear that she assumes that their mannerism is solely performed in her presence or in front of any other European; she excludes the idea that they do so in their own tribes. Back to Kamante, the 'special' native boy, Blixen cannot hide her colonial envy of him. He is talented in cooking, and he has "a surprising manual adroitness" as he beats the eggs' whites better than the machine (41). She finds that "[n]othing [...] could be more mysterious than this natural instinct in a savage for [the European] culinary art" (ibidem.). Throughout the sub-chapter "A native child" which is devoted to the portrayal of Kamante, Blixen varies between praise and condemn; while she expresses her admiration of these indicated characteristics, she keeps denigrating him by referring to him with phrases such as "his dark crooked hands", "ungraceful head", "a demon" and "a civilized dog". The use of these phrases proves the fact that she hates seeing the local inhabitants excelling in doing things. She hates experiencing her racist notions being challenged. The Africans or the Other are thought to be good at nothing, simply a sort of a different species of animals, and this has definitely fuelled her fears and anxieties.

⁴⁸ Throughout the examination of the book, this phrase gives the impression that sometimes it refers to the Kikuyu, and this can be possible since the region where the settlers live is mostly dominated by the Kikuyu.

Animal imagery is, in fact, a dominant style of language in colonial literature that mirrors the white man/woman's anxious tendency to fix the racial prejudices in order to keep the colonial stereotypes stabilized. The following is the famous passage that describes the cook Kamante: [h]ere even his intelligence sometimes failed him, and he came and offered me a Kikuyu delicacy – a roasted sweet potato or a lump of sheep's fat – as even *a civilized dog*, that has lived for a long time with people, will place a bone on the floor before you, as a present" (43; emphasis added). Thus, according to the writer, Kamante is a sort of wild animal/dog that has been tamed under her instructions, but the problem is the original nature cannot be entirely suppressed, and therefore it keeps reappearing from time to time, confirming her racial preconceived ideas. Many critics, like Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Hariclea Zengos and Auma Ochanda, find such metaphors dehumanizing of the local inhabitants (Brantly 84). While agreeing that these metaphors are "among the foremost of Dinesen's sins of commission", Brantly approves of Else Brundbjerg's statement that this is "a part of her way of expressing herself" (ibidem.). Brantly affirms that the animal imagery is very recurrent in the writer's works and applicable to the whites as to the blacks, and refers to Blixen's short story "The Supper at Elsinore"⁴⁹ in which Elsinore is depicted as "a poultry yard populated by swans, birds of prey, and chickens" (ibidem.). Certainly, the animal imagery employed in the description of Elsinore is not dehumanizing, because comparing people to birds in different cultures is not considered dehumanizing, and the context differs here, since the relationship between the settler and her Kikuyu cook is governed by the logic of the master and the slave. *FTT* also includes comparisons of both the blacks and the whites to birds; Mrs Nimmo, for example, is depicted as an ostrich, Captin Palmer as a giraffe, and Alec Wilson as a bat-eared fox (*FTT* 96). However, no European is described as a dog in the three selected works. In fact, the comparison of the indigenous people to dogs is repetitive in the colonial era. The Dorobo's face, for instance, is likened to a dog's (228). In his article *Heart of Darkness: An Image of Africa*, Chinua Achebe attacks both Blixen and Conrad for such comparisons. Talking about a worker on his ship, he says:

And between whiles I had to look after *the savage* who was fireman. He was an *improved specimen*; he could fire up a vertical boiler. He was there below me, and, upon my word, *to look at him was as edifying as seeing a dog in a parody of breeches and a feather hat, walking on his hind legs.* (qtd. in Achebe 1786; emphasis added)

Blixen's and Conrad's dog metaphors are mocking the people who have learnt how to behave like Europeans. Both writers see that "Africans [are] barely improved animals [and therefore]

⁴⁹ It is the fifth story in *Seven Gothic Tales*.

justifies treating them in a less humane manner” (Brantly 84). Towards the end of *OA*, when Blixen is preparing for her departure, she describes a Kikuyu woman crying, “tears streaming over her face, like a cow that makes water on the plain before you” (*OA* 327). Depicting a native person in this disgusting way shows how much she despises these people. It can be concluded that two types of animal imagery exist in *OA*: the first is used for depicting the indigenous people as a constituent of the natural landscape, and the second type is more abusive and denigrative.

5.2. Romanticized racism

5.2.1. The romanticization of the Other and the fear to ‘go native’

The romanticized racism in the selected books can be traced in the romantic aspect of the orientalist discourse. In *Orientalism*, Said thoroughly explores the romanticized Orient as he deals with “pre-Romantic and Romantic representations of the Orient as exotic locale” (*O* 118). Said maintains that the orientalist elements recognized in certain works of Romantics such as “William Beckford, Byron, Thomas Moore, and Goethe” are clearly connected to (and therefore cannot be separated from) the rising concern about gothic stories, and fantasies about “the barbaric splendor and cruelty” (*ibidem.*). He traces this “exotic sublimity” in the art of painting at the end of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century, pointing out to the tableaux of Delacroix and to other French and British painters’ works which are specifically made to generate intermixed feelings of “[s]ensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, [and] intense energy” (*ibidem.*). The exotic subliminal portrayal of the Other can be characterized as both romantic and gothic; while the Orient is romantically more associated with beauty, it is gothically more linked to horror and darkness. Thus, the sublime in the colonial context is the experience the western man lives when encountering the Orient.

The representation of the East as “mysterious” (Said; *CI* xi) is a sort of romanticizing the Other. To introduce the Orient in a gothic style makes it more tempting. Africa has been long perceived as a mysterious continent, and therefore the travel there has been considered a voyage into the unknown, into the ‘heart of darkness’. Blixen and Huxley, when first arrive to Kenya, have been enchanted with the African nature and the wild animals, but also they have feared the place. There, they will experience what they have learnt from the travellers’ stories, the novels and the poems, they will taste both the romance and the horror of the African life, they will live their fantasies and dreams. While watching the sunset with Ian in Thika, Lettice

lives the sublime; she utters: “there is more beauty in the butterfly’s wing or a seashell than in that sunset; but it has a barbaric splendour [sic] in it, and an element of terror” (*FTT* 121).

In the selected works, Africa is also portrayed as the theatrical stage of romance stories, of lovers/ people seeking freedom, as “Africa [is perceived as] an escape from modern Europe” (Nixon 219). Living in the wilderness without the constraints of the European society has been a dream of many Europeans. David Garnett constructs on *OA* a whole world of imagination resulting in being convinced that Africa is the paradise of the whites; in 1938, he enthusiastically confesses that “*Out of Africa* [...] . . . is the first book to make me understand wanting to settle in the heart of Africa, and to have given me a picture of white people living a free and generous life there” (qtd. in Brantly 74). Africa has been perceived as an exotic space, as a liberator. Tilly, for example, is no more interested in her appearance in Africa, because no one will judge her (*FTT* 37). As an aristocratic English woman, she is freed from the necessity of being elegant all the time and the fear of being judged if she does not look well dressed. In addition to that, she appears enjoying wearing light clothes, instead of the heavy and uncomfortable clothes designed for upper-class women. In the film adaptations of the memoirs, Blixen and Huxley’s mother are depicted wearing simple shirts, trousers and huts. Ironically, civilization is depicted as something that necessitates the restriction of the individuals’ freedom. This is actually echoed in the utterance: “Here an old man by the name of Awaru spoke. He was in closer contact with civilization than the others, for he had been seven years in jail” (*OA* 105). The same idea is also expressed when Tilly talks about her daughter, the narrator: “ ‘well, We’ve got tents,’ [...]. I think she was glad, really; already she had fallen in love with camp life and was in no hurry to become civilized again” (*FTT* 11).

The colonial assumption that Africa is a space that generates feelings of both liberation and horror can be further traced through the characters Tilly and Lettice. Lettice’s expression of her admiration of Tilly’s activity and vitality in such hard atmosphere (60-61), reveals her stressful situation, as she feels possibly being contaminated by ‘the primitives’. She addresses Tilly as follows: “the essence of a thousand generations of doing no more than is necessary to exist, of leaving things as they are, has settled into the ground. And it’s become too strong for me to resist; I’m not very good at resisting things, I’m afraid. Or do you think I am just making excuses?” (ibidem.). Later, she adds that the country scares her as she is worried about the fact that the European impact on the region will be “swallowed up” like any other civilization that once passed by this land (61). She wants that the European achievements in the region will be eternal. On the other hand, the adaptation to the African atmosphere,

however, is a sensitive issue to Lettice that “it [may] be dangerous to carry that too far” (113), otherwise one will turn native. She then teases her husband by imagining herself carrying loads on her back like a Kikuyu woman, putting on no clothes, and living in a hut surrounded by animals (ibidem.). This exposes how the white man/woman is anxiously obsessed with this idea.

Generally, colonial literature definitely includes gothic elements, if not being gothic like *Heart of Darkness*. This is what is called imperial gothic by Patrick Brantlinger. In his article *Imperial Gothic: Atavism and the Occult in the British Adventure Novel, 1880-1914*, he identifies three motifs of imperial gothic: “‘atavism’⁵⁰-- psychological and social regression like Kurtz’ ‘going native’ in *Heart of Darkness*--”, “invasion, often in the forms of demonic powers from the past as in Machen’s and Stoker’s tales of horror”, and “the degradation of adventure as in much of Conrad” (Brantlinger 245). The settlers, Blixen and Huxley, write about their encounters with the ‘primitive cultures’, the Africans who believe in the superpowers of the ancestors, and the African magicians. They also mentioned certain cannibal tribes such as the tribes living in the Victoria Nyanza basin. The first book of *RS* introduces a gothic description of the Kikuyu’s magic world; Huxley writes: “Irumu had already become a mundo-mugo, versed in none knew what mysteries, for it was well known that Ndia was a land of magic; strange and dreadful practices of witchcraft and sorcery were prevalent in that savage country” (*RS* 9). The fear of the invasion of native religions can be traced in the obsession with the diffusion of Christianity in all the colonies. Brantlinger sees that imperialism as a “political faith” is a cover for the increasing lack of faith in religion and an attempt to restore “faith in England’s future” (Brantlinger 246). He refers to Robert Erskine Childers’ *Riddle of the Sands* which begins with the narrator addressing the reader, telling him/her how he has learnt about certain lonely men who because of their fear of self-degeneration habituate themselves “to dress regularly for dinner” (ibidem.). This recalls the scene of Tilly dressing for dinner with Randall. As the work in the farm makes her forget to take care of her appearance, her clothes, her hair and her nails, she seizes the opportunity of inviting Randall for dinner: “now she had a chance for once to dress up like a lady, and she took it” (*FTT* 37). This can be interpreted that Tilly somehow feels civilized again. It should be mentioned that the aristocrats’ notion of civilization includes also a definite code of dress and behaviour.⁵¹ The white settlers who have spent long periods in ‘the savage country’ feel

⁵⁰ Brantlinger argues that “Imperialism is ... atavist in character” (qtd. in 245). This means that imperialism is a result of the people’s secret longing to come back to the age of savages.

⁵¹ Tilly considers that “[t]he Palmers are too civilized for this life” (65), because they are very aristocratic.

they have lost some of their civilizational features. They are so anxious that the train passing by Thika makes them feel secure in the midst of the wilderness and “very civilized” (128).

The European settlers, especially the aristocrats, have been anxious for being obliged to change certain codes, in order to adapt to the African atmosphere. Tilly, when first arrives in Thika, “was tightly laced in, her waist was wasp-like, her skirt voluminous” (4). Huxley ironically remembers how she was lucky as a child not to be under the obligation of wearing an “ensemble [that has] been designed to prevent the circulation of air” (ibidem.). Thus, this dinner is an opportunity to be really civilized. Blixen’s angst is also reflected in her previously mentioned utterance “my house shall be, in all humility, in the wilderness a civilized place” (OA 224). If a cinematic director focuses on this angle in the colonial age, he will come up with an excellent film of horror: all the requirements of this genre of films are present in OA: a lonely white woman lives in an isolated house in the midst of the jungles, struggling with her own fears and desires, as these fears arise from the idea that the call to the wild is strongly tempting and enchanting, and it is solely the weak and the immoral person who cannot resist the seduction. To give in to the call of the wild is like to succumb to the sirens’ bewitching songs in Homer’s poem “Odyssey”. The one who turns native/savage will be doomed forever as he/she will be considered mad and dead as a European. The fear to go native is better called the fear to live with shame. This frightening ending of certain Europeans constitutes an important theme in imperial gothic literature.

The characters similar to Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* who embody the deterioration of adventure exist in the selected works. In *FTT*, Mr Roos, the Dutch settler represents this degeneration. With this character, it can be seen that the act of mimicking the Other can also be applied to the Europeans. Unlike other Europeans, Mr Roos, builds a hut instead of a house; “it was a hut *like the natives*’, only with a sort of veranda” (*FTT* 161; emphasis added). He imitates the Kikuyu’s ways and strategies of hunting; “[he], squatting on his heels *like a kikuyu* [...], continued to unravel the trap and its chain without paying any attention to the plan of campaign” (166; emphasis added). Here, the European mimicry of the indigenous people is perceived by the colonizer as a contamination, and therefore it poses a threat to the white race and awakens the fear of going native whenever encountering such incidents. Mr Roos has also been suspected by Tilly that he has a sexual relationship with a “native girl” (173); it appears that some rumours have been circulating about this ‘shameful’ relationship.

In fact, being a Boer has accentuated the resentment of the English settlers towards him, as Boers are not considered as real Europeans. The Dutch people are even equated to Africans in a different scene (239), as Mr Roos has doubled his wildness. This reveals the degree of how much these people are perceived as degraded. Throughout the examination of the white settlers' books, it can be noticed that the British see themselves as the best and the noblest Europeans. This arrogant attitude towards the other Europeans comes from the fact that the British Empire is the most powerful empire at that time. Mr Roos appears to enjoy adopting the Kikuyu lifestyle: he learns their hunting secrets, for example, he saves Hereward's life because he knows that leopards always wander in pairs; Hereward was about to be killed by the mate of the leopard he has killed because of his ignorance of this fact. Mr Roos is a hybrid: he has combined the African lifestyle with the European's. He constructs a hut with a veranda, but without a garden; to a white settler, "[i]t was strange to see a European's dwelling without a garden, not even a few salvias or daisies, or an attempt at a lawn" (161). He also creates a new way of hunting which consists of blending the rules of African hunting he has learnt and his original expertise with the various types of rifles.

Although Bhabha's concept of hybridity does not deal with the racial hybridity or miscegenation, Mr Roos' relationship with the native girl announces the hybridity of his mind. In other words, miscegenation as a manifestation of the white settler's hybridity does not go against Bhabha's notion of hybridity. As a white man, he still believes in the supremacy of his race, but at the same time, he behaves in a way that does not satisfy his European fellows. When fighting with Sammy, he is so angry when Robin interferes that he explodes: "[y]ou let a nigger strike a white man, [...], and next they will kill you in your bed" (44). Allowing himself to deviate from 'the path of virtue', he accepts the norms of wilderness. When he talks about how he planned to kill the pair of leopards, Huxley describes him in the following way: "[i]t sounded as easy as making a pot of tea, and perhaps it was to Mr Roos, whose *own wildness* had not quite been bred away, and who used a rifle as if it were an extra limb" (171; emphasis added). Although he proves he is a good hunter, his European fellows still do not like his hybrid strategies of hunting, because he has damaged the European prestige. He is perceived as an anomalous cell in the European body. However, it should be mentioned that it appears that sexual relationships with non-Europeans are quite tolerable, if they do not result in children, for example, Robin who is not bothered with his aunt's marriage with a mulatto, simply because she is beyond the age of fertility (209).

Hybridity in general is not welcomed in either the native population or among the Europeans; it is received as a sort of treason of one's own culture and people. The local inhabitants wearing European clothes, at first, have been despised and rejected for following the enemy's style. In *RS*, Karanja used to put the native cloth whenever he goes to the latrine because "sometimes European clothes [are] an embarrassment" (*RS* 300). The same thing has happened in North Africa, without mentioning the nationalization. Even though Mr Roos goes native and crosses the forbidden boundaries of the European norms, he still believes in his superiority as a white man. To him, whiteness is the signifier of his higher position and what distinguishes him from 'the darker races'; 'after all, a white is a white, and a black is a black'. The obsession of the European man with his skin colour is the outcome of a culture that has been constructed on the idea that whiteness is the most ultimate source of pride and the greatest blessing.

The focus on the white man's pride is very recurrent in the memoirs, mirroring the obsession with this idea. It can be assumed that the settlers find conserving this pride as a prevention from moral debasement, and therefore their memoirs reflect their worries about being contaminated by 'the savages'. Throughout these autobiographies, the settlers prove that they are "of the best class" (Brantlinger 247). It is worth mentioning that as literary works slightly dealing with the degradation of adventure by including certain characters turning native and/or few hints to this issue, and by echoing the anxieties regarding this matter, cannot be completely compared to *Heart of Darkness* in which the theme of going native is a main subject-matter. At a certain time, "backsliding" has become a very serious problem to the colonizer, as the number of the Europeans seduced by the call to the wild is sharply increasing (*ibidem.*). This has been considered as a growing threat to the British Empire; the British colonists find themselves pulled back by agonizing about "the degeneration of their institutions, their culture, [and] their racial stock" in lieu of moving forward and focusing on their future (*ibidem.*).

On the other hand, the study of colonial literature always gives the impression that men are more vulnerable to the call of the wild than women. Women are often portrayed as very religious, moral, and naïve. This can be explained that in the patriarchal societies, girls are taken as subjects that need denser ethical upraising than boys, and as subjects that should be kept at home learning how to become a good wife for her future, like Mr Kurtz' fiancée in *Heart of Darkness*, who has kept waiting for his return from the Congo, and when he dies she has continued to mourn him, without knowing of his relationship with a native woman. This

actually fits Mr Kurtz' utterance: "[t]hey – the women I mean – are out of it – should be out of it. *We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own*, lest ours gets worse" (Conrad 59; emphasis added). Furthermore, the women settlers usually help their husbands in the farm work like Tilly, they often take decisions together, but the real management of the farm's affairs lies in the hands of the men; briefly, everything goes as they wish, and women find themselves constrained by the social norms.

Kurtz' statement, in fact, can be read from a different angle; to men, Africa can be regarded as a threatening place that bewitch women and make them turn against them. Thus, women longing for more freedom can be considered as an effect of the mysterious continent, and definitely men's world in the colony 'gets worse'. Women in the British or the European society are not supposed/ allowed to use guns, to hunt, because these activities are men's occupation. In the scene of searching for the wounded leopard, when Tilly asks for a rifle, she is ignored (*FTT* 167). Hereward does not like women coming to witness the adventure, without mentioning ladies carrying weapons. He possibly thinks this behaviour contradicts with his notion of femininity and/or masculinity. Irritated with the women's presence, he explodes: " '[h]ave you gone out of your mind?' [...] 'I'm not going to have a woman under my protection exposed to danger from a wounded beast' " (*ibidem.*). Tilly insists on staying, but not on having a rifle, because she knows her efforts will be in vain. She hesitatingly challenges the notion of masculinity that deprives her from discovering/practicing new things, and therefore it forbids her from crossing its boundaries. Whereas, Blixen, profiting much from her status as a divorced woman, she has led a free life and has enjoyed her sojourn in Kenya; she often goes on safaris and hunts with her boyfriend. Blixen does not conform to the conservative social and gender conventions of that era.

Tilly's attempt to act like a hunter can be considered as an attempt to mimic the male colonizer. The motive for mimicry is that sense of inferiority that keeps pushing people to imitate whom they see as superiors. As women, the female settlers have been experiencing this feeling towards men. They want to live the action. In the scene of the leopards' hunt, refusing her demand to participate in the hunt offends Tilly. "Nothing caused her more distress than to be left out of anything that promised interest and novelty" (166), because she is a woman. It can be assumed that she hates the distinctions between 'this is men's job' and 'this is women's job' that prevent her from having her share from the exotic pleasures of Africa. Mimicking the male colonizers reflects the longing of the white women settlers for freedom and to cut down with all social and gender restrictions. Blixen, on the other hand,

acts like a man compared to the European society at that time. The question is: would she behave so if she were still married? It can be possible that she wants to rely on herself like a man or to prove to herself that she is able of anything like a man.

Like the indigenous people, the white women settlers' revolting against being perceived as inferior to men guides them to rebel against them. Lettice is another woman settler who is revolted against her passive situation. She admits that she does not like being very emotional by calling it "my stupid nature" (54), assuming this characteristic as a weakness, since sensitivity is attributed to women in the patriarchal societies. She wants to become a "reformer" (ibidem.) to prove to herself and to her husband that she can be a tough and an active/useful woman like him, to gain confidence in herself. Thus, improving the children and women's terrible situation becomes the white woman's burden. She also hates her superficial life which revolves around attending concerts and ballets, and reading stories which is the typical life of an aristocrat woman (ibidem.). She is struggling to change herself and to find new things to do. This search for new horizons mirrors her suffocation by the class/gender rules.

Back to the romanticization of the Orient/Oriental, this romanticization appears to cease being a theory in the selected books. Africa and Africans are depicted as the realizers of the orientalist fantasies. It is obvious in several occasions that the communication with and/or the attitude towards the Other mirrors the imaginary perception and the fantasy about 'the exotic Orient'. At the beginning of the eleventh chapter in *FTT*, Lettice expresses her discomfiture with Ahmed kneeling on his knees "like a Circassian slave offering [her] a bowl of rose-water" as she puts herself at his place (100). Ian responds that he has also felt the same at the beginning, but later he starts to find "his manners [...] so perfect he's managed to make [him] feel like a caliph born to command the services of princes; so [they] are both satisfied" (ibidem.). This satisfaction is realized as the fantasy becomes real; Ahmed makes Ian live what he has learnt and imagined about the extravagant life of the caliphs in the Orient. Blixen also enjoys hearing "tales in the style of the Arabian Nights" from the Somali girls (OA 159). Certainly, the *Arabian Nights* she knows/has read is one of the orientalist translations of the original book. This is how the colonial romanticization of the Orient/Oriental works.

5.2.2. Blixen and Huxley, the representatives of romanticized racism

"The racism is catching, because it is persuasively put forward as love". (qtd. in Brantly 86)

This is how Ngugi sees *OA*, but this comment can also be applicable to Huxley's selected works, specifically *FTT*. In fact, classifying *OA* as "one of the most dangerous books ever written about Africa", partly refers to the romanticized racism in Blixen's autobiography. However, today, the book cannot be considered that dangerous since the mentality has totally changed in general. Racism has been condemned by the United Nations's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965.⁵² In the twenty-first century, the book is solely perceived as a legacy of a definite period of history that is open to different criticisms. At least, today, racism is based neither on scientific nor on religious justifications. Thus, the people who attempt to revive such ideas by certain publications, through TV programmes as previously mentioned in the thesis will hopefully achieve nothing.

Blixen's equivocal attitude towards the native inhabitants is well-mirrored in her book *OA*. Whereas she sometimes expresses her love for them, she looks at them with contempt. In the first chapter, she says "[a]s for me, my first weeks in Africa, I had felt a great affection for the Natives. It was a strong feeling that embraced all ages and both sexes" (*OA* 25). Later in the memoir, she feels she becomes a good friend with them. As she falls in love with the Kenyan nature, the romantic description of the African landscapes is quite recurrent. She is so enchanted by them that she writes "[t]he views were immensely wide. Everything that you saw made for greatness and freedom, and unequalled nobility" (13). In fact, she chooses to start her story as a settler on the Ngong Hills with the depiction of nature. The indigenous people themselves are perceived as a part of those beautiful landscapes. Talking about her first encounter with these people, she compares them with these animals; she claims that one should not frighten them, otherwise they disappear "like the wild animals which at an abrupt movement from you are gone" (26). A Kikuyu woman is also described as follows: "[w]hen we met she stood dead still, barring the path to me, staring at me in the exact manner of a giraffe in a herd, that you will meet in the open plain, and which lives and feels and thinks in a manner unknowable to us" (327). Here, Blixen constructs a binary opposition of us/them, the civilized European versus the Kikuyu, a different species of animals that consists a part of the Kenyan nature.

Expressing love towards the people that she considers 'second humans' defines what romanticized racism is. This love is first introduced as love of nature and then of the

⁵² For more details about the UN human rights, see <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx>

indigenous people who constitute an element of the wild nature. These people and this African nature represent to them the realization of their fantasies about these exotic entities back there in Europe, and the African soil represents to them the space where they will practice all their ideals of the civilizing mission and the white man's burden. Both writers Blixen and Huxley mention how the settlers, including Blixen herself and Huxley's mother, have cured many local inhabitants from some illnesses, and how whenever one of them has a health problem, he/she heads towards them. Definitely, this appears very humane from their part. However, the fact is that the settlers do not examine and nurse people out of a humane motive; they do so because they think it is their duty as white people towards the inferior races. In Africa, the settlers are acting as if they were doctors or nurses, and they often treat these people randomly. Blixen, for example, is not interested in the consequences of such practice. All she cares about is her fame as a doctor which has not been affected by "the catastrophic mistakes" (OA 31) she makes. She is proud of gaining this good reputation that has accidentally been won, and additionally proves to be solid. Hence, all the apparently beneficial efforts of the colonizer/settlers should not be perceived as humane actions, because they are made out of a look of inferiority.

OA is a product of a romantically racist writer par excellence. Blixen's romantic writing style suggests that she has been influenced and fascinated by Romanticism. The celebration and love of nature, the importance of emotion, and the abhorrence and rejection of the industrial and urban lifestyle are romantic principles. These romantic ideals are illustrated in the various descriptive passages of nature and the epiphanic and subliminal moments that the contemplation of the African landscapes generates in the writer, in her passionate relationship with Denys Finch Hatton, and in her admiration for certain native characteristics. In her memoir, Blixen finds the Kikuyu's resentment of "systemization" and "regularity" very interesting (30). She "[thinks] that what, at the bottom of their hearts, they feared from [them, the Europeans is] pedantry. In the hands of a pedant they die of grief" (ibidem.). Here, she senses the monotony and the mechanical aspect of the civilized European lifestyle. In fact, her experience as a doctor allows her to conclude from the Kikuyu's irregular attendance of which the German doctor also complains, that these people hate systemization and regularity. In this context, the Kikuyu can be considered as noble savages that have not been "exposed to the corrupting influences of civilization",⁵³ as Blixen sees them as "the echo from the earth when heaven had spoken" (OA 30). This idealization of the indigenous people is itself an

⁵³ The editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. <<http://www.britannica.com/art/noble-savage>>.

echo of the romantic view of the primitive man. Thus, it is very natural for the Kikuyu who are perceived as being in a complete harmony with nature to abhor the mechanical lifestyle that has been born out of civilization. Blixen manifests her yearning for a spiritual life which has turned into reality in Kenya. However, this should not be taken as a fixed attitude towards civilization and primitivism. The writer, in fact, holds ambiguous positions regarding this matter. After conveying her admiration for the indicated attribute of the Kikuyu, she later praises Kamante for being “an excellent patient” (32) who is always punctual with his appointments with her (as his doctor). She finds his regularity exceptional as a Kikuyu. It can be assumed that her romanticized racism is a product of her influence by the subsequence and the partial simultaneity of the totally contradictory intellectual movements, the enlightenment and romanticism.

The ambiguity of Blixen’s attitudes towards the native inhabitants is more intensified with her commitment to these people’s affairs with the colonial office and government. It is very bewildering that the loss of both the farm and her boyfriend does not stop her from thinking about her squatters’ future with the new proprietor after her departure. The squatters are asked to leave the place to the Kikuyu reserve in which not enough land is left to settle on, they and their cattle, and what makes the matter more difficult is that they insist to stay all together and refuse to sell their cattle. For their sake, she faces all the troubles of the colonial bureaucracy, from the District Commissioners of Nairobi to the office of the Governor Sir Joseph Byrne whom she never meets (321). “Sometimes [she has] to stay for a whole day in Nairobi, or to go in two or three times in a day” (ibidem.). Briefly, she does not rest until the problem of ‘her people’ is solved. She has been very patient, for she thinks that the issue will take her lifetime in order to be resolved. It is also very surprising that she refers to the Africans as her “black brothers” (qtd. in Brantly 79) in one of the letters to her brother Thomas, while it is very obvious that she considers the Africans as inferior to the Europeans. In the same letter, attention should be drawn to the sentence “even my glasses and my big cupboard must work in my mission for my ‘black brothers’” (ibidem.). It is a key statement that explains all this ambiguity. Blixen sees herself as a special missionary that is not connected with religion. As she believes in the importance of education, she writes in *Letters from Africa*:

I think that every large farm ought to have a school; there is no point in saying that natives are more happy in their primitive state; besides that being very questionable in itself, it is impossible to keep them there and by making no attempt to educate them all that results is that they get hold of all the worst aspects of civilization. (ibidem.)

In her memoir, she describes her “evening school” as her “favourite place on the farm, the centre of [their (she and her squatters)] spiritual life” (OA 37). However, she expresses her unease with the system of education which is carefully designed for the Africans and mainly consists of religion, and therefore she has been obliged to employ three teachers from the missions Roman Catholic, Church of England, and Church of Scotland (ibidem.). She points out to the fact that solely the Bible and the hymn books are translated to Swahili, and for this reason, she has been planning for the translation of Aesop’s fables “for the benefit of the Natives”, but, unfortunately she cannot achieve it, because of her busy schedule (ibidem.). On a higher level, Blixen is very concerned with the politics of Kenya, and regrets the fact that being a woman and a non-British subject prevents her from carrying on her mission (Brantly 79). Brantly reports that she talks about her struggle in her letters and interviews to represent the native inhabitants by arranging meetings with notable people such as Lord Islington and the Prince of Wales (ibidem.). She goes farther with her thinking that “the future of Kenya as a country lay in the hands of the natives, not the white settlers” (78). To Huxley, the writer of “the farcical novel, *The Merry Hippo*, on the theme of African Independence” (Githae-Mugo 20), this is a shocking statement. Like the romantics, Blixen sees herself as a prophet that her duty is to enlighten ‘her own people’ and show them the right path. As she adopts the narcissism of the romantic prophet, she sees in herself their saviour.

It is very laughable when the settlers appear proud when applying such notions; they consider with the education of the indigenous people – while exploiting them – they are helping and developing these ‘poor’ people. This embodies the very meaning of the hypocritical sympathy for them. Adopting the system of the squatters manifests this colonial hypocrisy. Blixen repeatedly refers to the workers or the slaves on her farm as ‘my squatters’ and ‘my boys’. The opening sentence of the book “I had a farm in Africa” (OA 13) announces that she considers this farm her own rightful property. Considering herself a “superior squatter” does not reveal that she thinks that the land is not hers. She is just trying to understand what these people think of her, and this has exposed her arrogance. In addition to that, when the squatters are ordered by the new masters to leave the farm in six months, she thinks that their confusion facing this problem is due to “[living] in the illusion that the land was theirs” (317). Surprisingly, when interviewed about The Mau Mau Rebellion, she expresses her sadness about the whites and the blacks’ battle and goes on saying “*Africa is for [her] always the blacks’ own country*” (qtd. in Brantly 82; emphasis added). What is more bewildering is that

she left in her will five thousand crowns for each of (her close servants and/or their sons) “Kamande Gatura, Ali Hassan, Ahmed Farah Aden (Saufe)⁵⁴, and Mohamed bin Juma” (xv).

OA is a book that can lead the reader to think that its writer is entrenched between the arrogance inherited from her own culture and regret resulting from her experience in Africa, which is not true. Living among Africans has challenged her prejudices about them in various occasions. It is very ironic that the writer talks about the clash of cultures as if it is happening in a peaceful country. In addition to their abhorrence of systemization and regularity, she admires their audacity as she sees it is in their nature to welcome the unpredictable and since they are used to such circumstances. She compares this Kikuyu characteristic to the Europeans “whom the majority strive to insure themselves against the unknown and the assaults of fate” (*OA* 30). Their curiosity about the new people coming to their countries and their lifestyle, as described in the selected works, shows their love of the unusual, and therefore their openness to other peoples and cultures. Blixen, in fact, explains that this openness is due to the indigenous people’s encounter with different people of different cultures including “Englishmen, Jews, Boers, Arabs, Somali Indians, Swaheli [sic], Masai and Kavirondo”; unlike “the Natives”, the Europeans have been accustomed to seclusion and to a single culture (53). She believes that this is the cause of the misapprehension governing the troubled relationship between the Europeans and the native population (*ibidem.*). She hints at the fact that being inflexible in the treatment of the local inhabitants is originated from living a life devoid of challenges of their own notions and beliefs. Here, colonialism is camouflaged by faked humanistic statements embellishing the exploitation of the African peoples and their lands. Blixen in *OA* is trying to establish for herself an image of the good settler, more precisely, a humane European settler by repeatedly showing fondness and understanding of the indigenous people’s way of thinking.

Like the “‘rosy’ picture of colonialism” (Brantly 76) introduced in *OA*, *FTT* depicts colonization as a beautiful spring. As an adult, Huxley’s opposition to magic and superstition does not prevent her from writing down with great nostalgia certain memories that contradict with this position. In *FTT*, the narrator remembers when she was a child how she visits a mundo-mugo to obtain a charm to protect her deer Twinkle from the python in the river; she struggles to rub Twinkle’s head and legs with the paste prepared of “various powders from his gourds, [the animal]’s hairs, one or two feathers, and some ground chalk” (*FTT* 181), and to make it eat some of it. As she cannot not make her eat it all, she fears that the charm will not

⁵⁴ Farah’s son (*OA* 164).

effectively work on the animal. But when Njombo tells her this is adequate, she trusts him because she believes that he knows better than her about these matters (182). She also believes what Njombo tells her about the python's "bright clothes" referring to his black skin which under water transforms into a multicoloured skin, and how shooting it will bring drought. Thus, she gives up the idea that it will be safer for Twinkle, if her father kills it. She writes: "I was glad that I would be able to warn him, as we needed rain for the young coffee, and if Tilly wore shoes made from such a magical creature she might disappear" (ibidem.). These scenes are impressive, since they depict the innocence of the little girl, and this has misleadingly added a 'soft' touch to the racism of the adult writer. It is true that as a child, she has been welcoming and open to the native beliefs, and this might imply that she has been lucky to move later to England, otherwise she will turn native if she stays there. This can be related to Mr Nimmo and Mrs Nimmo who think that Tilly and Robin are not looking after her well, as they allow her to spend much time communicating with the Kikuyu (76). Mrs Nimmo finds that the narrator has not been sent to school yet unbearable, saying "[i]t's not right, letting a child grow up like a native" (78).

FTT is also a reflection of its writer's spirit. It can be concluded from the study of Huxley and Blixen that Huxley appears more balanced than the latter, especially when looking at her positions on the superiority of the white race, the civilizing mission, and the dependence of the indigenous people. In fact, she is more serious regarding these issues. This can explain her involvement in the politics of Kenya, functioning as an " 'authority' and 'advisor' " (Githae-Mugo 20). The opening of the autobiography announces the typical colonizer's mindset. She defines Africa and the Kikuyu people by their "smell" which is unfamiliar to the English people; their smell is "dry, peppery, yet rich and deep, with an undertone of native body smeared with fat and red ochre and giving out a ripe, partly rancid odour" (*FTT* 4). Then, she continues with the smell-defining of the tribes of the Victoria Nyanza basin whose smell is "much less pleasant" (ibidem.). Micere Githae-Mugo argues that defining the indigenous people by their odour is a western tendency that is "both depersonalizing and stereotyping", and this can be traced in many books (Githae-Mugo 15). However, unlike certain Europeans, she "[grows] to enjoy" it (ibidem.). Here, Huxley embellishes her stereotypical definition of the Kikuyu. This is how romanticized racism functions in this memoir. Writing about herself when she was a child and how she used to be very fond of African nature and animals is itself a romanticization of the European colonization of the region. One of the most romantic

passages in this autobiography is Mrs Oram's statement celebrating the blessings of Africa of which the Africans are deprived:

Oh, but the whole country is a garden; a garden God has planted. Look what he has provided – streams to drink from, trees for shade, wild fruits and honey, birds and beasts for company. How can any of His creatures improve on that? Isn't it a waste of time to plant a border when the rain coaxes up a dozen different kinds of wild flower? There's nothing I love better than to walk in the wilds and return with my hands full of the bright jewels of veld and forest – the shy creepers pink storm lilies, humble forget-me-nots. (*FTT* 6)

Whereas, the Europeans always criticize the local inhabitants' disinterest in developing their ways of the land's exploitation as well as themselves, Mrs Oram finds that the European alteration of the natural views is distorting this heaven.⁵⁵ As a romantic, she sees that the European civilization has corrupted the African nature. Being herself a romantic, Huxley appears to hold a special affection for people like her. The way she writes about Lettice and Ian echoes her admiration for these characters. Lettice has the main characteristics of romantics: she is a very emotional woman, and shows signs of rebellion against the conventions of her society. Like Huxley, Lettice loves the wild animals and she feels sorry for the depletion of the livestock by the big game hunters; in fact, they are the sole thing she likes about Africa (53). Furthermore, Lettice expresses her rejection of the common perception of wealth and heroism. She tells Tilly:

Most people enclose themselves in diving-suits – they try to make fortunes or, if they have enough already, like Hereward, to win a big name, or to add a new bit to the Empire, something to make England mightier yet, like a bullfrog swelling out in a pond. Ian doesn't want to make a fortune, or a name, or even bits of Empire, he simply wants to live – though I shouldn't say simply, it is anything but that. You can't live, he says, if you are trying to grow richer or greater – only by fitting into the scheme of things, and not trying to alter it to fit you. (207)

She agrees with Ian, because she understands how the pursuit of such goals limits people's freedom. Finding this statement alarming, Tilly utters "[t]hat sounds rather Eastern" (*ibidem.*). Lettice is longing for a freedom that unfortunately is quite unacceptable by her milieu. In the settlers' discussion of their superiority and civilization in the twelfth chapter, Lettice questions if they represent a good example for the local inhabitants to follow (114). This implies that she is not certain about the whole matter. Commenting on Tilly's remark on the

⁵⁵ In fact, the enchanting nature and the mild climate of the Kenyan Highlands are the main factors that brought a considerably large population of immigrants to the place (Githae-Mugo 16).

native men's treatment of women, Ian ironically draws their attention to the notion of decency of his servant Ahmed who does not apprehend the way the European women behave.

Among all settlers in *FTT*, Lettice appears to be the most sensitive settler regarding the native woman's issue; she once says that "[she feels] guilty" every time she sees a women carrying heavy loads and babies on their backs and dragging themselves while climbing up a hill (113). It is possible that she thinks that colonialism is responsible for their misery. To this statement, her husband cries "How ridiculous!" blaming her for degrading herself to the natives' level by sympathizing with them (*ibidem.*). To him, they simply do not deserve empathy, because they are not humans, but savages. From the discussion of the different attitudes of this character towards the indigenous people, it can be suggested that her experience in Africa drives her to question and believe in things that as a white woman she is not allowed to. This specific equivocal position can be considered as both a cause and a result of feeling guilty for thinking of such forbidden matters and so betraying her own people and country, without mentioning being troubled because of her inability to adapt to the African environment. Her interest in the issue of the native women adds another reason to be admired by the writer who is "often acting as spokesman on her behalf" (Githae-Mugo 18).

Throughout the memoir, the narrator is represented as a character who is in perfect harmony with the wild life. "[She] seems to have had passionate love for all those 'small joys of life' that Kenyans often take so much for granted" (16). As a child, Huxley is very fond of animals. She used to have two chameleons, one deer which runs away later, and a pony. She even likes chess especially for its "prancing horses" (*FTT* 67). As Githae-Mugo agrees, what most cause her grief are the death and the separation with one of her animals (Githae-Mugo 16). Towards the end of the memoir, Huxley confesses that "[t]o be torn up by the roots is a sad fate for any growing thing" (264). She considers leaving Thika a trip to "the unknown" (*ibidem.*). Here, as a European child grown up in Africa, she reverses the binary opposition, and therefore Europe becomes the unfamiliar land. As a child, she has been so attached to her animals and to other settlers like Alec, Mrs Nimmo as well as the indigenous people such as Njombo, Sammy, Andrew, Kupanya, old Rohio and Kamau that she does not wish to leave them (*ibidem.*). Her love for these native people, in fact, does not equate her love for animals and the European settlers.

This can be traced in the Dorobo⁵⁶ scene. As she has been fascinated with this hunter and enjoys her adventure with him in the forest, “[she wants] to keep the Dorobo to [herself], he belonged to the same world as the dikdik and jasmine and butterflies” (225). She also describes the indigenous people as “wild and exciting as the gazelles and antelopes” (8). This confirms the idea that both Huxley and Blixen see the indigenous people as natural elements of the African wilderness. Furthermore, Huxley also refers to him as “my Dorobo” (ibidem.). Thus, to her, the Dorobo and the indicated indigenous people are mere living possessions that serve, entertain and accompany her in her little adventures. *The Times*’ review of the memoir has contributed to the writer’s romanticized racism, as it passionately comments that “[s]he knows East Africa and she loves it – the people, black and white, and the wild beauty of its countryside – with a critical and understanding sympathy” (*FTT*, back cover). It should be mentioned that Huxley’s special and artistic style in depicting nature and animals has camouflaged her racist attitude towards the Other, but not to the extent that it makes it invisible. According to the critic Thomas Hinde, she is the best representative of this writing style (Githae-Mugo 15).

The kind of love she expresses towards these characters is more clearly embodied in the following passage:

In the African heart there was a calm and tense of expectation and growing wonders to come, and as a result there was also the most moving and wonderful readiness of the African to serve, to imitate, and to follow the European, and finally an unqualified preparedness to love and be loved. (qtd. in Githae-Mugo 95)

This passage, in fact, introduces the perfect features of what Githae-Mugo refers to as the “good boys” (ibidem.). The close servants of both Blixen and Huxley’s family are viewed by their masters as good boys, since they are loyal, obedient, and eager to mimic them. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o concludes that “[h]er good characters [in *RS*] are those who live in stupid, perpetual puzzlement about the ways of the white man. The others are thugs and crooks who always act out of base motives” (qtd. in Githae-Mugo 107). Ngugi is revolted with Huxley’s adoption of the belief of the African “dependence mentality” in her writings; he condemns the depiction of the indigenous people in *RS* that denies the Africans that human dignity which prevents people from “submission” and self-effacement (106-107). Thus, the hybridity of the characters of the selected books analyzed in the previous chapters can be referred to as “submissive hybridity” (Stilz 3). According to Githae-Mugo, characters such as Benson

⁵⁶ Dorobo is “one of that race of hunters living in the forest on game they trapped or shot with poisoned arrows” (*FTT* 223).

Makuna and his allies are to Huxley the most deplorable ‘natives’, since they challenge her perception of the ‘good boys’. In *RS*, as previously mentioned, he is a rebel who calls for a different religious orientation of Christianity that suits the hybridity of both the Christian and the Kikuyu societies. Huxley blames the British education for originating such people, diagnosing the matter as “corruption” (Githae-Mugo 108). Githae-Mugo argues that this kind of characters is often punished by the writer for their malevolence, like Karioki (baptized as Jehoshophat) (111); he is one of Makuna’s fellows who has been executed by “an act of god” (*RS* 361) for challenging the Europeans. Huxley also writes about the fervent discussion between her parents and their neighbours pointing out to the mission-boys as untrustworthy (*FTT* 126-127). This is another hint about the problem of dishonesty of the missionary education. She sees that good/honest education produces good/honest natives.

This degrading gaze of the local inhabitants is a reflection of her belief in the scientific theories; in her books *White Man’s Country* and *On the Edge of the Rift*, she approves of the theories that the Africans’ mental capacities are far less than the Europeans’, and that the breadth of the Africans’ skulls caused by the climate prevents them from “the intellectual growth” (Githae-Mugo 17). In fact, *White Man’s Country* is a book dedicated to Lord Delamere⁵⁷ “as the ‘maker’ of Kenya”, by whom she is influenced (*ibidem.*).⁵⁸ However, the expression of this belief in these scientific theories is not as explicit in *FTT* as in the other books; she simply points out to the popular idea that the native people have been incapable of thinking about changing their situation (*FTT* 41). Furthermore, Huxley believes in the principle of the white man’s burden. As she is engaged with the settler society’s issues which must contribute to the efforts of the civilizing mission, she warns against making the indigenous people assume that they have the freedom of work, as this assumption will result in understanding it as a “hint to stop work” (Githae-Mugo 100). She continues arguing that it is the Europeans’ task to “teach the native to work”, otherwise he “[will] never advance if he [is] left to vegetate in his primordial state of idleness” (*ibidem.*). Huxley is a typical settler/colonizer who believes that she is doing the right/good thing for the local inhabitants. In her eyes, colonization is a “‘civilizing’ mission in itself” (*ibidem.*). Her romanticized racism is located in the very idea that the European occupation of the region has issued “freedom through colonization” (95). To her, the settlers who think and act like Lord

⁵⁷ He is one of the secondary characters of *FTT*. He is actually a famous English settler at that time.

⁵⁸ She actually confesses in its Preface that this work “reflects much of the thinking and accepts the standards of [Delamere’s] times” (qtd. in Githae-Mugo 100).

Delamere (including herself) are the real prophets of the civilizing mission. Therefore, colonization functions as the “saviour” (96) of the ‘poor’ Africans.

The celebration of colonization/the civilizing mission in the selected works announces the romanticization of these notions. In *OA*, for their participation in the World War I, the Masai are awarded with medals on which the phrase “*The Great War of Civilization*” (*OA* 192) is engraved. Furthermore, the Belgian traveller is a European who is very fond of these notions; as he tells the writer about the “labours of his life”, he keeps uttering “*Notre mission. Notre grand mission dans le Congo*” (262). Then, he adds “*Il faut enseigner aux nègres à être honnêtes à travailler. Rien de plus*” (*ibidem.*). The italicization of the three quotations is meant to emphasize the noblesse of the colonial mission. The strong belief in this mission as a heroic achievement drives the colonizers to think of themselves as heroes in the name of God and civilization, while disavowing the truth that colonialism has been essentially guided by the motives of greediness and the exploitation of the natural and human resources of the African continent.

In return for their ‘noble’ services to the indigenous people, the settlers see that it is their right to be thanked for carrying the burden of enlightening them. Undoubtedly, this idea marks its presence in Blixen’s *OA* and Huxley’s *FTT*. Blixen reports that the Europeans often complain about the Kikuyu’s ingratitude (39). She refutes this idea and gives the example of Kamante who keeps thanking her by volunteering in doing her services from time to time, and whenever she asks him why, he responds “if it had not been for [her] he would have been dead a long time ago” (*ibidem.*). To her, Kamante has fulfilled his duty. The Europeans like to hear the indigenous people acknowledging that they owe them. They wait for the Africans’ gratitude to prove and convince themselves that they have succeeded in doing the good thing. Rob Nixon actually responds to the settlers contending that the European colonization has saved the local inhabitants in Africa from “intertribal warfare” (Nixon 224): taking Kenyans as an example, he writes: “47,000 black Kenyans who died after being pressganged in the Europeans’ First ‘World’ War far outnumbered those killed in generations of intertribal feuding” (*ibidem.*). If colonialism was beneficial, the peoples would never fight to drive out their occupiers.

In the *FTT*, Huxley does the same thing; she introduces the Europeans’ opinion about the Africans’ gratitude, and then she rejects it. She states that the Europeans find them ungrateful (*FTT* 106). She affirms that “they took help for granted”, and they rarely return the favour

because they do not have that sense of “obligation” (ibidem.). She also remarks that the Kikuyu language does not contain a lexical register of thanking (ibidem.). “Europeans had many *true* stories of retainers who had turned and *bitten hands that had fed them generously*” (ibidem; emphasis added). Huxley, here, approves indirectly of the idea that the Europeans have to be shown appreciation for their favours to ‘the primitives’. Ironically, the colonizers are asking for gratitude in return for their services of the destructive denigration and the brutal exploitation of the indigenous people. Then, she represents Old Rohio as “an exception to all [those] rules” (ibidem.). She writes that he prefers to thank Tilly non-verbally for nursing him; he keeps offering her eggs and sweet potatoes in every visit of Karioki (ibidem.). ‘Good kikuyu’ exist, and the proof is Kamante and Old Rohio.

This, however, does not mean that the writers want to convey that the Europeans should not fall in such generalizations by providing the justifications for their assumptions. As long as the close servants behave as their masters wish, they are safe, but as soon as one of them commits a mistake, these generalizations resurface. When Kamante prepares a Kikuyu dish for Blixen, the latter says that “here his intelligence [...] failed him” (OA 43). This intelligence that distinguishes him from other Kikuyus in her eyes is no longer considered perfect. It can be assumed that through this scene Blixen wants to convey “[w]hat could one expect, after all, from a Negro [...]?” (Fanon, *FB* 6). On the other hand, as long as the close servants remain loyal and obedient, the masters continue to ‘love’ them, and the day they start to misbehave, they will show them how “to lack respect [is] a more serious crime than to neglect a child, bewitch a man, or steal a cow” (*FTT* 10).

The theory of the gift can be applied to the colonizer’s “myth of the ungrateful native” (Zabus 127). She sees that his ‘benevolent’ actions should be “binding” (123) to the indigenous people, and therefore they expect thanking as “‘a return gift’ in what the Skagit Indian called ‘an invisible handshake’” (ibidem.). Like the “gift of ‘water and berries’” (ibidem.) offered by Prospero to Caliban in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, the colonizer’s “gift of peace” (Githae-Mugo 79) is “poisonous” (Zabus 124). Here, Zabus states that it comes as no surprise that the meaning of the word “gift” in both German and Dutch is “poison” (ibidem.). Definitely, the poison of the colonial gift is more dangerous than any other gifts, since the giver and the receiver are the representatives of their peoples. Ironically, the colonizer considers his gift “pure”, while the colonized does not receive it as one. Then, as Prospero’s gift results in Caliban turning against him, the colonized starts to realize the truth of the gift, and therefore rebels against his oppressor. Zabus shares Mannoni’s interpretation that “Caliban’s reciprocity

in the gift-exchange as an ostensible act of submissiveness” can be applied to “any colonized people’s so called ‘dependent behaviour’” (126). This is perfectly applicable to the close servants (as portrayed in the selected books) who serve their masters with absolute loyalty, for they see them as good Europeans. In the light of Simmel’s definition of gratitude, the kind of gratitude that the colonizer expects from the local inhabitants is an eternal appreciation of his enlightening efforts, since his gift of peace/civilization “cannot be returned” (qtd. in 128).

Blixen’s and Huxley’s depictions of the peaceful life among the native inhabitants and the ‘benevolence’ of the settlers including themselves have indeed romanticized colonialism in the region. It can be concluded that both writers have contributed to the making of “Kenya Colony’s romantic mythology” (Jackson 345). Blixen’s house and her Lover’s grave have become “sites of colonial mythology” appealing to tourists (356). As the Kenyan tourist attractions have been made according to the visitors’ supposed expectations, it comes as no surprise that the tourists are seen “ ‘playing’ at being white settlers”, since “such expectations, as John Urry notes, are constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, television and literature” (ibidem.). The film adaptations of *OA* and *FTT* have diffused the romanticized racism of the memoirs which the majority of the European audience and even Africans fail to recognize.

6. Conclusion

Colonial literature is mainly founded on the assumption that “[c]olonialism is the habit of knowing what is good for others and seeing that they get it” (Huxley, qtd. in Nixon 216). In the discussed works, the mimic and the hybrid colonized people are considered as the products of this belief, since they have internalized the discriminating idea that the European’s sole objective in Africa is to save them from the darkness. However, the notion of the white man’s burden turns to be an impossible mission, causing the colonizer’s anxiety. The attempts to civilize ‘the primitives’ have ended up creating distorted versions of the white man, and therefore exposing what he disavows. Attention should be drawn to the fact that the violent imposition of the European culture as well as mimicry have also destroyed the original culture. The tendency to avoid mentioning the inhumane practices of colonization in the analyzed books has definitely intensified the demonization of the local cultures. This has resulted in diffusing a romanticized image of colonialism.

In fact, the application of Bhabha's concepts of mimicry and hybridity to study the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer has enabled the thesis to see the degree of the complexity and ambiguity of this relationship. But, it has also shown the sensitivity of the issue, since the employment of Bhabha's theory and the defence of the colonized people can result in misunderstandings such as being offensive to the indigenous people and/or approving of/ defending certain native practices. Furthermore, the analyzed works have demonstrated that sharing similar experiences in Kenya has given birth to almost identical books (especially the memoirs) which celebrate the settler life among the native tribes. The writers' idea that they know and understand well these people explains why their portrayal of these clans sounds as if these books represent an anthropological study of the various Kenyan tribes, particularly the Kikuyu.

The resistance of the indigenous people to the colonizer has shocked the settlers who used to believe in their own benevolence, and have not expected that these people do not appreciate their 'good' intentions towards them. The study of colonialism/postcolonialism has taught us a lesson that the imposition of one's ideas on other people can never ever be fruitful, because the change has to blossom from the people themselves, for solely this healthy change can be effective. The impressive scene of Habib Bourguiba, the first president of Tunisia shows how the woman is smiling, while he unveils her as an attempt to prepare her for the modern life,⁵⁹ which will liberate her from the domestic sphere. This picture reminds the people of what women have felt like when unveiled by the colonizer; they have considered this act as a humiliating violation of their own bodies and their rights as well.



⁵⁹ Actually, the veil is a mistranslated word of this white cloth which is called "sefsari". Sefsari is still considered as a beautiful traditional cloth in Tunisia; the problem is that it is not practical for modern life, for example, work.

Fig. 6: *Bourguiba encourages a Tunisian woman to unveil*

Source: Le point International⁶⁰

Unfortunately, the former African colonies have not achieved yet their real independence. Africa, today, is colonized by both the foreign agendas and its corrupt local elite who are themselves puppets performing the wishes of certain western leading powers. This explains the very slow rate of development of the continent since decolonization. Yesterday, the colonizer has violently imposed his own concept of change on the Other which proved to be a complete failure, and which has camouflaged the greedy aims in Africa, and today, Africans have conspired with the foreign agendas against the welfare of their own countries. Nowadays, the colonial strategies have changed and become more untraceable, especially with the growing influence of the multinational corporations on the world's leading governments. The world is now governed by the logic of "lesser powers lesser peoples" (Said, *CI* 41). "Either way, it is a historical fact. Sharing the world has never been humanity's defining attribute".⁶¹ But, it should not be forgotten that resistance has always been a part of this historical fact, and will continue to be so.

⁶⁰ Golliau, Catherine. <http://www.lepoint.fr/monde/monde-musulman-le-long-combat-des-femmes-28-04-2016-2035534_24.php>.

⁶¹ This quote is taken from the movie *X2*.

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8. Appendix

Abstract

The postcolonial criticism of the portrayal of the Other in colonial literature has often presented the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as a simple vertical relation. This thesis is a reading of the ambivalence and the complexity of this relationship in Karen Blixen's memoir *Out of Africa* and Elspeth Huxley's books *The Flame Trees of Thika* and *Red Strangers*. The analysis employs Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of the stereotype, mimicry and hybridity to show how both 'the centre' and 'the periphery' are troubled, questioning their own identities.

Zusammenfassung

Das Postkoloniale Kritik der Präsentation der anderen in die Kolonialliteratur hat die Beziehung zwischen dem Kolonisator und dem kolonisierte als eine einfache vertikale Beziehung angeboten. Die Masterarbeit ist eine Interpretation der Ambivalenz und die Komplexität dieser Beziehung in die Biographie der Karen Blixen „Jenseits von Afrika“ und die Bücher von Elspeth Huxley „Im Land des Feuerbaums“ und „Rot Fremde“. Die Analyse beschäftigt mit den Konzepte der Klischee, Mimikry und Hybridität des Homi K. Bhabha zu zeigen, wie beide, das Zentrum‘ und ‚die Peripherie‘ sind beunruhigt, ihre eigene Identität in Frage zu stellen.

