

Malika Rebai Maamri

**Cross-Cultural and Ideological Perceptions
of the Other in: W.B. Yeats, James Joyce,
Joseph Conrad, Chinua Achebe and Assia
Djebar**

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**UNIVERSITY OF ALGIERS
FACULTY OF ARTS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**CROSS-CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL
PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTHER IN: W.B.
YEATS, JAMES JOYCE, JOSEPH CONRAD,
CHINUA ACHEBE AND ASSIA DJEBAR**

a thesis

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for

a

P.H.D. IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

by

MALIKA REBAI MAAMRI

Under the supervision of

Prof. Yamina Deramchia, University of Algiers

And

Dr. Maria-Cristina Fumagalli, University of Essex (U.K)

Academic Year 2008/2009

**CROSS-CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL
PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTHER IN: W.B.
YEATS, JAMES JOYCE, JOSEPH CONRAD,
CHINUA ACHEBE AND ASSIA DJEBAR**

DEDICATION

To my beloved father who allowed me to escape the harem.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AG: Action Party

AML: Amis du Manifeste et de la Liberté

CSF : Congo Free State

CMS: Church Missionary Society

FLN: Front de Libération Nationale

F.P: Force Publique

GPRA: Provisional Revolutionary Government of Algeria

IRA: Irish Republican Army

MTLD : Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques

NCNC: National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons

NPC: Northern People's Congress

OAS: Organisation Armée Secrète

O.S: Organisation Spéciale

PPA: Party of the Algerian People

SPIL: Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language

UDMA : Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien

A: *L'Amour, la Fantasia*

AS: *Anthills of the Savannah*

D: *Dubliners*

HD: *Heart of Darkness*

TFA: *Things Fall Apart*

The SA: *The Secret Agent*

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INTRODUCTION

From the earliest times, the stranger from another tribe, the ‘barbarian’ who speaks an incomprehensible language, and follows ‘outlandish’ customs, but also the woman, whose biological difference stimulates fantasies of castration and devoration, or in our own times [...] that alien being, Jew or Communist, behind whose apparent human features a malignant or preternatural intelligence is thought to lurk: these are some of the archetypal figures of the Other about whom the essential point to be made is not so much that he is feared because he is evil; rather he is evil because he is Other [...]

Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981), 115.

“Beginnings,” wrote Edward Said “have to be made for each project in such a way as to enable what follows from them.”¹ Our beginning lies with the reality of cross-cultural encounters and with the phenomenon of the Other, an ineluctable problem of human society. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud explains our iniquitous and constant use of the Other, writing that “it is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are people left over to receive the manifestation of their aggressiveness.”² Similarly in *Barbarians Within and Without*, Leonard Woolf remarks that “in time of storm and stress within any society, [the barbarian’s] appeal is very strong. He offers immediate satisfaction of the simple instincts, love, hatred and anger. He helps us forget our own unhappiness by making other people still more unhappy.”³ And Frederic Jameson, in the above quote, adds that this alien being, the barbarian, “is feared [not] because he is evil; rather he is evil because he is Other.” Over the course of generations, the ‘barbarians’ have indeed always been the Others, and boundaries have been drawn between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ We need therefore to ask: Why such anathema? Why are there problems when people come into contact with different cultures? Why cannot people from different

¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 16.

² Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (S.I.: Hogarth Press, 1946), 61.

³ Leonard Woolf, *Barbarians Within and Without* (New York: Harcourt, 1939), 65-6.

backgrounds simply get along with each other? A preliminary consideration of these questions allows the introduction of a definition of some key concepts such as ‘perception,’ ‘alterity,’ ‘identity,’ ‘culture,’ ‘civilisation,’ ‘ideology,’ ‘orientalism,’ ‘colonial discourse,’ and some indications of their importance in determining behaviour towards people from another culture.

The Latin etymology of ‘perception’ with its prefix ‘per’ intensifies the violence of the root ‘capere’ meaning to seize. Perception is commonly defined as the process of creating patterns from the unprocessed sensory data, which involves the selection, organisation, and interpretation of that sensory stimulation. A fundamental question thus immediately arises: How do we decide what another person is like? There is much evidence that we tend to attribute our own behaviour to the situation and others to their dispositions. Our judgements of other people are weighed averages of the information we have or do not have about them. In other words, we tend to take for granted everything we ‘know’ about other people. The likelihood effect is that we like to focus on certain characteristics, positive, but most often the negative ones, an effect known as the halo effect.⁴ The halo effect seems to be particularly powerful when we know relatively little about the person. In other words, perception is an active process of collecting data, formulating hypotheses about those data and making adjustments at one’s own will. Interpreting the data in the light of what we already ‘know’ is clearly a lot more efficient than starting from scratch.

But what we commonly call ‘knowledge’ should perhaps be more accurately called ‘belief.’ The problem is that it comes pretty close to stereotyping. Stereotypes are indeed established beliefs about groups, peoples, nations and whole civilisations. They are over-generalised, incorrect, and impervious to new information. Although perception has its roots in the human brain and nerve structures, there is also a large component of the human perspective which is

⁴ The halo effect is involved in Harold Kelley’s implicit personality theory, (IPA) whereby the first traits that we recognise in other people tend to colour all our later perceptions, if only because of our initial cognitive bias.

determined by cultural and social learning. How individuals perceive others is often established by cultural backgrounds, socio-political, ideological and religious frameworks. The perception one has of the other often comes to be laden with misleading content and images of individuals. Often they result in misunderstandings of ethnic, racial, religious and national groupings, causing social resentments. Such misunderstandings can generate misconceptions or prejudices. In this sense, the stereotyped becomes the one who is strange and different, or the Other.

One way of inquiring into alterity⁵ is thus through a questioning of forms of representation or stereotyping, a universal strategy for 'seizing' the Other to come back to the root of the word perception. Alterity, from the German 'alter' or 'other,' does not simply describe individual differences but the systematised construction of classes of people. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines 'alterity' or otherness as "a thing other than the thing mentioned or the thinking subject," indicating that alterity comprises not only radical external difference, but everything that is in some way distinct from the subject. Alterity can therefore be understood as the represented Other, or projected identity. Be it racial, gendered or ethnic Other, the term 'Other' is used to name the way a hegemonic culture or gender group views different and subaltern ones as inferiors or just plain aliens and therefore as something that has to be erased or assimilated by any way. Moreover, as each generation reinforces its stereotypes, the problem is exacerbated. By extension, the negative otherness is attributed to entire cultures. The notion of the Other thus gains an encyclopaedic sense by designing a symbolic universe. In this sense, otherness is not alien to the articulation of gender. Based on the patriarchal order of society, otherness is a theory of objectification of women in a world where men constitute the centre and the standard. Woman becomes man's inferior Other. As such she is viewed as subservient, even to the point of lacking independent will.

⁵ Cf. 'Stereotypes of Alterity: Race, Sexuality and Gender' in Kirsti Bohata, *Post-Colonialism Revisited* (Cardiff: Univ. Of Wales Press, 2004), 29-58.

The construction of alterity inevitably leads to sexism, racism and classism. It is an early step in the process by which a semblance of social order is created. First some groups are constructed as Other, thus less than fully human; then we assign qualities to variable human individuals on the basis of their inclusion in this constructed alterity. Once we take this step in our construction of alterity, then, at last, we have created prejudice and stereotyping. The final step in the construction of alterity is to institutionalise these prejudices in laws and customs. When laws, group culture, educational values, and social custom operate as if prejudices were truths, then they result in racism, sexism, classism, and so forth. In all these cases however “tout autre est tout autre,”⁶ as Jacques Derrida would put it. Since the Other is constructed as an object, he/she ultimately develops an overarching search for self-identity.

Otherness is indeed an inherent aspect of identity construction and assertion. It is integral to the understanding of identities, as people construct roles for themselves in relation to an Other. How does identity come to be defined? What are its constituting criteria? The perception of one’s distinctiveness, as well as the perceptions of others, are prerequisites for an individual to define his/her identity. As a blend of self-identification and the perceptions of others, identity can only be viewed in terms of difference and demarcation.⁷ Furthermore, one of the most important factors affecting a person’s identity is linked to the encounters he/she has made throughout his/her life. From this perspective, personal identity develops during a set of interactions with the social environment. And culture plays an important role in shaping this environment.

The concept of culture forms indeed the core for definitions of Self and Other. Culture helps stabilise a person’s identity with its deep-rooted principles. We would thus define cultural identity as the result of a process whereby individuals or groups attempt to establish a sense of

⁶ “Every Other is wholly Other,” Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1993), 22.

⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 52.

self-esteem and self-confidence which enables them to accept their own place in life and society. It involves an acceptance of difference from others whilst forming a new belonging. Before turning to the specific notions of cultural differences a brief definition of the term 'culture' is necessary. As Robert Young has it:

The word 'culture,' which comes from the latin *cultura* and *colere*, has a wide range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, attend, protect, honour with worship. These meanings then separated out. More significantly, the meaning 'inhabit' has become the latin *colonus*, or farmer, from which we derive the word 'colony.' Therefore, 'culture' is always a form of colonisation, [a way of 'seizing' the Other,] even in relation to its conventional meaning as the tilling of the soil. The culture of land has always been the primary form of colonisation.⁸

While these definitions cover a wide range of meanings, they do not exhaust the many uses of the term 'culture.' For instance, in considering the notion of centre/periphery, most people hear 'culture' and think 'high culture.' Although it has a longer history in Continental Europe, the concept of 'high culture' was introduced into English largely with the publication of Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*⁹ in 1869. Arnold saw high culture as a force for moral and political good, and in various forms this view remains widespread, though far from uncontested. The phrase had been contrasted with 'Popular culture' or 'Mass culture' and also with 'Traditional cultures,' but by no means implied hostility to these. However the idea of 'culture' that developed in Europe during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries reflected inequalities within European societies, and between European powers and their colonies around the world. High culture thus became the culture of the ruling social group. It identifies 'culture' with 'civilisation.' In this case a Westerner's background thinking articulates the belief that there is no real culture outside the Western centre. Due to a false

⁸ Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1999), 30-1.

⁹ Arnold Matthew, *Culture and Anarchy* (New Haven; London : Yale University Press, c1994). Arnold defined culture as "the disinterested endeavour after man's perfection" (Preface) and most famously wrote that having culture meant to "know the best that has been said and thought in the world" - a specifically literary definition, also embracing Philosophy, which is now rather less likely to be considered an essential component of High Culture, at least in the English-speaking cultures (43).

perception of the Other, boundaries are drawn between high and the so-called low cultures. A sub-culture therefore exists only when it exhibits a fixed pattern of specific differences from the larger system.

One important strategic feature inherent in the notion of culture is indeed its normative potential of differentiating between Self and Other. When differences surface in families, organisations, or communities, culture is always present, shaping perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes. It is used by the different members of society, politicians, theologians, academics, and families to impose and ensure order, the basics of which change over time as need dictates. As F.SL Lyons has it,

against this sombre diagnosis, it may be then argued that where Matthew Arnold saw culture as a unifying force in a fragmented society and as a barrier against anarchy, the diversity of cultures had had been a force which worked against the evolution of a homogeneous society and in so doing has been an agent of anarchy rather than unity.¹⁰

Questions of the Self and the Other are at the root of many crucial issues in European thought. If Aristotle viewed the Other as a reflection of the soul, necessary to complete individual flourishing within a pattern of civic friendship in the polis, Jean Paul Sartre however portrayed Hell as other people, and for Hobbes, the Other carried the threat of domination and annihilation.¹¹ What is important is that, as the need is increasingly felt for a justification of domination, the justification often takes an ideological form.

Ideology is a word much used and abused of. The term was first coined by French philosopher, Count Destutt de Tracy, who used it in the 1790s, at the time of the French Revolution, to define the 'science of ideas,' a science supposedly at the service of men and which aimed at rescuing them by purging their minds of prejudice and preparing them for the supremacy of reason. But soon the term took on a new meaning. Nowadays, it is no longer 'the study of ideas,' but rather a set of ideas, beliefs and values about the way the social order

¹⁰ F.SL Lyons Lyons, *Culture and Anarchy in Ireland, 1890-1939* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, 2.

¹¹ Cited by Chris Tiffin, and Alan Lawson, *De-Scribing Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality* (London: Routledge, 1994), 64.

should work. Ideology, in this sense, is a set of beliefs with which people deceive themselves; it is a theory that expresses what they are led to think, as opposed to that which is true.¹² In other words, it is false consciousness. In cultural studies, the term 'ideology' has acquired the Marxist negative overtones: Ideology serves the interests of those with power in society. It therefore attends to maintaining relations of domination.¹³ Karl Marx argues that the property-owning classes have been able to rule by ideas which legitimised or made widely acceptable certain forms of social inequality. In so doing, ideologies have been able to disguise the real structure of domination and exploitation which exists in society. The investigation of domination has been extended to include relations of domination between the sexes, ethnic groups, dominated and subjected nations. In the context of the dominant and the dominated, which characterizes the charade of colonialism, the dominant group (European) set the pattern for what is 'normal' in their societies and in societies directly or indirectly controlled by them. It has then become 'normal' to ill-treat others and debase them. The whole character of ideology, its extremism and violence are nowhere more visible than in colonialism.

Colonialism is a rather elusive concept and does not lend itself to a clear definition. It is sometimes used interchangeably with imperialism, but the terms mean rather different things. As Peter Childs and Patrick Williams argue, imperialism is an ideological concept which maintains the legitimacy of the economic and military control of one nation by another and does not demand settlement. Colonialism however, as one form of practice which results from the ideology of imperialism, specifically concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location.¹⁴ In his book on *Modern Colonialism: Institutions and Policies*, (1955) Thomas R. Adam defines colonialism as "the political control of underdeveloped peoples whose social

¹² The Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, defines ideology as the representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Cited by Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1996), 41.

¹³ It is important to note that not all notions of ideology necessarily construe ideologies as negative. Ideology, in Lenin's view, had a positive connotation. Proletarian ideology was an important tool in the proletariat's struggle against the Bourgeoisie.

¹⁴ Peter Childs & Patrick Williams, *An Introduction to Post-colonial Theory* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997), 227.

and economic life is directed by the dominant power,”¹⁵ while Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana describes it as “the policy by which a foreign power binds territories to her own economic advantage.”¹⁶ Aimé Césaire however, views colonialism as a “pseudo-humanism [that] diminish[es] the rights of man.”¹⁷ And Edward Said defines it in relation to the Other. Which definition is the fittest for this research work? While it is true that colonialism is both political and economic control of a foreign country and is accompanied by settlement, the definitions proposed by Childs, Williams, Adam and Nkrumah touch upon only some aspects of colonialism. The most important features, which are to be at the heart of the colonial experience, have been supplied by Césaire but most explicitly by Said. There is indeed more to imperialism and colonialism than the accumulation of wealth and acquisition of land. The will to claim and control what is different is the main tenet of colonialism.

Colonialism can indeed only exist under conditions of inequality. It is organised around an unwavering view of the Other, and suggests certain ways of seeing, specific modes of understanding the world and a person’s place in it that assist in justifying the subservience of colonised peoples to the so-called superior order of the colonisers. It is therefore within the ideology of what Said terms ‘Orientalism’ that colonialism will first be considered.

Said defines orientalism as

a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient’s special place in European Western Experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience.¹⁸

¹⁵ Thomas R. Adam, *Modern Colonialism: Institutions and Policies* (New York: Random House, 1955), 17.

¹⁶ Kwame Nkrumah, *Autobiography* (London: Nelson, 1957), Vii.

¹⁷ Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1955), 174.

¹⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 1-3.

‘Orientalism’ has therefore been identified as the particular form that Western stereotypical understandings of other cultures has taken. It is a total misconception of the Other through a veil of interpretations of reality resulting in a denial of common humanity with people of Western descent. Some Western people think that others belong, as they do, to humanity but on an inferior level. The diamond in the crown of European culture is indeed the distinction made between itself and others through the criterion of civilisation. Certain people in Europe sought to re-interpret and re-define their entry to the world of civilisation through the invention of racial stereotypes and hierarchical cultural classifications. Convinced of being the best expression of humanity and that they had to project their principles and values on others, these Europeans went on ‘producing’ others in the name of the civilising mission which they were supposed to accomplish, taking example from the Roman empire - *Pax Romana* - a so-called model of peace and world order, a myth of universal happiness. As Europe mounted its civilisation, the use of violence to maintain oppressed peoples in the position of ‘uncivilised’ increased. The idea of the civilising mission was the bulwark in the justification of imperialism. Civilising other races regarded as ‘inferior’ became an ideological adjunct to the economic and military interests. It is this very attitude that Britain, Belgium, and France adopted to reject the cultures of Ireland, Nigeria, the Congo and Algeria.

During the colonial period in Ireland from 1169, Algeria from 1830, Nigeria from about 1850, and the Congo from 1879, the British, the French, and the Belgians, like any other colonial power asserted their dominance through a variety of media. The colonial policies pursued by the various European powers differed markedly. For instance, the British policy aimed at self-government or political independence while the French and Belgian policies rested mainly on assimilation ie. making French or Belgian citizens respectively out of Algerians and Congolese. Despite these differences in colonial systems however, the colonial

experiences of Ireland, Nigeria, the Congo and Algeria went through similar phases: the capture of the colony and the taming of the colonial Other.

Although Fanon contends that “the real Other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man,”¹⁹ historical records show that under colonial rule, any colonised man tended to be seen as Other. The Western ratio has indeed been formed through the negation of white and non-white peoples. To the British, Belgians and French, Ireland, Nigeria, the Congo and Algeria were homes of ‘savage’ peoples. To the African, the colonialist says, “You have no culture; you are an animal.” To the Irish, however, he says, “You have no culture; you are *almost* an animal - but at least you are not an *African*.”²⁰ The Irish, Nigerians, Congolese and Algerians had indeed been presented as almost different species at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder and were pejoratively referred to as ‘savages’ and ‘barbarians,’ hence lacking in all the attributes of civilisation. The nineteenth century was a particularly fertile era in the production of knowledge that sought to categorise, define and delimit the different peoples of the world. The British, Belgian and French powers presented themselves to the native peoples as the bearers of science, rationality and progress, and the enemies of religion, superstition and backwardness, hence as the agents of civilisation.

The colonisers sought to civilise these natives but instead they created for them a state of perpetual Otherness. It was indeed not evangelisation alone that the British, Belgian and French missionaries attempted but a cleansing of the Irish, Nigerian, Congolese and Algerian minds. These colonisers not only imposed their values on the natives, but also caused some to merge with the larger culture by denying their origins, destroying without any qualms the natives’ cultural systems and ultimately promoting the negation of these native societies. The Gaels, the Ibos, the Congolese and the Algerians had all been compelled to bury their cultures, to worship another religion, though in Algeria it was not compulsory. Crucial to the

¹⁹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove P, 1961), 26.

²⁰ Cited by Henry Louis Gates, ed., *Race, Writing and Difference* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986), 62. Italics mine.

domination of the mental universe of the colonised was also the domination of these peoples' languages. Drastic measures were taken by the colonisers against the use of the mother-tongue. Therefore, English or French became the language of every day life, alienating the native language. In such a context every Irish, every African was expected to acquiesce to the forces of colonialism that would preserve the coloniser's influence over the colonised Other. By subjugating the natives, who were viewed as too degraded and inhuman, the British, Belgian and French settlers made them deeply dependent and in the process erased their very identity.

The advanced/backward dichotomy has also been used to define male/female power relations. Patriarchy, like imperialism, is a supremacist ideology which subjugates and dominates its subjects. The oppressed woman is in this sense akin to the colonised subject. But women have been doubly colonised. Male authority has been explained in the "male conception of the world where women [become] the creatures of a male power-fantasy."²¹ Men stand for "the progressive agent[s]" while women incarnate the "inert, backward-looking and natural"²² in line with the dichotomies of civilised/uncivilised brought about by colonialism.

But colonialism operates not only as a military/economical/political/social/cultural force but also as a discourse of domination. Colonial discourses have been the ideal tool for the profound Othering of colonised peoples, men and women, as different and backward. The phrase 'colonial discourse'²³ refers not only to how one perceives the Other, but also indicates peculiar attitudes shaped by imperial expansion of the West in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The material provided by missionaries and historians about Ireland, Nigeria, the Congo and Algeria together with literature played a decisive role in constructing

²¹ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 145.

²² Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 359.

²³ I am indebted here to Gina Wisker's book, *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Literature* (Palgrave: Macmillan, 2007).

and perpetuating a sense of difference between the British, Belgian and French colonisers and the peoples from their colonies. Historical and literary works about the Other sustained the Western superiority complex, rationalised inequality as they systematically debased the Other and his culture. And scientific theories of race further complicated the racist divide which informed colonial contact by reinforcing the belief that colonisation was the barometer for establishing standards and bolstering the 'barbarian' image of the colonised. Fundamental to the project of ethnology were the supposedly empirical sciences of anthropology such as physiology, phrenology and craniology which produced a powerful hierarchy of stereotypes. Anthropologists started to categorise human races in accordance to how far they were supposed to have gone in the evolutionary ladder. This myth of race superiority provided the British, Belgian and French colonisers, among others, with an ideological justification for exploitation in all the meanings of the word. The cultural transformation the Irish, Nigerian, Congolese and Algerian societies underwent during the colonial period ultimately brought about a sense of displacement and left the colonised men struggling for a sense of themselves. With this colonial heritage, it is not hard to understand why cultural identity has now come to the forefront of cultural and postcolonial debates.

Postcolonial discourse, largely built around the concept of Otherness, includes both identity and difference as well as around the concept of resistance. Since the colonial position has been defined as that of the West's marginalised and silenced Other, then postcoloniality has empowered the margins and given voice to the subalterns. One cannot embark on a discussion about so nebulous a term as 'postcoloniality' without offering some kind of definition.

The term 'postcolonial' is commonly applied to previously colonised countries, which throughout the 1940s and 1950s and following intensive anti-colonial campaigns, underwent a radical decolonisation. De-colonisation implies not only the rejection of the deleterious ideas from the West, but also the freedom of the oppressed from the shackles of the oppressor as

well as the creation of “new men,”²⁴ as Fanon has it. Although it is generally believed that postcoloniality is more concerned with the post-independence era, we would argue that the cultural influence of the centre does certainly not vanish with political freedom. Independence is a political event that takes place at a certain time, but in the cultural field, there is a continuity of preoccupations from the moment of colonisation to the present day and this may even extend to the future.

Postcolonialism therefore studies the world during and after colonisation. It focuses on the ways in which colonial ‘knowledge’ of the native peoples has been generated and used to serve the coloniser’s interests, and with cultural identity in colonised societies: the dilemmas of developing a national identity after colonial rule; the ways in which writers articulate and celebrate that identity. Thus literature while arguably the means for imperial (and patriarchal) powers to propagate their version of culture also encompasses narratives which challenge dominant hegemonies and through which colonised people can assert their own identity and history. A contrapuntal reading thus addresses both the perspective of the coloniser and that of the colonised; in other words that of imperialism and that of resistance to it (Said).

One of the main forms of opposition to cultural imperialism has been the quest of the self for its moorings and the restoration of cultural identity. But the recovery of the real self, as Trinh, T. Min-Ha explained, “requires the elimination of all that is considered foreign or not true to the self, that is to say, not I, the Other.”²⁵ There has therefore been an imperative to assert an ethnic distinctiveness, and to re-fashion alternative National/Cultural identities. Nationalism offers colonial subjects a positive emphasis on their native culture, but it requires a literature of and from the formerly colonised peoples.

²⁴ *The Wretched of the Earth*, 36-7.

²⁵ Trinh T. Min-Ha, ‘Not you/Like you: Postcolonial women and the interlocking Question of identity and Difference,’ in *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Indiana University Press, 1989), 58.

Postcolonial counter-discursive writing exposes the underlying assumptions of European discourses from the native's cross-cultural standpoint. In recent times the figure of the Other, women, natives, minorities, deviants, subalterns, hitherto silent and effaced, has made claims to speak back, disrupting the realm of politics in radical ways. Having shaken off the cultural cringe, postcolonial writers are "writing back" (Bill Ashcroft et al.) to the centre, debunking clichés produced by the masters, hence paving the way for a deep questioning about the making of Otherness. They have become increasingly interested in the formation of national identity.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that postcolonial literatures developed through different phases. As Bill Ashcroft et al. remark:

During the imperial period writing in the language of the imperial centre [was] produced by a literate elite whose primary identification [was] with the colonising power [...] The second phase of production within the evolving discourse of the post-colonial [was] the literature produced under imperial licence by 'natives' or 'outcasts,' for instance the large body of poetry and prose produced in the nineteenth century by the English educated Indian upper class, or African missionary literature [...]"²⁶

But these early postcolonial texts were prevented from fully exploring their anti-imperial potential because literature in the colony was under the control of the ruling class. Such restrictions certainly account for the emergence of modern postcolonial literatures.

A major aspect of postcolonial literatures is the concern with place and displacement. Where is one's place? This question is fundamental to the cultural impact of colonisation and affects every aspect of colonised societies. It is here therefore that the crisis of identity surfaces. Postcolonial writers have been concerned with the reconstruction of 'place,' and postcolonial women writers have participated in these counter-narratives. As women share with colonised races and cultures an intimate experience of oppression and repression, it is no surprise

²⁶ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith, and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989), 5.

therefore that the history and concerns of feminist theory have paralleled developments in postcolonial theory.

Post-colonialism and feminism indeed overlap: the former springs from the literature of empire and speaks its language; feminism uses patriarchy as a platform from which to speak against patriarchy. Women's world in the margin, be it in the domestic or public sphere, constitutes a subversive space for campaign against marginalisation. The space has provided a veritable weapon as demonstrated by feminist literature and gender action. Postcolonial women writers expose both the dominant imperial and patriarchal ideologies. Thus in both postcolonial male and female writing the question of representation necessarily bifurcates under a dual agenda: first a resistance to colonialism through a deconstructive reading of its rhetoric; second a re-valorising of the colonised peoples' culture. We have followed this dual agenda in this doctoral thesis.

The aim of this doctoral thesis is to investigate the notion of alterity in cross-cultural encounters between Britain and Ireland and Nigeria, Belgium and the Congo, France and Algeria. Many works have been published concerning cross-cultural behaviour and this thesis would make, we hope, a modest contribution to postcolonial studies.

This doctoral thesis investigates 'Otherness' through works which have thoroughly examined and questioned the creation of a 'stable self' by putting it in dialogue with its others and to society as a whole, namely W.B. Yeats's selected poems, James Joyce's *Dubliners*, (1914) Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, (1899) Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), and Assia Djebar's *L'Amour, La Fantasia* (1985). The rationale behind our selection of these texts is that they are typical instances of postcolonial representations of Otherness, tales of cultural clash. These texts both enunciate the cultural collision and allow the Other a voice of resistance. They are therefore concerned with both the issue of colonialism and that of subject formation and identity reconstruction. By representing the results of English,

Belgian and French oppression in tangible material terms as well as its spiritual bankruptcies, Yeats, Joyce, Conrad, Achebe and Djébar mark their works as clearly critical of the colonial regime and opposed to colonial exploitation, positioning themselves as postcolonial through their representations. In this sense, their texts raise issues debated in current postcolonial discussions.

The second incentive behind our choice of these texts is that most critical overviews of the issue of 'writing back' are mainly focused on the Anglophone world overlooking cultural and historical specificities. Not all countries have the same experience of colonialism and it has affected the colonial subjects quite differently. We believe that there are many texts, both in French (and in Arabic) that have a lot to contribute to the debates on postcolonial identity, hence our choice of a francophone writer. The choice of a woman writer is dictated by our belief that men and women do not experience colonialism in the same way, and they do not live post-colonialism in the same way either. Therefore, women writers of colonial texts are bound to be different both thematically and discursively.

Bringing together writers from such distinct cultural backgrounds, quite different geopolitical and socio-historical conditions may seem odd at first glance, yet their connection has several strands. What first and foremost binds these writers is their awareness of the upheavals that colonial rule caused. Moreover, as they all grew up in the shadow of imperialism and colonialism, they stand on the edge of two cultures, belonging fully to neither and their acts of self-positioning offer an opportunity to interrogate the operation and ramifications of cultural constructions of Otherness in an Irish /African colonial context.

What these writers have in common is also their underlying concern with changing the world. Each oppressed group represented by the writers cited above had to use the platform of imperialist literature in order to revise the histories of the Irish and the Africans as written in literatures in English and French, and had been compelled to use the language and ideology of

the dominant culture to create a cultural space from which to speak. Their narratives rechart the position of the individual, and present a rejection of stereotyping, and a merging of character and culture.

These authors moreover reveal the paradoxes of the colonial position and Europe's equivocal attitude to its Others, one of the main characteristics of the colonial representations to which postcolonial authors are writing back. As champions of the oppressed, they have given voice, in their works, to those silenced by dominant cultures. More than a hundred years ago, W.B. Yeats and James Joyce were deeply marginalised by the English colonisers though in very different ways. Yeats looked into the past and prophesied the future and with Joyce, and other Irish writers, strove to create a unified Irish society that could resist English oppression. James Joyce showed the paralysis that afflicted both the society and politics of Ireland. Joseph Conrad, a contemporary of Yeats and Joyce, a Polish writer similarly oppressed by the Russians, exposed the brutality of imperialism and spoke for the African Other. Chinua Achebe is a twentieth century Nigerian writer of Ibo culture, another culture oppressed by British imperialism; and Assia Djebar, a Francophone woman writer from North African culture suffered from a double colonisation: that of patriarchy and that of French colonialism. Like Yeats and Joyce, Achebe and Djebar set out to rewrite the history of their respective peoples. But the Algerian woman writer manufactured a speaking platform from the midst of colonialism and patriarchy as well. She showed that it is possible for women of the new millennium to find an alternative space of their own making, where they may regain agency. To refer to Mikhail Bakhtin's ideas of speech genres, it is easy to compare each ideology, imperialist and patriarchal, to an utterance in a chain of communication. In Bakhtin's view:

Every utterance must be regarded as primarily a *response* to preceding utterances of the given sphere (we understand the word 'response' here in the broadest sense). Each utterance refutes, affirms, [...]Therefore, each kind of utterance is fill-

ed with various kinds of responsive reactions to other utterances of the given sphere of speech communication.²⁷

In this sense, each writer cited above responded to the colonising masters by using his language to create a sense of cultural specificity and difference. Paradoxical as it is, the coloniser's language had been a major element in the definitions of Self and Other in these writers' narratives.

The theories that will be used in the analysis of these texts are wide-ranging: Intertextuality, sociocriticism and postcolonial theories. Theorists of intertextuality, such as Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, argue that a literary text does not come out of a vacuum. In Kristeva's words: "every text builds itself as a mosaic of quotations. Every text is absorption and transformation of another text [...]"²⁸ A text is indeed a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture, "entering in mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that is the reader [...]"²⁹ explains Roland Barthes. If a text absorbs and transforms (all loaded terms in a post-colonial context), then it is the reader's job to make sense of the process. By using metaphors of "mosaic," and "social text," as Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes do, they encourage us to view a text as part of, and being overrun by a larger social context, hence the importance of a socio-critical reading of the texts under study. One of the functions of literature down through the ages has been to comment on society and socio-political problems. The aim of socio-criticism is thus to show that Yeats's, Joyce's, Conrad's, Achebe's and Djébar's artistic creations are social practices and ideological productions. To read these writers' texts in their historical, social and cultural contexts is thus to attend to the ways they dynamically deal with the issues they raise.

²⁷ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Austin: University of Texas P., 1986), 91.

²⁸ Julia Kristeva, *Sémiotiké : Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez (Paris: Seuil, 1969). Trans. as *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature* by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez, 146.

²⁹ Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris: Seuil, 1970), 21.

Mikhail Bakhtin's writings also offer a useful framework for the study of the aforementioned texts and their potentials for performance while at the same time acknowledging the social, cultural, and political nature of these texts, and the importance of context to textual meaning. Bakhtin's theory on the dialogues of voices in texts, heteroglossia and polyphony, among others, based on a perception of the inherent relationship between ideology and utterance, addresses the socio-political fact of literary performance and provides analytical tools relevant to the act of performing literature. In the case of postcolonial re-writings of canonical texts for instance, dialogue refers to the use of language which allows voices of the Other to emerge in dialogue with the voice of the 'individual.'

Our theoretical framework also includes a wide range of postcolonial theories. As the term implies, one of the main aspects of postcolonial theory is an exploration of the impact and continuing legacy of European conquest, in our context, the creation by European powers, such as Britain, Belgium and France, of dominated foreign empires. Central to this critical examination is an analysis of the ideas of European superiority over colonised people. Postcolonial theories therefore investigate the dichotomous frame of 'us' and 'them,' and explore ways in which identity, language, class, racial and gender differences have been deployed in colonial discourse. Theories of colonial discourses have been hugely influential in the development of post-colonialism. They explore the ways that representations and modes of perception of the Other are used as tools of colonial power to keep the colonised peoples subservient to colonial rule. The first overview was probably *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literatures* (1989) inspired by Salman Rushdie's argument on the need to decolonise English language. The model of colonial discourse which relies on the binary opposition between Self and Other as developed by Edward Said is also apt for this study. Said offers invaluable insight into European racism. In his view, capitalism inevitably culminates in imperialism which dominates, classifies and commodifies all space

under the aegis of a metropolitan centre.³⁰ In his seminal *Orientalism*, and later in *Culture and Imperialism*, Said examines the role that European discourse has played in creating and maintaining non-European peoples as subaltern groups. Western fantasies of the exotic, the oriental Other, involve a colonisation by transcendence that subsumes the alterity of the Other under a category of knowledge.

Our analysis also draws on Frantz Fanon's theory of Self/Other elaborated in his anti-colonialist treatise, *Black Skins, White Masks*, (1952) and his discourse on nationalism in *Studies in a Dying Colonialism* (1965). As the chronicler of colonialism, Fanon provided a psychopathology of colonial domination. He questioned the basic assumptions of colonialism, and exposed the methods of control the white world used to hold down their colonies. Fanon defined the colonial relationship as one of non-recognition of the colonised's humanity, his subjecthood. Thus in his view colonialism de-structured then re-structured the colonised man and in the process depersonalised him. It imposed an existentially false and degrading existence upon its black victims to the extent that it demanded their conformity to its distorted values. Fanon thus called for a radical break with colonial culture, and exalted violence as a necessary pre-condition for this rupture. The broad outlines of his theory of Otherness have been taken up by Homi K. Bhabha.

The Other has indeed been a major preoccupation of this Indian-American theorist who argues that stereotyping is pathological because it is fetishistic behaviour. Cultural diversity and cultural difference are the two important concepts Bhabha discusses in his work. The politics of difference played out in his work highlights the notions of hybridity, liminality, intersticity and mimicry. For him, both coloniser and colonised undergo a splitting of their identities. This suggests that a new identity is formed. For Bhabha moreover, no cultural meaning is separable from its originally multi-cultural production. He thus sees writing as a productive way of conceptualising the differences between cultures. Though supporting

³⁰ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 225.

nationalism, Bhabha, like Fanon, warns against the pitfalls of national consciousness. Quite paradoxically, nationalism in the hands of a native bourgeoisie may replicate the chauvinism of colonial hegemony and thus betray the peoples' revolutionary endeavours.³¹ Bhabha's and Fanon's arguments are forceful not least because they represent the nation in its most illiberal facets, but also because they reveal the paradoxes and contradictions of cultural identity in narratives of liberation. This claim in turn bears some resemblance to Gayatri Spivak's theory that the subaltern's 'truth' is "always already"³² distorted by the Westerner, who enacts "epistemic violence by interpreting the culture of the Other."³³ Spivak's exploration of the possibilities of recovering the voices of women therefore complies with this research. Her definition of the subaltern, disempowered after the advent of independence becomes quite significant when applied to the gendered subaltern.

With regard to the critical approach adopted in this work, we have avoided using a proper psychoanalytic criticism in a way that may appear surprising in a study so bound up with the concept of selfhood and literary creativity. We have followed the line of thought expounded by Edward Said who pointed out that while Sigmund Freud was certainly deeply interested in what we call now the Other, his view of culture was Eurocentric. Although some seminal texts written by Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi and others, analyse the effects of colonialism on the psyche of both coloniser and colonised, our own engagement is informed by issues of cultural difference and also by the political nature of the above-cited writers' texts.

³¹ Cf. Fanon's, 'On National Culture,' and 'The Pitfalls of National Consciousness,' essays in *The Wretched of the Earth*, as well as Bhabha's 'DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation,' in *The Location of Culture*.

³² Gayatri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?,' in Bill Ashcroft et al., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 25.

³³ Ibidem.

Each theoretical approach mentioned above will be used where appropriate to bear on some aspects of our analysis in the various chapters of this thesis, which consists of two main parts: part one and part two comprising respectively four and seven chapters.³⁴

PART I: Colonialism and its Legacies of Darkness

As no art can be divorced from the social and historical reality in which it appeared, a socio-historical background is necessary to interpret any piece of literary work. The purpose of this part is therefore to set stage and provide the context for what follows in the thesis. One important way to understand the effects of colonisation and decolonisation on the Irish and African countries under study is to gauge the institutional legacies of history. To understand present-day Algeria, Nigeria, the Congo and Ireland and their problems, it is essential to keep alive the memory of what had gone before and to delve further into a past that has remained obscured for so long. We will lay particular stress on how Belgium, Britain and France achieved dominance and maintained rule over indigenous peoples whose experiences of empire varied tremendously. During the colonial era, countries such as Britain, Belgium and France established a host of political and administrative institutions to rule beyond their boundaries. These had enduring effects on the native people's lives. This part therefore addresses the colonial legacy in the aforecited countries.

Chapter one: The Irish colonial experience. The Normans' invasion of Ireland in the twelfth century gave way to a cycle of British colonisation which was consolidated in the sixteenth century under the Tudors when the English gained control of the entire isle. English expansion was accompanied by the expropriation of the defeated Irish aristocracy in favour of English landlords, the ousting of the indigenous peasantry and grants of land to loyal English and Scottish colonial settlers. But the Irish question is not exclusively about the land but one

³⁴ This study is the product of a considerable amount of research based on official archives, (Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France) the writers' biographies, autobiographies, letters, as well as articles, essays, interviews, (personal and others) critical and theoretical studies of colonialism and post-colonialism.

that also revolves over religion. This chapter therefore brings into light the religious tensions between Protestants and Catholics. As year 1649 was a turning point in the history of both England and Ireland, we have devoted a section to the savage campaign launched by the English Parliamentary leader, Oliver Cromwell, and the harsh system he imposed on Ireland, which was further exacerbated by the Penal Laws of 1695. The deep injustice generated by these laws was later reinforced by the Act of Union. When the Act of Union was passed in 1800, Catholics believed that the united Parliament would allow them to hold seats in Parliament, but this right was allowed to them only twenty-nine years later with the enactment of the Catholic Relief Act. Under Parnell's leadership, the Catholics demanded a separate Irish parliament within the British union. The British won over the Catholics by promising them emancipation. But the Catholics' triumph was short-lived as the country was racked by famine in 1845. Special attention will therefore be paid to the Act of Union, the Catholic emancipation and the human and economic tragedies occasioned by the Great Famine. When Ireland was finally granted home rule, after World War I, it was a completely ruined country. Paradoxically, Britain emerged at that time not only as the largest overseas empire, thanks to her long-standing in India, but also as the European country that earned the lion's share in the scramble for Africa. Britain took twice as much as France, for example of Africa's population under her yoke. Nigeria alone contributed millions of subjects.

Chapter two: Nigeria's Falling Apart thus looks at Nigeria's colonial relationship with Great Britain which began through the activities of the 'The Royal Niger Company' chartered under the leadership of Sir George Taubman Goldie from 1886. It will focus on the 'indirect rule' strategy used by the British, which rested upon the idea that the British could best govern through indigenous authorities. In effect this indirect rule policy proved a great experiment in coercive cultural relativism. It exacerbated the problems between the two protectorates of the North and the South. This chapter will therefore focus on the complex

relationship between Northern and Southern regions, and the conflicts over tradition the indirect rule policy created when British colonial officials began to anglicise traditional African political institutions by gradually modifying their practices, an action similar to the 'Frenchisation' operated by the French on the Algerians.

Chapter three: Algeria's Long Road to Peace concentrates on the French colonisation of Algeria, which started in 1830. Unlike the British, the French opted for a system of 'direct' rule. In order to understand the nature of the French colonial regime in Algeria as well as the theories of assimilation it promoted, it is important to analyse the Senatus-Consulte Laws of 1863 and 1865, and their underlying ideological function. Like the British in Ireland and Nigeria, the French interfered in the Algerian way of life. This was strongly opposed by the Algerians and led to a bloody war during which the French military used brutal force and inflicted both physical and moral torture on the Algerians as will be discussed in the final sections of this chapter.

Colonialism was also a plague that devastated the Congo. This region fell into the hands of the Belgian King about the same time Nigeria was under British colonial rule. **Chapter four: Leopold II's Congo: A Negation to Humanity** relates the atrocities committed in the Congo during King Leopold II's regime. The King ruled the Congo State not as a trustee of the Powers, but as an absolute sovereign, trampling the Berlin-made Congo charter under foot. He held the Congolese people as his private property, and made all the riches of the land his: rubber and ivory were gathered for him by men, women and little children under compulsion of lash and bullet, fire, starvation, and mutilation.

Part II: At the Crossroads of Cultures

The examination of the British, Belgian and French models of colonisation will reveal common features. Our concern however lies elsewhere with those forms of domination that revolve around the construction of the Other. It is particularly important to see to what extent

the otherness of the Nigerians, Congolese, Algerians and Irish, their supposed ‘inferiority’ and ‘savagery’ justified the colonisers’ intrusion on their respective territories. The racialism of the nineteenth century, to which Darwinian concepts and ethno-psychiatrists appeared to give a new scientific validity, lent theoretical and moral justification to the prevailing state of fact. The main strand in **Chapter five: ‘Barbaric’ Others: Why are They not so Blest?** is therefore to examine the role played by ethnocentric prejudices in shaping the relations of England, Belgium and France towards their respective colonies. It will also focus on the repercussions this thinking had on the British, Belgian and French colonisers’ minds.

Working against the background of the West’s history of the colonial enterprise and its exploitation of other societies and cultures, postcolonial theory has therefore been used as a vital tool to re-read the texts of Western imperialism to offer a powerful framework for analysing identity formation. **Chapter Six: Postcolonial Theory** spotlights the new set of conceptual tools postcoloniality has provided not simply to revise colonialism, but also to reframe it in terms of the relation between colonial power and colonial knowledge. Postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, among others, provided a foundation for the emergence of a distinct form of cultural theory, the analysis of colonial discourse. All of them grappled with the centre/periphery opposition, though each critic developed his own perspective towards colonialism. By revealing the many conflicting articulations of colonial discourse, these theorists sought to demonstrate the limits of its discursive power and by focusing on the wide range of stereotypes and subject position allocated to the colonised in colonialist texts. We shall then analyse Yeats’s, Joyce’s, Conrad’s, Achebe’s and Djébar’s selected works in the light of the above-cited postcolonial theories in the chapters that follow.

Chapter Seven: Apocalypse Then considers Yeats’s ‘The Second Coming,’(1921) Joyce’s *Dubliners*, (1914) Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*,(1899) Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and

Djebar's *L'Amour, la Fantasia* (1985) from a historical viewpoint. These writers deploy the plagues of colonialism, analyse the predicament of the colonised subject, and formulate a critique both of the assimilationist theory and colonial laws which turned the colonised society into a vagrant society. The constant use of historical themes in these works bears witness to the need to come to terms with the remnants of colonialism.

The next chapters will be devoted to a discussion of the concept of the Other by examining several narratives centred upon the protagonist's search for identity. Our point is to elucidate the encounters between England/Ireland and Nigeria, Belgium/the Congo, Algeria/France long deformed and obscured by colonial historiography, and shed new light on questions of identity and culture.

Chapter Eight: Re-Inventing Ireland: W.B.Yeats's Poetry and James Joyce's *Dubliners*

draws on some Yeatsian poems and Joycean short stories to outline that centuries of conflict between Ireland and Britain produced some of the most complex cultural identities possible. Although Yeats was a national poet, and wrote more than a hundred years ago, his voice resonates across cultures to the contemporary world. His voice was the beginning of post-colonialism in literature written in English. At the time of Yeats's birth, the Irish had been living for almost seven hundred years under English oppression, since at least 1171 when Pope Adrian IV gave Henry II authority to rule Ireland. Yeats himself was doubly marginalised. In terms of power, these forms of otherness were antithetical: to be Irish in England was to be inferior; in Catholic Ireland, he was Protestant, which was to be superior. Yeats's experiences of dual Otherness influenced much of his life's work. In order to demonstrate that the Irish were more than substandard Englishmen and provide a basis for his assertion of a difference from the imperial centre, one of the projects of postcolonial literatures, Yeats looked into ancient history, the ancient myths and legends of the Celts, which offered an alternative way of seeing and representing the world. Although Joyce could

not commit himself to subordinate his art to politics, he however agreed with Yeats that Ireland's ills were attributed to English oppression. However his conception of Irishness differed from Yeats's. Joyce showed his people how the Church oppressed them by taking a strong hand in their politics, by keeping them bound to a strict moral code, and contributing to their poverty thus making their subservience to the English more acute. The destruction of Parnell, in 1890, and with him the hopes of Irish Catholics for a fuller participation in society coloured Joyce's thinking for the rest of his life. The fragmentation of identity entailed by colonisation is also a topic tackled by Joseph Conrad and Chinua Achebe.

Chapter Nine: Mapping the Subaltern: Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* focuses on Conrad's and Achebe's views of the colonial Other. As an outspoken critic of imperialism, Conrad identifies with the victims of imperialist oppression and shares a perspective with postcolonial writers. Yeats's line "Things fall apart" in his poem, 'The Second Coming,' can be directly linked to Joseph Conrad who wrote about hollow centres in *Heart of Darkness*, twenty years before Yeats's poem, and to Chinua Achebe, who titled his first novel, *Things Fall Apart*, after Yeats's poem forty years later. Like Joyce, Conrad was an exile and a multilingual. Like the poet, Conrad anticipated the future. Conrad not only manufactured a position for himself to speak from but he also spoke about the predicament of the colonised African man. Drawing inspiration from Yeats's 'The Second Coming,' Achebe set forth a tantalising story which deals with the clash of cultures and the violent transitions in life and values brought about by the onset of British colonisation in Nigeria at the turn of the nineteenth century. Under British rule "things" began to "fall apart." The encounter with the British led to a deepening sense of a distinct Ibo ethnic identity. In refuting the colonial versions of history, the Nigerian writer elaborated a counter-

history in which the Ibo past with all its imperfections, was not “a long night of savagery,”³⁵ as Assia Djébar did in *L'Amour, la Fantasia*.

Algerian writers like the Irish and the Nigerians overtly criticised colonial rule reclaiming their identity; yet, the problem of Algerian cultural identity remains figured in the masculine terms of cultural Nationalism. Djébar's *L'Amour* is particularly apt for a discussion of the theme of Otherness: it contains two aspects: a dialogue with the West and a dialogue with man. **Chapter Ten: Making Sense of a Double Colonisation: Assia Djébar's *L'Amour, la Fantasia*** thus offers a powerful statement of women's struggles to denounce, resist and reshape the discourses of dominance. It raises important postcolonial and feminist issues for Algerian women, notably their relationship to language and writing and the relationship between their language and their identity. It attends to the question of women in another dimension of 'identity,' namely their gender, explores the interaction of race and gender in the experience of Algerian women, and discusses the possibility of a woman's space that transcends the problems of imperialism and patriarchy. Picking up on the area of inquiry that Yeats, Joyce, Conrad and Achebe started, Djébar captures moments of the history of Algeria. Portraying Algerian women as victims of a dual oppression, Djébar claims subjectivity for herself and her Algerian and African sisters by re-appropriating language, history, space and the gaze. On the one hand, the novelist explores French colonial archives in order to rewrite the history of France's conquest of Algeria by reinserting women into the pages of history. On the other hand, she challenges the Muslim patriarch's dominating gaze so as to empower Algerian women and restore their subjectivity. As women's voices have been unheard thus the images of women in pre-colonial as well as in colonial periods had been mostly presented by male writers. Concurrently, the latter have not been spared the criticism of being androcentric based on their amplified presentation of male gender. This point brings us to consider woman's place in Yeats's, Joyce's, Conrad's and Achebe's works in **Chapter**

³⁵ Chinua Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday/Anchor Press, 1975), 72.