



## ***The Subaltern Speaks: Identity, Authenticity and Image Dynamics in Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and Bole Butake's *Family Saga*.***

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### KEYWORDS :

#### Introduction

This paper examines Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and Bole Butake's *Family Saga* as counter narratives of the mega narratives of Western imperialism. The central axis of these counter narratives is the identity question in a nation where some citizens appear to have no dignity, self-worth or identity. This subaltern class in the two plays demonstrates the urgent need as postcolonials to discover who they are by reclaiming their roots through memory or history.

Read principally from GayatriChakravortySpivak's illuminating essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' the paper argues that while Walcott takes a St. Lucian stance with regards to the issue of identity from the perspective of the black race vis a vis the white race, Butake, on the other hand, looks at identity and self-definition from the Cameroonian perspective by examining the relationship between and within Cameroonians after independence. The paper concludes that in both cases, it is the hegemonic class that defines life and categorizes individuals in society. Consequently, the subaltern class must speak so that the two narratives can be confronted in order to get an authentic self-definition or identity.

#### Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back* defines "postcolonial" as that which "covers all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day". In this sense, "postcolonial" literature is any literature that "speaks back" to the processes of imperialism (2). By speaking back this literature deplors the politics of colonialism. ChukwumaOkoye in "Wole Soyinka: Text, Embodied Practice and Post-Colonial Resistance" elaborates on this view when he states that:

Post-colonialism continues the battle against colonial insinuations even after the demise of direct formal colonization. It contests the emergent local repressive regimes which often posture deceptively as progressive alternatives with the objective to launch crippling offensives against imperialism, corruption and bad governance, only to turn around and repress the very people they profess to protect. The various postcolonial dictatorships in Asia, Latin America and Africa are typical instances of this inconsistency. Most significantly, post colonialism is about the pursuit of justice, dignity and access to basic social amenities for/by those to whom these amenities are denied. (40)

The pursuit of justice and dignity for the purpose of this paper, can be understood to mean a search for recognition and re-establishment of the colonized man's identity in all dimensions. As a result, colonialism would not be understood only as a European phenomenon because in this paper the domination, relegation and denigration of one culture's identity and image by another through claims of authenticity would be viewed as colonialism as the case would be in the plays under study.

From the above submission, it should be noted that postcolonial

literature and theory are also involved in reclaiming stories, ways of seeing the world, and sense of reality against an imposed European notion of what is real. "Speaking back" therefore becomes about insisting on any literature that seeks to decry with virulence the ills of colonialism in all its ramifications. Another very important ill that postcolonialism decries is the issue of the identity and displacement of formerly colonized peoples as Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin further contend when they say that:

A major feature of post-colonial literatures is the concern of place and displacement. It is here that the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being... many have been eroded by dislocation resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or "voluntary" removal... Or it may have been destroyed by cultural denigration, the conscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly racial or cultural model. (9)

Spivak's contributions to postcolonial discourse are invaluable especially with her essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' Through this essay, she examines the subaltern status of Indian women. Though the term 'subaltern' generally denotes an inferior rank in the military, Spivak uses it to describe the subordinated and disenfranchised people of Asia especially the women of India who have most often been categorized with regards to gender and caste. It is clear therefore that her stand in this regard has a feminist agenda. Despite her seemingly narrowing of the term to Indian women, this study has used the term to incorporate all colonial and postcolonial subjects.

The theory of subalternity evinced in her essay can be understood to stipulate that the subaltern cannot speak. Even if they can speak, those who hold hegemonic power (colonialists, post colonialists and the custodians of patriarchy) are somehow advertently unwilling or not ready to give a listening ear. To justify such claims, Spivak examines the effects of 'epistemic violence' brought to bear on subaltern identity and situation. Such violence she believes is as a result of discourses of knowledge about the subaltern propagated by intellectuals who believe to be speaking on their behalf. She adds that "The clearest available example of such epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other" (24-25) This "precarious subjectivity" of the subaltern is succinctly handled by Walcott and Butake. Note is taken of Lestrade's perception of Makak and Kamalo's description of Kamala in the plays under study.

Though Spivak does not wholly exempt herself from such discursive violence, she argues that such claimed knowledge of the 'other' usually couches some colonial agenda. Epistemic violence therefore is created through the discourses of 'native informants' ('intellectuals' like Corporal and Kamalo who believe to be outside the realm of subalternity in some way.) This according to Spivak only helps to decenter the subalterns since they exercise no sovereignty over the construction of their selfhood. As a result, she concludes her essay with a negative answer to the question she has posed through its title. To her, speaking on behalf of the subaltern is a

replication of colonialism since it reinforces the western concept of 'Other'. Despite Spivak's conclusion that the subaltern cannot speak in such conditions, this paper will conversely argue that the subaltern or 'other' can and is speaking through the plays. It is through such speaking that he is able to define his identity in the face of 'epistemic violence' and other colonialist discourses.

Identity which is one of the key terms for this paper is the way in which an individual and/or group defines itself and it is important to self-conception, as well as national understanding. It often involves both "Essentialism" and "Othering" which is the social and/or psychological ways in which one group excludes or marginalizes another group. By declaring someone "other," persons tend to stress what makes them dissimilar from or opposite of another and this carries over into the way they represent others, especially through stereotypical images. Borrowing from the perspective of Andrew T. Ngeh and Usman Suleiman in *Power Dialectics and the Crisis of Identity in Anglophone Cameroonian Poetry*, identity has to do with cultural, political and social exclusion as the masses are socially isolated and politically marginalized. Therefore their quest for identity as 'humans with inalienable rights and freedom becomes a categorical imperative' (3).

In discussing the question of identity in postcolonial nations, the concept of power inevitably finds its place. Homi Bhabha, from this perspective looks at the importance of social power with regards to subaltern groups as "oppressed minority groups whose presence was crucial to the self-definition of the majority groups. The subaltern social groups were also in a position to subvert the authority of those who had hegemonic power." (191) This conception of the subaltern stresses the need for resistance, like Ngeh and Suleiman propose, in order to achieve human freedom, and assertion of identity. This clearly brings into the picture of postcolonial drama the concept of identity politics which can also be translated as image dynamics for one's identity builds his image. Benedict Binebai concurs with this view and believes that cultural identity and cultural nationalism should exist side by side with political identity and nationalism. He further observes that all over the world and across ages, the use of literature for the preservation and promotion of identity has been institutionalized and that dramatists and literary scholars seem to have come to a consensus on this position though he points out that John M. Robertson condemns the fact that the use of literature for the propagation of national pride "is an error of errors, a falsity of falsities". (209-10). In fact, Robertson's fear is that the ex-colonized people may fall prey to the same illusions of authenticity as did the colonialists but it suffices to say that Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin lay this fear to rest.

Another important concept looked at in this paper is authenticity. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies* seem to disagree with some postcolonial theorists' argument that for the purpose of authenticity in postcolonial cultural production there should be a rejection of the influence of the colonial period in programs of decolonization which to some degree inadvertently invokes the idea that certain forms and practices are 'inauthentic'. These critics, therefore, argue for a recuperation of authentic pre-colonial traditions and customs but such an argument may prove somewhat limping for Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin contrarily argue in *Key Concepts* that:

The problem with such claims to cultural authenticity is that they often become entangled in an essentialist cultural position in which fixed practices become iconized as authentically indigenous and others are excluded as hybridized or contaminated. This has as its corollary the danger of ignoring the possibility that cultures may develop and change as their conditions change. (21-22)

They go ahead to argue that cultural essentialism may be adopted as a strategic political position in the struggle against imperial power in order to resist oppression but they fear that a claim to authenticity can imply that these cultures are not subject to change.

(21-22)

It can be understood that authenticity deals with an identification of those cultural values of a given peoples' culture which can be upheld with regards to the peoples' worldview and socio-political existence with a valid and active sense of self without cultural denigration of the 'other'. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin seem to be proposing that all opposing cultures should be open-ended thereby giving allowance to change as time passes by. This therefore means that there should be some sort of compromise between cultures that will allow each to borrow what is positive and 'authentic' from one another. Through this, marginalization, stigmatization and categorization that are problematic to the question of identity will be addressed.

At this juncture, we hold that it is against the backdrop of Spivak's portrayal of the uncomfortable situation and position of the subaltern that this paper seeks to examine how Derek Walcott and Bole Butake have represented the Subaltern's identity and image through an 'authentic culture' that is open-ended as proposed by Ashcroft in an attempt to forestall the predatory and colonializing culture of imperialist ideology, philosophy and politics translated through the imposed neocolonialists.

### **Problematics of Identity and Authenticity in *Dream on Monkey Mountain and Family Saga***

The landing of slave traders and colonialists in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world marked the genesis of a conflict that would keep trending for centuries. At the center of this conflict are the controversial issues of identity and authenticity which became the preoccupation of many a black writer and critic. As a result, one of the primordial concerns of Walcott in *Dream on Monkey Mountain* is to examine the nature of Caribbean identity and M. Vanisree contends that the impact of slave trade and its adverse impact on Walcott's people should not be undermined. She holds that slavery and colonialism made these people feel a sense of alienation as they were moved from their native land to the Caribbean Islands.

The alienation, denigration and dislocation of a people's exemplified in the character of Makak whom the playwright sometimes refers to as "Africa." Makak in a soliloquy talks of his true nature by emphasizing his blackness and dislocation as a result of slavery and colonialism:

I was a king among shadows. Either the shadows were real, and I was no king, or it is my own kingliness that created the shadows. Either way, I am lonely, lost, an old man again... We are wrapped in black air, we are black, ourselves shadows in the firelight of the white man's mind. Soon, soon it will be morning, praise God, and the dream will rise like vapor. (304)

As already insinuated, the most relevant aspect in Walcott's play is the quest for identity. An identity which the protagonist- Makak is out to look for and Vanisree holds that Walcott portrays the St. Lucian cultural experience with its "heterogeneous fusion of British imperialism and black identity as a primary cause of black deformation" (125). In the play, Walcott examines the tension between the cultural heritage of Africa and the West in the midst of the new dispensation brought in by slavery and colonialism. As a result, Vanisree further holds that the play is a "complex allegory" which is concerned with racial identity and deals with Makak's dream through which he believes he will discover himself as a black man in a racially conscious community. Makak's inability to determine his true identity like some of his compatriots makes his state of mind unstable. In fact, he is black and he wants to find a remedy for it, he believes such a remedy will come from his hallucinations about a white lady on Monkey Mountain.

Such a solution by Makak evidently brings out his inferiority complex through his considering of Whites as his superiors for they claimed such superiority and authenticity. This is why his dream is presented as "fantasy about a white lady" who protects him and also

takes care of him thus assuming a superior position. Vanisreeagan contends that Makak is only a recipient of her kindness and encouragement (126). By asking Makak not to live as he does in the forest, it can be understood that the apparition is indirectly alienating him further away from his true nature. In fact, this lady wants Makak to see that only the new way of life she is presenting is the authentic *modus vivendi* for him and his contemporaries like Tigre and Souris. Through his dream, Makak realizes that his countrymen are without an identity or roots. In fact, they are a people caught up in darkness. His need for divine help and intervention in this dilemma is expressed along with the need to restore to the black people a sense of self dignity and respect in the face of white domination.

Walcott's juxtaposition of dream and reality is indicative of the state of flux in which St. Lucian self-definition is always caught up. Makak is usually entranced by the supplanted presence of the white lady in his dream and such a presence compels him to succumb to white superiority as the lady tells him of who he is. This is an exercise of 'epistemic violence' which Spivak accuses western discourse of propagating. By arrogating knowledge of Makak's heritage, the white lady indirectly places herself above him and believes she holds the right to redirect his course in search of selfhood. Also, the playwright's use of a symbol like "darkness" portrays the lost feeling of the native population while the prison in which Makak and his friends are incarcerated can be considered a symbol of colonial rule.

Just like Walcott, Butake is concerned with the issue of identity, self-definition and image. While Walcott takes a Caribbean stance from the perspective of racial identity, Butake looks at identity and self-definition from the third world perspective by examining the relationship between blacks and blacks after independence. Such a relation proves to be that of exploitation and unruly behaviour filled with impunity instilled in the African leaders by the European colonizers who left them as watchdogs to lord over their own. Again, the relation prevailing between the ruled and the ruling in Africa inevitably has led to the ruled's quest for his identity in the postcolonial nation-state. The ruled seem not to identify himself as belonging to the same nation-state with those who rule.

The exploitation of Kamala, the manager of the family estate, by his supposed brother-Kamalo who believes that he is the theoretician who conceives plans with regards to the running of the family estate for Kamala and his children to execute is characteristic of the relationship that prevails among the ruled and the ruling in post-independent African states. Kamalo is a squander maniac who feeds from the gains achieved by Kamala while the latter, Ngong and Sawa toil on the family estate. Such an imbalance in the distribution of the 'national cake' instills in the less privileged the feeling of exclusion and disillusion.

Sawa, Ngong and Kamala throughout the play suffer from an identity crisis since they try to understand who they really are in relation to Kamalo with whom they believe they have family ties. Contrarily, Kamalo rejects such claims and succinctly establishes a master-servant relationship between him and the Kamalas. As a result, Kamalo seems to justify his 'rape' of the family's resources as well as the physical rape of Sawa. This is probably because he believes he has all the prerogatives of power thereby giving him authenticity to lord over the Kamalas as instituted by Baakingoom. Kamalo here erroneously arrogates to himself the power of knowledge and as Spivak believes he acts falsely on behalf of the Kamalas. Such a situation or stance can be understood to be reflective of the colonizer's authenticating of the superiority of a small group of elect over the majority in their former colonies just after independence. This placement is justification for the turbulence that reigned in most post independent countries in Africa and Asia. Examples are evident in Rwanda where the Hutus were instituted to lord over the Tutsis thereby provoking the 1994 genocide in that country. In such a situation therefore, these down trodden people are in constant search for an identity in the same nation where they dwell with their exploiters and tormentors. This

search for self-identification and identity is what the Kamalas in *Family Saga* are out for. In fact, they like Makak constantly search for avenues to speak back and or redress their dilemma.

Unlike *Dream on Monkey Mountain* that dramatizes the experiences of blacks in a racially conscious West Indian island through ritualistic African dramatic techniques, *Family Saga* can be understood to dramatize through the techniques of theatre for development and conscientization the resultant realities of the union (a union whose basis is interrogated by Nkengasong) between Southern Cameroon and La Republique du Cameroun. This is so because the problems presented by Sawa, Ngong and Kamala in Movement six of the play (51-53) can be considered as representative of those of the Anglophone peoples of Cameroon. These characters say:

**Sawa:** My three problems are: uncle Kamalo, no mother and poverty na...

**Ngong:** Poverty and too much work, no future...

**Kamala:** My own problems are: my identity, lack of discussion with Kamalo and bad management resulting in poverty. So you see, poverty is common to all of us.

**Sawa:** And Kamalona? Kamalo is the one causing all our problems na? (51-52)

These characters decry their marginalization, misery and poverty resulting from the unequal distribution of wealth. Most importantly, their lack of identity and sense of belonging to the nation is also decried. All these problems have built for them an identity as the wretched of the earth. This is why they are in constant search in order to understand who they really are and their position or status in the nation just like the Anglophone Cameroonians since the unification of the two parts of the country.

The Kamalas in this play lack a determinate identity for themselves. Consequently, they are in constant search for such an identity because they have been living under the illusion that they are family with Kamalo and Baakingoom. Their realization of the brutal truth (as falsely presented by Kamalo) puts them in a stasis. These people have in one way been completely dislocated from their roots by the false and predatory signing of the deed of brotherhood which in some respect is a deed of servitude. The signing of such a document can be understood as Kamala's relinquishing of his identity as an equal with Kamalo with regard to the ownership of the family estate. This is because under the pretext of superiority, Kamalo attributes to the Kamalas the status of slaves as he holds that his role is to conceive for Kamala to execute. This why Kamala affirms:

He tells me that his role is to conceive while mine is to execute. In short, I am a slave, toiling in the fields from dawn to dusk in these rags while he is having air-conditioning at home in a three piece suit, eating and drinking and smoking and making merry... That is the dog's life I am going through. (22)

Sawa, Kamala's daughter confirms this when she confronts Kamalo before her brutal rape. She is blunt when she questions him:

You see na? You see na? Who made such an unjust rule na? You made that master and slave rule na, uncle? That's why you are living in a very beautiful house only drinking and smoking and dancing while we are toiling in the fields for your enjoyment na? (29-30)

Ngong concurs these accusations and goes ahead to submit that:

...is there any sense in an agreement which is so obviously disregarded and even violated by one of the parties? Is it possible for a cockroach to hold dialogue with a fowl? A pig has never been known to consider the hunger in another's stomach... He will understand sooner than later that solidarity is the foundation stone of unity, progress and

prosperity...(34)

Ngong's use of the fowl and cockroach binary as well as the image of the pig presupposes that they are dealing with a man who is greedy and inconsiderate. As a result, as the saying goes, the cockroach can never be innocent in the court of fowls. Therefore, it would appear the Kamalas are fighting a lost battle.

*Family Saga* qualifies as a postcolonial piece because it seemingly plunges into the history of Cameroon to establish the source of the identity issues of Anglophone Cameroonians as presented by the Kamalas. In the play, the playwright artistically fictionalizes historical facts and happenings in the Cameroons. Before the union of the Cameroons during the 1961 Plebiscite, there existed two Cameroons with distinct political and economic institutions as well as socio-cultural identities. Kamala affirms this when he says: "Sawa, in those days we had different barns. I took care of my affairs and he took care of his. There was really nothing to worry about. Until he persuaded me into this single barn thing..."(54)

This reunification, the playwright seems to be saying, is the source of Kamala's identity issues since it dislodges him from his position with regards to what is now called the family estate. The plebiscite therefore metaphorically stands for the deed of brotherhood constantly referred to in the play. Symbolically, this deed stands for the trickery, betrayal and abuse of confidence by Kamalo and Kamala himself identifies this as the beginning of his woes when he says: "A man I trusted as my brother betrays me in the most horrific and despicable act. It is more heinous than... than the forgery in the deed of brotherhood. Kamalo, how can you do this to me..."(55)

Furthermore, the demise of Kamala is reiterated by the fact that his wife eloped with a stranger who already had many wives. Historically, she can be understood to be that part of Northern Cameroon that voted to gain independence by joining Northern Nigeria during the plebiscite—a country that was already independent with many confederated states. This act of betrayal seems to have played down the force of West Cameroon in gaining independence. Kamala's wife's elopement therefore played down on his quest for sovereignty and plunged him into signing the deed of "bondage hood" in name of brotherhood. At this juncture, the status of Kamala as a slave on the estate can be historically situated. The playwright is therefore seemingly speaking back at the enslavement of Anglophone Cameroon today resulting from the Plebiscite of 1961.

Both Walcott and Butake are preoccupied with the issue of identity. They seek to dig into the source of the identity crises their characters face and consequently their compatriots. They are also concerned with the problem of Authenticity which involves cultural practices, race and self-image. Most significantly, in the two works studied the playwrights offer opportunities for the reflection of alternative strategies for self-definition and identity. While Walcott seems to call for cultural tolerance and a complete rejection of a return to Africa by the racially dislocated and marginalized black people of Saint Lucia since the 'original' Africa is inexistent as a result of colonialism, Butake on his part does not only present means through which subaltern peoples can overcome their marginalization and loss of identity as the case usually is in Theatre for Development. The playwright goes even further through this genre of drama to educate the dictator and tormentor of the people. He presents to the stooge obfuscator the means through which he can overcome his dictatorship to establish a peaceful relationship between him and other citizens through dialogue. Dialogue, Butake seems to be proposing is the key to the marginalization and identity crisis suffered by the Kamalas and consequently the peoples of the Cameroons.

### **Re-imagining "Otherness" and Self-definition in *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and *Family Saga***

A look at the plays under study here reveals the intentions of the playwrights. They are bent on exploring the identity crisis faced by

the peoples of their various nations. Both Walcott and Butake set out to debunk the false claims of authenticity assumed first by the white colonialist in Walcott's play and secondly by the imperial supplanted leaders of the newly independent nation in Butake's play. These playwrights seek out ways to re-image the wretched of the earth that have been classified as "other". Through their dramatic creativity, they provide an occasion for these subaltern people to speak out, reclaim their history, rebrand themselves and polish their identities.

In *Dream on Monkey Mountain* when Makak evokes his identity and dislocation, his language is not precise; rather, it has a poetic twist to it. Vanisree contends that the playwright injects into the play a "Caribbean flare" that shines the light on the identity of the Black Caribbean through the portrayal of their tribal rituals consisting of songs, musical instruments, masks and the use of smoke and loud cries. All these cultural and traditional elements help to build the identity of the Caribbean in the play as well as situating their roots as truly African. Walcott's play becomes an opportunity to the colonized people of the Caribbean islands to speak about their identity and culture.

Makak's state of mind is unstable and he is disillusioned because he can't make out his own identity. In fact, his blackness irritates him as it does the whites and so he wants to find a remedy for it. This he fallaciously seems to achieve by looking up to the white lady in his dream. This dream Vanisree says is just a reflection of his sub-conscious through which he is able to view his problem. Further in his dream Makak sees his people without roots, an identity and because of this, he sings of better days ahead and reminds them of their strength potentials (*Dream*, 249)

Walcott comes to a conclusion on the issue of racial superiority and quest of identity by presenting a trial for whites during which they are condemned by the African tribes for neglecting other races. Yet in another trial, Corporal Lestrade abandons his loyalty to the Western world and consequently the colonialists. He reclaims his black heritage and now sides with Makak. He convinces the protagonist not to depend on the whites for counsel and as a result advises him to eradicate the white lady in his dreams for the lady's culture has clouded his mind so much so that his own identity has been denigrated or completely wiped out. Lestrade has this to say of the white woman:

She is the wife of the devil, the white witch. She is the mirror of the moon that this ape looks into and find himself unbearable. She is all that is pure, all that he cannot touch. You see her status in white stone and you turn your face away, mixed with abhorrence and lust, with destruction and desire... She is the white light that paralyzed your mind that led you into this confusion. It is you who created her, so Kill her! Kill her! (319)

Makak heeds Lestrade's advice to subdue the illusion that had been ostracizing him from his roots. Makak kills the woman as sacrifice that symbolizes a reaction against a life of fantasy and inferiority instilled in the blacks by the colonialists. Such a life of illusion is the source of the black man's inferiority, lack of self-worth and loss of identity Walcott seems to be saying. By executing the white lady, the playwright seems to say that Makak has finally discovered who he is and this identity should never be viewed from the reflection of the whites of his community. In fact both Makak and Lestrade at this point have succeeded in rebranding themselves by ejecting the negative white conception of blackness.

Unlike Makak in Walcott's play who virulently eliminate the source of the identity crisis, Kamala and his siblings in Butake's play take a more moderate and compromising stance in settling their identity issues in a bid to rebrand and re-image themselves in the face of their oppressors. This method can be considered to follow from Ashcroft's proposition of an open-ended approach in the resolution of identity differences.



Despite the hideous nature of his plight, Kamala believes that violence isn't the solution. Rather, he thinks dialogue and the force of argument will do the job. As a result, he instills in his children the spirit of compromise though someone like Ngong is skeptical with such a solution at first. Ngong, Sawa and Kamala all want to be identified as part of the family, a family to which Kamalo does not agree they belong. This is why even after considering a divorce from the deed of brotherhood, the trio still prefers to be incorporated into the family. This can be explained by their desire to be part and parcel of the decision making process on the estate as well as a need for an equitable distribution of work and proceeds.

Butake seems to be proposing that peaceful dialogue is the solution to the problems of the Kamala's and this is why through the play within the play, the Kamalas see it as an opportunity to peacefully present their grievances in front of their tormentors especially Kamalo. Sawa buttresses this move through a Biblical allusion drawn from Mathew 7:7, "Ask and you shall be given; knock and the door shall be opened" (29). Though the Kamalas don't know when the rain started beating them, they however believe that a good starting point towards their solution is by reclaiming their history. This is why Kamala in trying to decipher the origins of their problems says: "We have to look in history books and diaries kept by people who are known for telling the truth; especially priests, philosophers, travellers and even soothsayers" (57) What Kamala is insinuating here is that knowledge is power.

Throughout the play, the Kamala's try to appeal to the conscience of Kamalo. Though he is adamant to change, he finally gives in after he experiences some sort of an epiphany that changes his views on the position of the Kamala's especially with regards to family ties and the estate. Kamalo realizes his faults by coming face to face with his victims but he is quick to apologize thereby recognizing that Kamala is his brother. Here, one may not be wrong to say that Butake's play falls under the category of Theatre for Development as it seemingly educates Anglophone Cameroonians on possible ways of resolving their differences with La Republique. In fact, the Kamala's succeed in re-imagining their identity and debunking the self-implemented authenticity enjoyed by Kamalo by reclaiming their roots and using the force of argument rather than the argument of force.

### Conclusion

After an examination of *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and *Family Saga*, it can be concluded here that both playwrights are postcolonial dramatists who are concerned with the burning issues of their postcolonial nations. This paper has identified one of such crucial issues to be that of identity and self-assertion in a nation where the denizens are usually not placed on the same level especially by the negative influence of colonialism. The protagonists of these two plays demonstrate an urgent need for them to discover who they are by reclaiming their roots especially through history.

Walcott takes a more Caribbean stance from the perspective of racial identity where under supposed authenticity and superiority the colonialists considered blacks as being racially inferior thereby igniting in them that burning desire to identify themselves as a people with a culture and a land of theirs-Africa. Butake on the other hand looks at identity and self-definition from a third world perspective by examining the relationship between Africans after independence. Such a relation proves to be that of exploitation and unruly behaviour filled with impunity instilled in the African leaders by the European colonizers who left them as watchdogs after independence. Such a relation prevailing between the ruled and the ruling in Africa inevitably has led to the ruled man's quest of his identity in the postcolonial nation. The ruled man seems not to identify himself as belonging to the same nation with those in authority for there is still some sort of a master-slave relationship between them. Despite such a view, Butake like Walcott seems to propose that knowledge of one's roots is a good tool for the force of one's arguments especially when faced with the issue of identity crisis.

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