

LOVE IN POSTCOLONIAL TIMES: EXPLORING ECHOES OF C.S. LEWIS' *FOUR LOVES*  
IN SELECTED WORKS BY DEREK WALCOTT, V.S. NAIPAUL, TONI MORRISON, AND

PABLO NERUDA

By

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This thesis explores the universal theme of love, as analyzed by C.S. Lewis in his classical essay *The Four Loves*. In the course of this literary quest, selected literary works of four laureates of Nobel Prize in literature — *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* by V.S. Naipaul, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, and representative poems from the poetic creations of Derek Walcott and Pablo Neruda- will be discussed in the multicultural context of a postcolonial era.

C.S. Lewis lamented the poverty and limitations of the English language in expressing the polysemantic nuances of the word “love”. Consequently, he used the Greek lexicon to define and explain this profound concept and, in the process, the author classified love as being synonymous with four different English words: Affection, Friendship, Eros (with a Greek variant named Venus), and Charity. All four are rich in their applications to the relationships between human beings, and the spiritual, religious nature of the relationship between man and the Divinity.

In the argumentation of this thesis, concepts such as colonialism, postcolonialism, orientalism, imperialism, modernity, the Other, Eurocentrism, Carribean, slavery and African American will be discussed in relationship to the manifestation of love , the lack of it, or the

misinterpretation of love, as it was the case of the colonial powers in their conquest and subjugation of the indigenous people.



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## INTRODUCTION:

Postcolonialism and globalization are ubiquitous phenomena of modern times, and the recent innovations in technology, communications, transportation, and commerce have all contributed into transforming the planet Earth into a shrinking global village. All the massive changes in the above-mentioned sectors have affected writers as well, since the artists of the penned word function as voices, not onto wilderness, but rather into a modern Babel of communications.

Wishing to be in accord with the multicultural and transnational trends, and engaging the international agora where cultures, religions, and customs intersect, I have chosen to study selected works of four writers who have gained international reputation by the fact that their writings transcend physical barriers of time and space. These four versatile artists of the word are Derek Walcott, V.S. Naipaul, Toni Morrison, and Pablo Neruda. Each one of the selected authors is a Nobel Prize laureate, and collectively they are seminal writers who have garnished extensive accolades. It needs to be emphasized that each one is representative of either minorities or colonized people; therefore, their writings offer new valences and visions of cultures that historically have been underrepresented.

Their writings share this common thread: immigration brings a sense of anxiety in the beginning, but, given time, acculturation takes place and people start feeling at home in more than one place. They all have inevitably become global citizens, and their allegiances shifted as well by making them aware of phenomena that occur at a global scale. Many of the convulsions that inevitably accompany immigrants' lives, who are struggling to make sense of their new realities, are being reflected in the writings of these international writers. For all of them, writing is like an exorcism exercise operated in order to help them make sense of the Brave New World.

Their work will be examined through the lenses of renowned writer and Christian apologist C.S. Lewis and the forms of love, as categorized by him, will be presented as such.

In his classical essay *Four Loves* (1960), C.S. Lewis explores the profound concept of love by looking at it from different perspectives. It is worth noting that he begins his exploration by using the Greek lexicon as a starting point. The Greeks gave the humanity not only three of the pillars of Western thought (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle), but provided the world with a language that was very rich in nuances of words' meanings. Lewis condenses the eleven words that the Greeks used to convey the meaning of the love concept to four main ones which he calls affection, friendship, eros, and charity. He is a master of fine distinctions and differentiates among types of loves that characterize human beings as "Need-loves" and the love that pertains primarily to the Divinity as the "Gift-loves". To make this distinction clear, C.S. Lewis explains: "Every human love, at its height, has a tendency to claim for itself a divine authority. Its voice tends to sound as if it were the will of God Himself. It tells us not to count the cost, it demands of us a total commitment, it attempts to over-ride all other claims and insinuates that any action is lawful and even meritorious" (216). On the other hand, human beings could have a real resemblance to God when their kind of loves are giving and selfless. Lewis continues by saying "Our Gift-loves are really God-like; and among our Gift-loves those are most Godlike which are most boundless and unwearied in giving. All the things the poets say about them are true. Their joy, their energy, their patience, their readiness to forgive, their desire for the good of the beloved- all this is a real and all but adorable image of the Divine life" (216).

Affection is seen by the author as being the humblest and most widely diffused of loves. For instance, it is a type of love that a mother would have for her offspring and it is paradoxical in its nature since it is a Need-love and a Gift-love at the same time: "Affection gives itself no

airs... It almost slinks or seeps through our lives. It lives with humble, un-dress, private things; soft slippers, old clothes, old jokes, the thump of a sleepy dog's tail on the kitchen floor, the sound of a sewing-machine, a gollywog left on the lawn" (231).

Lewis considers Friendship to be the least biological of human love since it is by practice a love of choice and emerges from what he calls the "matrix of Friendship". He again makes a fine distinction between Friendship and Companionship: "Friendship arises out of mere Companionship when two or more of the companions discover that they have in common some insight or interest or even taste which the others do not share and which, till that moment, each believed to be his own unique treasure or burden" (248).

Eros is the third type of love presented by Lewis with a customary distinction. He calls it Venus when it refers to pure sexuality, but he concedes that sexuality may operate without Eros or as part of Eros. Venus implies sexual desire and, without Eros, wants the thing in itself while Eros wants the Beloved. It follows, as Lewis suggests, that Eros is noblest or purest when Venus is reduced to the minimum since in true love Eros obliterates the distinction between giving and receiving. But the author warns that Eros needs to be ruled if it is to function properly in real life: "The god dies or becomes a demon unless he obeys God. It would be well if, in such case, he always died. But he may live on, mercilessly chaining together two mutual tormentors, each raw all over with the poison of hate-in-love, each ravenous to receive and implacably refusing to give, jealous, suspicious, resentful, struggling for the upper hand" (274-275).

Lewis envisions Charity as having its origin in God Himself and it is par excellence a love that gives without necessarily expecting something in return. In a very real sense, it is a love that human beings ought to have for God.

People manifest their different types love in relationships and in time generate cultures that are marked in history by certain dynamics. Tzvetan Todorov raises pertinent questions in respect to the period of colonialism and the history of relationships generated by it:” Can we really love someone if we know nothing of his identity; if we see, in place of that identity, a projection of ourselves or of our ideals? We know that such a thing is quite possible in personal relations, but what happens in cultural confrontations? Doesn’t one culture risk trying to transform the other in its own name, and therefore risk subjugating it as well? How much is such love worth?”

(Todorov 168). This thesis will attempt to answer these questions, and others similar to them, by asserting that despite the tormented history produced by colonialism and postcolonialism love in all its forms is still viable.

## CHAPTER ONE:

### LOVE YOURSELF THE RIGHT WAY: A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY FOR FINDING THE REASON TO BE

I liked the precious lamps in the evening. /I had never seen so much snow. It whitened  
night...

She and the horn were from the same white magic and when she came,

She lifted her head and the horn hooked my heart,

And the world magnified a greeting into love. (Derek Walcott: *The Prodigal*)

The essence and nature of love has fascinated people from all generations across the vast ocean of human cultures. Some artists have exalted love as being the paramount of human experiences, while others have bemoaned its transient nature and consider it merely a fleeting feeling that leaves people empty when it is gone. Derek Walcott writes his poetry from the so called edge of the Empire, and the legitimate question of his expertise on the subject of colonialism has been asked; he answered forcefully by creating a poetry that is effervescent and luxuriant, just as the landscape that surrounds the islands of Trinidad and Saint-Lucia. The Swedish Academy bestowed the Nobel prize on Derek Walcott, as a tribute to poets that represented a world increasingly multicultural *de facto*. In his passionate address to him, Kjell Espmark (a member of the Swedish Academy) characterized his poetry as "a meeting-place of the virtuosity of Europe and the sensuality of a Caribbean Adam...a union comprehending a white father and a black mother...[and] a mixture of materials deriving from different: cultures, the West Indian, the African, and the European "( qtd. in Granqvist 21). The same critic considers that love emanates in Walcott's creations from the surrounding culture:

It is such a love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirlooms whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than the original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original Continent (Granqvist 19).

There is no doubt that Derek Walcott propelled the Caribbean ethnic culture onto the center stage of world's literature by extolling the values of universal love. Another important modernist, Aimee Césaire, opines that “ Black people may never have invented things or brought the world under exploitative control, muses, but” they remain the final guarantee of the humane sensibility: Hence, while proclaiming the richness both of nature and of Africa's cultural traditions, Walcott pursues a broad humanist agenda that entails a ‘celebration of universal love and a plea for recognition of man's universal ties in a world beset by hatred and divisiveness” (qtd. in Okpewho 28).

The sense of love permeates many of his poems, as some of those included in “White Egrets” where the shadow of Eros hovers large. Love and desire, however, are complicated by old age and sorrow for the loss of others who are loved now even in death. At *prima facia* one could encounter the tortured obsession of the speaker with the young object of desire:

I'll tell you what they think: you're too old to be / shaken by such a lissome young woman, to need her / in spite of your scarred trunk and trembling hand, / your head rustles with thoughts of her like the cedar / in March, you blaze in her praise

like a sea-almond, / the crab scrawls your letters then hides them, / certain that she would never understand. (Walcott, *Poetry* 54)

Then, however, the speaker turns on himself: “What if all this passion is out of proportion to its subject? . . . / that she should infect your day to the very marrow, / to hate the common light and its simple joys / . . . old man in the dimming world” (Walcott 21). Fred Dings observes that “Derek Walcott’s carefully nuanced, balanced, and multifaceted understanding of the world gives these poems their maturity of vision; it’s his supreme craft that gives them their beauty” (Dings 76).

The fact that the poetry of Derek Walcott is engaging and calling at the same time for the return to a pristine and unselfish Friendship love for “the Other”, as a correct love for oneself, cannot be denied. McMorris considers that Walcott’s engagement in his poetry, just like many others Caribbean poets’ manifestos, “constitutes a politically and historically aware postcolonial ethics that could be called “other-oriented” or “other-conscious. The same critic finds his poetry as being engaging for his audience:

Simply put, other-conscious writing seeks out what is unsayable and unidentifiable; more importantly, other-consciousness empathizes with those who have been excluded or oppressed and can often be found in the culture of those who have been oppressed... His poems not only put the reader in the place of the Other; they reveal that taking responsibility for the Other provides a way of being in the world that can move us beyond the vicious cycle of racism and hatred.

(qtd.in Jenkins 18-19)

Human beings are already born with a lost Adamic innocence, in a fallen world that is prone to corrupt them even more. The three archetypal faces of Adam are reflected in people’s

lack of love for God, for the Other, and for themselves. Lost in Eden were not just the spirituality between God and his creature, or intimacy between a man and woman, but the vital connections between man and his inner self. The trifold estrangement has plagued humanity since. Walcott intuitively understands this and attempts to offer hope for the deep sense of alienation that man has to endure until it comes to terms with his Creator and the redeeming grace offered by the Son of Man.

An analysis of Walcott should naturally lead to discussion of another Nobel Prize writer by the name of V.S. Naipaul, whose work became the subject of criticism by Walcott himself. This is reflected in an excerpt from Walcott's poem:

I Walcott's Words /An extract from 'The Mongoose'/have been bitten, I  
must avoid infection / Or else I'll be as dead as Naipaul's fiction/Read his  
last novels, you'll see just/what I mean./A lethargy, approaching the  
obscene/The model is more ho-hum than Dickens./The essays have more  
bite/They scatter chickens like critics, but each stabbing phrase is  
poison./Since he has made that snaring style a prison/The plots are forced,  
the prose sedate and silly/The anti-hero is a prick named Willie/Who lacks  
the conflict of a Waugh or Lawrence/And whines with his creator's self-  
abhorrence. ([guardian.co.uk/books/2008](http://guardian.co.uk/books/2008))

The poem might not do justice to the efforts that Naipaul has put into his work at hand but some of the subtle criticism is grounded in shallow themes, uninspiring characters, and aimlessness of the plot, to name a few of the faults that are detrimental to the latest work of Naipaul ([guardian.co.uk/books/2008](http://guardian.co.uk/books/2008)).



The poem “Love after Love” urges for self- acceptance, for redemption, and for a return to a right way of loving oneself, as God originally intended:

The time will come when, with elation, you will greet yourself arriving/ at your own door, in your own mirror, / and each will smile at the other’s welcome, / and say sit here. Eat/ You will love again the stranger who was yourself, / Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart/ to itself, to the stranger who has loved you/ all your life, whom you ignored, for another, who knows you by heart./ Take down the love-letters from the bookshelf/ the photographs, the desperate notes, peel your own image from the mirror./ Sit. Feast on your life. (Walcott, *Poetry* 227)

Central to the poem is the communion through a symbolic intimacy, represented by the wine and bread, a communion that calls for restitution and wholeness of the individual as a prerequisite for true love of oneself. There has to be a correct form for the love of oneself otherwise the command “love your neighbor as yourself” would be out of place; the poet captures well the need for the modern individual to make peace with him/herself in a world that is working constantly to distract him/her and deepen the sense of alienation.

This is Charity love at its best, derived from *agape*, a love with abandonment that makes possible all the other loves. C.S. Lewis clarifies the intricacies of love by taking people back to the infinite and eternal Springs of love:” God is love. We must not begin with mysticism, with the creature’s love for God, or with the wonderful foretastes of the fruition of God vouchsafed to some in their earthly life. We begin at the real beginning, with love as the Divine energy. This primal love is Gift-love...God, who needs nothing, loves into existence wholly superfluous creatures in order that He may love and perfect them” (C.S. Lewis, *Inspirational* 281).

In an attempt to produce a minimalist theodicy that would eventually explain the actual state of mankind, Derek Walcott fuses together love in its pristine Edenic origins, along with the following perversion of it that plunged the entire humanity in free fall. His poem *Adam's Song* is relevant for the matter:

The first was Eve,/ who horned God for the Serpent,/ for Adam's sake;  
which makes/ everyone guilty or Eve innocent./ Nothing has changed/ for  
men still sing the song that Adam sang/ against the world he lost to  
vipers,/ the song to Eve/ against his own damnation; he sang it in the  
evening of the world/ with the lights coming in the eyes / of panthers in  
the peaceable kingdom/ and his death coming out of the trees, he sings it,  
frightened of the jealousy of God and at the price / of his own death, the  
songs ascends to God who wipes his eyes: ' Heart you are in my heart as  
the bird rises,/ heart, you are in my heart while the sun sleeps, / heart, you  
lie still in me as the dew is,/ you weep within me, as the rain weeps.

(Walcott 198)

The poet continues his struggle to understand the primeval and pivotal gestures of disobedience of Adam and Eve that have reversed the course of love and history of humanity. The fact that Derek Walcott was at odds with organized religion is well known, and as D'Aguiar contends:

Derek Walcott's idea that the poem itself, namely poetics and poetry as a process, may contain God, indemnify spirituality, and enshrine faith in the middle of an absence of any obvious belief system, by investing in a formal procedure called the composed poem. If this is the case, then the

evidence should reside in the body of work. Nuggets of wisdom to do with a religious subject should be extractable from the work where the work functions as a surrogate cathedral for a missing conventional God worshipped in a conventional way. (216)

Born into a family of Methodists, the poet understands the foolishness of merely paying lip service to God into a simulacrum of pious feelings paraded every Sunday in a feeble attempt to please and appease God. The following poem conveys that sense of inutility of a fake love of God that many people display on a regular basis.

A City's Death by Fire/After that hot gospeller had leveled all but the church'd sky,/I wrote the tale by tallow of a city's death by fire;/Under a candle's eye, that smoked in tears,/ I Wanted to tell, in more than wax, of faiths that were snapped like wire./All day I walked abroad among the rubbled tales,/Shocked at each wall that stood on the street like a liar;/Loud was the bird-rocked sky, and all the clouds were bales/Torn open by looting, and white, in spite of the fire./By the smoking sea, where Christ walked, I asked, why/Should a man wax tears, when his wooden world fails?/In town, leaves were paper, but the hills were a flock of faiths;/To a boy who walked all day, each leaf was a green breath/Rebuilding a love I thought was dead as nails,/Blessing the death and the baptism by fire. (Walcott, *Collected Poems* 6)

What is missing from the entire atmosphere is genuine love. As the author of Narnia would concede:

To love at all is to allow yourself to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, and irredeemable. (C.S. Lewis, *Inspirational* 278-279)

It has been asserted by many critics that the hallmark of Walcott's poetry is the paradox, and one has to concede that the love in itself is the greatest paradox, expressed in a multifaceted way and difficult to comprehend at times. One of the critics put it this way:

The apparent fondness for paradox and contradiction is one aspect of the self-image that Walcott projects and pursues. His poetry especially is an imaginative self-exploration and self-creation, a fiction and drama of himself. This writing of the self involves a process of self-address and self-interrogation. This pursuit is not egocentricity or self-indulgent display of personal angst. It is Walcott's way of engaging with the world, by examining himself-in-the world. (Baugh 6)

It is to be expected that Eros will haunt his poetry in a sensual dance between an archetypal couple of him and her, with echoes of a lost Paradise, as exemplified in some of his best lyrics:

A Sunday at three o'clock/where the real Adam and Eve have coupled/  
and lie in re-christening sweat/ his sweat on his paneled torso that heft

bananas/ that has killed snakes/ that has climbed out of rivers, now, as on  
the furred tops of the hills/ a breeze moving the hairs on his chest/ on a  
Sunday at three o'clock/ when the snakes pours itself / into a chalice of  
leaves. (Walcott, *Poetry* 221-222)

The regret of a lost paradisiacal love is hinted at in *Parang*:

For desire turned to regret, / not knowing the truth that I sang/ At Parang and la  
comette/ Boy, every damned tune them tune/ of love that will last forever/ in the  
wax and the wane of the moon. Since Adam catch body-fever...All man does  
dance to the tune: that love is a place in the bush/ with music grieving from, far, /  
as you look past her shoulder and see/ Like her one tear afterwards/ the falling of  
a fixed star. (Walcott 42)

The entrance of evil in the world is explained as well as in the poem called *The Cell*  
where the venom brought into the intimate world of a man and woman by the serpent's sin seeps  
in slithering:

Woman, wasp-waisted, then wasp-tongued,/ hissing to enemies how much  
I wronged you, how just you were!...You cried against the poison charged  
inside/ his flesh and yours, I prayed we'd clasp/ each other fierce as  
coupling wasps, as bittersweet it seemed to flesh/ to die in self-stung  
martyrdom, for mind and body bitten black. (Walcott 112)

The last poem portrays an iridescent Eros gone berserk, which" reduces the role of the  
senses to a minor consideration, may yet be plain adultery, may involve breaking a wife's heart,  
deceiving a husband, betraying a friend, polluting hospitality and deserting your children" (C.S.  
Lewis 262-263).

The same philosopher offers a fine distinction between what people may perceive as sexual drive:” Sexual desire, without Eros, wants it, the thing in itself; Eros wants the Beloved”. Walcott addresses this dichotomy in marvelous and mysterious musings about the role of Eros in the family life:

I am in love/...But even if I love not him but the world,/ and the wonder of the world in him, of him in the world,/ and the wonder that make the world waken to me,/ I shall never grow old in him,/ I shall always be morning to him,/ and I must walk and be gentle as morning...And which of them in time would be betrayed/ was never questioned by that poetry.../that preferred love to immortality”.(160-162) Again, writes C.S.

Lewis:

In some mysterious but quite indisputable fashion the lover desires the Beloved herself, not the pleasure she can give. No lover in the world ever sought the embraces of a woman he loved as result of a calculation, however unconscious, that they would be more pleasurable than those of any other woman. (Inspirational 264)

Charity love, just like the heavenly grace, is a teacher that uses silences, experiences, victories and failures to teach the lesson of dependency on it. Along this line of thought, writes Derek Walcott:

And love came, cracked the hearts it joined just as love ought,/ Was our tallest delight and our deepest affliction,/ Taught us more than philosophy did what we wanted/ Freedom from, not of, thought/...But the grace we avoid, that gave us vision,/ Discloses around curves and architecture

whose/ Sunday logic we can take or refuse,/ And leaves to the simple soul  
its own decision/ After landscapes, palms, cathedrals or the hermit-  
thrush/ And wins my love now and gives it a silence/ That would inform a  
blind world of its flesh. (*Poetry 5-7*)

C.S. Lewis would agree with the bard luminous illustration in this poem by taking the reader back to where it all began:” When God planted a garden, He sat a man over it and set the man under Himself. When He planted the garden of our nature and caused the flowering, fruiting loves to grow there, he set our will to ‘dress’ them. Compared with them it is dry and cold. And unless His grace comes down, like the rain and the sunshine, we shall use this tool to little purpose. But its laborious — and largely negative services — services are indispensable” (C.S. Lewis 276-277).

C.S. Lewis echoes Saint Augustine when considering that the essence of Charity type of love means that one has to dedicate his or her life only to God, the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Master of all things and beings, Lewis puts things in the perspective of eternity.” All human beings pass away. Do not let your happiness depend on something you may lose. If love is to be a blessing, not a misery, it must be for the only Beloved, who will never pass away” (*Inspirational 278*).

Unfortunately, Derek Walcott seemed not to have arrived at the understanding of the generosity of God in His giving love. This could be gleaned from his poem *Crusoe’s Island* in which the poet reminiscences Thomas Dylan’s urge to ‘not go gentle into that good night’, after he lost his father at an early age:

Bethel and Canaan’s heart/Lie open like a psalm/ I labor at my art, My father,  
God, is dead./ past thirty now I know/To love the self is dread/of being swallowed

by the blue/Of heaven overhead/Or rougher blue bellow...O love, we die alone!/ I  
am borne by the bell/Backward to the boyhood/ To the gray wood/Spire, harvest,  
and marigold, To those whom a cruel/Just gather could gather/To his blue breast,  
His beard/ A folding cloud, As he gathered my father. Irresolute and proud, /I can  
never go back. (Walcott 78-80)

When deeply grieving, people tend to forget that they do not function in an impersonal, deterministic, and haphazard Universe, where life, death, and even family relations are merely the result of blind chance, but rather in a Universe that has, at helm, a loving and all wise God. Everything is a gift, and any good gift, including the storge love proceeds indeed from a Sovereign God.” Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change ”(James 1:17 ESV).Even the death of the beloved ones, if understood in the proper context of eternity, is an act of love, a liberating rite of passage from “ this mortal coil” toward the ultimate state of being comprised of love, peace, and happiness. For those “who die in the Lord”, there follows *Visio Dei*, the amazing, awesome and primeval encounter between the originator of agape and the recipient of it. Bliss, eternal blessing, rapture, and other similar words or concepts, could not comprehend the intensity and transformation produced in human beings by the beatific vision of God Himself.

It has been asserted with certitude, born out of shared human experiences, that one never forgets his or her first love, and the modern troubadour, the Prodigal from St. Lucia, is merely prisoner to that fierce, primal love whose memory still hunts and hurts:

I see the brown heat of the skin of my first love, so still, so perfect,/ so  
unaltered, and I see how she walked with her sunburnt hands against the



still sea-almonds,/ to a remembered cove, where she stood on a small  
dock- that was when I thought we were immortal/ and that love would be  
folded doves and folded oars/ and water lapping against eroding stone/ in  
the ochre country of the afternoon. (Walcott 64)

What the poem reveals is that first love leaves behind lingering Affection, which C.S. Lewis thinks is not simply one of the natural loves, but is Love Himself working in our human hearts and fulfilling the law:

Affection opens our eyes to goodness we could not have seen or should not have been appreciated without it ...it almost slinks or seeps through our lives. It lives with humble, un-dress, private things; soft slippers, old clothes, old jokes, the thump of a sleepy dog's tail on the kitchen floor, the sound of a sewing machine, a gollywog left on the lawn.

*(Inspirational 231)*

From a small island, former colony, almost lost into the immensity of the ocean, Derek Walcott writes with what, at times, appears to be rage; there is no such love for the oppressor, the colonist and its home-grown poets that are agents of The Empire. Culture played a very important role in decolonization and made possible for the world to finally hear beautiful poetic voices like the one reverberating throughout his creation. Edward Said's argument for decolonization in *Culture and Imperialism* is manifold, but centers on the importance of culture:" the cultural effort to decolonize... goes on long after the political establishment of independent nation-states and persists well after long after successful nationalism has come to a stop" (213). He considers Imperialism as" an act of geographical violence" and opines that the communal

identity is “quite literally grounded on this poetically projected base (226) from which Walcott emerged.

Love must exist in some shape or form even in the postcolonial era. Jahan Ramazani asserts that” while enormously promising at mid-twentieth century, decolonization is far from a finished process. As indicated by poets such as Bennett, Okot, and Walcott, native regimes have perpetuated a held-over colonialism within many Third World nations” (161). Derek Walcott was undoubtedly in the decolonization avant-garde “ working along vertical and horizontal axes of transnational affiliations” and along with other poets” have renamed and recharted both native spaces and centers of metropolitan power... and have articulated emergent post colonized identities and their own vexed relations to those collective formations” (162).

Derek Walcott demonstrates that geography is not that relevant to the creative power of a wordsmith. He used the God-given gift to create memorable lines of poetry in the postcolonial, transnational world he operated. Ironically, he has done this in the English language, the language of the colonizer. Many of his poems incorporate the four loves described by C.S.Lewis and demonstrate that love is possible even in postcolonial times and that is triumphant against injustice and evil perpetrated in history by people who have, many a time, misused and abused the power granted them by their Creator. Charity love is a gift from God as well and it can be a transformative love. In the words of the same author:” God can awake in man, towards Himself, a supranatural Appreciative love. This is of all gifts the most to be desired. Here, not in our natural loves, nor even in ethics, lies the true centre of all human and angelic life. With this all things are possible” (C.S. Lewis 288).

Time heals wounds and it will take some more time and change of hearts for the colonist and colonizer to truly reconcile. Transnational poetry and multicultural literature like that created

by Derek Walcott transcends and at the same time connects the earthly realm with the heavenly one. It acts as a liaison between what is seen and what is not seen. The greatest need of all beings is the need for love, and it is the role of the artist to point toward the author of it. As a prophetic voice crying in the desert created by the lack of love between people of the nations, he has done just that. Gifted grace from above is necessary for love to operate and repair wounds made over time in many hearts across cultures.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### LOVE IS THE ANSWER - AGAPE NOT VENUS MUST WIN!

Derek Walcott and V.S. Naipaul are connected in many ways by the postcolonial culture that shaped their intellectual formation. In the case of Naipaul, his important work occurred right at the center of Empire where he immigrated as a young and aspiring writer. A definition of the terms used here is important. In his classic work, *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha defines the locus and function of this type of culture:

Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement, whether they are the ‘middle passage’ of slavery and indenture, the ‘voyage out’ of the civilizing mission, the fraught accommodation of Third World migration to the West after the Second World War, or the traffic of economic and political refugees within and outside the Third World. Culture is translational because such spatial histories of displacement... make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by *culture*, a rather complex issue. (247)

The fact that the Swedish Academy awarded the Nobel Prize in literature to Derek Walcott was in itself a recognition that the poet was an ambassador of the Caribbean culture as well as a fine representative of the transnational culture that Bhabha is referring to.

One of the foremost experts on postcolonial studies, Bill Ashcroft, considers that

Postcolonialism is now used in wide and diverse ways to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the

discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects... and their contemporary colonial legacies. (Ashcroft et al. 205)

The definition proposed by Ashcroft et al. is relevant to the discussion since the poetry of Derek Walcott, along with the work of other writers from former colonies, represents not only the cultural legacy left by the Europeans (languages included), but a clear form of resistance and the reinvention of oneself in the postcolonial environment.

On the other hand, Gayatri Spivak proposes a clear distinction between terms when she writes:

Let us learn to discriminate the terms *colonialism*- in the European formation stretching from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries- *neocolonialism*- dominant economic, political, and culturalist maneuvers emerging in our century after the uneven dissolution of the territorial empires- and *postcoloniality*- the contemporary global condition, since the first term is supposed to have passed or be passing into the second. (Spivak 172)

Spivak is correct in proposing this fine distinction between colonialism, neocolonialism, and postcoloniality given the fact that the former colonies have to negotiate not only with the heritage left by the former colonizers but have to adapt to the new geopolitical realities of globalization in order to function properly.

The overarching need for love analyzed by C.S.Lewis, a love that many human beings express has been captured with masterful strokes of pen by V.S. Naipaul; it is a world suffused by the desire to change the status quo- be it in the political realm, relationships, or social stratification- a postcolonial world which Naipaul portrays in two sequential novels that

catapulted him to fame on the world's literary scene and helped him win the Nobel Prize: *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds*.

Both novels chronicle the long journey of the main hero Willie Somerset Chandran from modest origins in rural India to London and afterwards to Africa, Berlin, and back to India. It could be asserted that V.S. Naipaul attempts to use his main hero to show the differences between colonized and colonizer societies in a post-colonial world that moves rapidly toward a full-blown globalization that doesn't erase but rather extenuates the differences between the two societies. As Jeffrey Folks opines, "Naipaul's characterization of Willie Chandran has particular relevance for our culture, for it is the story of one who wishes to 'transcend' all parochial and local definitions of identity and attain a sort of universality that will vaguely align him with the causes of human rights and social equality, without placing any actual demands or limits on his own conduct" ( 252). Folks captures the moral dilemma of the main character, the struggle he has to align with the idealistic efforts for universal humanitarian causes while maintaining his own moral conduct. The title of the book *Half of Life* is significant and intended as a double entendre: on one hand, half of the name of the main hero (Somerset) has been taken from the famed British writer Somerset Maugham and applied arbitrarily to him at birth as a symbol of respect for the colonizer: on the other hand, the other meaning of the half represents the fact that a colonizer looks at their subjects as only being half people.

The book begins as a story within a story where Willie's father- a consummate raconteur- tells Willie the story of his birth. Throughout Naipaul's work, one can observe an almost lethal humor to give life and credibility to his characters. For instance, Chandran Senior who was trapped and forced into a marriage to an ugly girl because of his lack of control, describes to Willie how his sister came into being:

This was the nature of my life. My utter wretchedness, my self-disgust, can be imagined when, with everything I have spoken about, and in spite of my private vow of *brahmacharya* (vow of sexual abstinence), which represent the profoundest part of my nature, Willie's mother became pregnant for the second time. This time it was a girl, and this time there was no room for any kind of self-delusion. The girl was the image of her mother. It was like divine punishment. I called her Sarojini, after the woman poet of the independence movement, in the hope that a similar kind of blessing might fall on her. (Naipaul, *Half a Life* 34)

The story of the father could be constructed as what C.S. Lewis calls a Venus type of love which in this case ran amok. Eventually, Willie is being sent out to London on a post-secondary scholarship where he is able to publish a volume of short stories. Many commentators have mistakenly taken Willie as an alter ego of Naipaul himself. For instance, J. M. Coetzee suggests that Willie's spiritual journey toward sexual self-discovery, "identifying the sexual embrace as the ultimate arena of truth" is "where Naipaul himself might have gone if... he had, instead of secluding himself with his type-writer, followed his heart" (10).

While there are some parallels between the life of the writer who came on a scholarship to study literature at Oxford and afterwards dedicated his life to a career in writing, the comparison stops here. Willie Chandran, once arrived in the capital of the Empire, has decided to dedicate his life to the pursuit of self-gratification by any means possible and to break away from the traditional culture he was raised in since he believes that the rules of the Indian culture are arbitrary and thus do not apply to his life. As Jeffery Folks aptly observes, "Willie's conception of the arbitrary nature of culture, overlooks the crucial role played by the inherent system of belief within all advanced civilizations" (253). It is interesting to note that V.S.

Naipaul, when comparing himself to Conrad and his own immigration to England, had to acknowledge the sense of alienation that every immigrant experiences as a result of being uprooted from his or her ancestral land. He writes, “To be a colonial was to know a kind of security; it was to inhabit a fixed world. And I suppose that in my fantasy I had seen myself coming to England as to some purely literary region, where, untrammelled by the accidents of history or background, I could make a romantic career for myself as a writer. But in the new world I felt that ground move below me” (Naipaul 233).

And the ground moved indeed under the feet of Willie, and he moved with it too, on a road to sexual initiation followed by promiscuity. The hero is looking for true friendship and a sense of belonging, but unfortunately, he engages in sexual liaisons with different women in a sort of instinctual escapism via erotic pursuits of one kind or another. C.S. Lewis makes a very fine distinction between a Venus type of love, which is in essence plain lust, and the Eros type of love when he writes:

Sexual desire, without Eros, wants *it*, the *thing in itself*; Eros wants the Beloved. The thing is a sensory pleasure... He wants a pleasure for which a woman happens to be the necessary piece of apparatus. How much he cares about the woman as such may be gauged by his attitude to her five minutes after fruition (one does not keep the carton after he has smoked the cigarettes). Now Eros makes a man really want, not a woman, but one particular woman. (263-264)

Of course, Willie does not want to assume any personal responsibility or commitment to any serious relationship and places all the blame on the culture he was raised in (after all *Kama Sutra* was a book reserved for the upper caste), and especially on his father. He confesses to his British friends,



That philosophical-practical way of dealing with sex belongs to our past, and that world was ravaged and destroyed by the Muslims. Now we live like incestuous little animals in a hole. We grope all our female relations and are always full of shame. Nobody talked about sex and seduction at home, but I discover now that it is the fundamental skill all men should be trained in. (Naipaul, *Half* 111)

Willie Chandran is saved from his libertine lifestyle by Ana, a young woman from Portuguese East Africa, who ends up marrying him. The narrative suggests that Ana functions as a saving agent of grace that enters his life to alleviate his loneliness and deep-seated insecurities stemming from his childhood. “What was most intoxicating for Willie was that for the first time in his life he felt himself in the presence of someone who accepted him completely. At home, his life had been ruled by his mixed inheritance. It spoilt everything. Even the love he felt for his mother, which should have been pure, was full of the pain he felt for their circumstances” (Naipaul 117).

This new relationship echoes the Affection (*storge*) type of love which C.S. Lewis considered to be a paradox since it refers primarily to the love that parents and especially mothers have for their offspring. It is a paradoxical, Need-love, because while the parents love their children, and in doing so they give, it is also a Gift-love that needs to be needed. The author of Narnia muses that, “Affection can love the unattractive: God and His saints love the unlovable. Affection ‘does not expect too much,’ turns a blind eye to faults, revives easily after quarrels; just so charity suffers long and is kind and forgives. (Lewis, *Inspirational* 233).

After they are married, the newlyweds relocate to Mozambique where they live off of the estate that Ana inherited. She displays the Affection love almost impeccably for the next eighteen years while Willie descends progressively into an even more gross promiscuity that he

was practicing in London. For instance, not only does he have a few adulterous affairs, but he also begins frequenting a city bar populated by native prostitutes (some of them still in their teen years) just to satisfy his insatiable lustful and consuming passion. Willie tries to justify his amorality and the constant betrayal of his wife by easing his conscience in believing that he is on a sexual odyssey meant to help him discover his true manhood and identity. Thus, he describes an affair with the wife of their majordomo (Graca) as being exhilarating and liberating at the same time:

Everything I had known before- the furtiveness of London, the awful provincial prostitute, the paid black girls of the places of pleasure here, who had yet satisfied me for so long, and for whom for almost a year I had felt such gratitude, and poor Ana, ... still so gentle and generous-over the next half hour everything fell away, and I thought how terrible it would have been if, as could so easily have happened, I had died without knowing the depth of satisfaction, this other person that I had just discovered within myself. It was worth any price, and consequence-  
(Naipaul, *Half* 190)

The end of *Half a Life* is emblematic for the end of the fractured relationship between Willie and Ana, and the author includes a twist in the plot by having Ana take Willie to visit her brother who is imprisoned in a wheelchair and serves as a doppelganger of Willie. The scene described is grotesque, if not, downright horrific, since the crippled brother is torturing a spitting cobra that he keeps prisoner in a bottle. The dialogue that follows after they leave the ghastly brother is reflective of how the marriage of Willie and Ana started well at first, but later became poisoned because of Willie's perverted understanding of true love. Ana expounds on this by

saying, “To think of him there all the time. That’s what I’ve had to live with. I wanted you to see him. It is what you might leave behind” (Naipaul 200-201).

The story of Willie Chandran continues in the sequel called *Magic Seeds*, and again the title might be interpreted to refer to the classical story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* as one of the critics put it. The hero is a tragic figure because of his high expectations of life that are grounded in thin air, and is just logical that, “he may never arrive at a rewarding life because of his continued expectation of the bounty that is to be magically bestowed. Like so many others, he expects to acquire with little effort the magic seeds that will transport him up the beanstalk to the treasure. This sort of fantasy is damaging not only to Willie but to everyone around him because it breeds attitudes of passivity and expediency” (Folks 255).

After twenty years of escapism, with a detour and stay in Berlin with his sister Saroji, who is a fervent Marxist, Willie returns to India and joins Marxist guerrillas that are bent on bringing a revolution to India at any cost. The relationship of Willie and his sister has elements of the type of love that C.S. Lewis labels as Friendship. The man without qualities (to quip Robert Musil) has fell under the influence of his sister who seems to be the only one who genuinely cares about Willie despite of all his shortcomings because she considers him not just as a brother but as a friend. Lewis makes a very fine distinction when he writes:

Friendship is in a sense not at all derogatory ... there is nothing throaty about it; nothing that quickens the pulse or turns your red and pale. It is essentially between individuals; the moment two men are friends they have in some degree drawn apart together from the herd. Without Eros, none of us would have been begotten and without Affection none of us would have been reared; but can live and breed without Friendship. (244)

In fact, Willie begins to show some signs of Friendship love after he joins the Marxist fighters and makes some African friends: “And Willie for the first time felt something like companionship and affection for the dark man. He thought, ‘I have never had this feeling for any man. It is wonderful and enriching, this feeling of friendship. I have waited forty years for it. This business is working out” (Naipaul, *Magic* 72-73).

Naipaul takes time at great length to describe another descent of his tragic hero into the dark side of human nature; not only does Willie join the wrong faction of revolutionaries, he also ends up by participating directly in the murder of three persons. The revolutionaries have a mantra that the first sacrifice for the cause has to be sexuality which of course resonates too well with Willie’s libido who has to make sacrifices for the cause. In the end, Willie is captured and after a summary judgement, is condemned to ten years of prison for being an accessory to murder. The incisive, even caustic, humor of Naipaul cuts through again since Willie sees himself to be an innocent victim of circumstances rather than a dangerous criminal and is amazed at the pronouncement of the superintendent: “He takes me twenty times more seriously than I took myself. He wouldn’t believe that things merely happened around me. He just counts the dead bodies” (Naipaul 150). In analyzing Willie’s modus operandi, Folks observes that, “From within his abstract view, the objective fact of murder does not exist. Willie does not believe that he can be held responsible for the revolutionary violence in which he has participated because he has never believed himself to be a participant in any actual society” (260).

However, Sarojini proves the value of Affection love by fighting for her brother’s release from prison which takes place a year later. Willie returns to London and reconnects with some of his old friends that are still alive. Old habits die hard and the aged hero is able to secure a few

more sexual escapades to help him make up for the time lost following Marxist utopias. The novel closes with a wedding scene while Willie attends the wedding of the half-English son of Marcus, a West African diplomat "who lived for interracial sex and wanted to have a white grandchild." It could be that the key to understand the title has sexual and racial connotations since the African politician wants a mix of the genes (seeds) between the former colonized and colonist for a magic and better future for both. It should be noted that Naipaul allows his sense of humor that characterizes his writing style to flare again in describing the formality of the moment and the pervading sense of political correctness, "Before the sonnet was through, one of the pages farted, and no one knew whether was the dark page or the fair one. But the guests lined up correctly on this matter: the dark people thought the dark child has farted; the fair people thought it was the fair child" (Naipaul, *Magic* 278).

From alienation to physical exile, imposed by adverse circumstances, Willie Chandran, and other characters in *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* live tumultuous lives and demonstrate the consequences of it. The existentialists have argued that alienation of the modern man was the result of exploitation and industrialization; Naipaul gives validity so some of these arguments, including Karl Marx's observation that in capitalism the *homo faber* has been estranged from the labor of his own work and consequently is living in a permanent state of alienation and anxiety. The brutality and existential emptiness seem to be the norm in *Magic Seeds* where Willie Chandran follows his lover Ana and descends into a full-blown leftist revolution that eventually fails. Willie is a character that does not take responsibility for building a life for himself, but rather prefers to shift blame for his fate on family, background, colonial culture, and misfortune. It could be argued that he is a tragic character that wanders from continent to continent in search

for a better existence and a new self, yet in the process he is lost in the sea of modernity gone global.

Friendship love could be traced in both novels, but it is a fragmented type of love. The main characters attempt to develop relations of friendship, but, in each case, it becomes clear that the traumas of childhood, corroborated with the existential struggle of becoming does not allow for long lasting friendship. For instance, Willie Chandran settles for friendships of convenience that do not carry too many obligations on his part. The relation between Willie and his sister Sarojini who offers help and serves as a sort of moral compass for the wanderer, is a ray of hope that attests to the power of blood ties even in the face of the direst circumstances.

Eros is also present through Naipaul's work. Yet it is not necessarily a love based on affection, but rather the raw sexuality of Venus love, which is based on desire and immediate need. Thus, almost all the males in his novels look for loves outside the confines of marriage in an attempt to fulfill their instinctual urges, demonstrate their virility, or create the illusion of being in control of their otherwise chaotic lives.

Undoubtedly, V.S. Naipaul has created some of the most complex characters the modern literature. Literary critic Mahanathan considers that "his strengths as a writer reach beyond colonial and postcolonial concerns" and that "both novels reveal, in the multiple crossings of the border by Willie and Sarojini, the devastating effect of instability on the diasporic migrant and the globalized citizen, who because of race, gender, and class differences remains marginal and displaced" (Mahanathan 5). Homi Bhabha goes so far to compare Naipaul to Joseph Conrad when he asserts that "Naipaul 'translates Conrad from Africa to the Caribbean in order to transform the despair of postcolonial history into an appeal for the autonomy of the art. The more fiercely he believes that 'the wisdom of the heart has no concern with the erection or demolition

of theories’, the more convinced he becomes of the unmediated nature of the Western book” (Bhabha 152).

Bill Ashcroft defines the Eurocentric discourse as a “system of statements that can be made about the world that involve certain assumptions, prejudices, blindness, and insights, all of which have a historical provenance, but exclude other, possibly equally valid” (Ashcroft et al. 85). Ashcroft is correct in pointing out that the Eurocentric discourse is biased by design since it excludes from the dialogue the expressions of native cultures. Moreover, it has wrongly been assumed that since the colonizers imposed their domination by superior weaponry, their culture is superior to the indigenous cultures.

Edward Said has considered Naipaul as a “belated Kipling, and his seminal work *Orientalism* frames the colonial and postcolonial milieu where both novels are set. Since *Orientalism*’s main theme is about the polarity and binarity of two opposing systems, the concept of power and who stands on the podium to address the crowd are overwhelmingly present in this work:” The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them”(Said, xiii). It has to be said that Naipaul, who early in his life and work held Marxist views, later changed his position and was ironic and even critical to the effects of Marxist doctrine in the former colonies.

The effects of colonialism and postcolonialism pervade the work of Walcott as well as Naipaul and their creations reflect the domineering attitude that the colonizers had toward their ‘subjects’ who have been seen as being the ‘other’. The fact that the colonizers have always seen the colonized people as not only being the other, but being “inferior to them” has left long lasting marks on the psyche of these people, so that in the new postcolonial era they had to confront the

past with its traumatic experiences and to try to rebuild their lives. However, for people undergoing the effects of this trauma, the healing process is not an easy one, especially when they are asked to forgive and forget the inhuman way they were treated all this time.

It can be asserted that there needs to be a real change not only of attitude, but of heart of the former colonizer in order to see the indigenous people as fellow human beings worthy of the same respect and love they demand of others. Reputable professor and author Tzvetan Todorov (whom Said quotes a few times) reflects on the notion of “the other” in one of his classic books:” We can discover *the other* in ourselves, realize we are not a homogeneous substance, radically alien to whatever is not us...I can convince of these *others* as an abstraction, as the *Other-other* in relation to myself to me. [These are] outsiders whose language and customs I do not understand, so foreign that in extreme instances I am reluctant to admit that they belong to the same species as my own” (Todorov 3). In addressing the colonial discourse, Homi Bhabha claims that what needs to be questioned is the mode of representation of otherness and hails Said as an attentive critic:” The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (Bhabha 101).

History has demonstrated that power corrupts everything including the very concept of love. When people who are in a position of power see other human beings as inferior to them, as vehicles of sheer exploitation, the notion of love is out of question. Relationships between human beings need to be based on respect in order for love to even be possible. But in relationships based on dominance and subjugation, it is always the people in power who demand respect and submission without questions. Said proposes a semiotic of ‘Orientalist’ power by analyzing different discourses that the European colonizing powers have employed in order to preserve



their position.” Philosophically, then, the kind of language, thought, and vision that I have called orientalism very generally is a form of radical realism; anyone employing orientalism, which is the habit of dealing with questions, objects, qualities and regions deemed Oriental, will designate, name, point to, fix, what he is talking about with a word or phrase, which then is considered to be...reality” (Said 101-102). Said himself in his *Imperialism and Culture* laments the exploitation purported by the colonizing powers and the way they treated their subjects by applying what he calls ‘ the imperial wish’:

The obdurately material natives are transformed from subservient beings into inferior humanity, then the colonizer is similarly transformed into an invisible scribe, whose writing reports on the Other...For the colonizer the incorporative apparatus requires unremitting effort to maintain. For the victim, imperialism offers these alternatives: serve or be destroyed. (168)

These are harsh conditions for anyone who has been exposed to the abuse of power to survive, let alone to learn how to forgive and even love. Yet forgiveness and love are those required ingredients that both the colonizer and the colonized have to practice. Ironically, the victims of colonization are usually more predisposed to forgive and accept the new reality than the people who have been in power for so long. There is a nobleness that suffering produces and this quality enables the colonized people in the end to love and forgive. The burden remains on the colonizers who have to relearn how to respect other human beings and to treat them with the required dignity.

Bhabha has taken the proposed concept of discourse from Said and elaborated further on the power relationships that are being established between the colonizer and the colonized:” Subjects are always disproportionately placed in the opposition or domination through the

symbolic dicentric of multiple power relations which play the role of support as well as target or adversary...The terms in which Said's *Orientalism* is unified-the intentionality and unidirectionality of colonial power-also unify the subject of colonial enunciation”(Bhabha 103).

In a recent interview, Naipaul concurred and espoused Said's main thesis by rejecting the European interpretation of history by raising a few rhetorical questions:

Can you write a satisfactory history of England from the pre-Roman time up through the Roman occupation, the Roman withdrawal, the time of the little savage kings, and their being wiped out by the Danes -the consequence of all this being that nothing happened? It wouldn't make sense to write weighty histories about that; whereas, if you make all this a chapter of something larger, the material conceivably can stand that kind of inquiry. Remember what I wrote years ago, that history was built around achievement and creation. (Mukherjee 9)

In the same interview, he clarified why he rejects Marxism as a viable political system for the former colonies:” “The Marxists tend to reduce people to their distress, or to their economic position... Everyone has something outside himself which gives him some idea of his own status. But you can't assume that people who live in a bleak condition have nothing at all to esteem in themselves and will therefore answer any revolutionary call at all” (*A Home*, Naipaul).

Naipaul observes correctly the dynamics of the colonizer/colonized that led to low self-esteem in the colonized people making it difficult for revolution. Ideas do have consequences and the former colonized people need to be educated in order to understand their rights and to regain a healthy self-esteem and a proper love of themselves.

Robert Balfour disagrees with Bhabha's suggestions in *The Location of Culture* that migrancy and hybridity offer rich intellectual possibilities since in Naipaul's work migration leads to the impossibility of belonging anywhere like people stuck in a permanent limbo:

Despite their Western education, both Sarojini and Chandran are disadvantaged and made more vulnerable to the rejection inflicted upon them as the unlucky favorites of patrons (Chandran's Roger, Sarojini's Wolf). Sarojini and Chandran are aware that their host countries offer them sanctuary while rejecting them based on race. If they have any value in terms of accomplishment or possessions, these are quickly categorized and undervalued. Race, the last bastion of colonialism, cannot be hidden, even when the colonizer shares an education and language with the formerly colonized. Yet those aspects of education and language which supposedly enable global mobility and acceptance in the global marketplace, work only insofar as they homogenize a notion of what it means to be Western, where Western is defined in colonial terms: race categorization and the fear of contamination. Such practices form part of the "practice of globalization", even if the rhetoric of racism does not. (Balfour 9)

The rhetoric of racism perpetrated by the colonizer have perverted the concept of love at its very core since people are valued and judged based on race. True love rejects, by definition, such sort of discrimination. Extensive anthropological studies show without equivocation that, despite many differences in customs and traditions, love is a universal phenomenon practiced by all cultures across the world.

Time heals wounds and it will take some more time and change of hearts for the colonist and colonizer to truly reconcile. Transnational prose and multicultural literature like that created

by V.S. Naipaul's fiction reflects the realities of the postcolonial culture. Gifted grace from above is necessary for love to operate and repair wounds made over time in many hearts.

## CHAPTER THREE:

### LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH

Toni Morrison wrote extensively about love in all of its forms and she crystalized her thinking by penning these words: “You do not deserve love regardless of the suffering you have endured. You do not deserve love because somebody did you wrong. You do not deserve love just because you want it. You can only earn - by practice and careful contemplations - the right to express it and you have to learn how to accept it” (*Paradise 141*). It could be argued that all four loves discussed by C.S.Lewis are present in Morrison’s novel *Beloved*, but the presence of Affection looms large throughout.

Morrison borrowed the title from St. Paul’s Epistle to the church in Rome and even used the reference as a motto to her work: “I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved” (Rom. 9:25, KJV). The plot of this novel is based on a true story of a black slave woman, Margaret Garner, who in 1856 escaped from a plantation and sought refuge in Ohio along with her husband and their three children. They were eventually recaptured, but before their return, she decides to sacrifice her two-year-old daughter rather than to have her taken back to slavery.

“Love is or ain’t. Thin love ain’t love at all” muses Sethe, the main character of *Beloved*. It is precisely the litmus test of authentic love that the mother has to pass through, given the fact that true love is willing to sacrifice everything for the wellbeing of the loved ones.

Morrison attempts to address an existential dilemma in *Beloved*: to love or to be loved.

She sees love as being enabling and elemental to wholeness “and is the ultimate expression of one’s being a full human being. Because African American people were denied the right to love each other in healthy ways, in stable family units uninterrupted from the parceling out and selling of African people that occurred under chattel enslavement, this expression takes on new challenges given these external hostilities. As Baby Suggs reports, “Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it. They don’t love your eyes; they’d just as soon pick ‘em out. No more do they love the skin on your back. Yonder they flay it” (*Beloved* 89).

One needs to remember that the action analyzed here occurs in colonial times where racism is as normal as breeding. Unfortunately, racism is still a sad reality in postcolonial times even though it lies in hiding. To eliminate racism from American culture, Morrison suggests that we need to convert a racist house into a race-specific yet nonracist home. Critic, Evelyn Schreiber, considers that

Morrison’s fiction characters struggle for self-definition free of racial encumbrances, and time and again they rely on psychic as well as physical aspects of ‘home’ (and love) to survive their racial trauma Home, whether a place or a concept, retrieved through memory, provides protection from trauma. ... While the core cultural trauma of slavery underlines each work, characters in various generations work through personal and contextual layers in unique ways. (1-2)

The sources of Morrison’s stories are grounded in real life and history:

It is always some narrative told to her, some value passed down, some event remembered, some person in her community, some newspaper story or artifact revealing an essential truth about the loves of Black people in this country that ignites her imagination. ... each novel is also an artistic commentary on life and

history reaching beyond the story told at the center of the text. (Denard, *What Moves* 13-14)

The fact that the former slaves have never owned a place they could call home, with all the accoutrements of it, has generated a sense of alienation, of real displacement, that is pervasive in Morrison's work. The characters in this novel struggle not only to find meaning in life and love but are attempting to live normal lives under the circumstances. It follows just naturally then that the storyline of the novelist will incorporate narratives of the native people.

Love seems to be almost impossible in an environment where people were treated as objects to be bought, sold, and moved at the owner's discretion, as the narrator reveals:

In all of baby's life as well as Sethe's own, men and women were moved around like checkers. Anybody Baby Suggs knew, let alone loved, who hadn't run off or been hanged, got rented out, loaned out, bought up, brought back, stored up, mortgaged won, stolen or seized. So, Baby's eight children had six fathers.  
(*Beloved* 28-29)

Love seems to be almost impossible given the fact that the slaves were treated as subhuman. Yet, the novel *Beloved* through Morrison's main character (Sethe) echoes the Affection type of love which C.S. Lewis considered to be a paradox since it refers primarily to the love that parents and especially mothers have for their offspring. It is a paradoxical, Need-love, because while the parents love their children, and in doing so they give, but it is also a Gift-love that needs to be needed. The author of Narnia muses that "Affection can love the unattractive: God and His saints love the unlovable. Affection 'does not expect too much,' turns a blind eye to faults, revives easily after quarrels; just so charity suffers long and is kind and forgives" (233).

It is precisely this type of love that Paul D., the elusive lover, refers to even though any type of love in colonial times is a risky business:

For a used-to-be-slave woman to love anything that much was dangerous, especially if it was her children, she had settled on to love. The best thing, he knew, was to love just a little bit; everything, just a little bit so when they broke its back, or shoved it in a croaker sack, well, maybe you'd have a little love left over for the next one. (*Beloved* 55)

The same type of love can be easily attributed to the ghost of *Beloved* who comes back from beyond the grave precisely because she missed out on the love of her mother. As is obvious from the dialogue that takes place between Denver and *Beloved*: “Don't you never tell me what to do. But I'm on your side, *Beloved*.' 'She is the one I need. You can go but she is the one I have to have.' Her eyes stretched to the limit, black as the all-night sky” (Morrison 89).

Sethe's motherly love exemplifies very well this love in that it is not sentimental but rather pragmatic given the circumstances she and her children find themselves in. It is not accidental that Baby Suggs, who has lost all her eight children and cannot exercise her maternal love, does not give up on love but becomes a spiritual mother to other women, serving as a preacher and healer. Her need-love has been miraculously converted into an agape type of love where she exhorts her community to love each other since love is the ultimate form of resistance against the oppression of the colonists. C.S. Lewis considers this type of love to be the highest form of love since it has the ultimate object as God himself. St. Augustine urges people not to give their hearts to anything or anyone, but to God since if one's happiness depends on something or someone that may be lost; in that case, losing that love would be a tragedy and not a blessing.



Carmen Gillespie captures well the heart-wrenching drama that Sethe goes through when she is denied even the basic functions as a mother,” For Sethe, one of the ultimate expressions of freedom and of mother love is having the ability, the time, and the freedom to provide milk for her children- a basic function often denied to women who were enslaved” (31). Many horrors of the past have been justified in the name of the ideology of that particular moment/time in the history, and the ideology of black woman as breeder produced and justified many of the despicable practices of slavery; it is as Barbara Rigney concludes: “The disintegration of family, the denial of a mother’s right to love her daughter...is perhaps the greatest horror of slavery”(68).Andrea O’Reilly explains that the novel gives voice to the slave women’s stories of motherhood and in the process creates an alternative, subversive, discourse of black motherhood: “The taking of breast milk through the practice of wet nursing signifies the appropriation and commodification of slave women’s motherlove. A slave mother was seldom allowed to nurse her babies and, when she was, they received milk only after the white babies have suckled” (129).

The text reveals that slaves, in the words of Paul D., “protect...yourself and love...small...a big love...would split you wide open (Morrison 162).” Don’t love nothing,” Ella advises Sethe upon her arrival in the North (92). With your children “moved around like checkers” it was, as Paul D. warns, “risky...and dangerous to love too much.” Or in the words of Sethe, “Unless carefree. Mother love is a killer” (132). Historian O’Reilly explains the harsh realities that black mothers had to face while the white mothers ( especially in the South) were worshipped on a pedestal:” With the children who were not traded, sold, or killed, the slave woman had to struggle against the society’s denial of her maternal feelings, the definition of her children as property, and the master’s demand that her time and energy be spent elsewhere in order to give them the love and attention they needed for basic survival” (129). As Sethe

explains bitterly later to Paul D., “couldn’t love ’em proper...because they weren’t mine to love” (Morrison 162).

When a human being has to undergo the almost unspeakable horrors of being treated worse than an animal, trauma, depression, and a sense of hopelessness are just the normal outcomes. It is almost to be expected that when a person has been exposed to this treatment for a long time that individual will have forgotten to love himself or herself properly. Baby Suggs has learned to transform her painful past into a present in which she rebuilds her life with self-love. “She uses her self-awareness to forge her life as a preacher and to assist others involving themselves, creating an ideal imaginary image; she teaches others to see themselves differently from the way the larger, dominant culture views them” (Schreiber 47).

Baby Suggs’ message to the oppressed community is a message of grace and love. One cannot love his neighbor like himself if he has never learned a proper way of loving himself. “She did not tell them to clean up their lives or to go and sin no more. She did not tell them they were the blessed of the earth, its inheriting meek or its glory bound pure. ... ‘Here,’ she said, ‘in this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard” (Morrison, *Beloved* 103).

The blessed presence of agape love as displayed by Baby Suggs has a reassuring presence for the community of the betrodden that marvels at her energy. "Why is she and hers always the center of things? How come she always knows exactly what to do and when? Giving advice; passing messages; healing the sick, hiding fugitives, loving cooking, cooking, loving, preaching, singing, dancing, and loving everybody like it was her job and hers alone" (161). But this should come as no surprise since Agape has its origin in God himself who is pure love. The author of Narnia writes:

God, as Creator of nature, implants in us both Gift-loves and Need-loves. The Gift-loves are natural images of Himself; proximities to Him by resemblance which are not necessarily and in all men proximities of approach. A devoted mother, a beneficent ruler or teacher, may give and give, continually exhibiting the likeness, without making the approach. (*Inspirational* 282)

The entire premise of the book is based on love taken to the extreme. Can a mom love her children so much that, in a moment of desperation, she would rather kill them than allow them to be taken into slavery? Is freedom more important than life in itself? Or could it be that the mother who had to endure the humility of slavery thinks that love is stronger than death and that in killing her daughter, in fact, she frees her to live in another world where there is perfect love and total freedom? It is a historical fact that during slavery some slave women chose to kill their children rather than watching them growing up as slaves. The heroine seems to accept this paradox when she explains to Paul D.: “she had to be safe and I put her where she would be. But my love was tough and she back now. ... If I hadn’t killed her, she would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her. ... I’ll tell Beloved about that; she’ll understand. She my daughter” (Morrison 236).

The other two types of love that Lewis describes (Friendship and Eros) can both be observed in the relation between Sethe and Paul D, a relationship that resembles those flowers that bloom late in the Fall.

It is obvious that Paul D. serves not only as a confidant but as a dear friend and lover to Sethe who has longed for so many years for such a meaningful relationship. True intimacy presupposes friendship and reciprocal respect and the gentleman who enters her life provides

both. Again C.S. Lewis makes a fine distinction between Venus, a carnal love, and Eros, a love that is preoccupied with the well-being of the loved one:

Now Eros makes a man really want, not a woman, but one particular woman. In some mysterious but quite indisputable fashion the lover desires the Beloved herself, not the pleasure she can give. ... In Eros, a need at its most intense, sees the object most intensely as a thing admirable in herself, important far beyond her relation to the lover's need. (Lewis 263-264)

The closing of the story demonstrates that Sethe and Paul D. have meshed Eros and Friendship into true and lasting intimacy where there's no need for too many words and where even the silence could be meaningful. "'Sethe,' he says, 'me and you, we got more yesterday than anybody. We need some kind of tomorrow.' He leans over and takes her hand. With the other he touches her face. 'You your best thing, Sethe. You are.' His holding fingers are holding hers. 'Me? Me?' (Morrison 322).

The novel is infused with the ominous presence of the colonizer and the trauma caused by the repressive system haunts still the memories of former slaves:

Eighteen seventy-four and whitefolks were still on the loose. Whole towns wiped clean of Negroes; eighty-seven lynchings in one year alone in Kentucky; four colored schools burned to the ground; grown men whipped like children; children whipped like adults; black women raped by the crew; property taken; necks broken. He smelled skin, skin and hot blood. (Morrison 213).

The brutality and the cruelty perpetrated by the colonizer upon the slaves is inexcusable and almost unfathomable. It shows that the Conradian "heart of darkness" does not pertain to a geographical place, but to the depth of depravity that a human heart is capable of when in

position of power. As the historians of this era agree, the trauma caused by exploitation runs deep and is perpetuated from generation to generation. The wounds inflicted not only on the bodies of the former slaves, but especially on the psyche of them have been passed on to the next generations. Under these conditions, the healing process is an arduous one as it takes its toll on the traumatized people. Healing is still possible, yet the former colonizer has to make reparations, seek forgiveness, and make meaningful, heartfelt amends that should eventually lead to restitution.

Caroline Rody offers insight when she considers the novel more than a “recuperation of unrepresented history” that does not account for its” cultivation of the bizarre and uncanny; its revival of gothic conventions- the haunted house, the bloody secret, the sexually alluring ghost; its obsessive claustrophobic plot focus; and an emotional climate that changes from pained repression to volcanic fury to a suspended lovers’ swoon”( 156).The author herself yet gave the best explanation for the reasons that prompted her to write the book,” There is no place where I can go, or where you can go, and think about it, or not think about, or summon the presence of- slaves...Something that reminds us of the ones who made the journey, and those who did not make it. There is no suitable memorial-or plaque, or wreath, or wall, or park, or skyscraper lobby...And because such a place doesn’t exist that I know of, the book had to” (Morrison, *Lectures*).

The fact is that the deep trauma caused the abject system of slavery perpetrated by the colonizers for so long still haunts generations of African American people who have been exploited mercilessly for centuries. This is a historical bleeding wound that finds it difficult to heal even in postcolonial times. Literary critic Rody is again helpful in interpreting the book’s main message:” *Beloved* is not a place of the dead but a place where survivors can go to summon

and recollect, to look upon the sculpted shape of their own sorrow. *Beloved* cannot recover the interior life of slaves, but by dramatizing the psychological legacy of slavery, it portrays that interior place in the African American psyche where a slave's face still haunts" (Rody 161).

*Beloved* ends with the promise of a possible continuation of love in a mended community, but not its full realization. Deeply traumatized, Sethe still tries to believe that what Paul D. does, is to her "best thing". Yet as a critic remarks," she has already relinquished to her past agonies to allow herself the chance to fashion a life with Paul D. "( Otten 26). Toni Morrison commented in an interview after the publishing of the book that," with the best intentions in the world we can do enormous harm, enormous harm...All about love...people do all sorts of things under its name, under its guise. The violence is a distortion of what, perhaps, we want to do" (Otten 90).

The second question that needs to be addressed concerns the possibility of love in postcolonial time under the auspices of some form of reconciliation between the aggressor and the aggrieved party, between the colonizers and the colonized, or formerly enslaved people and these questions cannot elude America with its not so glorious colonist past. Edward Said's argument for decolonization in *Culture and Imperialism* is manifold but centers on the importance of culture:" the cultural effort to decolonize... goes on long after the political establishment of independent nation-states and persists well after long after successful nationalism has come to a stop" (213). He considers Imperialism as" an act of geographical violence" and opines that the communal identity is "quite literally grounded on this poetically projected base (226) from which many writers, including Morrison, emerged.

In the story of the *Beloved*, individual and collective pasts, loves, and memories have merged becoming united and inseparable. And as Sethe, Denver, Paul D. and their neighbors

have come to realize,” the traumatic memories of slavery traveled with them into freedom. Their future survival depends upon their ability to face the memory of their past yet not to be consumed by its ghosts. (Smith 73)

The infanticide committed by Sethe is difficult to comprehend and accept. How could a mother kill her own daughter and still claim that she did it out of love? C.S. Lewis concedes that the Affection love can be “ferocious” in its actions. The act of Sethe has to be understood in the context of inhumane and degrading slavery. The community of black people is faced with a dilemma: to excommunicate the woman and treat her as a permanent outcast or forgive and try to help her. Love does prevail in *Beloved* and solves this dilemma. The older black women of the town showed Charity and true Agape love by forgiving Sethe. Sethe was harshly viewed by both blacks and whites for killing her child. However, by work’s end, other “mothers” decided to forgive Sethe and came together to cleanse and stop the overly consuming love shown in the story *Beloved*.

God heals traumas and the wounds of the soul in time. Changes in people’s minds and hearts also require time. Given the postcolonial climate, more time and more education are needed for real change and healing to take place. However, there are multiple encouraging signs that love is still possible even in the postcolonial era.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### LOVE IS A CONSUMING FIRE

“ Oh, love is a journey with water and stars,/with drowning air and storms of flour;/love is a clash of lightnings,/two bodies subdued by one honey...Love crosses its islands, from grief to grief,/it sets its roots, watered with tears,/and no one-no one-can escape the heart's progress/as it runs, silent and carnivorous” ( Neruda, *100 Poems of Love* 151).

Gabriel Garcia Marquez considered Pablo Neruda as being the best poet of the twentieth century. He might have said it out of friendship, but nowadays no one doubts that Neruda remains as one of the most important poets of modern times. His work is suffused with light and love. In fact, it could be asserted that his entire body of work constitutes a hymn dedicated to human beings and the love exercised by them.

During his lifetime, the Chilean poet was well known for his political leftist views and for his fight for the rights of the working people. In the recently released films dedicated to Neruda, *The Postman* and *Neruda*, he is simply called “The Poet of the People”. In fact, the poet represented his country as an ambassador for many years. As a member of a nation that has been colonized for centuries by Spain, he understood the lasting effects of colonization on a people. Undoing these effects during the postcolonial era is a daunting task and Pablo Neruda, along with other leaders from former colonies, accepted the challenge and worked primarily for the oppressed people at fulfilling his destiny.

Love, with all its multifaceted aspects analyzed by C.S. Lewis, can be observed in action throughout his literary work. His most famous volume of poetry that catapulted him to



international fame was titled *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* (*Veinte Poemas de Amor y una Cancion Desesperada*) was published in June 1924. It is very difficult to differentiate between an artist's personal life and the reflections of it in their work. Pablo Neruda was an extraordinary person, what one could call a person larger than life, and as such he loved many women. According to Mark Eisner in his definitive biography on Neruda, *The Poet's Calling*, "Neruda had several muses/subjects for *Twenty Love Poems*, though Albertina and Teresa were the two most important and prevalent. In each poem, the loved one is not present; each verse is a failed call to have her right next to him" (104).

It is difficult to select a certain poem from this brilliant collection since each poem is a gem in itself. Yet, for the sake of the argument, two of them stand out by expressing love in a beautiful way:

I like it when you're quiet. It's as if you weren't here now, / and you heard me from a distance, and my voice couldn't reach you. / It's as if your eyes had flown away from you, and as if / your mouth were closed because I leaned to kiss you. / Just as all living things are filled with my soul, / you emerge from all living things filled with the soul of me. / It's as if, a butterfly in dreams, you were my soul, / and as if you were the soul's word, melancholy... I like it when you're quiet. It's as if you weren't here now. / As if you were dead now, and sorrowful, and distant. / A word then is sufficient, or a smile, to make me happy. / Happy that it seems so certain that you're present. (Neruda *The Poet's Calling* 220-221)

In the poem simply titled *Poem XX*, the feeling of sadness and melancholy of a lost loved one is almost palpable:

Tonight, I can write the saddest lines. / Write, for example, “The night is starry/  
and the stars are blue and shiver in the distance.” / The night wind revolves in the  
sky and sings. / Tonight, I can write the saddest lines. / I loved her, and sometimes  
she loved me too. / She loved me, and sometimes I loved her too... / I am no  
longer in love with her, that’s certain, but maybe I / love her. / Love is so short,  
forgetting is so long. (Neruda *Twenty Love Poems* 24-25)

There is an evocative melancholy in this poem, an almost palpable regret for a love long gone. Neruda excels in conveying one of the greatest paradoxes of love: one cannot understand the full extent of love until the loved one is no longer part of that relationship. Despite the brevity of love, the intensity of it and the memories built around it take a long time to dissipate.

In talking about charity as a God-gift love, C.S. Lewis recounts the biblical story of creation: “When God planted a garden, He set a man over it and set the man under Himself. When He planted the garden of our nature and caused the flowering, fruiting loves to grow there, He set our will to ‘dress’ them. Compared with them it is dry and cold. And unless His grace comes down, like the rain and the sunshine, we shall use this tool to little purpose” (*Inspirational* 276). The charity type of love described by Lewis is captured well by Neruda in his other two poems: “Now they can leave me in peace, / and grow used to my absence. / I am going to close my eyes. / I only want five things, / five chosen roots. / One is an endless love” (*Extravagaria* 17). And in this poem, where the writer thinks in abstract about love, comparing it to a fire: “I love all the things there are, / and of all fire / love is the only inexhaustible one; / and that’s why I go from life to life, / from guitar to guitar, / and I have no fear / of light or of shade, / and almost being earth myself, / I spoon away at infinity (109).

Lewis referred to Affection as the most common type of love and he warned about certain real dangers:

Every human love, at its height, has a tendency to claim for itself a divine authority. Its voice tends to sound as if it were the will of God Himself. It tells us not to count the cost, it demands of us a total commitment, it attempts to over-ride all other claims and insinuates that any action which is sincerely done 'for love's sake' is thereby lawful and even meritorious. That erotic love and love of one's country may thus attempt to 'become gods' is generally recognized. But family affection may do the same. So, in a different way, may friendship. (*Inspirational* 216)

Affection is presented by Neruda in another poem that celebrates the sheer joy of loving:

In the course of a day we shall meet one another... / And so, when I greet you / and kiss your flowering mouth, / our kisses are other kisses, our mouths are other mouths. / Joy, my love, joy in all things, in what falls and what flourishes. / Joy in today and yesterday, / the day before and tomorrow. / Joy in bread and stone, / joy in fire and rain. / In what changes, is born, grows, / consumes itself, and becomes a kiss again. / Joy in the air we have, / and in what we have of earth... / Joy in the night and the day, / and the four stations of the soul. (*Extravagaria* 69-71)

The poet befriended many people, including the woman he loved, and he expresses Friendship love in two representative poems:

This time is difficult. Wait for me. / We will live it out vividly. / Give me your small hand: / we will rise and suffer, / we will feel, we will fly. / We are once

more the pair / who lived in barbed places, / in harsh nests in the rock. / This time  
is difficult. Wait for me / with a basket, with your clothes, / with you shoes and a  
shovel. / Now we need each other, / not only for the carnations' sake, / not only to  
harvest honey - / we need our hands / to wash with, to make fire. / So in this  
difficult time / let us face up to infinity / with four hands and four eyes.

*(Intimacies 3)*

In *Strangers on the Shore*, one could sense a longing feeling for a lost friendship:

It makes no sense to return / to the ocean without warning- / it does not know you  
return/ or even that you were away, / and the water is so buddy / with all its blue  
business / that arrivals go unrealized. / The waves keep up their song / and  
although the sea has many hands, / many mouths and many kisses, / no hand  
reaches out to you, / no mouth kisses you; / and you soon must realize / what a  
feeble thing you are. / By now we thought we were friends, / we come back with  
open arms, / and here is the sea, dancing away, / not bothering with us. (*On the  
blue shore 29*)

Yet, C.S. Lewis reminded us about the spiritual nature of love that Friendship should be based on: “Friendship, then, like the other natural loves, is unable to save itself. In reality, because it is spiritual and therefore faces a subtler enemy, it must, even more wholeheartedly than they, invoke the divine protection if it hopes to remain sweet” (*Inspirational 260*).

When talking about Eros love, Lewis argues about the “grandeur and terror” of love and uses a very clever way to describe the way this love could move from a contemplative stage to a possessive stage:

He is more likely to feel that tide of Eros, having demolished many sand-castles and made islands of many rocks, has now at last with a triumphant seventh wave flooded this part of his nature also – the little pool of ordinary sexuality which was there on his beach before the tide came in. Eros enters him like an invader, taking over and reorganizing, one by one, the institutions of a conquered country. It may have taken over many others before it reaches the sex in him; and it will reorganize that too. (263)

Lewis sees the romanticism and the poetry in Eros, but differentiates between Eros and Venus which signals a transition from Affection and Friendship into a burning desire:

The poetry is there as well as the un-poetry; the gravity of Venus as well as her levity, the *gravis ardor* or burning weight of desire. Pleasure, pushed to its extreme, shatters us like pain. The longing for a union which only the flesh can mediate while the flesh, our mutually excluding bodies, renders it forever unattainable can have the grandeur of a metaphysical pursuit. (267-268)

Neruda describes the erotic love of Venus vividly in two celebratory poems:

Full woman, flesh-apple, hot moon, / thick smell of seaweed, mud and light in masquerade, / what secret clarity opens through your columns? / What ancient night does a man touch with his senses? / Oh, love is a journey with water and stars, / with drowning air and storms of flour; / love is a clash of lightnings, / two bodies subdued by one honey. / Kidd by kiss I travel your little infinity, / your borders, your rivers, your tiny villages; / and a genital fire- transformed, delicious - / slips through the narrow roadways of the blood / till it pours itself, quick, like a

night carnation, till it is” / and is nothing, in shadow, and a flimmer of light. (*100 Love 29*)

The poet reminisces about his consuming love for his latest wife, Matilde, in a sonnet simply titled *XXII*:

Love, how often I loved you without seeing- / without remembering you - / not recognizing your glance, not knowing you, a gentian / in the wrong place, scorching in the hot noon, / but I loved only the smell of the wheat... / I loved you without knowing I did; I searched to remember you. / I broke into houses to steal your likeness, / though I already knew what you were like. And, suddenly, / when you were there with me I touched you, and my life / stopped: you stood before me, you took dominion like a queen: / like a wildfire in the forest, and the flame is your dominion.(49)

Without disparaging the power and influence that Eros exercises over human beings, C.S. Lewis recognizes the perils that this kind of love brings about when he writes: “It is in the grandeur of Eros that the seeds of danger are concealed. He has spoken like a god. His total commitment, his reckless disregard of happiness, his transcendence of self-regard, sound like a message from the eternal world (*Inspiration 270*). The masterful Chilean poet attempts to define love and recognizes the paradox and struggles of one being in love in two wonderful sonnets:

You must know that I do not love and that I love you, / because everything alive has its two sides; a word is one wing of the silence, / fire has its cold half. / I love you in order to begin to love you, / to start infinity again / and never to stop loving you: / that’s why I do not love you yet. / I love you, and I do not love you, as if I held/ keys in my hand: to a future of joy - / a wretched, muddled fate - / My love

has two lives, in order to love you: / that's why I love you when I do not love you,  
/ and also why I love you when I do. (*100 Love* 95)

The emotional roller coaster that a lover has to go through is candidly presented here:

I do not love you – except because I love you; / I go from loving to not loving  
you, / from waiting to not waiting for you / my heart moves from the cold into /  
the fire. I love you only because it's you / I love; I hate you no end, and hating  
you / bend to you, and the measure of my changing love for you / is that I do not  
see you but love you / blindly. Maybe the January light will consume / my heart  
with its cruel / ray, stealing my key to true / calm. In this part of the story I am the  
one who / dies, the only one, and I will die of love because I love you, / because I  
love you, Love, in fire and in blood. (*100 Love* 141)

It is no accident that Neruda begins this poem with a paradox meant to reflect the  
confusing feelings that love can bring about. The fact that conflicting feelings of love and hate  
can coexist in his heart to the point the poet sees himself as a victim seems not to deter him to  
continue to love “blindly”. In using metaphors such as fire and blood, Neruda wants to convey  
the life and intensity that accompanies true love in a relationship.

Right after publishing the acclaimed *Twenty Poems*, Neruda experimented with a  
different type of verse and created another amazing volume of poetry which he called “*Venture  
of the Infinite Man* (*Tentativa del Hombre Infinito*). The poetry, which was an obvious departure  
from the exuberant, exotic, ebullient style that characterized his previous work, was written in an  
avantgarde style and has gained its rightful place in Neruda's bibliography. One merely has to  
read carefully to see the metaphorical quality, the deepening of his thinking on the subject of  
love, as gleaned from these verses:

Oh night dead hurricane your dark lava slides/ my joys bite into your ink / my  
joyous human song suckles your hard breasts / my human heart scales your wires  
/ impatient I restrain my heart that dances / dances in the winds that cleanse you  
of your color / spellbound dancer on great tides that raise the dawn / twisting to  
that side or beyond you continue being mine / in the solitude of dusk your smile  
knocks / in that instant vines climb to my window / wind from high above lashes  
the hunger for your presence / a gesture of joy a word of sorrow that I were closer  
to you / on its profound clock night secludes hours / yet having you in my arms I  
hesitated / something that does not belong to you descends from your head / and  
fills your raised hand with gold... / right beside me young woman in love / who  
else but you like the drunken wire is a song with no title / ah my sad one a smile  
spreads like a butterfly across your face / and for you my sister does not dress in  
black / I am the one who plucks names and high constellations of dew / in the  
night of blue walls high upon your brow / to sing your praises word of pure wings  
/ the one who broke his fate always where he was not / for example the night  
rolling among silver crosses / that was your first kiss why even remember it / I  
spread you out before the silence / my earth the birds of my thirst protect you /  
and I kiss your mouth with twilight. (Venture 10-11)

It is important to note the use of the second person point of view that conveys an  
adolescentine intimacy, a closeness, a sense of togetherness that only lovers know.

Love in all shapes pervades and permeates the luminous lyrics of Pablo Neruda and  
shows the intricate beauty of love between human beings in all its complexity.



## CONCLUSION:

### LOVE IS A LAW OF NATURE AND THE FULLFILMENT OF THAT LAW

Love is a universal phenomenon that is manifested in all cultures of the world. One could even conclude that love is a *sine qua non* ingredient of humanity since love defines and makes us function as human beings. As this thesis has argued, love is possible and at work even in postcolonial times. In another classic essay, C.S. Lewis insists on the fact that the whole universe operates not only on physical laws, but on moral laws as well in a twofold assertion:

First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in. (*The Complete* 18)

It is no secret for anyone that the author of *The Four Loves* converted to Christianity in his late years. Arguing for the supremacy of Charity love as a God's imparted Gift-love, C.S. Lewis touches on the ontological reason for our own very existence when he writes:

We must not begin with mysticism, with the creature's love for God, or with the wonderful foretastes of the fruition of God vouchsafed to some in their earthly life. We begin at the real beginning, with love as the Divine energy. This primal love is Gift-love... God, who needs nothing, loves into existence wholly superfluous creatures in order that He may love and perfect them. (*Inspirational* 281)

C.S. Lewis was influenced to arrive to his conclusions by another British writer, George MacDonald, who discussed love in the same categorical terms:

Love is one, and love is changeless. For love loves unto purity.... As it was love that first created humanity, so even human love, in proportion to its divinity, will go on creating the beautiful for its own outpouring. There is nothing eternal but that which loves and can be loved, and love is ever climbing toward the consummation when such shall be the universe, imperishable, divine. (8)

Since love has created the universe with all its creatures, it follows the same love that keeps things into being and help human beings function properly.

Throughout history, and especially during the colonial and postcolonial times, many abuses, or even heinous crimes, have been committed in the name of “love”. It goes without saying that such nefarious deeds have been carried out as abuses of power and constituted misrepresentations or the opposite of true love. The postcolonial era has brought to people in former colonies the most cherished liberty and all this time efforts have been made to repair and restore relationships between former colonizers and the colonized people. However, as the unfolding history shows, more time and more meaningful amendments are necessary for the restoration of the indigenous cultures and the righting of relationship between people to take place.

The universal law of love is still at work in people’s lives and many benefic changes have been implemented in the multicultural milieu where the former colonists and the colonized people have learned to coexist in peaceful conditions. Love in all its forms and expressions is an inextinguishable fact of life, and, as this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, love in the all its

multifaceted forms will in the end prevail and bring the necessary healing to those people who have been hurt.

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