



**TRICOLOURED CULTURE IN THE WRITINGS OF THE LITERARY TRIPLET- EZEKIEL, OKARA AND WALCOTT**

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**ARTICLE INFO**

**Article History:**

Received 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2018

Received in revised form 24<sup>th</sup>

April, 2018 Accepted 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

Published online 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2018

**Key words:**

Culture, tricoloured, triplet, variation, linguistic, religious, poetic, decolonization, mimicry, hybridity.

**ABSTRACT**

Language and literature is the major medium for the manifestation and transmission of different cultures. This paper tries to find out the cultural variations in the writings of three eminent contemporary writers who are from the third world countries. Nissim Ezekiel, the famous South Asian writer from India, through his writings depicts the typical Indian culture. Gabriel Okara, the famous African writer from Nigeria, through his writings portrays the African culture with all its vitality and vigour. Derek Walcott, the famous Latin American writer from West Indies, also through his writings celebrates the splendour of Caribbean culture. Thus these writers have used language effectively to exhibit their respective cultures. In the words used, in the themes dealt, in the settings placed, in the style employed etc. we can see the cultural resonance. This paper also tries to show some similarities prevailing among the diversities of these writers. These similarities have coiled to become a unifying thread which binds the works of these writers together and makes them a literary triplet.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Nissim Ezekiel, Gabriel Okara and Derek Walcott can be called literary triplet since they are contemporaries and are from the Third World countries. The works of these writers have a significant place in the New World Literature or the Postcolonial Literature. New Literatures is a term used as an alternative to 'Common Wealth Literatures' and later 'Post-Colonial Literatures', especially during the late 1970s and 1980s. 'New Literatures' stressed the emergent nature of the work from post-colonial societies and connoted freshness and difference. It is still used as a synonym for the term 'post-colonial', but has been employed much less frequently in the 1990s. This is in part because of a sense expressed by some critics that the term has paternalistic overtones and fails to ground cultural production in the history and legacies of the colonial encounter. Many of the cultures to which it refers such as those in India have literary traditions far older than British literature itself. To avoid this problem, the term is generally used in the phrase 'New Literatures in English'. This is to emphasize the fact that it refers to writing produced in English and not to writing available in classical languages like Sanskrit or in any of India's other languages.

The attempt of this paper can be considered as a part of postcolonial studies and cultural studies. Postcolonial studies is the critical analysis of the history, culture, literature, and modes of discourse that are specific to the former colonies of

England, Spain, France and other European imperial powers. These studies have focused especially on the Third World Countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands, and South America. The attempt of this paper can also become part of cultural studies, because through the comparative study of the literatures, it studies the culture of three different places, located in three different continents.

'Culture' is a word which has got a wide range of meanings and definitions. It includes customs, traditions, beliefs, manners, myths and several other things pertaining to a particular society or an ethnic group. Different parts of the world have different cultures. Now we shall see the different aspects of cultural variations in the writings of the eminent writers- Ezekiel, Okara and Walcott.

**Linguistic Variations**

Linguistic variations include how the English language is used differently by Ezekiel, Okara and Walcott. It includes the vocabulary used, tone of diction, grammar, syntax etc. Each writer may have his own unique style and individuality. At the same time the writer belongs to a particular community, society and nation. Therefore the writer's works reflect not only his individual culture but also the culture to which the writer belongs.

Nissim Ezekiel creates an authentic flavor of India, by the use of Indian English, Pidgin English or Bazar English, as it is often called. This can be seen in the poems like, "Good-bye Party for Miss Pushpa T. S" and "The Patriot". In these poems the syntactical peculiarities of Indian English, particularly the

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use of present continuous tense for simple present, is indicative of the thought processes of Indians. Ezekiel has tried to create an Indian flavor by the use of common Hindi words. *Guru, ashram, burka, chapatti, pan, mantra* are a few of the vernacular words the poet has used to create an illusion of real life as it is lived in India. It is a common mistake to use the present continuous tense in place of the simple present. Ezekiel exploits this national trait in his poems. In the poem "The Patriot" he writes:

I am standing for peace and non-violence.  
Why world is fighting, fighting  
Why all people of the world  
Are not following Mahatma Gandhi  
I am simply not understanding  
Ancient Indian wisdom is 100 per cent correct. (1-6)

Ezekiel is mocking Indian people's wrong usage of English. We can see the mistakes and wrong usages clearly:

Other day I am reading in newspaper  
(Everyday I'm reading Times of India  
To improve my English language)  
How one goonda fellow  
Threw stone at Indirabehn. ("The Patriot" 10-14)

Sometimes the usage of this English becomes rambling and even the logical connectives between ideas are missing. There are digressions entirely unconnected with the central concern of the poem to show the typical of the Indian way of thinking and speaking. For example a few lines from "Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T. S":

I am not remembering now which place.  
Surat? Ah, Yes,  
Once only I stayed in Surat  
With family members  
Of my uncle's very old friend-  
his wife was cooking nicely...  
that was long time ago. (19-25)

Although the English language use portrayed by Ezekiel has many mistakes it has an Indianness, beauty and rhythm. It also throws light upon the linguistic culture of Indian people. William Walsh says: "Ezekiel's delivery is mild and unemphatic, a matter of cool diction, moderate metaphor, of syntax rather than music" (qtd. in Iyengar 711).

Similar to Ezekiel, Okara's use of language reflects his cultural background. Throughout his poetry there is evidence of the influence of the traditional folk literature of his people. Some of his earliest writings were translations of this oral literature, and the subdued tone and rhythm of his poetry are as much a reflection of this inheritance as they are of poet's withdrawn nature. Okara uses repetition of words and phrases in some of his poems to produce a dramatic effect. In the poem "The Call of the River Nun" he repeats "I hear" several times and in the poem "Moon in the Bucket" the word "look" is repeated several times. Being an African, Okara uses some words and phrases related to Nigerian as well as African culture. Words such as 'oil palms', 'elms', 'black birds', etc. peculiar to Africa can be seen in his writings. The term 'inside' is Okara's peculiar rendering of an expression in his native Ijaw. It appears in many of his writings and for him it is a powerful tool representing the sum total of human being. The poet's own traditional roots are so strong and deeply entrenched that they resist the "uprooter's spades", which means European

culture. Okara uses some colloquial expressions such as "ack-ack" for machine guns and "simmer" for boil down. Ezekiel used present continuous tense in order to show the Indianness in his language; Okara also uses present continuous tense abundantly in some of poems to produce an onomatopoeic effect. In the poem "Suddenly the Air Cracks" he writes:

diving men women dragging children  
seeking shelter not there breathless  
hugging gutters walls houses  
crumbling rumbling thunder  
bombs hearts thumping heads low  
under beds moving wordless lips- (22-27)

Okara's use of language in order to reflect his cultural heritage is most successful in his novel *The Voice*.

Derek Walcott, being a Caribbean writer through his language reflects the culture of the Caribbean people. According to Braithwaite the function of the writer is to express and articulate the people's culture in its historical depth, and to give it back to them and the writer properly functions in, from, and for his own society (qtd. in Breiner 2). Through creolization, condensed clarity and richness of sound texture, Walcott has created a language of his own which reflects the culture of his place. Walcott says:

I do not consider English to be language of my masters. I consider language to be my birthright. I happen to have been born in an English and a Creole place, and love both languages. It is the passion, futility and industry of critics to perpetuate this ambiguity. It is their profession. It is mine to do what other poets before me did, Dante, Chaucer, Villon, Burns, which is to fuse the noble and the common language, the streets and the law courts, in a tone that is true to my own voice, in which both accents are heard naturally (qtd. in Walder 129).

Both accents may be heard in his poems such as "Mass Man", a recreation of carnival in Trinidad. The title "Mass Man" has a triple reference: to people in the mass; to a man who attends the Catholic mass; and, in creole, to a carnival masquerader. The line "'Join us', they shout, 'O God, child, you can't dance?'" is an exact reproduction of colloquial Trinidadian. Native place names and words are used in his poems. His poem "A Sea-Chantey" replete with native place names in the opening lines:

Anguilla, Adina,  
Antigua, Cannelles  
Andreuille, all the I's,  
Voyelles, of the liquid Antilles,  
The names tremble like needles  
Of anchored frigates, (1-6)

In his poem "The Schooner Flight" Shabine is the narrator and central character. Shabine is the Everyman of the Caribbean. Shabine tells us that he speaks in the "common language" of "the wind", and is "satisfied/ if my hand gave voice to one people's grief" (xi. 20-21). About this poem Wayne Brown comments: "In it Walcott forges, from the diverse strands of his region's history- from the rhythms, intonations and syntax of West Indian dialect and the vocabulary and syntactical possibilities of Standard English- a poetic language that is musical, compressed and subtle" (142).

Walcott's representation of his culture through language is best seen in his plays such as

"Ti-Jean and His Brothers" and "Dream on Monkey Mountain". In these plays dialogue is spiced with fast-paced puns, metaphors, and verbal play. Movement is carried by music, dance, mime, abrupt pauses and asides to the audience. Dennis Walder writes:

Walcott's lines are so resonant because they assert no superiority between the European and African languages which have helped create the different dialects available within the repertoire of English today. He offers instead a mixed and flexible dialect of his own, welcoming anyone willing to listen, and to accept that language may be greater than the confines of class, race and self. (129)

### **Religious Variations**

Religion has an important role in culture. There are many customs, rituals, manners etc. related to the religious beliefs of the people forming a major aspect of any culture. In the works of writers knowingly or unknowingly their religious attitudes and beliefs are got reflected. Talking about the influence of literature in social change Weller and Austin says: "It seems as hard to isolate the strictly literary factor as the religious factor and to answer the question whether the influence is due to the particular factor itself, or to other forces for which the factor is a mere 'shrine' or 'channel'" (108).

Nissim Ezekiel was not committed to any particular system of thought or religion; but was always content to be man of God. He was brought up in a mildly orthodox Jewish home which gradually became liberal Jewish. He combines within the orbit of his poetry so many traditions of love, philosophy and religion- of Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity. There is in Ezekiel a Blakean strain of humanizing God. He speaks to God casually and informally like a friend and often his expression is inflected with banter and irony.

In some of his poems Ezekiel is criticizing the superstitious beliefs of the Indians. One best example for such a poem is "Night of the Scorpion". In this poem we can see the innocent beliefs of the Indians. The villagers thought that their prayer alone can work a miraculous cure upon the suffering victim. The lines also throw light into the culture of these people- their beliefs, customs, unity, helping mentality, innocence etc. They pray for the health and well-being of the mother, and Ezekiel's verse here grows incantatory and mantric, in keeping with the requirements of thought and emotion:

May the sins of your previous birth  
be burned away tonight, they said.  
May your suffering decrease  
the misfortunes of your next birth, they said.  
May the sum of evil  
balanced in this unreal world  
against the sum of good  
become diminished by your pain, they said. (19-26)

Each of these incantations shows their religious ideas concerning sin, suffering, evil, purgation, life after death etc. "A Time to Change" is a moral allegory using the journey and quest motif. There are Old Testament echoes reminiscent of the Book of Psalms or the Prophets; Ezekiel in London could be the Jews in Babylon corrupted by unlawful desires, strange gods and defiled by foreign practices: "We who leave the house in April, Lord,/ How shall we return?"(1-2). The subject

is a mind tormented by awareness of following false gods, disgusted by continuing restlessness which desiring stability, quietness, discipline, purpose and order. The writing of poetry is treated as a moral act and a prayer by Ezekiel. The poems reveal his religious background and also the background of the place to which he belongs.

In Gabriel Okara's works we can see the reflection of two religions- one is the native African religion and other is the Christianity. Many Africans were converted to Christianity, but they withheld their African religious rituals, customs, beliefs and practices. In Okara's works we can see the intermixing of these two religious cultures. 'Bells' and 'drums' are two symbols frequently employed by Okara, which resonate two different religious cultures. In the poem "New Year's Eve Midnight" he uses the 'bells' which reflect a Christian culture:

Now the bells are tolling-

A year is dead.

And my heart is slowly beating

the Nunc Dimittis

to all my hopes and mute

yearnings of a year

and ghosts hover round

dream beyond dream (1-8)

Here although the bell is tolling, we can also see the picture of ghosts hovering round. In the poem "The Call of the River Nun" one line states the "invoking the ghost of a child". Infusing of ghostly images shows the influence of native African religion. Okara's famous poem "The Mystic Drum" becomes a celebration of African religious culture. The beating of the drum and the dancing of the nature in this poem is really mysterious. Okara uses some religious allusions in his poems. In the poem "New Year's Eve Midnight" he uses the phrase "Nunc Dimittis". It refers to the prayer of Simeon as recorded in the second chapter of Luke's Gospel. Simeon was a devout old man who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the infant Jesus who was expected to redeem Israel. The 'Nunc Dimittis' was Simeon's song of gratitude and valediction. In the poem "Suddenly the Air Cracks" we see the phrase "a babel of emotions". It refers to ninth chapter of Genesis which is about the building of the city and tower of Babel. God introduced a confusion of tongues during the project to frustrate the builders' vanity and to make it impossible for them to achieve their plans. The implication in the poem is a scene of confused emotions. The poem "Piano and Drums" is a beautiful combination of two religious cultures- 'piano' representing the Christian and 'drum' representing the African.

Derek Walcott considers writing poetry as a religious vocation. Walcott says that he has never separated the writing of poetry from prayer and has grown up believing it as a vocation, a religious vocation. Although a Methodist, Walcott is successful in portraying the Christian religious culture of the people of the Caribbean. The titles of some of his poems have religious overtones. For example "Adam's Song", "Sabbaths, WI", "A Lesson for This Sunday", "Pentecost" etc. In the poem "A Sea-Chantey" we can see the Christian cultural background of the Caribbean islands. The conclusion lines of the poem replete with Christian symbols, words, and prayers:

The litany of islands,

The rosary of archipelagoes,

Anguilla, Antigua,  
Virgin of Guadeloupe,  
And stone-white Grenada  
Of sunlight and pigeons,  
The amen of calm waters  
The amen of calm waters  
The amen of calm waters. (72-80)

This poem ends like a Christian prayer repeating the same line to produce the particular meditative effect. In Walcott's poems we can see many Biblical allusions which add to the Christian tradition of the poems. In the poem "The Bright Field" the poet uses the term 'original sin'. In Christian religion original sin brought the knowledge of good and evil into the world, destroying paradise and initiating history. In this poem the Europe or the British is credited with or accused of having destroyed the 'paradise' islands, and initiating West Indian history. Some other Biblical allusions are "The adulteress stoned to death" in the poem "Adam's Song"; "Samson's" in "To Return to the Trees" etc.

### **Poetic Variations**

Poetic variations include the difference in the imagery, setting and poetic devices employed by these three writers. Language and imagery of poetry helps us to determine the culture of a particular region.

Ezekiel is essentially a poet with a well-marked Indian sensibility. He had firsthand knowledge of Indian scene and has feelingly rendered it in a number of poems. He was a city dweller, he was touched by the squalor, dirt and misery, the exploitation and corruption which he witnessed everywhere in the city of Bombay. His treatment of Indian life is characterized by down to earth realism. This is clearly brought out by a number of poems, particularly: "In India" and "The Patriot".

In the first part of the poem "In India", the poverty, the squalor, the heat and ugliness of an Indian city is vivified through a few words following each other in quick succession. The unique relationship between literature and environment is clearly shown:

Always in the sun's eye,  
Here among the beggars,  
Hawkers, pavement sleepers,  
Hutment dwellers, slums, etc.  
Dead souls of men and gods,  
Burnt out mothers, frightened  
Virgins, wasted child  
And tortured animals  
All in noisy silence  
Suffering the place and time. (1-10)

The third part of this poem is a blunt satire on the low status of women in India. They are treated as minor citizens, while the men, under Western influence, do what they please. The conflict of cultures is brilliantly and ironically depicted in the last part of this poem where the English boss tries to seduce his Indian secretary.

Ezekiel through his poetry gives us a vivid sense of the Indian milieu, its traditions and cultures. The city scene has been perceived in all its tragic majesty and through the use of vivid pictorial imagery and ironic contrasts it is versified for the readers also. East-West tensions and the conflict of the two

cultures are also brought out. The 'wooden' Indian wives, who did not flirt, are well contrasted with "women bosom semi-bare" belonging to other nations with different cultural norms, their "semi-bare bosom" being suggestive of their lax morality. Gabriel Okara's use of poetic language reflects his native culture. This is mainly through the imagery, symbols and metaphors used in the poems. Through these images a portrait of African culture is brought before the readers. Okara's images are not only visual but also auditory and kinesthetic. So as we see these pictures we can hear the sound and feel the motion of them. In short there is a throbbing of African culture.

In the poem "The Fisherman's Invocation", two traditional Ijaw symbols dominate. They are in Okara's rendering, 'theBack' and 'the Child-Front'. 'The Back' represents what has past, what has been experienced; it is also used to refer to that which is traditional and deeply entrenched. 'Child-Front' is used in the sense of what is to come, as in the saying that the future is like a child. Just as the birth of a child is accompanied by pangs of pain, the coming of the front in this poem is heralded by thunder and lightning. The form of this poem is modeled on a traditional ballad performance which celebrates an important occasion, here the birth of a child, which is analogous to the birth of a nation. The poem was written to commemorate Nigeria's independence, and the poet uses the symbolism of the back and the child-front in the midst of so much festivity to capture the travails, uncertainties and the gloom of the realities of nationhood. After all the feasting follows a period of sober reflection and disillusion, since the new nation is caught in an unending cycle of problems and frustrations.

Okara has used different figures of speech in order to make his poem in tune with his culture. Alliterations and compound words are frequently used by him. The alliterations such as "winter-weary elms", "with the weight of the weightless snow", "dreamed of birds, black birds", "balanced the blinding orbs", "bent-backed elms", "winter wind" from the poem "The Snow Flakes Sail Gently Down" not only show the effective use of alliterations but also show the peculiar climate and culture of the place to which the poet belongs.

Similar to Ezekiel and Okara, Walcott also expresses his culture through his verse. Breiner writes: "Once poetry is not limited to what passes through the needle's eye of metropolitan publication, but embraces the whole intellectual commerce of the society, then the field is enriched by a range of poetry from the highest to the most naive" (22). This is true to Walcott's poetry. He could write poems concerning different aspects of his society. From the images, symbols and words we could get a true picture of the natives of Caribbean islands. Since Walcott is a poet of the island, his works replete with sea and sea-life. Voyage is a major theme in his poems. "The Schooner Flight" is a poem in which the central character Shabine, quits from Trinidad, his homeland and travels a lot, but fails to find a harbor or a resting place. This poem emerges as an allegory of the poet's soul through life. Wayne Brown says about this poem that it "remains a major poem, containing virtually all the main themes of literature: imagination, history, exile, love and death" (142).

In Walcott's many poems we can see number of allusions. These allusions may be towards different persons, places, incidents, literary works etc. Through these allusions Walcott

is taking his readers from the Caribbean islands to other parts of the world and to the zone of world literature. In a single poem "Ruins of a Great House" we can see allusions related to Faulkner, Kipling, Hawkins, Walter Raleigh, Drake, Donne etc. Greek mythology is a favourite subject of Walcott. In his poems we can see a wide range of mythological allusions. The main narrative of Walcott's epic, *Omeros* takes place on the islands of St. Lucia, where Walcott was born and raised up. "... Walcott writes as someone simultaneously aware of himself as individual and as archetype- as a man belonging to a certain race, region and age, and as a witness for mankind" (Browne viii).

Now we get a small idea regarding the cultural variations in the works of the writers- Ezekiel, Okara and Walcott. At linguistic, religious and poetic level we see the diversity in their cultures. In spite of these diversities we can see some aspects of similarities in their writings. The similarities evolve from their common historical background of colonialism. These writers belong to the Third World countries which were the colonies of European powers for a long time. Due to this common fate of misfortune and suffering their songs have a sorrowful and sardonic tone of similar nature. They also share the common cultural aftereffects of colonialism. Cultures of these nations have some features in common based on the analysis of the works of these three writers. They are decolonization, mimicry and hybridity.

### **Decolonization**

Decolonization is the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms. This includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved. Decolonizing processes that have advocated a return to indigenous language use have involved both a social programme to democratize culture and a programme of cultural recuperation and re-evaluation. In Nissim Ezekiel's works we can see traces of decolonization. In "Poster Poems" he sings:

Ask yourself:  
What have I lost?  
search for it,  
find it,  
try not to lose it again. (1-5)

Here the poet or the narrator may be searching for the lost native culture and trying to get it back. In the poem "You Laughed and Laughed and Laughed" Gabriel Okara sings about how the African natives were ridiculed by the colonizers for their particular lifestyle:

You laughed at my song,  
You laughed at my walk.  
Then I danced my magic dance  
to the rhythm of talking drums pleading, but  
you shut your eyes and laughed and  
laughed and laughed. (9-14)

Although the colonizers ridiculed them they were not ready to give up. They continued to dance to the rhythm of the drum. Derek Walcott also sings about the sufferings of the colonized during the period of colonialism:

Planters whose tears were marketable gum, whose voices  
scratch the twilight like dried fronds

edged with reflection,  
Colonels, hard as the commonwealth's greenheart,  
middlemen, usurers whose art  
kept an empire in the red, ("veranda" 4-9)  
The thoughts about the sufferings of his grandfather under  
colonial rule always haunted him.

### **Mimicry**

The term 'mimicry' is used to describe the ambivalent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. The result is a 'blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quiet threatening. This is because mimicry is never very far from mockery; since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. Nissim Ezekiel's poem "Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S" is a fine example of mimicry:

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling  
even for no reason  
but simply because she is feeling. (12-14)  
Gabriel Okara may be trying to show the mimicry of his own  
society when he sings:

And we learn to dance to half familiar half strange songs  
We learn to dance to half familiar half strange  
rhythms fashioned in dreams as the Child-Front  
lies sleeping with breasts in his mouth. ("The Fisherman's  
Invocation" 19-22)

Derek Walcott told to Dennis Scott in 1968: "I will always remain, as long as I write in the West Indies, I will always seem to be a visible imitator, and superficially I will always be an imitator" (qtd. in Walder 126). This comment by Walcott shows how he was aware of the mimicry done by his writings.

### **Hybridity**

Hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. As used in horticulture, the term refers to the cross-breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form a third, 'hybrid' species. Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial etc. Linguistic examples include pidgin and creole languages. By stressing the transformative cultural, linguistic and political impacts on both the colonized and the colonizer, it has been regarded as replicating assimilationist policies by masking or 'whitewashing' cultural differences. Due to hybridity in the native culture and style is spoiled. These three poets seem to be aware about it and they lament over it. Nissim Ezekiel writes in the poem "Portrait":

Beneath his daily strategy,  
Reflected in his suffering face,  
I see his dim identity,  
A small, deserted, holy place. (13-16)

Similar agony is expressed by Gabriel Okara in his famous poem "Once Upon a Time". The cultural infiltration of the West has taught the Africans to be mechanical even when they smile, shake hands and talk. He wants to "unlearn" all those "muting things" and to "relearn" how to be a genuine human being:

But believe me, son.  
I want to be what I used to be

When I was like you, I want  
To unlearn all these muting things.  
Most of all, I want to relearn  
how to laugh, for my laugh in the mirror  
shows only my teeth like a snake's bare fangs! (33-40)  
Derek Walcott through the character Shabine in the poem "The Schooner Flight" expresses his own anxiety regarding his hybridity:

I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,  
I had a sound colonial education,  
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,  
And either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation. (i. 40-43)  
Dennis Walder writes about the pain of hybridity experienced by Shabine:

Shabine has to be both realistic character and visionary; and the tensions of Walcott's culture, the fractures of its past and present, are difficult to overcome; and so we feel the uncertainty underlying this attempt, through Shabine, to embrace his hybrid origins. If at times it seems a "vain search for one island that heals", nevertheless, the search goes on. (129)

Thus in spite of cultural variations, in these three writers, there are some similarities which arise from their common predicament. These similarities bind their works together. It reveals the beauty of unity in diversity.

## CONCLUSION

These three writers loved painting and had some knowledge about it. Nissim Ezekiel was interested in painting. Ezekiel mentions the name of the famous painter Cezanne in his poem "In India". Gabriel Okara was a talented painter. He had a famous exhibition of his water colours in Lagos in the 1940s. As a young man Derek Walcott was trained as a painter. Walcott greatly admired Cezanne and Giorgione and sought to learn from them. Due to the interest and experience in painting we can see pictorial quality in the works of these writers. Their works are the fusion of word-pictures.

A tricoloured culture is formed through the combination of the writings of Ezekiel, Okara and Walcott. Nissim Ezekiel, representing Asian culture, is also a poet of the flesh. He sings about the suffering and the wretchedness of the city dwellers. He depicts in his poems love, passion and sex. So we can associate the colour red to him. Gabriel Okara, representing the African culture, is also a poet of nature. In many of his poems we can see nature imagery. "The Snow Flakes Sail Gently Down" is a picturization of nature's beauty and rhythm. So we can associate the colour green to him. Derek Walcott representing the Caribbean culture is a poet of the sea and seamen.

Many of his poems are related to sea-life. The titles of some of his poems are "The Harbour", "Tales of the Islands", "Missing the Sea", "Cold Spring Harbour", "A Sea-Chantey", "Sea Canes", "The Schooner Flight"- all related to sea. One of his poetry collections is named *Sea Grapes* and one of his poems is titled "Blues". So we can associate the colour blue to him.

Thus we have the three primary colours- red, green and blue. From these primary colours we can get all other secondary colours. The combination of these colours can give a perfection or completeness. In short the writings of these three writers include all possible range of imagination, emotion, events, characters and regions that can be brought into the field of literature. Therefore the writings of these three writers from the Third World countries can be blended to form a tricoloured culture, which represents the whole world and it in fact makes these writers a literary triplet.

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### How to cite this article:

Rakesh Jose (2018) 'Tricoloured Culture in the Writings of the Literary Triplet- Ezekiel, Okara And Walcott', *International Journal of Current Advanced Research*, 07(6), pp. 13273-13278. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijcar.2018.13278.2359>

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