

Chapter III

DETERRITORIALIZATION OR RETERRITORIALIZATION

I will plant my people on the land I gave them. (Amos 9 15)

Canada is a country of immigrants. People of different cultures and races have left their own territory to settle in Canada. They were either deterritorialized (removed or taken away from their own territory) from their native land and brought to Canada or they left their country on their own to migrate to Canada in search of employment, education, or just 'good life'. About the immigration of the West Indians to Canada Monika Kaup states, "The journey north, for West Indian immigrants, is a quest for a better life in a land of opportunity and, often, an escape from poverty" (Siemerling 178). Deterritorialization from one's country and reterritorialization in another country is like the agony of a tree when it is uprooted from its own native soil and transplanted in an unfriendly foreign land that is least interested in the growth of the plant. In her "The Practical Guide to Gardening" included in *She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks* Philip gives an ironical description of the transplantation of a plant summed up in the last sentence. The agony and pain of a plant when transplanted is indirectly referred to the migration of

the Blacks by deterritorialization from their own native land and reterritorialization in an alien culture and soil.

It is important, while transplanting plants, that their roots not be exposed to the air longer than is necessary. Failure to observe this caution will result in the plant dying eventually, if not immediately. When transplanting, you may notice a gently ripping sound as the roots are torn away from the soil. This is to be expected: for the plant, transplanting is always a painful process (85)

The earth and the environment of the new land may not be conducive to the nurture and growth of the transplanted plant. Similarly an immigrant may not be able to adjust with the new environment, society and culture especially when the atmosphere in the new country is not so friendly. When African slaves were brought to Canada, they were exposed to severe cold and piercing wind as well as snow and storm. "The Practical Guide to Gardening" would also mean that the slave masters who reterritorialized them in Canada were as cruel as the Canadian climate.

When the Africans were reterritorialized in Canada they became subjects of the colony of Canada and thus there is "territorial subjection" according to Sylvia Söderlind (3). Canada kept Africans whom European powers deterritorialized from Africa under slavery and subjugation. Canada also subjugated the Native Indians whose ancestors lived there for thousands of years. In this way Aboriginal people in Canada were deterritorialized in their own land. As Söderlind writes in her

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“Canada’s past is, as the ambivalence of its literature often indicates is a double one: it has been colonized by the French and British but it is also a colonizer of its indigenous peoples” (3).

Some of those who are deterritorialized from their own countries and are reterritorialized in Canada write about their own land and culture. The Europeans in Canada categorize the writings of those who belong to different ethnic cultures and races as multicultural literature. Multicultural literature of Canada today has given rise to a discourse of a different kind. Writers from different cultures are armed with creative and imaginative writings to register their dissent of Canada’s policies of cultural and racial discriminations. As a result ethnic, racial, sexual and social minorities of Canada have created “a discourse of colonization that has coloured Canadian writing”, as observed by Söderlind (3). The writings of the white majority hold the centre place in Canadian literature. They are considered mainstream writers and they belong to the centre, and the ethnic and racial minorities are pushed away from the centre to the margin. However, with so many minority writers receiving accolades, the focus of attention has now shifted from the centre to the margin. Söderlind calls the centre “the metropolis” and the margin “the colony” (3). Minority writers are from the colonies and therefore Söderlind equates margin with “the colony” and the centre is the “metropolis” which means the chief city or the capital of a country. The “metropolis” is the seat of power and authority, whereas the colony is the place where the rulers and the subjects dwell.

Caribbean women writers like Claire Harris, Marlene Nourbese Philip and Dionne Brand who have made their mark as writers in Canada and have carved out a place internationally for their bold words and loud cries are not ready to be marginalized. Minority communities, which live alongside the dominant Anglo-Saxon community in Canada, are considered marginal to the dominant community. Philip expresses her displeasure against the Canadian attitude of marginalizing people like her. According to her she is not in the margin but on the "Frontier" which is able to resist the advances of the centre that wants to absorb the marginal areas. In her *Frontiers: Essays and Writings on racism and culture*, she writes,

I have great difficulty with the concept of marginality as it is ordinarily articulated: it suggests a relationship with the dominant culture in which the marginal is considered inferior, and implies that the marginal wishes to lose its quality of marginality and be eventually absorbed by the more dominant culture. (41)

Philip prefers the term "frontier" to "margin" because the marginal culture might get absorbed in the dominant culture, whereas the "frontier" will resist the dominant culture and hence she wants to belong to the "frontier". Frontiers of a nation are not "margins". Frontiers are fortified to protect the mainland from being pushed to the "margin". What is in the margin could lose its identity when the center draws those in the margin into it to make them subjects or further pushes them down and either destroys or annihilates those in the margin. The frontier can withstand the onslaught

of the center's malicious moves because it is guarded. Therefore frontiers of any nation have to be powerfully safeguarded for security reasons. For Philip "frontier" is significantly meaningful in the context of Canadian writing Caribbean women writers work hard to save and safeguard their frontier. It is not at all possible for the centre to exist without the frontier Hence Philip writes,

Surely this meaning is encapsulated in Williams' phrase "emergent energies and experiences which stubbornly resist" the dominant culture. The concept of frontier changes our perception of ourselves and the so-called mainstream. All of which is not to deny that there is a dominant culture, with a "central system of practices, meanings and values". (*Frontiers* 41-42)

According to Lamming the Caribbean is the imperial frontier. Lamming claims that London, Paris, New York and Toronto have become outposts on the frontier of other cultures (Birbalsingh ix). Colonial territories in the Caribbean and elsewhere were conquered, settled and maintained on behalf of those who owned them. So "the Caribbean is the imperial frontier" (Birbalsingh 2). In this sense the Caribbean frontier had outposts in London, Paris, New York and Toronto. European powers occupied the Caribbean islands and those who owned them belonged to Europe.

In her "Ole Talk: A Sketch" in *Language in Her Eye* (Scheir et al.) Claire Harris refuses to accept the theory of marginalization. According to her there is a large number of Black writers in Canada and they have a good number of creative works

to their credit “In three recent anthologies there are seventy-two Black writers. All but three are university graduates. Several of them teach at universities I am quite sure the situation is the same for Asian writers” (140). In her “Poets in Limbo”, Harris asserts that immigrant writers in exile who are deterritorialized to the borderland (Cáliz – Montoro 56) shape their experience of being “eternal immigrants forever poised on the verge of not belonging” (Neuman & Kamboureli 115) into language.

There is a historical reason for marginalizing and deterritorializing the Blacks and the other ethnic communities to the bottom of the social and political ladder of Canada. The reason can be found in the classification of human beings by Herodotus (c.485 - c 425 B C) in his *The Histories*. Richard J. F. Day in his *Multiculturalism And the History of Canadian Diversity* writes that the human beings were classified as fifty different peoples. For him the Greeks^s were on top of the human race: Greeks and Others. Greeks were those who possessed the good, and lacked the evil and Non-Greeks were their complement. Greeks used *polis* and *Ethnos* to differentiate between the Greek and the “Others”: “Greek lived in a polis, a city-state with an obvious physical centre and a particular set of institutions. So the territory belonged to the Greeks. Non-Greeks lived in various sorts of regional or village affiliations, and lacked Greek political institutions” (Humphreys 130-1 qtd. in Richard J. F. Day 52). Day summarizes the method of classification adopted by Herodotus relevant to the European discourse on diversity:

A set of categories is constructed and used as a basis of evaluation and comparison of various peoples. These categories rely upon what can be seen from a distance, and provide information about what is supposed to be the nature of a people, which is also presumed to be influenced by the land, they occupy. In all cases, the Self people provides a basis for comparison, with signs of similarity to the Self usually counting as possession of a good, and signs of difference indicative of a lack or deficiency. The nature of a people is assumed to be displayed in all individuals who are of that people, so that to know one is to know all and vice versa. Finally, the further one gets from one's own land, the stranger the peoples one encounters, until at the edges of the world there are only marvels and monsters to which the normal categories of evaluation scarcely apply. (J. F. Day 56-7)

The west has erred in attempting to categorize the inhabitants of this planet according to the European plan. The western historians had preconceived notions about the rest of the peoples and assigned the others positions subordinate to them. The categorization of human beings into different groups according to colour and class, ethnicity and culture was done to promote the western design and reason. The attempt was to formulate a theory of human nature based on geography and climate.

There are travellers, explorers and voyagers who described the land and the inhabitants they encountered on their journeys according to the European idea of

categorization of human beings. The voyages of Columbus, who set out for the East by heading west, mark an important division in the European discourse on diversity. Later Explorers were told what to expect in their own travels. Discussions were held in Europe about the findings of Columbus to find out if the beings he claimed to have met were humans. Dr. Chance accompanied Columbus on his second voyage. He described the people he encountered: "they eat all the snakes and lizards, and spiders, and worms, that they find upon the ground, so that, to my fancy, their bestiality is greater than that of any beast upon the face of the earth" (Major 133-41, qtd. in J. F. Day 68). Often the accounts of Columbus are not consistent. Chamberlin gives an example from *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (trans. Cecil Jane) to illustrate that Columbus based his description of the native people more upon fancy than upon any accurate observation: "They all go naked as their mothers bore them and the women also, although I saw only one very young girl" (Jane 149 as qtd. in J. E. Chamberlin 6).

When European explorers and travellers encountered people other than Europeans in their expeditions, they considered them savages and placed them between beasts and men. In Muenster's *Cosmographia Barbarians, Savages, and Monsters* were lumped together as forms of the subhuman (Hogden 127-8 cited in J. F. Day 67). Juan Gines de Sepulveda who was a renowned translator of Aristotle based his position upon Aristotle claiming that the hierarchy was natural, so that Savages, as inferior people, were born to serve the superior Europeans: "In wisdom, skill, virtue and humanity, these people are as inferior to Spaniards as children are to adults and

women to men;" (Sepulveda, cited in Todorov 153 qtd. in J. F. Day 68). Sepulveda who was the official historian for the Spanish court justified the Spanish conquest of the aboriginal inhabitants. He claimed that "Indians were incapable of orderly living, being disobedient by nature, and they should therefore be subjected to rule, including enslavement" (Chamberlin 8). On the basis of these European notions, Pierre D'Avity, worked out five categories of Barbarians in 1614. "Each level on the scale was predicated upon a lack of some European quality, the most important of which was the possession of reason, which implied knowledge of religion and abstinence from Cannibalism" (J. F. Day 68). After the first voyages of Columbus to the New World, the people there were seen by the Europeans as beasts, monsters and also as humans by others; but, even when they were considered humans, they were allocated an inferior status. The conclusion was, as savages did not have reason, wisdom and other qualities, Europeans could teach them. And so European colonialism took hold throughout the New World, and fast-paced Discovery and looting gave to more sedentary rhythms of domination (J. F. Day, 69).

"Ethnic" refers to any person or group other than those whom the speaker considers normal or dominant. In Greek 'ethnic' (*ethnos*) means a person who is not a Greek. According to Kymlicka in Canadian multiculturalism policy discourse "ethnic" refers to a people that does not, and should not, possess a "polis" (qtd. in J. F. Day 52). The situation is comparable to that in India where the caste system plays a significant role in society. Those who belong to high castes live in the centre especially of the village and the others live in the periphery of the village. In other words the high



caste people occupy the territory and the low caste people are pushed to the periphery. The low caste people in villages might do menial jobs for the high caste people, but they will not be allowed to live in the areas generally occupied by the high caste people.

In the Canadian context those who have been pushed to the margin have struggled hard. Africans especially have been exiled from their own country and were brought to Canada to serve the Europeans. When Africans were exiled from their native land, it was deterritorialization from their own country and as Philip writes that they were reterritorialized “into the pale and beyond, into the nether nether land of race” (10). “Ethnicity”, according to Philip, includes “language, religion, education, music, patterns of family relations” (10). When they were exiled, they were also deterritorialized from their language, religion, culture, customs, traditions, social and family relations and bonds. Philip further reiterates that Africans did not come to Canada on their own. Philip makes it clear that Africans were forcefully brought to Canada by their colonizers to make the life of the colonizers comfortable and in the process, the life of the deterritorialized Africans was made hell for them by the colonizers. “Unlike all other peoples who came here, the African did not choose to come, but was forced to come as a consequence of one of the most cruel enterprises in history, the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans” (*Frontiers* 22). Philip refers here to the slave trade that the Europeans were engaged in for their own prosperity. Europeans also employed the Native Indians in Canada in the developmental activities that brought the Europeans profit. In fact Canada belongs to the Native

Indians who were the original inhabitants there. Philip bursts out in puns to emphasize this fact: “The only peoples who be(truly)long here – who be long here [. . .], are the Native peoples” (*Frontiers* 22)

In *Rivers Have Sources, Trees Have roots: Speaking about racism*, Brand and Bhaggiyadatta explain how the Native Indians were deterritorialized in their own country. Brand gives an instance in which Native Indians were uprooted from the reserve they were living. When they refused to be deterritorialized from their own territory, they were forcefully bundled up in a truck, locked and hauled away like cattle (20). The colonizers of Canada did not find them useful any more after they took away the land occupied by them. Similarly when the Europeans did not find the Africans useful, they wanted to get rid of them by branding them (Africans) as “Others” and pushing them to the margin. Philip writes that the Europeans would not hesitate to discard an African when s/he was not found useful. “I am reminded that there was a time when it was cheaper to get rid of an African slave who was no longer useful, and buy a new one, than to continue to provide for her” (*Frontier* 23).

Philip wonders if such an idea of “use and throw” has initiated the “nigger go home” attitude because when Europeans arrived, they encountered the aboriginal people whose ancestors came to Canada more than 40,000 years ago. Later Africans who were reterritorialized in Canada as slaves along with the aboriginals have played an important role in the development of Canada.

Could this have been the start of the “nigger go home” attitude? We need now, however, to be m/othered by those very societies and cultures, which have destroyed our cultures, enriched themselves on our exploited labour, and who would now banish, if not destroy us. By Canada. But more important than that, Canada *needs* to m/other us. Her very salvation depends on m/othering all her peoples - those who be/long(ed) here when the first Europeans arrived- the Native peoples; as well as those like the African who unwittingly encountered history and became seminal in its development. (*Frontier* 23-24)

Deterritorialization also led to the destruction and annihilation of the original population either in their own land or in the reterritorialized land. The first act of deterritorialization that resulted in the annihilation of the native population in their own land took place immediately after Columbus’ entry into the island towards the end of the fifteenth century. According to Philip, Columbus came to the Caribbean “sowing it with the poisoned seed of Europe to produce Old World mutations of genocide, devastation and racism” (*Frontiers* 23). George Lamming in his “Occasion of Speaking” says that “within a matter of twenty-five or thirty years of Columbus’ arrival, this aboriginal population was totally destroyed” (Birbalsingh 2). In *Closed Entrances: Canadian Culture and Imperialism* Arnold H. Itwaru and Natasha Ksonzek write about the imperial justification to destroy and annihilate the people in their own land: “the slaughter of more than a hundred million of them within the last six hundred years of Empire glory” (6). In his “Nation Language”,

Edward Brathwaite ” also writes that the aboriginals became extinct when Spanish, French, English and Dutch forces began marauding and pillaging the Caribbean: “the destruction of the Amerindians, which took place within 30 years of Columbus’ discovery (one million dead a year)” (Ashcroft et al 309)

The other kind of deterritorialization took place on account of commercialization and colonization of Africans who were deterritorialized from Africa and reterritorialized as slaves in Europe and her colonies. In her *Bread Out of Stone* Brand speaks about the deterritorialization of her ancestors before they could be reterritorialized in slave centers. Many slaves became prey to inhuman and unhealthy conditions in slave ships. “Fifteen million of them survived the voyage, five million of them women; millions among them died, were killed, committed suicide in the Middle Passage” (21). Philip writes in her *Showing Grit: Showboating North of the 44th Parallel* that between 25 and 100 million Africans were enslaved and / or killed (76). Reterritorialization of Africans as slaves was painful and they were submitted to all sorts suffering and torture. In the “Introduction” to *Caribbean Women Writers* a collection of essays from the first conference of Caribbean women writers edited by Selwyn R. Cudjoe, there is an account of Mary Prince, a West Indian slave. It is taken from “The History of Mary Prince, Related by Herself” in *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (1831). As mentioned in the previous chapter Mary Prince was an eyewitness to the brutal reality of slavery. In her narration she talks about the halter round the neck and the whip upon the back of the slaves. Children were separated from their mothers, and husbands from wives and sold as cattle. Women that have

had children were exposed in the open field to shame. Slaves were tied up and flogged and thrashed. Mothers could only weep and mourn over their children whom they could not save from the whip and the rope of the cruel slave masters (Cudjoe 11-12). Philip writes in her *Showing Grit* "for women and girls sexual harassment and rape was standard" (76).

Philip quotes from James Walvin's *Black Ivory* to emphasize the terror of slavery that her race experienced. The account is a heart-rending example of the deterritorialization of Africans:

On ship the slaves were packed in the hold on galleries one above the other. Each was given four or five feet in length and two or three feet in height, so that they could neither lie at full length nor sit upright ... In this position they lived for the voyage, ... The close proximity of so many naked human beings, their bruised and festering flesh, the foetid air, the prevailing dysentery, the accumulation of filth, turned these holds into a hell ... held in position by chains on their bleeding flesh. No place on earth, observed one writer ... concentrated on so much misery as the hold of a slave ship (*Showing Grit* 75)

Philip adds that it was financially advantageous for captains to throw sick Africans overboard because they could collect insurance money against the missing slaves, which they would not get if they were taken dead. In this way the Atlantic became a

accept the colonizer's language as their mother tongue. Therefore Philip refuses to consider the English language as her "mother tongue".

Colonizers reterritorialized their language in the Caribbean and deterritorialized the mother tongue of the natives. A Caribbean in Canada is both geographically and linguistically reterritorialized. Philip is not comfortable with the linguistic reterritorialization in Canada. Harris, Philip and Brand are deterritorialized linguistically in spite of their colonial education in the Caribbean. They feel that their native experiences, their culture and oral literature cannot be rendered effectively in the reterritorialized language. Harris, Philip and Brand register their linguistic dissent by reterritorializing the English language of the colonizer for their use. They also employ native idioms and phrases to reinforce their Caribbean experience. They invent new metaphors, use fractured syntax and redefine semantics not only to emphasize their dissent of the colonial language but also to raise their voice against racism and the treatment their race has received in the reterritorialized land. However English has become the vehicular language for these writers. These writers use the English language as a vehicle that can carry their dissent not only to the Empire, but also to all peoples of the earth because as a *vehicular* language, English has no territory and it belongs to all those use it.

The *vehicular* language is one of the four languages that are at work in society. The concept of "linguistic alienation" presented by Gobard (as cited by Söderlind) accounts for the "interrelationship between four languages at work in any society".

Gobard classifies them as the *vernacular*, *mythic*, *referential* and *vehicular* languages. The *vernacular* that is mainly spoken by the natives of a nation is their mother tongue. Its function is to establish "communion" between the speakers of the land. The colonizer cannot communicate with them in the language of the natives because the colonizer does not know the language of the colonized. As the colonizers are more powerful than the colonized, it becomes easy for the colonizers to impose their language on the colonized. However, the natives prefer their own native language to the foreign tongue to communicate among themselves. Communion is an act of personal sharing and caring and when it is carried out orally, it will have to be in the language of the community or society. Hence oral literature in the colony also exists in the *vernacular*. The second language is the *mythic* language in which members of a community share their beliefs. It is the sacred language of communion with God. This is the language of religious rituals and rites in a society or community.

The third is the *referential* language in which history, culture, canons of art and literature are written. The *referential* language according to Söderlind is the language of the nation. While the *vernacular* is the language of the region and the *mythic* belongs to the beyond, the *referential* language is of the national scholarship. These languages belong to the territory and are shared by everyone within the territory or a nation. The fourth language is the *vehicular* language or 'lingua franca' and it is non-territorial. It does not belong to any territory. However, the *vehicular* language gains popularity at the expense of the *vernacular*. The *vehicular* language is able to deterritorialize the *vernacular* language. In the colonies created by

Europeans the *vernacular* language is deterritorialized and the *vehicular* language is reterritorialized. The *vehicular* language has no territory and therefore a writer has to write in the *vehicular* language to go beyond the boundaries of the reterritorialized country and culture.

When linguistically deterritorialized Caribbean women writers took recourse to the *vehicular* language, they reterritorialized themselves in the *vehicular* language in order to reach out to a larger audience. They are linguistically reterritorialized because the *vehicular* language was the language of the colonizer in the Caribbean and is also the *vehicular* language in Canada because it is also a colony of their erstwhile colonizers. However, they shudder at the prospects of using the colonizer's language as the *vehicular* language. The anguish and agony of having to use the language of the colonizer is very ironically expressed by Philip in her "Discourse on the Logic of Language" (*She Tries Her Tongue; Her Silence Softly Breaks*) because it is the language of oppression and persecution. Their ancestors were subjected to humiliation and mutilation if they spoke in their mother tongue.

English

is my mother tongue

A mother tongue is not

not a foreign lan lan lang

language

l/anguish

anguish

-a foreign anguish,

I have no mother

tongue (56)

Philip sees the English language as the language that was a vehicle of torture of the Blacks in slave camps because the slaves were threatened even with the removal of the tongue if they spoke in their native language. It is also the language that deterritorialized the history of Africa and the Blacks. Europeans had a preset concept of history and they deterritorialized the history of other cultures only to reterritorialize the other history on the periphery of the European history. Though English is Philip's first language, she traces the lineage and finds that it is her "father tongue" because it was brought to the Caribbean by colonizers who were all men. Therefore it cannot be her "mother tongue". The lines quoted above from "Discourse on the Logic of Language" in her *She Tries Her Tongue; Her Silence Softly Breaks*, Philip reterritorializes the English language to make it her *vehicular* language. She is aware that the English language in the colonizer's model cannot serve her purpose. Though Harris, Philip and Brand find the *vehicular* language a viable medium to communicate with the world outside, they feel that it is not adequate enough to carry their native experience and the burden of brutal slavery of their race. Therefore they have to reinforce the *vehicular* language with their *vernacular* to enable them to create a powerfully reterritorialized language in which

their dissent of the language of the colonizer- the “foreign anguish”- becomes their vehicle to reach out to the peoples of the world.

Philip feels alienated from the language of the colonizer because it is also the language of the oppressor. However the language of colonization and oppression has encroached upon the *vernacular* language and has deterritorialized it. If one wants to open the eyes of the world and draw the attention of the people to the oppression of the Africans by the colonizer, s/he has to speak or write in the *vehicular* language. It is the *vehicular* language that is understood outside the territory and outside the region and the nation. Therefore Philip though disinclined to her “father tongue”, is not hesitant to use it for international communication. The efficient use of the “father tongue” enables her to win laurels and accolades for her works in the language of the oppressor and the language that has deterritorialized her native language and land. It is her “father tongue” that has given her power to express dissent and resentment of the racist Canadian culture that classifies human beings by the colour of their skin.

“Other” writers settled in Canada also feel the linguistic deterritorialization. In her essay “The Sound Barrier: Translating Ourselves in Language and Experience”, in *Language in Her Eye* (Scheier et al.) Himani Bannerji brings out very vividly her predicament of having to write in an alien language that is also for her the language of colonization: “The words, their meanings – shared and personal – their nuances are a substantial and material part of our reality. In another language, I am another

person, my life another life" (32). As an Indian, Bannerji feels that she belongs to a different culture and her native language is her own. Therefore in Canada she feels deterritorialized both linguistically and geographically. The language of the colonizer is not suitable to translate her feelings, emotions, ideas and views of her own people and land. However she has to write in the language in which she is reterritorialized her deterritorialized self. She writes from a country where she is reterritorialized and this country has an alien culture and a foreign language.

Arun Mukherjee writes about her own initiation into ^{the} Anglo-American canon of literature in India and Canada, which deterritorialized her from the concepts of language, and literature, which she cherished. She writes in her *Oppositional Aesthetics: Readings from Hyphenated Space* that though the texts in her course of study in India were ahistorical and apolitical, they were presented as "the epitome of what constituted literature" (3). She writes that it did not educate her in any way, but alienated her from reality and made her believe that "literature pertained to the cultivation of certain emotions-sentimental effusions over the beauty of nature, anguish over mutability-and a high-minded disdain for all rationality and abstract thought" (3).

Vevaina and Godard use expressions like 'minor literature', and 'major language' (13) to mean that minority writers use the language of the majority community. In the context of African Caribbean Canadian women writers the major language is English. Caribbean Canadian women writers like Harris, Philip, and Brand

detrterritorialize the English language and reterritorialize 'Nation Language' in their writings because as Edward Brathwaite asserts, "English can articulate only Eurocentric experience, an experience alien to Caribbean people of African descent ..." (Siemerling 195). Harris, Philip, and Brand detrterritorialize the superiority and authority of the English language by questioning its punctuation, syntax, lexis, semantics as well as rhyme and rhythm, they also introduce words from African languages. The following examples reveal the features mentioned above

this tongue that roots

deep

in

yank

pull

tear

root

out

that I would

chop

in

pieces (Philip, *She Tries Her Tongue...* 80)

Daughter to live is to dream the self
to make a fiction
this telling i begin
you stranded in landscape of your time
will redefine shedding my tales
to grow your own
as i have lost our ancestors you
daughters will lose me
(Harris, *Drawing Down A Daughter* 43)

I want to flail
trapped in its limits
flesh if novena candles
juju
.
houngan, sing Oshun song for me
I need to talk to her, the only one I remember
give me a tongue
(Brand, "Canto V" of *Primitive Offensive* 23)

It is important here to highlight Brand's use of the words 'juju', 'houngan' and 'Oshun' which deterritorialize the Anglo-Saxon language. The "i" of Harris also deterritorializes the authority and power of the English language. By using "i" instead of "I" Harris questions the egoistic masculinity of the English language.

Deterritorialization of language is creative and it indicates intensive use of language by writers. Vevaina and Godard argue, "Relations of complementarity and distinction between these subjects are necessary for an "ordinary" or "extensive" or "reterritorializing" function of language as representation (14). Reterritorialized language of Harris, Philip and Brand represent in their language the tormentation that slaves were subjected to as their wages and the humiliation they underwent as their right because of being the subjects of the Empire. Their language has the rhythm of suffering, the rhyme of torture and the figures of terror:

a morphology of rolling chain and copper gong
now shape this twang, falsettos of whip and air
rudiment this grammar.

(Brand, *No Language Is Neutral* 23)

Europeans can deterritorialize 'Others' according to what they think is the standard and rule. In the article "Where Have All the Natives Gone?" Rey Chow narrates the experience of being on a search committee for a specialist in Chinese language and literature at the University of Minnesota. A candidate from the People's Republic of

China discussed in her talk “why we still enjoy reading the eighteenth-century classic, *The Dream of the Red Chamber*”. During the committee’s discussion a faculty member, an American Marxist mentioned, “the talk was not about why we still enjoy reading *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. It was about why she enjoys reading it. She does because she likes capitalism” (Mongia 122). This is an example of how Europeans deterritorialize others by reterritorializing their view and voice.

The imperial education system in the Caribbean also deterritorialized the Caribbean culture and language. Brathwaite writes, “People were forced to learn things which had no relevance to themselves’ (Ashcroft et al. 310). They knew more about the snowfall, which does not occur in the Caribbean than the hurricanes known to everyone there. It is interesting to observe here how the Caribbean children were deterritorialized from the experience and culture of their own land by the colonial education. Brathwaite adds, “Caribbean children who, instead of writing in their ‘Creole’ essays ‘the snow was falling on the playing fields of Shropshire’ (which is what our children were writing a few years ago, below drawings they made of white snowfields and the corn-haired people who inhabited such a landscape), wrote ‘the snow was falling on the cane-fields’ trying to have both cultures at the same time” (Ashcroft et al. 310-11).

An African writer writes from two traditions and s/he bases her/his work in two spaces: an African native culture and an alien Canadian culture. When the African writer is a woman, one more dimension is added to the existing spaces and

traditions; gender becomes equally a powerful aspect in the writings of Caribbean women writers. Harris, Philip and Brand are Africans, they are women and they write about Africa and Canada while in Canada. Henry Louis Gates^S, Jr. explains the concept in the following words:

In case of the writer of African descent, her or his texts occupy spaces at least in two traditions: a European or American literary tradition, and one of the several related but distinct black traditions. The 'heritage' of each black text written in a Western language is, then, a double heritage, a two-toned, as it were. Its visual tones are white and black, and its aural tones are standard and vernacular (4)

Harris, Philip, and Brand follow common strategies though each writes in her individual space. All three of them write about Africa, their deterritorialized space. During her study at the University of Nigeria, Harris realized the importance of Africa as the cradle of western civilization, which made her understand her responsibility as an African. Therefore she asserts that it is her duty "to return Africa to its place at the centre, the Heart of Western Civilization" (Kamboureli, 141). The recognition of loss and pain of Africans becomes the main objective of her writing'. In her essay "Why do I write?" Harris expresses her discontent in a powerful and forceful language of dissent:

[. . .] Africans in North America, and of course, Europe - have suffered a traumatic loss. The nations which inflicted and continue to inflict the loss have never acknowledged their crime, nor have they ever been contrite. Instead the west has externalized guilt and self-loathing, projecting it on to us. As a result, Europeans, North Americans, and Africans of the Diaspora still have a great festering boil to lance, one for which they carry unequal burdens of responsibility but which nevertheless, they must lance together. There can, of course, be no healing while Europeans continue to see Africans as some versions of failed humanity, even as Africans see them as deluded monsters. There still is little or no acceptance, on either side, of the world we have made together; no recognition of the Scar tissue embroidering it. (Morrell 28 - 29)

Philip protests passionately against the attitude of the west that has deterritorialized the Africans and marginalized them in Canada where they are reterritorialized. Africans are "Others" in the reterritorialized land:

Sometimes it appears that we Africans in the New World have been weaned forever on the milk of otherness: we have been too long "othered" by those societies who traditionally have thought and currently think nothing of enriching themselves on our labour then discarding us - the detritus of capitalism. (*Frontier* 23)

The history of Africa, which is the original territory of the Africans, is written by Europeans, as they understood it. Harris, Philip and Brand do not want to accept this European view of African history. Therefore Philip takes Dr David Livingstone and presents the female traveller searching for him with an alternative view of history in her novel *Looking for Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence*. According to her, history can still be rewritten giving Africans and Africa their due place. It will only happen when they are reterritorialized in their own land from where their ancestors were deterritorialized and were made the victims of the slave trade. Here reterritorialization in their own land implies the granting of due status to Africa as the center of western civilization. There will then be the new 'her (his) story', the story of Africa and her people who will be acknowledged as the inheritors of the western civilization. Philip is determined to rediscover Africa and she finds Dr. Livingstone's words significant, "I will open a way to the interior or perish" (*Looking for Livingstone 2*).

Philip takes the above words of Dr. Livingstone, as her motto in her adventurous journey to the interiors of Africa to ensure what Dr. Livingstone claimed is wrong. Then she muses to herself "perhaps he discovered something else – the same thing I search for –" (*Looking for Livingstone 2*). The narrator asks Dr. Livingstone, "if you have anything to compare with this... this. . ." (*Looking for Livingstone 52*). As the narrator's experience is unique, it cannot be compared with Livingstone's experience because Africans had known and experienced everything of Africa before any Livingstone set his foot there. When Arwhal left the narrator in a huge room of

coloured fabric and yarn and told her to stay there until she could “piece together the words of (my) silence .. The word doesn’t belong to you, it has been used by others owned and whored by others long ago” (*Looking for Livingstone* 52).

The *vehicular* language that deterritorialized the African language is the language in which Europeans have written about Africa. Therefore those words have no meaning. Now it is only the silence that belongs to her. But in order to make the silence felt, words have to be used, and the words will weave the silence into the language of literature. “But to use your silence, you have to use the word” (*Looking for Livingstone* 52). Silence has to be transformed into words and sentences and then there will emerge the language that will be understood globally. According to Gobard the *vehicular* language does not belong to anyone particularly because it has no territory and hence it is the language of all those who use it for various purposes. The narrator while talking about the silence states very ironically, “I loved the absolute in the silence of black, or the distilled silence of white;” (*Looking for Livingstone* 55).

One could read two meanings here: the history she is looking for is “absolute in the silence of black”. She is looking for the real history that is not distilled by the whites; the white man’s history of Africa is distilled and thus made white. One could also read that the black is original and it is distilled into white. If Africa is given its rightful place as the centre of western civilization, the whites will also have to belong to the same civilization. But the whites were distilled into white though originally they were

not so. "Distilled silence" could also mean the silence the Europeans maintain about their origin and their civilization. Though Africa is the centre of western civilization, Europeans are silent about it

The black is pieced together like a multicoloured quilt and hence remains unsullied and uncorrupted. If the narrator has to weave the entire history of Africa, she has to weave every thread selecting it carefully and matching it according to different shades and colours to make it multicoloured and beautiful. Africa was colourful and beautiful before it was "discovered" by the Europeans whose eclectic approach failed to give the world the true story of Africa. The Europeans deterritorialized Africa so that they could reterritorialize themselves in Africa to colonize and empower her there. Therefore the narrator in Philip's story sets out to rediscover the real Africa that is uncorrupt and unblemished. The narrator wants to go back in space and time to experience the Africa of pre-deterritorialization. The deterritorialization of Africa by Europeans dislocated her from her status of being the centre of the western civilization and "othered" her people who actually mothered the western man. However the Europeans (m) othered Africa only to enslave her and then went on to show the world that they civilized Africa. They showcased an exhibition *Into the Heart of Africa* in Royal Ontario Museum in 1990. In *Closed Entrances* Itwaru and Ksonzek bring out the European version of the reterritorialization of Africa at the Royal Ontario Museum. They identify the Museum as a prison that has imprisoned Africa, the Muse:

The Muse is imprisoned here in artifactual death. A taxonomic identification holds sepulchral watch in the predomination of labels, specimens, classifications. They locate and re-name that which is dislocated by placing it in another location, in this museum, ... The encased object, dislocated from its unique place and meaning, and relocated, in this instance in Toronto, is relocated in permanent dislocation, stripped of its authority (97)

Indian born Bannerji feels that the dislocation should enable one to reconstruct the history that was distorted by the colonists. Such an attempt will help reconstruct a new content and new forms. "Who we are should be a historical/ memorial and reconstructive excursion heralding a new content and new forms out of the very problems created by dislocation or fragmentation" (Scheier et al.40).

In an interview with Silvera Makeda, "The Other Woman": *Women of Colour in Contemporary Canadian Literature* Dionne Brand asserts that *No Language is Neutral* is written "in the language that I grew up in" (366). Here Brand refers to English, which for her is the *vehicular* language to emphasize the fact that English does not only belong to the Anglo-Saxons, but also belongs to all. Like Philip, she goes deep into the history to undo whatever dominant Europeans have held long as the true picture of Africa. Africa and the people of Africa are not given recognition by Europeans and even now they are marginalized and treated as 'others'. Europeans keep the 'centre' place for themselves and deterritorialize others from the center. Similarly the language in which others speak and write is set aside as non-standard

Nourbese Philip talks to Janice Williamson about placing the 'center-piece' of the poem in "Discourse on the Logic of Language" about the ambivalence of 'father tongue' and mother tongue. There is a short story of a mother blowing words into her newborn daughter in the left margin and the historical edicts about the mutilation and hanging of the tongues of slaves for speaking their mother tongues in the right margin (*She Tries Her Tongue* 56). This is an example of physical mutilation and linguistic deterritorialization. If one gets her mother tongue from the left margin, it is deterritorialized, destroyed or mutilated when it reaches the right margin. Ironically Philip makes it clear that when some other languages are written from right to left, the English language with its killer instinct as in the edicts, is written from left to right. The edict of the removal and hanging of the tongue is in the right margin. Ironically also the English language moves from top to bottom to reterritorialize Anglo-Saxons symbolically on top and to deterritorialize Africans actually to the bottom in the classification of human beings.

Claire Harris sets her poem "To Dissipate Grief" to reiterate how she is deterritorialized from the centre. Therefore she is compelled to write in the margins. She sets her words in the ~~right~~ margin in italics to underline that her existence as a poet has no relevance to those who claim the possession of the centre.

we hustle in & out of shops
bustling to buy
everything
we say 'it
is cheaper here'
we point at things
weigh values
nudge each other
as goods are taken down
from shelves
on barstools
spread over counters
so we can finger them
Dream their effect
tallying silently the cost
in dollars
we buy shoes & bags
belts wallets luggage
clothes with French seams
accents

*and this is what happens
when you die
first you uncoil
the guts of pain
then you climb
where it leads
you gather yourself
pull yourself
out of nails
out of split ends
gather yourself
into the mouth
a breath
that labours
a sigh that goes on
on and on
because this
is it
your last taste
of earth*

(The Conception of Winter 34)

In her *Rivers have Sources, Trees Have Roots: speaking of Racism*, Brand and Bhaggiyadatta write that the whites block the source of the black people today so that the source itself will get dried and those dependent on it will die in oblivion. When the family tree of the black people's genealogy is cut at the roots, the tree itself will be desiccated and parched. Thus the blacks are denied their own growth because as slaves they were forced to work for the growth and development of Europeans. Brand works for the welfare of the black people by combating racism in Canada. In her *No Language is Neutral* Brand explores the genealogy of her persona by delving into layers of history in order to undo the hold of the dominant gaze, be it imperialistic or masculine. Brand feels it necessary to speak honestly about important matters. The Europeans were dishonest about the black people. The white people did not want to recognize the contribution of the blacks in the reterritorialized land, Canada. Kamboureli cites Olive Patricia Dickason as writing, "Canada has fifty – five founding nations rather than the two that have been officially acknowledged" (7). So the present day Canada is not founded by two founding fathers. The deterritorialized people of Africa who were reterritorialized in Canada, many ethnic and racial groups in Canada and the Native Indians have contributed to the building of Canada as a Nation.

In *Bread Out of Stone* Brand writes that she wants to recover the legitimate history of Africa. Harris, Philip and Brand are determined to recover African history, the story of the land, the territory from where the story is deterritorialized and they want to reterritorialize it in its rightful place. It is necessary to take away African history

from the hands of Europeans. In the same essay Brand writes that the whites use their cowardly language to mislead the world: “. . . yet speaking in the most secret and cowardly language of normalcy and affirmation, . . . (*Bread Out of Stone* 23). The design of the whites is to establish that their writing about the territory of Africa is honest. If one wrote/spoke about the deterritorialized story of Africa, it would reveal the dishonest treatment of Africa by the whites. However if the speaker/writer is non-white, the whites would not appreciate him/her. Brand narrates the experience she had with a male writer in her *Bread Out of Stone*, who told her “You write very well, but stay away from the politics” (21). She writes the true story of the deterritorialized Africans, who were brought as slaves and were reterritorialized in Canada. “I am a Black woman whose ancestors were brought to new world lying tightly packed in ships” (*Bread Out of Stone* 21). However, Claire Harris, Nourbese Philip and Dionne Brand are trying to reterritorialize the deterritorialized Africa. As Brand wants to recover the history of Africa, Harris asks the west to return Africa to its place at the centre, the heart of western civilization, and Philip is in search of the lost history of Africa in order to reterritorialize the deterritorialized Africa.

When the Europeans rushed to India to establish their domination, they found that Indians did not possess ‘superior’ qualities; but they were sure that they could teach the Indians. As in the case of other colonies, the British found that the Indians were useful in some ways; the major advantage they discovered in Indians was that they could ‘train’ Indians to serve them. This became very clear in the now widely discussed Macaulay’s Minute (2.2.1835) who wanted to create a class of Indians to

educate the entire population of India. At the same time Macaulay felt the need to have some Indians who will mediate between the ruler and the ruled. Macaulay's ethnocentric view of the world is well known. Macaulay's superiority complex and the superior status he accorded to the British and also the idea that the British were born to civilize 'other' people of the world are obvious in his statement. "I have never found anyone who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. . . When we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded and general principles investigated the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable" (Clive and Pinney 241-242 as qtd. Chamberlin 77). Macaulay's attempt to reterritorialize English and English superiority in India is born out of his enthusiasm to please the Queen whom he represented.

For Nourbese Philip, Dr. David Livingstone, the celebrated discoverer of Africa is another western man who projected Africa as a strange land and Africans as inferior human beings. Therefore in her *Looking For Dr. Livingstone: An Odyssey of Silence*, Philip writes that what Livingstone has claimed about Africa is not a fact. She asserts that it is the power that makes something a fact or a lie: "– a fact is whatever anyone, having the power to enforce it says is a fact. Power – that is the distinguishing mark of a fact" (67).

The same idea echoes in Dionne Brand's *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun* where she is very emphatic about the way in which the west has neglected her race. She writes in the poem entitled "For Martin Carter" in section of "LANGUAGES"

a thief has gone with handfulls
chunks pulled away
handfulls of fruit, pink fleshed stories
a thief sipping pernod
with his moustache and his gold rings
and giving interviews to international correspondents
and his lies

(Chronicles of the Hostile Sun 18)

Brand here talks about the Europeans who went to Africa to deterritorialize Africans from their own territory for the advantage of the Europeans. After the Europeans had deterritorialized Africans they reterritorialized them in the Empire. The wealth of Africa was carried to the land of the whites and it was reterritorialized in the white man's land.

Harris, Philip and Brand are opposed to the preconceived idea of classification of human beings by the whites and for totally deterritorializing Africans physically, linguistically, geographically and culturally. In her "Managing the Unmanageable" included in the *Caribbean Women Writers: Essays From The First International*

Conference, Nourbese Philip writes that the whites found some races unmanageable and therefore they considered them threats to their “survival” and held them as the embodiment of evil and whatever is bad in the world.

European thought has traditionally designed certain groups not only as inferior but also, paradoxically, as threats to their order, systems, and traditions of knowledge. Women, Africans, Asians, and aboriginals can be said to comprise these groups and together they constitute the threat of the Other - ...[. . .] where he was rational, the Other was irrational; where he was controlled, the Other was uncontrolled - a slave to his her emotions; where he was white and therefore the repository of all that was good, the Other was black and the repository of all that was evil. (Cudjoe 295)

As Europeans thought that Africans were subhuman beings and they (Africans) had to be managed, they (Europeans) deterritorialized them linguistically and culturally and colonized them in their own territories. This led to linguistic deterritorialization because Africans were denied ~~of~~ opportunities to communicate in their own languages. The subhuman status given to Africans by the Europeans has hurt the feelings of all Africans and psychologically affected them. These Afro-Caribbean writers want the world to realize why the whites did what they did. They might be able to fool all people for some time by imposing their own ideas on others, but it is not possible to fool all the people all the time.

Linguistically reterritorialized writers like Harris, Philip and Brand make their writings powerful in the reterritorialized language by making it their *vehicular* language. Their writings make a difference because they mould it and make a synthesis of African demotic and dialects. In the next chapter we shall see how these Caribbean women writers reterritorialized in Canada attempt to reterritorialize the Anglo-Saxon language to create a niche for them in the world of literature. They have created awareness in the people all over the world by writing in the language of the colonizer. These writers knead the English language with their native experience and oral literature as well as their African demotic and weave it with a new metaphor and morphology to make their dissent powerful and effective

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