Dispersal of Power-Relationship in V.S. Naipaul’s Guerillas

Ramesh Prasad Adhikary
M.M. Campus, Tribhuvan University Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Nepal

Abstract: This research makes an intensive study of V.S. Naipaul’s Guerillas. It tries to show how the Foucauldian concept of discourse had affected on the actions of the natives in their struggle against the domination of the former British colonial agents in Caribbean island which results in the dispersal of power-relationship among the people. The events of the novel, Guerillas move around the effect of Black Power Movement. The novel has become such a document which is presented as a mirror of post-colonial Trinidadian community with inter-racial and intra-racial conflicts among the people. Blacks are discarded by the colonial rulers where Jimmy, the black power leader faces trauma for the blacks’ racial identity. Then, they start the struggle against the British colonials but they cannot achieve success due to inorganicity among them. On the other hand, the colonial workers are too found in dilemma. Even, the white ladies are found in supporting the Black Power Movement which consequently results in inorganicity and multiplicity of power. Thus, it portrays the working of horizontal and marginality of power among the people in post-colonial Trinidadian community.

Key words: Racial identity, inorganicity, Foucauldian concept, Guerillas, Trinidadian

INTRODUCTION

Naipaul’s literary career and his novel Guerillas: This research attempts to study Nobel Laureate Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul’s seventh novel Guerillas as a representation of dispersal of power-relationship among the people. The novel tries to give the most graphic, vivid and realistic account of the post colonial Trinidadian communities where there was not any authentic internal source of power due to inorganic and radically divided societies. Instead, power is dispersed everywhere in each and every corner of the society. A mood of loss permeates Guerillas, in which everybody is a wonderer in one way or another.

Naipaul’s Guerillas is set in a drought-ridden racially mixed Caribbean island where people feel the sense of lost. The whites are moving forward for their purposes in their own way without caring what the blacks are doing where as blacks with their leaders marching ahead. This situation has been a little more problematic because of lack of compromise which results in inter-racial and intra-racial conflicts among the people. Sometimes, the agents of colonizers feel that what are doing is not good. It is only their duty. This ambivalent feelings and their unfair behavior upon blacks has made a wide gap between the colonial whites and the native blacks. Everyone living in island including Roche, Jane and the black power leader Jimmy Ahmad are at the margins of the power. Power, therefore, is found everywhere having no any authenticity, organicity and centrality.

Acknowledged as the finest writer of the English sentence, Naipaul was born on 17th August, 1932 of a diasporic Indian parentage in Trinidad. He moved to London when he won a scholarship at Oxford University at the age of seventeen. After completing the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1953, he continued to live in England where he started his career as a novel writer. Presently, he lives in Wiltshire, England. He was awarded the Novel Prize in literature in 2001.

Naipaul is the most compelling literary figure of last 50 years. Producing uniquely masterpieces of both fiction and non-fiction, he is a gift born of a forceful visionary impulse with great feeling or his formidable body of work and exclusive access to his private papers and personal recollections. He has spent a great deal of time travelling Asia, Africa and America. He has been praised for his creative use of autobiogaphy in his travel narrative and for converting autobiographical material into poignant fiction and he has been accused of projecting his own neurosis onto his narrators and characters. Even the clarity and elegance of his prose, universally admired, have been treated by his detractors as mere sophistic devices for promulgating his views. From 1954-1956, Naipaul was a broadcaster for BBC’s Caribbean voices and between the
years 1957 and 1961, he was a regular fiction reviewer for the newspaper New Statesman. About his career and subject matter of his works, Said (2001) opines in his culture and imperialism:

*To some degree the early V.S. Naipaul, the essayist and travel writer, resident off and on in England, yet always on the move, revisiting his Caribbean and Indian roots, shifting through the debris of colonialism and post-colonialism, remorselessly judging the illusions and cruelties of independent state and the new true believers, was a figure of modern intellectual exile (40)*

It shows the impact of the colonial and post-colonial cruelties on the third world people. How he himself becomes a figure of modern intellectual exile throughout his life and literary career is significant.

Naipaul, an Indian by descent, a Trinidadian by birth and a Britain by citizenship is trying to search for his own root through writing. Living in a metropolitan culture, he shows the problems of the cultural assimilation as Rushdie does in Imaginary Homeland. He faces the problems like belongingness, rootless and sense of loss among the English people. So, he attempts to turn his nostalgic past through his fictional works and through his fictional works and travel memoirs for identifying and creating his self. About identity politics, Wolfreys *et al.* (2005) write: “Identity politics refers to the ideologies of difference that characterize politically motivated movements and school of literary criticism such as multiculturalism, in which diversity or ethnicity functions as the principal issue of political debate” (43). Thus, the creating of identity separately is difficult in the post-colonial era as there is no authenticity, organicity and centrality rather multiplicity and inorganicity functions. This research work mainly throws light or how the post imperial Trinidadian community operates multiplicity of power or how pervasive power rooted everywhere because of the racial, political and sexual tension in post-colonial Trinidad.

Guerillas is one of the Naipaul’s most complex books; it is certainly his most suspenseful, a series of shocks, like a shroud slowly unwound from a bloody corpse, showing damaged and familiar-face lost. It is a violent book in which little violence is explicit and it is opposite of anonymous. It may surprise the causal readers of Naipaul’s work, those who regret the absence of calypso in his West Indian books.

Since the time Guerillas appeared in literary horizon, in 1975, it has drawn the attention of many critics and literary men. As many critics have poured their critical sentimentalities on it, the criticism on the text are also varied owing to different perspectives. On the whole, the mood that haunts the novel is one of the existential despair. As Karma (1990) observes; “it is similar to existential absurdity: of anguish at living in an unrelated meaningless world: in a void” (27). It justifies how pessimism has become a central strain in Naipaul’s novel. This reflects a major personal crisis in Naipaul’s life and his disillusionment with India.

Naipaul’s apocalyptic vision offers an extremely dismal view of the world. It envisions the post imperial world as falling apart. About the post imperial situation, Mohan (2001) opines:

*The world contained in Guerillas is on the brink of extinction and this is evident in the Ridge, the city and the commune, all of which are described in terms of decay. The houses on the Ridge are not homes but ‘concrete shells’. As Jane notes these houses would never become ‘like family houses that had been lived in for two or three generation’ (125)*

This kind of vision points out the fact how there exist tension among the people in the post colonial era. Though he presents the extinctive vision of the world, he seems to have forgotten about the working of pervasive power which is the very basic purpose of the research work.

Guerillas is based on factual journalism republished as the “Killing in Trinidad”, is set in a thinly discussed Trinidad on the brink of revolution. As the novel is set in the nameless country of Caribbean island populated by a mix of ethnics but dominated by the post-colonial British during the Black Power Movement. The protagonist of the novel is a black power leader, Jimmy Ahmad, who is grown up in that country. Therefore, his remembrance of racial discrimination by whites in his childhood plays vital role in the development of the novel. Jimmy, the protagonist is accused of assault and rape in England and is moved from there. After arriving in Trinidad, he forms a commune for equality of the blacks. Roche, a South African resistance fighter is appointed as an agent of white colonizer as Sablich. Though he was white, he readily fought for the black men and even risked his life for apartheid. He was tortured by South-African government and was sent in jail for sometime in Africa. Jane is Roche’s English lover who along with Roche comes to visit Thrush cross Grange. As she arrives Thrush cross Grange, she is influenced by native blacks and their act of putting up hoarding boards and slogans for black right and justice.

Though the country became independent by white representatives, they were dominant even in the post independent era. The whole country was engulfed by the vampire of imperialism. There was racial, political and sexual tension everywhere. These tensions result pervasive power operating in post-independent Trinidadian communities where everyone seems guerillas fighting for his own little cause. The violence is found everywhere as no authentic power works. People are
found burning liquor shops. It won’t stop only damaging the things or property; rather it even kills Stephens and Jane. This created a kind of fear in the mind of whites. As the violence reaches to climax, curfew is announced and helicopters are flying over. Radio programmes and BBC news announce about current incident of the country. Thrush cross Grange has become a cover for the guerillas. Roche and other white colonizer agents realize their position in risk and start making passport to back for their own country.

Unfolding the novel on a former British colony in Caribbean during the 1970’s, Naipaul shows the racial and economic tensions where islanders are said to “coexist in hysteria”. This is inhabited with Asians, Africans, Americans and British colonials. Jimmy Ahmad is presented as a black power advocate, Roche as a writer and Jane as a neurotic lover in the novel. There is no honest relationship among these island exploiters. There is no authentic-internal source of power functioning in post independent Caribbean. Everyone seems to be a leader. Power is everywhere and everybody’s hand roots in each and every nook and corner of the society. The major exchanges revolve around sex and politics but every encounter is marred by deceit.

To sum up, Guerillas tries to project Naipaul’s own personal experience on Caribbean island in the post independent period where he finds the local natives being dominated in different ways even after the independence of Caribbean island. Each and every economic activity were handled by the former colonizers where the natives were even denied from their own natural rights. This created the feeling of dislocation and alienation in their own country. Therefore, they fight for their right and justice and dismantle the vision of former British colonizers but due to intra-racial conflicts, they find themselves too at the marginality of power. About the popularity and success of the novel, Guerillas, Patrick French (2008) writes; “Guerillas has proved an unexpected success in America and Francis Ford Coppola wanted to turn it into a film” (390).

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FOUCAULT’S INFLUENCE ON POST-COLONIAL THEORY**

Foucault’s influence in the literary theory has been strong among revisionist literary historians known as post-colonialist thinkers, who study the circulation of power throughout society. His theories have been concerned largely with concept of power, knowledge and discourse and his influence is clear in a great deal of post-structuralist, post-modernist, feminist, post-marxist and post-colonial theorizing. He, thus, challenges the conditions of certain truth from his contemporary thinkers. He does not say that power is evil in itself rather his idea of power is related to productivity.

As being a political thinker, Foucault states that power is employed and exercised through nit-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads, they are always in position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application. For him, resistance is more effective which always moves along with power.

Foucauldian concept of discourse has been widely used by the post-colonial theorists like Edward Said in his work, Orientalism. For Said, through discourse, the west exercise institutionalized power over the non-west. He follows the logic of Foucault (1972)’s theory and challenges the western discourse. According to Foucault, no discourse is fixed for all the time. They both are cause and effect. It not only wields power but also stimulus oppositions. The opposition of power is just like the other side of coin. It is natural for opposition to have a will to power. It can jump into no time, whenever it gets chance. The colonial discourse not only creates power to rule other, but also contains the possibility of resistance to it from the other. Edward Said expresses his ideas in his work Orientalism in the following ways: “I think Orientalism was itself a product of certain political forces and activities. Orientalism is a product certain political forces and activities” (203). It draws upon development in Marxist theories of power, especially the political philosophy of Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci and Francis Michel Foucault. Here, Said examined how knowledge that the western imperial powers formed about their colonies helped continually to justify their subjection. Western nations like France and Britain, he argued, spent an immense amount of time producing knowledge about the locations they dominated.

In culture and imperialism, Edward Said argues regarding the term imperialism and colonialism and states: “Imperialism’ means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of dominating metropolitan counter ruling a distant territory; ‘Colonialism’, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlement on distant territory” (9). Thus, neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and aquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination.

Race is another significant factor to identify themselves in front of other. But in post-colonial era, race loses its values and significance. As people lose their racial identity, they cannot organize or unite themselves rather they find their racial identity is in crisis. The term ‘race’ is defined in various ways. Wolfreys, Robbins and Womack state: “Race refers to a family, tribe, people or nation sharing a set of common interests, beliefs, habits or
Power and resistance: In Volume I of the history of sexuality, Foucault says that where there is power there is resistance. This is important and problematic statement for many reasons. It is productive in the sense it allows us to consider the relationship between those in struggles over power as not simply reducible to mater-slave relation or an oppressor-victim relationship. In order for there to be a relation where power is experienced, there has to be someone who resists Foucault goes so far as to argue that where there is no resistance it is not, in effect, a power relation. During the post-colonial era, where neither of them, the former colonial agents or the natives are in position of power rather the local people are found resisting against colonial discourse to locate their own identity and cultural values. Thus, for him resistance is ‘written in’ to exercise of power.

Certain theorists have worked with Foucault’s ideas of power and have tried to capture the complexity of relations of resistance and flash out Foucault’s ideas more. For example, James Scott in Domination of Arts of Renaissance has concerned himself with the way that both the powerful and powerless are constrained in their behavior with power-relation. Scott asks:

*How do we study power-relation when the powerless are often obliged to adopt a strategic pose in the presence of the powerful and when the powerful may have an interest in over dramatizing their reputation and mastery? If we take all of this at face, value we risk mistaking what may be a tactic for the whole story (XIII)*

Thus, Scott suggests what need to add to the analysis of the behavior of powerless and powerful in each others’ presence is an analysis of their behavior when they are with equals. There he suggests, they develop a ‘hidden transcript’.

In the collection of essays entitled Power/Knowledge (1980), Foucault explores the way that, in order for something to be established as a factor as true, other equally valid statements have been discredited and denied. He asserts that the set of procedures which produce knowledge and keep knowledge in circulation can be termed an ‘epitome’. About Foucault’s concept of power in relation to knowledge Wolfreys, Robbins and Womack state:

*Power is causal, it is constitutive of knowledge, even while knowledge is, concomitantly, constitutive of power: knowledge gives one power : but one has the power in given circumstances to constitute bodies of knowledge, discourses and so on as valid or invalid, truthful or untruthful. Power serves in making the world both knowable and controllable (65-66)*

This justifies, in Foucault’s view power implies knowledge and vice versa. He characterizes power/knowledge as an abstract force which determines what will be known, rather than assuming that individual thinkers develop ideas and knowledge.

Foucault’s view of relationship between knowledge and power is not uncontested. In a very general way, we are aware that knowledge and power are related. Knowledge, for Foucault is the product of a certain discourse, which has embedded it to be formulated and has novelty outside it. The truth of the human sciences is the effects of discourses of language. Their ‘knowledge’ does not derive from access to the real world, to authentic reality but from the rules of their discourses. Concerning Foucault’s view of relation between power and knowledge, Bertens (2003) writes: “Knowledge is enabled by the rules of certain discourse, which decide what qualifies knowledge and what does not but ultimately in Foucault’s scenario knowledge is produced by power, by the means that a discourse has at its disposal to establish its credibility” (155-56). Since, we all are extensions of discourses that we have internalized, we ourselves constantly reproduce their power even in our intimate relations.

In Foucault’s view, there is equality in terms of power distributions. It is not hierarchical flowing from top to bottom and is used vertically to dominate the others.

Foucauldian power does not adhere to the repressive hypothesis that sees power functioning in the form of chain which localizes it in a few hand. Power, for him, is not just the ruthless domination of the weaker by the stronger. This idea is akin to Nietzsche, who says that power is to be ‘had’ at all. In The History of Sexuality Vol-I, Foucault states about all-pervasive nature of power:

*Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere […] that is there is no binary opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations […] no such duality extending from the top down and recreating on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body (93-94)*
Marxist thinking though he openly acknowledged his debt to Nietzsche, than to Karl Marx who like Foucault saw History in terms of power but defined power as something to be wielded by somebody upon the other. But Foucault saw power not simply as the repressive force that produce what happens in a society. Only this, he himself is caught and empowered by certain discourses and practices that constitute power. His concern with the productivity of power is all pervasive and deserves equal weight.

Rejecting hierarchical or vertical notion of power and found in Marxism, he says power is pervasive and horizontal and it lacks a locus. This notion of power is interrelated, with his notion of discourse in which believes that discourses are medium through which power is exercised in society. As discourses are multiple and rooted in every nooks and corners of society. Power too is dispersed everywhere. Thus, power is to be seen in its dispersion, not in centralization.

**Discourse and ideology:** Discourse is a term widely used in analyzing literary and non-literary texts. It has become a common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology and many others. In post-colonial era, colonial discourses are not found in authentic situation in creating truth for natives and circulating colonial power, as the countries have been decolonized from military power. Foucault has used widely the term ‘discourse’ in his discussion of power, knowledge and truth. Discourse, for Foucault is important in the sense it joins knowledge and power. Discourses in societies are created through various act of representation by people who are in power. In term of ‘ideology’, Marxist theorists use the term to denote the domination of powerless by powerful one. Foucault sought to distinguish and distance his work from Marxist thinking though he openly acknowledged his debt to Marxist thought. What is clear is that Marxism and notion ideology were crucial for him in the development of the notion of discourse.

Foucault remarks it is education system that regulates the discourse rather than being seen as an enlightening institution where force inquiry after the truth is encouraged. Another internal regulator of discourse is the notion of the academic discipline. Due to academic discipline, philosophers, psychologists, linguists and semioticians who are all engaged in the study of the same subject language—may be largely unaware of each other’s work. It demarcates certain types of knowledge as belonging to particular domains and also leads to the construction of distinct methodologies for analysis.

**Power-relations in post-colonial world:** Post-colonial world is the time of great diversity where lots of changes take place in the society but those changes cannot be totally established as authorized one. The facts keep on changes according to the expression of the people. Stephen Best and Douglas Kellner opine that Foucauldian discontinuity refers to the fact that in a transition from one historical era to another “things are no longer perceived, described, expressed, characterized, classified and known in the same way” (217). It shows that such kind of situation arises because of the boundaries of knowledge and nature of transitional period; there arises the discontinuity and historical breaks including same overlapping interaction between the old and the new. There is found a kind of shift in the science of labor, life and language where all go to establish their own ideas. Due to this fact, one faces difficulty in creating his/her own discourse.

People in the post-colonial world tried to reestablish their own cultural values as they were confused by the culture imposed upon them by the colonizers. Those neglected and forgotten cultural values were again rediscovered. Moreover, the problem of identity emerges when people find themselves lost in dilemma. Such things happen when they are confused about the values of others. About the colonial aftermath, Leela Gandhi (1999) states: “It is marked by the range of ambivalent cultural moods of formations which accompany periods of transition and translations. It is, in the first place, a celebrated moment of arrival-charged with the rhetoric of independence and creative euphoria of self-invention” (5). During the creation of identity, if they remain valid up to the end they become powerful but it is not so easy to establish their own discourse with the support of others.

Contemporary American critic Huntington (1992) exploring the peoples’ pursuit to identify themselves along the cultural lives opines: “In post-cold war world people are cultural people and various are attempting to answer the most basic question human can face: Who are we? They identify with cultural group […] we know who we are not” (21). This justifies people in post world war period identify themselves in relation to culture, race and history.

Foucault’s concept of pervasive power functions in Naipaul’s Guerillas as the novel is set in the drought-ridden post-colonial Trinidadian Communities where none either people related to ex-power or the people of would be possible power are found dominant rather both of them are found at the marginality of power with confused perceptions.

**ANALYSIS: PERVERSIVE POWER-RELATIONSHIP IN GUERRILLAS**

Confronting the ideology that power is vertical, Guerrillas manifests the multiple location of power which
operates through inter-racial conflicts, gentle and ambivalent nature of colonial workers, male ideology and the working of marginality of power that result out of the past-colonial reality of Trinidad. Guerillas do not cover only the fictional imagination of author but it has made a true history of human lives in post colonial era. It is not set in a fixed place so as to universalize the condition of all once colonized country people and to show how pervasive power functions in post-colonial Thrush Grange commune.

It would be fair to say that Naipaul at this stage of his literary career was not a political waiter in any conscious sense. The same, however, cannot be said about his later novels where there is a clear shift of focus to the post-imperial third world political scenario so much, so that individuals are reduced to political beings and the social situation as a whole is described in terms of power-politics. Every relationship, even the one between sexes is affected by it.

Set in a drought-ridden post-colonial Caribbean island, Guerillas brings a group of different people from various racial back grounds. As their racial background varied, they did have no sense of authenticity and originality, rather mixed and confused feelings are brought forward. Though the country became free from military colonization, it was still guided by linguistics, economics and cultural ones. On the other hand, the former British colonizers were trying to relocate their own position through creating their own discourses but they were found disobeyed/rejected by natives, so as to make living within the country, they accept the discovers of natives. Thus, the novel not only shows the working of marginality of power in every nook and corners of society but also resistance made by natives against the attempts of former colonial workers, as Foucault discloses in his work, The History of Sexuality.

Guerillas is set in an unnamed Caribbean island and the action centers around three major characters Jimmy, Jane and Roche. The novel is based on the real life character of Michael X also known as Abdul Malik, whose story Naipaul has published in Return, his collection of articles. Naipaul, here, makes some changes in the cost in order to extend its thematic possibilities by introducing two new characters Roche, the white liberal and Bryant, a black homosexual youth and transforms the original story in to a modern fable of power and marginality. Everyone living in island including Roche and Jane are at the margins of power.

Bryant, a part from being Jimmy’s alter ego-adds a Fresh dimensions to theme of marginality of power. Being a slum youth who is physically deformed and barely articulate, one would think of him as the most marginal character in the novel. Jimmy as the narrator writes about Jane’s visit to Thrush cross Grange when the black boy asks a dollar from her:

And the boy on the next bed said more loudly and in an abrupt tone, not looking at her, his shining face resting one side on his thin pillow, his close set blood shot eyes fixed on the buck door way: “Give me a dollar” [...] she took out a purse from her shoulder bag and offered a red dollar note, folded in four. Raising his arm but not changing in position on the bed, still is not looking at her, he took the note, let his hand fall in the bed and said “Thank you, white lady” (10-11)

Bryant’s position seems the most marginal one as he extorts a dollar from her. It was clarified later that the black boy who asks a dollar was Bryant, through the conversation among Roche, Jane and Jimmy:

Roche said: "Did they ask you for money?"
One of them asked me for a dollar. ’
Jimmy said: "That was Bryant.
'A Boy with pigtails, very black.'
'Bryant', Jimmy said (13)

But later on, Bryant, one of the most marginal/more peripheral characters becomes a party to Jane’s murder. As Jimmy offers her to him after having raped her anally. He kills her savagely because he hates her sexually and racially. After having raped her anally, Jimmy says:

Bryant the rat kill the rat!"
Bryant running, faltered.
"Your rat, Bryant your rat"
Her right hand was on her arm swelling around her neck and it was on her right arm that Bryant made the first cut. The first curt: the rest would follow (247)

His killing Jane is a horrible act not because he a madman but because it saves him at least temporarily from madness. More accurately, killing her allows him to repress the need he has felt to kill Jimmy. This killing of white lady by a physically deformed black boy, the most marginal character states how the authenticity of power has been subverted and reached his the hands of marginal ones. Though the whites think they are in powerful position, it is subverted through resistance of natives. This incident highlights the fact that in a male dominated world, Jane’s position as a woman, who is previously supposed to be superior as white by skin is even more marginal than Bryant.

Naipaul employs the third person omniscient narrator’s perspectives and successfully dramatizes the degenerate politics of the post independence ex-colony as he moves in out of the consciousness of characters. The story-line of the novel runs this: Jimmy Ahmad just returned from London after involving himself in sexual assault. Therefore he is feared by everyone. The government fears him because of his “English glamour”
while the capitalistic firms like the Sablich, which have investments in the island fear him as block power man who can bring about revolution in the island. This involvement in rape shows his resistance against white’s authenticity on the one hand and the fear created in the mind of the colonial workers indicates the inauthenticity of power position on the other. He states the story of the rape of a white girl in following words: “It was the story of the rape of a white girl at beach by a gang. The girl had bled and shrieked and fainted. One of the men had then run to a brackish creek in the coconut grove and has tried, using his cupped his hands alone to bring water to the girl” (60).

Jimmy, a black power man whose activities shock the colonial workers, knows his potential only too well. The affluent capitalists realize that in order to keep away Jimmy from creating trouble for them, they must harshness his latent energy and channalize it. He calls the commune “Thrushcross Grange” and leads the slum youth to bring about a revolution based on land. The black leader, Jimmy has put an eye to look at whites and their activities.

Blacks are not so simple as white people think they are. Now the blacks do not believe in whites. The blacks are always skeptic. How strongly Jimmy writes about Peter Roche, shows the inner feelings of oppressed people. The narrator remarks:

Still everybody has their uses, even Mr. Peter Roche, I call him Massa but he does not see the joke. He is the great white revolutionary and torture hero of South Africa. He’s written him book which I don’t think you would know about, but over here of course he is a world shaking bestselling author and now he is working for one of our old imperialist firms Sablich’s great slave traders in the old days, they now pretend that black is beautiful and wait for it they employ Mr. Roche to prove it (36)

The white people think that all black people believe what they pretend to show. The power holders think that the common people obey what they order. But the oppressed people try to find a way out of that situation. They try to compare their life in the past and present. That gives them the power to go further for their goals. Once Jimmy says to Jane; “You would find this hard to believe, but when I was a boy my ambition was to be a waiter in this hotel. They didn’t allow black people” (66). Such examples of experiences of the natives who have been uprooted are highlighted in Naipaul’s writing. The hero Jimmy on a dispossessed person not only tries to achieve his own position but also his whole racial status.

Though the colonialism was over, the different colonial institutions were being operated throughout post-colonial era. Through these colonial institutions, they were exercising their power over native people where they are not given any type of opportunity instead; they are not allowed to enter in those institutions. Rather, they are considered as objects and things of museum to watch them up Jimmy opines:

*When we were at school we used to come to play there some afternoons. Cricket and Football. The white people would watch us. And we would act up for them. When I was in England I met a girl who had been here as a girl. She passed through with her patents and they stayed at the Prince Albert. All she remembers of the place where the little black boys playing football in the park outside the hotel (67-68)*

How the colonial institutions function during the transitional period, whereby through these restitutions they were operating power and creating truths for the natives. The local people are found in dilemma whether to follow colonial discourses or to relocate their positions in their own discourses separate from the former colonial workers.

On the whole, the mood that haunts the novel is one of the existential despair. As Sashi Karma observes: “It’s similar to existential obscurity: of anguish at living in an unrelated meaningless world: in a void” (27). Pessimism, a central strain takes place in the novel as it projects the wasteland like world. This reflects a major personal crisis in Naipaul’s life and his disillusionment with India. Though, Sashi Karma projects the mood of the novel as an existential despair, he seems to forget to talk about pervasive power operating in post-colonial Trinidadian Community.

Jane is Roche’s girl friend, who has followed him to the island because she believes Roche to be ‘an engaged doer’. However, it does not take long for her to realize that Roche’s position in the island is no better than that of refugee. The narrator remarks: “And Roche didn’t occupy in it the position she thought he did. When it seemed so fresh [...] she saw that Roche was refuge on the island. He was an employee of his firm, he belonged to a place like the Ridge; he was half colonial” (45). Her ambivalent attitude toward Roche signifies the colonial workers do have no authenticity rather they are in dilemma. As they realize their discourses are being disobeyed by the natives, they begin to accept the discourses of the natives for a living. Her ambivalent feeling about her own race is further depicted as she says: “Colonial police are terrible” (89). Though she herself belongs to the colonizers’ group she is confused about her own norms and values. This shows her own nature towards the former British colonial workers.

There is ironic contrast between what the characters think and feel and what they say and do. This ironic contrast between their thinking and activities reveal the inauthenticity and disintegration among the colonial
agents. As they are themselves disintegrated; they are not in position of power to rule, hierarchical power as Marxist theorists claim. In addition, we get into the psyche of the characters through it and they are subjected to further assessment through their preparations about one another. Like wise, Roche’s idea about Jane also undergoes a change after she joins him at the Ridge. When he had first met her in London he had considered her to be a coherent person with a point of view. But later he finds changed view in her.

It is not clear until the end but Jimmy and his boys are the ‘guerillas’ and are part of the resistance movement. To resist against the colonial power, Jimmy sadomonizes her and brings to Bryant who cuts “her right arm” (247) first and kills her as she goes to meet Jimmy to say good bye him. During the sexual act, Jimmy acts as a dominant male lover and he becomes aggressive in the relationship. The narrator remarks: “He covered her mouth with his, his lips widened and she made a strange sound and then he spat in her mouth. She swallowed and he let her face go” (240). Observing the excitation of Jane in sexual act Jimmy’s deeply rooted anger comes out. He returns her wonton kiss wit one equally obscene: he spits in her mouth. She swallowed and he let her face go” (240). Observing the excitation of Jane in sexual act Jimmy’s deeply rooted anger comes out. He returns her won ton kiss with one equally obscene: he spits into her mouth. He also achieves an erection by forcing Jane to submit to anal sex, an act she hates. He even taunts her loss of virginity since she had ever been so brutalized. Such type of brutalization of white lady by Jimmy suggest, it is not only whites who are in position to operate power but blacks are as well as they are in successful position to resist against colonial agents.

Ahmad too engages in act of sexual dominance, even rapes as a sexually divided man torn between his desire to be loved and to dominate. He is further heightened by bisexual whose male lover, Bryant, functions as the protagonist’s alter ego. It is as though Ahmad’s most murderous instincts are deputized to Bryant, so that Bryant can live another kind of deceit that of seeming kindness, as his horrific projects develops.

This kind of sense of suspicion grows up when Mrs. Grandlieu’s father-in-law died when he drank water in his estate house. They think blacks are serving only poisonous food for them. This led them towards dilemma and suspicion. Champa Rao Mohan in concern to Naipaul and his novel Guerillas remarks:

Naipaul’s apocalyptic vision offers an extremely dismal view of the world. It envisions the post-imperial word as falling apart […] The world contained in Guerillas is on the brink of existential and this is evident in Ridge, the city and the commune all of which are described in terms of decay (125)

Though Rao Mohan projects serious and destructive view of Thrush cross Grange during the post-colonial world, he fails to decentre the power position of the colonial agents, where, in fact, the marginality of power is found functioning everywhere, which is the very motif of this research work.

One of the significant reasons, the natives are against the white is that Americans are taking away bauxite from that place. The raw materials of that place are not used for the local native people. “Harry said, ‘but that’s a hell of a thing you are telling us, Merry. This place could be paradise, man, if people really planned. We could have real industries. We don’t have to let the Americans just take away our bauxite” (137). This shows intra-racial conflicts among the colonial agents as according to him, the country can be made a place like heaven if people work properly and they use raw materials for local products. These reasons have made the native people fire so they behave like a mad people. This sense of exploiting those local products deeply rooted in them.

Peter Roche is a South African freedom fighter. Though he was white by skin, he readily fought for the black man and even risked his life for apartheid. Therefore, he had been tortured in South Africa for his involvement in the anti-apartheid cause.

Like the quest for identity and freedom, Naipaul’s characters search for power and also meet with failure as for Foucault, there is no authentic internal source of power operates in commune rather power moves along with resistance. Jimmy, the black power leader’s search for authentic power ends in fiasco. The narrator states about him:

You people sent me back here to be nothing but I picked myself up, I must have surprised you, you must have read about me in papers, people have knew who I was, they knew what I had done; they knew what I was offering them […] these crazy black people started shouted for Israel and Africa and I was a lost man, but I was always lost I knew that since I was a child, I know I was fooling myself. But I am a man Marjorie, it is what you made me, the pain you brought me and you see how it’s ending (233)

This shows how a man of action and very popular in letters and books, comes to lose his own dignity as the riots breaks out. He is not considered as a Black Power leader. He loses his dignity and personality and reaches in position of marginality of power. Jane, Roche’s girl friend, too moves in search of a rich handsome and energetic man and her search for an energetic man for her physical satisfaction and power proves to be fatal. After sexual exploitation, the deeply rooted hatred against whites emerges in Jimmy and he offers Jane to Bryant. The narrator states: “Her right hand was on the arm swelling around her neck and it was on her right arm that Bryant made the first cut” (247). Her desires to achieve powerful position by seeking an energetic and powerful person lead her to gruesome end.
Finally, it’s Meredith, the colonial politician who becomes the minister. However, the events that lead to his becoming the minister are so vaguely presented that one cannot derive any positive meaning out of it. About Meredith position as a politician, the narrator argues:

Meredith was about forty. He had been in politics and had briefly been a minister but then he had fallen out with the party and reigned. He spoke to himself and was spoken of, not as a rejected politician but as a political dropout and this made him unusual, because politics here was often a man’s only livelihood and political failure was a kind of extinction (32)

Though he becomes a minister, his position as a powerful is not presented in proper way rather, he is projected as rejected politician. He achieves the position of marginality. It only reiterates the unpredictable and chaotic nature of politics in the Third World.

The broadcaster is even more alarmed by Jimmy in his role as a community leader on the island. He warns Jane and Roche that their associate is a violent man, a top spinning out of control. Meredith expounds on Ahmad:

I regard him as one of the most dangerous men in their place [...] Anybody can use that man and create chaos in this place. He can be programmed. He’s the most suggestible man I know [...] There is a kind of dynamic about his condition that has to work itself out. In England, it ended with the rape and indecent assault. The same dynamic will take him to end here (140)

There was a sense of fear in the mind of colonial agents. They regard Jimmy as the most dangerous man of Thrush cross Grange in the sense he has been leading the Black power movement. Yet, Meredith’s premonition exile who house became decidedly suburban in his personal life as well as in his politics. However, by the novel’s end, this same group will be wholly dependent on the former type for their very lives.

Roche, Jane and Harry de Tenuja face psychological problems. The Black power movement against white colonialists has created a kind of fear and tension to Harry as he finds the life of his race in Thrush cross Grange in impermanence and uncertainties which is a shock to him and his race. When Roche and Jane are at Harry’s beach house Harry says, “The doctor said: well, Harry boy, I don’t know what to say, I fell it must be psychological” (120). His psychological problem is not only his private one. It is common of white people as the natives are creating violence in the commune.

Jimmy considers that he has created fears and tension in the mind of the colonial agents. He is very well aware of his condition how it was in the past and how is it now. He regards that the whites have fallen in dilemma.

He wants to justify that he is not enemy of anyone. He is not a simple politician who gives speech in the street for his own benefits. He further justifies about himself:

I’m not like the others. I’m not a street corner politician. I don’t make any speeches. Nobody’s going to throw me in jail because I am subversive. I am not subversive. I am the friend of every capitalist in the country. Everybody is my friend. I am not going out on the streets to change the government. Nobody is going to shoot me down. I am here and I stay here. If they want to kill me they have to come here. I carry no gun [...] I have no gun. I am no guerilla (21)

He doesn’t regard himself as a guerrilla as he does not carry any negative motive. He carries only racial purpose for the benefits of all. Wherever he goes he only wants his own right, he does not carry fight for any personal benefit as others politicians do. Therefore, he doesn’t fear of any body and he says he carries no gun as he does not have any negative purpose.

The revolution had broken out everywhere and the sense of fear and tension starts growing in Roche’s mind heavily. He is found waiting for Jane to leave the commune. He regards that he has built his life on sand which does not carry any meaning or a value. He finds himself failed in two ways. The narrator remarks about his failure:

In the morning Roche thought I’ve built my whole life on sand. He had thought of himself as a doer [...] the day’s routine became awaited in those words [...] In his mind, the two failures were linked and ran together. He thought I have trapped myself. One failure by itself he could have managed, but the two running together here, in this lost corner of the world, would overwhelm him. And he could neither act nor withdraw; he could only wait (87)

Roche finds himself failed in his ambition. His desire was to be a powerful ruler who could dominate over the natives as Marxist theorists forwarded. But because of the recent events and the resistance made by the natives did not allow him to be support rather he finds his project failed due to oppositions’ resistance and violence.

What Jane hears from others about Jimmy doesn’t make any belief upon it. It indicates the ambivalent or unstable nature of colonial workers. Everyone talks of guerrillas but Jane is surprised with the ideas of guerrillas. The narrator remarks:

There was strangeness and danger: the paths, actors gardens between houses [...] sometimes at night and in the early morning, there was the sound of gunfire. The newspapers, the radios and the television spoke of guerrilla (25)

Not only the people and media are found talking of guerillas but the situation and landscape also shows the real deserted condition of that place. Draught has engulfed the land totally and fire is found everywhere. “The narrator further states: The hill had turned brown many clumps of the bamboo had caught fire and the woodland on the Ridge had acquired something of the derelict quality of the city. Trees had been stripped; negotiation had generally dried and thinned” (40). This atmosphere created by revolution itself signifies there was no authenticity of power working in Thrush cross commune rather inorganicity is sprayed everywhere. As Foucault says power is dispersed, inorganic, pervasive and horizontal in the society.

After anal exploitation of Jane by the black power leader Jimmy, the narrator presents the biblical allusion which signifies the nature of the former colonial workers and the natives. The narrator writes:

Ant’s nests, of dried mud, were like black, veins on the white trunks of softwood trees. The wild banana was in flower: a solid spray of spear-heads of orange and yellow that never turned to fruit, emerging sticky with mauve gum and slime from the heart of the tree (246)

Through several allusions such as ‘ant’s nest’, ‘dried mud’ and ‘blacks veins on the white trunks of softwood trees, the narrator reveals the inconstant and changeable evil nature of the former colonial workers who been outwardly white by their color or skin but inwardly very cruel and selfish. The narrator associates the cruelty and selfish nature of white colonials with the natural allusions.

Considering the novel as a story of violence and betrayal, Patrick French, in his recently published book The World is what it is. The Authorized Biography of V.S. Naipaul states: “Guerrillas is a story of violence and betrayal that ends with Roche packing his suitcases and telling Jimmy over the telephone that Jane is in her room packing, although he knows that Jimmy has murdered her” (347). This picks up of the life as he is living in the novel, is now at a very serious level. How knowingly he accepts the murder of Jane is very much significant. As Patrick French’s motif was to publish authorized biography by of V.S. Naipaul, he seems to forget about the power relationship among the people where no one is found in dominant position of power rather power in found along with resistance. By this, we mean the gentle nature of the colonial workers who accept the murder of his girlfriend as it allows him to make a living. These colonial workers like Roche acceptance and natives’ resistance against the white colonial workers forward the working of pervasive power in post colonial Trinidad.

It’s clear that in inorganic and fragmented societies like Thrush cross commune can’t have an authentic integral source of power. This means post-imperial world does not have center or hierarchical notion of power where the powerless or weaker accepts the stronger. Both the colonial workers and the colonized ones are at the margins of power. Power is found in each and every nook and corner of society, instead of organic and hierarchical notion of power. Even characters like Jimmy Ahmad who seems to lead guerrilla movements are at the margins of power and ends up pathetically. The inauthenticity of Jimmy’s so called guerilla movement reflected in the interior decoration of Jimmy’s house, which mimics English middle class suburbia.

CONCLUSION

In Guerrillas, Naipaul presents the vivid sceneries of post-imperial Caribbean Island where pervasive power is found functioning everywhere so that both the former colonial workers and the colonized natives are found at the marginality of power. The novel reveals the circumstances for dispersed power-relations among people creating inter-racial and intra-racial conflicts among them. Jimmy Ahmad, educated in England, finds himself dislocated within his own country and his race’s identity in crisis. Therefore, he resists for his own little cause and is considered as a guerrilla. People in post colonial era try to reestablish their own cultural values and they are confused by the culture imposed upon them by the colonizers. As they don’t find their racial rights in their Thrush cross Grange commune, they resist relocating their racial location. But due to post colonial era, people are found lost in dilemma, confusion and so forth. So, the authenticity, originality and unity do not function rather inorganicity is found among people where pervasive power operates in different forms. The white people, the agents of colonial workers are spying over blacks and their activities to suppress blacks’ movement against them. They do not think of black racial identity. The colonial agent, Roche is always working to suppress and divert the blacks’ movement. In England also, Jimmy and other blacks are not taken as human beings where he was accused of a rape and assault. The foreign rulers in their own country are not tolerable for natives. Therefore, they resist against the foreign rulers. Moreover, those natives are not allowed to go to good schools and colleges and good hotels like Albert Price Hotel where only whites are allowed to go. Though they carry the dream to be a waiter and work in the hotel. For example, Jimmy has great ambition to be a waiter in Prince Albert Hotel but those natives are left behind in outside deserted and suburb areas.

Guerrillas projects a series of shocks and suspenseful events by locating it in a drought ridden-post imperial nameless country which is under controlled by the former British colonizers. The place does not look very good. It looks decayed like Eliot’s Waste land. In inorganic and
racially divided societies like Caribbean, there can be no authentic internal source of power as the Marxist theorists have claimed that there operates the master-slave relationship. In such a society like the once depicted in novel, everyone is Guerrilla a privateer fighting for his one little cause. In Guerillas, we meet, Roche, Jane, Jimmy and the boys at the commune are derelicts who have no sense of purpose in life and just ‘carry-on’. This reveals the operation of dispersal of power-relationship in post-colonial commune like Thrush Cross Grange.

REFERENCES
