The Alienation of The Other: A Study of Animal Metaphors in Gurnah's *Paradise*

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Abstract— *Tanzanian-British author Abdulrazak Gurnah is the Nobel Prize in Literature laureate of 2021. To date, he has published ten novels, including Paradise (1994), By the Sea (2002), and Afterlives (2020), which primarily depict the living conditions of people in African colonies, focusing on issues such as identity, gender oppression, and racial conflict. His representative work Paradise, through the coming-of-age journey of a debt slave boy from German East Africa, just portrays the plight of The Other under the intertwined influences of tradition, patriarchy, and colonial systems. This study takes Gurnah's Paradise as the research object, combining Sartre's theory of The Other with the perspective of animal metaphors. Through close textual analysis, it ultimately selects three pairs of highly symbolic animal images, which are "wolf and wolf-people", "crocodile and goat", and "pigeon and dog", to systematically analyze their metaphorical connections with the individual, gender, and race Other. Further investigation reveals that commodity trade and slavery serves as primary causes for the physical and spiritual alienation of these Others. Within the macro-historical context of colonialism, the colonized were traded as commodities and tamed like livestock, ultimately losing freedom and dignity, thereby being transformed from humans into objects and beasts. This study thus aims to enrich the current academic research in interpreting animal metaphors in Paradise, offering fresh perspectives for examining social discrimination rooted in gender and race and so on. By prompting readers to reflect on related real-world issues, it advocates for the construction of a more diverse and inclusive society.*

*Keywords— **Abdulrazak Gurnah, Alienation, Animal Metaphors, Paradise, The Other.***

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Abdulrazak Gurnah and *Paradise*

On 7 October 2021, Stockholm local time, Tanzanian writer Abdulrazak Gurnah had surprisingly won the Nobel Prize for Literature. The awards were presented as the following: For his uncompromising and empathetic in-depth exploration of the effects of colonialism and concern for the fate of refugees caught between cultural and geographic fissures (Nobel Prize Committee 2021).

Born in 1948 on the island of Zanzibar, Tanzania (then known as Zanzibar and Pemba), Gurnah's Arab citizens were massacred in 1963 as a result of the revolution that followed Zanzibar's liberation from British colonial rule. As a member of this ethnic group, Gurnah was also forced to leave his country at the age of 18 and travelled to the UK as a refugee to study, eventually earning a PhD at the University of Kent, where he continued to teach. Due to these experiences, as a diaspora

African writer, he draws from his own sense of displacement and longing for home, with his academic knowledge, to critique colonialism and explore hybrid identities from a distinct perspective, establishing him as a leading scholar in the field of postcolonial literature.

Until now, Gurnah has published a total of ten full-length novels, including his masterpieces *Paradise* and *By the Sea*, which have been shortlisted for the Booker Prize several times. Just as what he once said in his own acceptance speech that "I've come to recognise that there are some affairs I need to say, some tasks I need to complete, as well as some remorse and indignation I need to push and dig for (Gurnah 2021)", most of his works oppose simplified thinking, reject stereotypical descriptions, and avoid primitive nostalgia and imagery of pre-colonial Africa, giving readers a glimpse of a multicultural East Africa.

Paradise is set in Zanzibar, East Africa. Just as the preface of this book shows, it is a place where Muslim black Africans, Christian missionaries, and Indians from the subcontinent coexist. It was also colonised by Germany from the second half of the 19th century to the end of the First World War. And according to the words of Lu (2022), through three trading journeys by Yusuf, who is a 12-year-old boy sold into slavery due to his father's debts, the whole book employs a frame narrative like the style of *One Thousand and One Nights*. And from a child's point of view and the third person's perspective, each trading journey, directly exposes Yusuf to diverse cultures with different stories and myths, while borrowing some biblical and Quranic elements, obviously the tales of Joseph and the Garden of Eden.

It is usually considered that *Paradise* is at once the story of a tragic love story, and a tale of the corruption of traditional African patterns by European colonialism. The title's metaphorical pun, both as the paradise and the hell, can be easily found from the different descriptions of the garden in Uncle Aziz's house from the beginning of "the silence and coolness of the garden in flower" (Gurnah 1994: 42) to the end of "the garden lay in composed silence, it's night music trembling imperceptibly in the gloom" (Gurnah 1994: 247). Apart from such a metaphor of the title, symbolic animal imagery is also woven throughout this book as some

significant metaphors, making *Paradise* a fertile ground for relative research.

1.2 Literature Review: Studies Abroad and at Home

Despite Abdulrazak Gurnah's profound significance in the domain of post-colonial literature, in China, his works actually have been rarely explored before his receipt of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2021. But research abroad on Gurnah and his works are relatively earlier than that at home. Fortunately, the prestigious award has greatly led Gurnah into the global literary spotlight, making his works gain more intense scrutiny and analysis over the world. *Paradise*, with its richly textured narrative and incisive exploration of themes deeply rooted in Africa's colonial history, has also become a focal point for scholars and critics both abroad and at home naturally.

Over the years, overseas research on *Paradise*, mainly focuses on its narrative of intertextuality, and themes including colonialism and identity. About its narrative of intertextuality, Jacobs (2009) proposed that *Paradise* reverts to the colonial gaze from a post-colonial stance, offering a narrative revision of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. To this point, by in detail discussing the Swahili histories and the text in detail, Mustafa (2015) stated that most literary research on this novel centers around Gurnah's subtle description, skillful intertextuality, and intricate Islamic and biblical allusions. Regarding the themes of colonialism, Berman (2013) initially analyzed Yusuf's final choice of joining a column of askaris, who are native soldiers recruited by the Germans, showing a social space of Africa that is disrupted due to colonialism. And around this, Goettsche (2023) further investigated German colonialism's aftermath in East Africa as depicted in *Paradise* and also other works. And Houlden (2013) even examined male homosexual desire in Gurnah's *Paradise* and *By the Sea*, highlighting the corrosive effects of both slave trading and colonialism in East Africa. Under such colonial circumstances, many scholars also explored further the theme of identity. Pujolras-Noguer (2023) recently traced the deep trauma of displacement in both Gurnah's *Paradise* and *Afterlives*, which both demonstrate colonialism's traumatic impacts on its characters' identity. In the same vein, by carefully analyzing the behaviour of Gurnah's characters in both *Paradise* and *By the Sea*,

Kohler (2017) showed that the characters' mobility and migration, which are closely related to the theme of identity, are inseparably linked with both trade and storytelling.

At home, in terms of a general study of Gurnah and his works, Xiong (2022) focused on the translation and reception of Gurnah's works in China, deeply analyzing the introduction process, the dissemination channels, and also the readers' feedback. More specifically on *Paradise*, domestic research has been mainly emerging in recent years, also on the topics of narrative, colonialism and identity. In the field of narrative, Lu (2022) analyzed the nested-style narrative structure and the constantly deepening narrative levels in *Paradise* from the traditional, purposeful, mobile, and reflective characteristics of East African business travel activities. Besides, Zhao (2024) used Shen Dan's dual-narrative process theory to analyze, believing that this novel not only reveals the impact of European colonialism and slavery on East African countries but also shows the positive force of characters like Yusuf who strive to seek subjectivity and break free from identity fetters. Wang (2025), similar to Jacobs, also discussed the intertextual relationship between *Paradise* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.* Concerning colonial history, DeCarde and Zhang (2023), with the theme of "The Denied Paradise", centered on the research of Gurnah and the Swahili world. From the perspectives of colonialism, cultural conflict and integration, it revealed the destruction of the colonial system on the local social structure, cultural traditions, and the fates of individuals. And Zhang (2024) used the new historicism to analyze, focusing on the dual-colonial history of Oman Arabs and Europeans in East Africa, questioning the Western discourse that blames Arabs for East African problems, and revealing the full picture of East African ethnic groups under dual-colonial rule. As for identity, Guo (2023) amplified that, in the process of gradually emerging from a state of naive bewilderment toward maturity, the protagonist Yusuf encounters a multitude of characters who, as an identity of The Other, offer him diverse paths of growth.

In conclusion, in general terms, both domestic and foreign scholars have indeed carried out extensive and in-depth research on Gurnah's *Paradise* about its narrative,

and themes of colonialism as well as identity. Nevertheless, it is evident that there remains substantial room for more specific improvements. Zhu and Zheng (2022) pointed out that *Paradise* uses a large number of metaphors for implicit narrative, focusing on the multiple crises of identity recognition and showing colonial trauma in Africa. However, relevant research on symbolism is still rare, especially on its metaphors. Although Zheng and Qi (2023) analyzed the symbolic metaphors in *Paradise* from the perspective of cultural memory theory, they also mainly focused on the dialectical tension of symbolic metaphorical characters, events, and colors. That is to say, it is worth noting that animal images that frequently appear throughout the text, also as metaphorical symbols, have received surprisingly little attention.

1.3 Theoretical Basis: The Other

The Other is universally considered as those individuals or groups in opposition to The Self. Since ancient Greece, it has drawn much attention, especially in philosophy. And its theoretical development, from Hegel's Absolute Idea, Husserl's Phenomenology, Heidegger's Existentialism, Gadamer's Hermeneutics, to Sartre's, Levinas's, Adorno's, and Lyotard's Postmodernism, has proposed multi-dimensional interpreting approaches that have triggered extensively interdisciplinary discussions in philosophy, sociology, as well as psychology.

In the realm of philosophy, the idea of The Other can be traced back to Hegel's dialectical system. As noted in numerous philosophical studies, Hegel (1807) proposed that self-consciousness doesn't exist in isolation. Instead, it can only be affirmed and developed through the unity of opposites with The Other. Through the recognition of the Other, self-consciousness evolves from being in itself to being for itself. This is not merely a deepening of individual self-awareness but also a spiritual elevation. As philosophical trends advanced, the theory of The Other continued to evolve within schools such as Phenomenology, Existentialism, and Hermeneutics. Husserl (1927) stressed uncovering the essence of inter-subjectivity via the intentional analysis of The Other in his Phenomenology. Heidegger (1931), from an existentialist perspective, probed into the crucial role of The Other in individual existence and world construction. Gadamer (1960), in his Hermeneutics, concentrated on

analyzing the function of The Other in text interpretation and cultural inheritance from the aspects of language and comprehension. Furthermore to Postmodernism, Sartre (2003) believed that the gaze of The Other is a key factor in the formation of individual self-consciousness. In other words, the perception of others not only makes individuals aware of their own existence but also brings about the dilemma of freedom and responsibility. Levinas (1969), placed The Other at the core of ethics, emphasizing infinite responsibility and respect for The Other and asserting that ethical relations are founded on responses to The Other. Adorno (1973) and Lyotard (1984), from the perspectives of critical theory, exposed the repression and exclusion of The Other within social structures and called for respect for differences and an embrace of diversity.

In sociology and psychology, the concept of The Other is widely utilized to analyze individual self-identity and social interaction, which also are both closely related to psychology. As Mead (1934) pointed out, during the process of interacting with others, individuals gradually form and adjust their self-identity through the recognition and feedback from The Other. For instance, in group dynamics, individuals interact with The Other within the group, jointly shaping group culture and behavior norms. In critical theory and post-colonial theory, The Other has become a potent tool for revealing social inequality and cultural hegemony. Edward Said (1978), in his *Orientalism*, indicated that the West solidifies its cultural hegemony and superiority by constructing The Other image of the Orient. This othering process is, in fact, an embodiment of power operation. Post-colonial theory further explores how the colonized achieve self-liberation and cultural rejuvenation through the deconstruction and reconstruction of The Other identity. In contemporary society, the concept of The Other is also crucial for issues such as globalization, immigration, race, and gender and so on. As Appiah (2006) suggested, it helps people understand how individuals construct their identities when interacting with The Other from diverse cultural backgrounds in a multicultural setting and how to foster understanding and tolerance among different cultures.

In summary, The Other theory plays a unique role in different disciplinary fields and cultural contexts, jointly offering rich theoretical resources and analytical

perspectives. Therefore, this paper, on a more detailed level, applies such a theory of Sartre's The Other, which, as the core of existentialist philosophy, deeply analyzes the complex power relations, dilemmas of subjectivity, and the unremitting pursuit of freedom between The Self and The Other. His book *Being and Nothingness* just reveals the process by which self-awareness is constructed in social relations. At the individual level, when a person experiences the look of the other, the "I" that was originally an acting subject is instantaneously transformed into an object under scrutiny and judgment. This establishes a power relationship, compelling the individual to adjust their behavior in response to the look of others, either to conform to social expectations or to avoid negative evaluations. At the social level, collective looks, such as public opinion, also profoundly influence an individual's or a group's self-expression and behavioral choices in society (Sartre 2003). To such points, Sartre's concept can largely helps to analyze a deeper relationship between The Self and The Other from the dimension of the individual to the collective, which is highly applicable to the exploration of the oppressive and hierarchical relationships of different individuals, genders and races depicted in *Paradise*.

1.4 Purpose, Significance and Structure of the Study

As a rhetorical device, animal metaphors endow humans and other entities with animal characteristics or behaviours in order to convey specific meanings, emotions and concepts. Its use in literature, poetry, mythology, psychology and philosophy not only demonstrates the richness of linguistic expression but also reveals profound cultural and cognitive phenomena. This metaphor is based on the principle of similarity, which produces intuitive understanding and emotional resonance through the similarities between animals and humans in terms of emotions, behaviours or traits. In recent years, there has been a gradual rise in the study of the animal question in philosophy. Scholars have centred their discussions around the construction of subjectivity, exploring topics related to classification and boundaries. The subjectivity of animals as The Other and their crucial role as independent entities in triggering reflections on human nature in literary works have also been emphasised. Therefore, cutting into the theme of The Other in literary works from animal

metaphors can undoubtedly provide a new perspective for understanding and interpreting social phenomena. Therefore, by analyzing the metaphorical mapping relationship between animal figures and different Others in *Paradise*, and then exploring the manifestations and causes of the alienation of these Others, this paper aims to deepen the understanding of its readers and also encourage critical engagement with issues of social justice.

Overall, this study is significant in many ways, both academically and socially. On the academic level, it contributes to the development of literary theory. By combining Sartre's theory of The Other with animal metaphors, this study provides a new approach to exploring literary themes. It demonstrates how the concept of The Other can be embodied and analysed through the lens of animal imagery, thereby bridging the gap between philosophy and literature. Besides, this interdisciplinary exploration not only enriches the theoretical tools of literary scholars, but also promotes cross-fertilisation of different disciplines and stimulates more innovative research in correlative literary studies. At the social level, it also has the potential to raise awareness of historical and contemporary social issues. Exploring the alienation of The Other in Gurnah's *Paradise* through animal metaphors can help to reveal the deep-rooted problems of identity conflict, gender inequality and racial discrimination in colonial Africa under the influence of tradition, patriarchy and colonialism. This also helps readers to further reflect on the historical roots of these social injustices, to understand how they continue to shape modern societies, and to cultivate more empathetic and tolerant attitudes towards different traditions, genders and races in the process of globalisation and modernisation.

This thesis is structured into six parts. The introduction offers background on Gurnah and *Paradise*, reviews existing research to identify gaps, elaborates on The Other theory with a focus on Sartre's ideas, and presents the study's purpose, significance, and structure. The second to fourth parts form the main body: Part two analyzes the individual Other in the traditional community with identity conflicts; Part three focuses on the gender Other in patriarchy with gender inequality; Part four examines the race Other in a Western-centered world with racial discrimination. Part five then explores the root

causes of The Others' alienation, which are commodification and slavery. The conclusion finally summarizes how these animal metaphors reveal oppression on individuals, gender and race, emphasizes the study's contributions to post-colonial research, and advocates for a more inclusive society.

II.   THE INDIVIDUAL OTHER IN THE TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY

Africa's cultural diversity resists homogenization, as its writers often embody distinct tribal identities: Achebe with Igbo culture, Soyinka with Yoruba, and Gurnah with Swahili, a hybrid civilization shaped by Arab-African exchanges in Zanzibar (Zhu 2023: 45). Similarlly, Gurnah's *Paradise* interrogates the "individual Other" through the protagonist Yusuf's nomadic journey from 12 to 18, positioning him as an outsider navigating fragmented Swahili collectives. Khalil's fable of "wolves" and "wolf-people" in Chapter 1 The Walled Garden just reflects this tension:

> Khalil told Yusuf stories of wolves and jackals who stole human babies and raised them as beasts… When they were grown, they made them couple with them, to produce the wolf-people who lived in the deepest forest and ate nothing but putrid flesh… Anyway, the wolf-people sometimes came among real people (Gurnah 1994: 28).

This allegory frames the native/wolf and outsider/wolf-people metaphor, exposing identity struggles within Swahili tradition.

2.1 The Native as the Wolf: Identity Fixed with purity

2.1.1 The Native's Identity Fixed in the Same Tradition

Traditional Swahili communities anchor identity in religious and cultural continuity. To this extent, Islam, as a totalizing force, just dissolves individual markers into collective religious identity, where true belonging lies not in the homeland but the umma, that is, the global Muslim community in Islam. This rigidity is enforced by figures like Uncle Aziz and Hamid, who act seemingly just as cultural custodians. Despite this, their self-positioning within their respective communities is clearly defined in that religious and trade tradition.

Aziz is just a typical representative of the traditional Arab merchant class along the East African

coast. Beneath a veneer of religiosity, he exploits vulnerable groups through debt relationships, incorporating youths like Yusuf and Khalil into his commercial network as collateral. On the surface, Aziz presents himself as a kindly uncle, but in reality, he uses usury and contractual traps to force the children of debtors into unpaid labor, even consolidating his interests through arranged marriages. These examples reveal his hypocrisy, as he ostensibly adheres to Islamic teachings, under the proclaim that "religion is a beautiful thing, pure and true" (Gurnah 1994: 101), while in truth manipulating religious authority to justify his exploitation. For instance, he funds Yusuf's education at a madrasa to study the Quran, but his real aim is to legitimize his oppressive practices. In Gurnah's works, such Muslim characters exhibit a strong sense of both honor and shame, a point noted by foreign scholar Godwin Siundu (2013) in his research, which highlights how figures in Gurnah's novels use these traditional concepts to construct their ethnic identities and distinguish themselves from other groups.

In this novel, coastal society is portrayed by the merchant class as civilized, while the inland regions are dismissed as the domain of savages. Hamid, on the other hand, serves as Aziz's business partner in the inland mountains, responsible for storing smuggled goods. Hamid's adherence to inland traditions manifests in two key ways. First, he restricts his daughter Asha's interactions with Yusuf to uphold traditional family ethics. Second, he sends Yusuf to a Quranic school for education, ensures regular mosque attendance, and even arranges for him to learn mechanics and auto repair from the well-educated Indian, Kalasinga. These actions subtly reflect his efforts, as a local, to integrate Yusuf into his traditional community. What is more, almost everyone calls the well-educated Indian Kalasinga, a nickname akin to Harbans Singh. And Mustafa (2015) points out in her research that Kalasinga was indeed a historical figure. In Swahili, it was customary to refer to Sikhs in East Africa as Kalasinga. This also shows the profound influence of religion.

Influenced by Islam and trade culture, a caravan venturing inland for commerce functions like a mobile micro-society (Zhu & Zheng 2022). Though its members such as merchants, guides, translators, porters may hail from different communities, speak different languages, and follow different faiths, they temporarily set aside their differences for a shared goal. In unfamiliar territories, they are compelled to maintain a semblance of unity. Each trading expedition, with its prolonged interactions, naturally fosters cross-cultural exchange among diverse ethnic groups. In the spacial mobility depicted in the text, from "the mountain town" to "Chatu" and then to tribes like "Witu", Swahili, as the most widely used trade language at the time, spread alongside the expansion of commercial networks, eventually becoming one of the official languages of modern Tanzania, making the native's identity more fixed in the same tradition of not only religion, but also language.

2.1.2 The Wolf Metaphor: The Self with Purity

The wolf metaphor is a powerful symbol that crystallises the locals' unwavering quest for purity, as their collective identity is carefully constructed through strict adherence to cultural and religious norms. The wolf, known for its sense of community and territoriality, just reflects the Swahili community's deep-rooted obsession with preserving their cultural and religious homogeneity. This similarity is embodied in the fact that the Swahili community, resolutely defends its boundaries and traditions like the wolves, ensuring that any deviation from the established norms is resisted.

In Khalil's story, the wolves' behaviour in raising human children to reject their humanity is similar to the behaviour of Aziz and others who try to mould individuals within their communities. For example, Aziz's paternalistic control over Yusuf exemplifies the pack's desire to force people to conform to norms. Aziz's desire for Yusuf to accept the norms of the Umma without question is both a literal assimilation of violence as depicted in Khalil's fable and symbolic in his behaviour. This process reflects the community's tendency to suppress individuality in favour of a unified collective identity and justifies this behaviour through cultural indoctrination with religion in rooted tradition.

The contrasting metaphor of wolf and ghoul in the narrative further reinforces the connection between the wolf and purity, where the wolf is the embodiment of purity, while the ghoul is the ultimate symbol of impurity. The ghouls "eat dead meat, human meat preferably, but

only of those over whom prayers have not been said after death (Gurnah 1994: 28)", which represents an insistence on and defence of the purity of traditional religious beliefs. This moral hierarchy, in reality constructed through the exclusion of ghouls, is in fact a means by which the traditional community defines itself as culturally pure. For example, when Yusuf questions Aziz's authority, he is labelled a kifaurongo (dead liar), effectively dehumanised and rejected as The Other by verbally abuse. This mechanism of exclusion can help to preserve the pure self-image of the people in the traditional community, just like the wolves holding on to their place in the original tradition through exclusion.

In other words, the purity associated with the metaphor of the wolf creates a cycle in which individuals are pressured to conform to established norms, in which case the wolf disciplines The Other who is not a wolf belonging to them through either indoctrination or exclusion. For instance, Aziz's and Hamid's adherence to indoctrinating Yusuf by Quranic teachings in fact stems from a fear of change and a desire to maintain the tradition. They are convinced of their community's traditions and see any deviation as a threat to its stability and identity. The metaphor of the wolf thus reflects not only the local self-perception of purity, but also a means by which traditional Swahili communities maintain social order and consolidate existing structures.

2.2 The Outsider Yusuf as the wolf-people: Identity Mixed with Hybridity

2.2.1 Yusuf's Identity Mixed Between Different Cultures

According to Jacobs (2009), Yusuf travels westward from the east coast of Africa: The first leg of his journey involves taking a train from Tanga to Mount Kilimanjaro, and the second leg is a trek through mountains, plateaus, the great lakes region, and the great rift valley, ultimately reaching the Congo Basin. Actually, Yusuf's journey into the interior is just a part of a more than two-thousand-year-old tradition of East African commercial caravans, which have their own set of organizational principles, trade rules, and ceremonial disciplines (Mustafa 2015). For example, Aziz's caravan is composed of a headman (mnyapara), porters, guards, translators, and a band, reflecting the complex social structure and functional division within historical East African trade expeditions. In such a diverse environments, Yusuf broadens his horizons regarding culture, religion, trade, and politics, while at the same time inevitably experiencing repeated shocks between different cultures.

During his journey into the interior, Yusuf on the whole encounters three particularly influential events that occupied a significant portion of the novel, which can be summarized as follows: first, passing through a village attacked by neighboring villages, where he witnessed numerous mutilated and decaying corpses; second, being led by local guides into the dense mountain jungle, from which they took six days to emerge, with several people succumbing to the hardships and dying in the jungle; and third, being captured and taken as hostage by the Chatu. All of these events test humanity, beliefs, physical strength, and wisdom of the caravan members. So such experiences, on the one hand, truthfully reflected the caravan's confrontation with the forces of nature in the African interior, and on the other hand, also reveal the indigenous people's exclusion of outsiders. For Yusuf, this exclusion is even more particularly pervasive.

As a debt slave sold to Aziz, Yusuf always addressed Aziz as "uncle", while Khalil, another young slave, insisted on calling Aziz "Seyyid" and urged Yusuf to follow:

You'd better learn that quickly, zuma. It's important for you. He doesn't like little beggars like you calling him Uncle, Uncle, Uncle. He likes you to kiss his hand and call him Seyyid. And in case you don't know what that means, it means master. Do you hear me, kipumbu we, you little testicle? Seyyid, you call him that. Seyyid (Gurnah 1994: 25)!

Many scholars believed that the word "Seyyid" originally meant leader and later referred to the descendant of Muhammad, an honourable title for Muslim nobles. Yusuf's resistance to the cultural identity of "Seyyid" was actually a stress response to trauma (Zhu & Zheng 2022). In his life of dependence and enslavement, Yusuf endures much trauma not only physically but also psychologically. Amply speaking, he leaves his parents and homeland, considering that he is following a trusted "Uncle", but in fact only to end up in slavery. Later, when Yusuf finally meets his beloved girl Amina, he could only watch her

becoming his Uncle's wife, which makes his only hope for life dashed. According to Zhu and Zheng (2022), all of these experiences traumatise Yusuf, leading him to resist his original religious and cultural identity.

However, in Islamic teaching, collectivism is largely emphasized, in which the true belonging of its believers is actually not their homeland but their religious community as a whole. Under the influence of such teachings, The Self identity of Yusuf as an individual is gradually dissolved. So, by resisting his original religious and cultural identity, Yusuf actually attempts to construct an Other identity, isolating himself from the surrounding world in an effort to establish his true cultural identity (Zhu & Zheng 2022), evading reality by denying his own essence as The Other under the natives' look.

2.2.2 The Wolf-people Metaphor: The Other with Hybridity

The wolf-people metaphor serves as a powerful symbol of Yusuf's hybrid identity as an outsider within the Swahili community. Unlike those pure wolves, wolf-people are neither fully human nor fully wolf. This inherent ambiguity in nature can just mirror Yusuf's situation, where, as a "rehani" (a debt slave), he finds himself in a swinging position, unable to fully integrate into the umma in the Swahili collectives due to his being an outsider, yet also disconnected from his family he once knew. And the wolf-people's association with the forest further hinting Yusuf's marginality of being excluded, because the forest just represents the unknown and the chaotic that is in contrast to the structured and traditional world of the umma.

Yusuf, who are just between the rigid norms of the Swahili community and the unpredictable realities of the outside world, just like the wolf-people who are raised up gradually losing self-awareness. That is to say, the collective look of the community of "wolves" reduces Yusuf to an object, through which the natives attempt to police their cultural boundaries by making The Other Yusuf feel alienated with a hybrid identity. However, Gurnah presents such hybridity not merely as a source of alienation but also more as a wellspring of resistance. For example, Yusuf's exposure to Swahili traders, who fluidly go through those cultural boundaries, just broadens his perspective and allows him to critique the rigidity of the

umma in tradition. These traders' stories of distant lands and their own fluid identities seemingly act as a counter-narrative to Khalil's fables. Because they inspire Yusuf to question his hybrid identity imposed by the community and also to embrace its complexity.

Overall, the wolf metaphor resonates deeply with Yusuf's conflicted cultural identity. His mixed status makes him just like a slave to different cultures with a kind of alienation. However, this sense of alienation is also the key to Yusuf's insight. Because his alienation comes form journeying among different areas with diverse cultures, whose complexity provides him enlightment for "epiphany". In other words, his final decision to join the German army is just a rejection of the identity umma tries to impose on him and a bold step towards asserting his self-identity losing the original root. Thus, Yusuf's mixed identity can be seen as both a burden and also a strength. By occupying the limited space between different cultures, he challenges the myth of the umma's purity and advocates a more inclusive view of identity. It shows that hybridity is not only a threat, but can instead be a pathway to liberation, offering the possibility of transcending the confines of traditional cultural boundaries and forming a new sense of self as The Other excluded from the traditional communities.

2.3 The Other with Identity Conflict in Tradition

The symbols of the wolf and the wolf-people are thus metaphors for the conflict of identity within the tradition-bound Swahili community. This not only reflects the deep-rooted conflict between the protection of tradition and the inevitable external influences, but also exposes the paradox of tradition itself. The local people symbolised by the wolves are in fact the source of stability and identity for the traditional community. The Swahili community is based on the continuity of Islamic religion and culture and enforces strict norms to maintain its purity. However, this tradition also serves as a "prison", trapping individuals in a struggle to resist change. The community's emphasis on orthodox religion and hierarchical social structures, as a matter of fact, greatly stifled individuality. Yusuf's marginal position as an outsider to the Swahili community, who are with mixed ancestry and ambiguous cultural identity, just reflects this dilemma of stifled individuality. Because those natives impose their individuality on him.

His struggle to reconcile his multiple cultural identities with his original cultural roots and the traditions of the Swahili community reflects in a small way the challenge of combining tradition and modernity on the African continent.

According to Zhang (2015), diaspora writers cross national and ethnic boundaries and travel between different cultures, and their experiences endow their writing with characteristics that are different from those of national literature rooted in a single native culture. As The Other, Yusuf is just a mirror of Gurnah himself, constantly seeking self-identification in the collision of multiple cultures, and is internally conflicted and entangled. Yusuf's predicament is not only personal but also epitomises the times, reflecting the universality of cultural integration and conflict in the context of globalization. And to this point, Gurnah reveals the complex psychology of the diaspora community between tradition and modernity, belonging and alienation, thus further exploring the multiple dimensions of identity. Actually, the constant struggle and exploration of The Other in the midst of identity conflict becomes a potential force driving the evolution and development of the culture of traditional communities.

III.   THE GENDER OTHER IN THE PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY

The hegemony of indigenous men studies women's lives by examining the intersectionality of gender, class, race, caste, religion, and sexuality (Al-Wazedi 156). Engels (1884), in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, also said, "The overthrow of the mother-right was the world-historic defeat of the female sex." In traditional Swahili society, the ideology of patriarchy constructs the civilized edifice of male society through the hegemonic discourse order and gender system. In such a society dominated by cultural ideology, women can only exist as an Other, and this also manifests at a deeper level of spiritual consciousness. Specifically, in *Paradise*, the intersecting scenes of a crocodile attacking a woman and the Sultan slaughtering goats in Chapter 3 The Journey to the Interior can just encapsulate this tension:

> They saw a woman who had gone intothe water being attacked by a crocodile... Her relatives threw themselves in the water in their grief

and had to be pulled out by the others, some of whom were now watching the water warily for more crocodiles... The sultan of Mkata slaughtered two goats and invited the merchant to bring a company over to eat with him (Gurnah 1994: 122).

This allegory frames the men/crocodiles and women/goats dichotomy, exposing how patriarchy naturalizes gendered oppression.

3.1 The Men as Crocodiles: Predator and Masculinity
3.1.1 Men as Predators in Dominance

In the Swahili society depicted in Abdulrazak Gurna's *Paradise*, patriarchy is firmly maintained through the control of ideology. Louis Althusser (1971) has once pointed out that ideologies are not static but are constantly reproduced and reconstructed in social practices. In the male-dominated Swahili societies of East Africa, the economic, political, and cultural superstructures are used to create social norms that are in the interest of men, which in turn are then inculcated into publicly accepted common sense. This patriarchal ideology deliberately exaggerates the natural differences between men and women, assigning to men the role of rulers. In this context, men continially dominate all spheres of society like predators in the natural world.

In this novel, Yusuf's experiences can just epitomize male-dominated consciousness. Although Yusuf is positioned as The Other in comparison to the natives of an outside world, within the binary gender structure he still forms with women, exhibiting a strong sense of subjectivity as a man. At the beginning of the book, from a child's perspective, the scene of children comparing their genitals is depicted:

> To pass the time, they gossiped or played cards. It was with them that Yusuf first heard that babies lived in penises. When a man wanted a child,he put the baby inside a woman's stomach where there is more room for it to grow (Gurnah 1994: 7).

Yusuf is not the only one skeptical of this story. As the debate intensifies, the children expose their genitals for comparison, and the older boys even force the younger ones to show theirs for amusement. This seemingly innocent children's game is, in fact, an early manifestation of masculinity, reflecting men's unconscious

display of their physical characteristics and reinforcement of their gender superiority.

In this regard, the merchant Aziz takes such image of male-dominated predation more to an extreme. In the realm of commerce, Aziz, with his in-depth knowledge of trade routes and keen insight into market supply and demand, becomes the core of the commercial network. When dealing with various trading partners, whether local vendors or merchants from afar, he always uses his shrewd business acumen to dictate the pace of transactions, unilaterally determining commodity prices, transaction methods, and profit distribution, reducing others to subordinates who passively accept his rules. Such dominance then expands to the domestic sphere. He confines his wife to the walled garden and forces Khalil's sister into marriage through debt coercion. These actions all demonstrate his status as a dominant male, treating women as disposable property and subordinates, much like a predator.

In addition, the scene of a woman entering a shop to buy flour and salt further reveals men's dominance from a male perspective. The Gurnah's description of this womans's appearance is full of unfriendly gaze from men: "She wore a cloth round her middle, and a large ring of beads round her neck and over her shoulders. Her chest was uncovered, revealing her breasts (Gurnah 1994: 85)."

Such a portrayal makes the female body a natural focus of the male gaze, making her an object to be ogled and critiqued at will in the eyes of the men. The male characters, Kalasinga and Hussein, engage her in a seemingly friendly conversation, creating a harmonious atmosphere. However, as soon as she leaves, Kalasinga immediately fantasises about having sex with her in vulgar and explicit language, even degrading her as a barbaric woman, and lusting after her body at the same time. This stark contrast in attitudes actually exposes a double standard in men's treatment of women: men use normal social interactions to hide their true intentions, and simply treat women as mere tools to satisfy their dominant desires.

3.1.2 The Crocodile Metaphor: The Self with Masculinity

Thus, the metaphor of the crocodile in *Paradise* serves as a symbol that not only represents male dominance but also reflects how men construct and reinforce their masculine identities. Crocodiles are often associated with traits such as strength, aggression, and the ability to dominate their environment. In the novel, when men are implicitly compared to crocodiles, it reveals their self-perception and the social ideal of masculinity they aspire to. For men in the Swahili society depicted in the novel, identifying with the crocodile means embracing and emphasizing certain masculine qualities. The act of being a predator, as illustrated by Aziz's behavior in business and domestic life, is a way for men to assert their masculinity. Aziz's control over trade and his authoritative actions within the family are reflections of the crocodile's predatory nature. By exerting dominance, he not only maintains his position of power but also reinforces his masculine self-image. This self-construction is deeply rooted in the patriarchal ideology, which values male strength, assertiveness, and control.

Moreover, the crocodile metaphor shows how men use external symbols to define themselves. In the scene where a woman is attacked by a crocodile, the men's reaction and the association of men with crocodiles in this context reveal a collective male consciousness and also gaze. The fear and wariness that others show towards crocodile-like men further validate their self-perception as powerful and dominant beings. It is a form of social recognition that men seek, as they strive to fit into the masculine mold defined by the patriarchal society. On this score, the crocodile also represents the men's sense of invincibility and superiority. Just as a crocodile is a top predator in its natural habitat, men in this society also see themselves as the dominant force in social, economic, and domestic arenas. This sense of superiority is not only directed towards women but also towards other men who may be seen as less masculine or less powerful. The metaphor thus becomes a means for men to distinguish themselves, to create a hierarchy within the male gender, and to maintain their position at the top of the social order.

In essence, the crocodile metaphor in *Paradise* is a complex symbol that reveals the multi-faceted nature of masculine identity construction in a patriarchal society. It shows how men use animalistic associations to define, reinforce, and glorify their masculinity, while simultaneously justifying their

dominance over women.

3.2 The Women as Goats: Prey and Femininity

3.2.1 Women as Preys in Submissiveness

In *Paradise*, under patriarchal rule, women are reduced to both docile and sacrificial goats. Yusuf's father's remark of "if something happens to you, they will pick another one from the pens (Gurnah, 1994: 13)" just vividly exposes their submissiveness, to which women's subjectivity is erased, underscoring their objectified status in a patriarchal system. This subjugation is further illuminated through three intersecting dimensions of oppression, each instantiated in the lives of Yusuf's mother, Aziz's wife, and Khalil's sister.

Firstly, Yusuf's mother endures a life of silent suffering and invisibility. In the domestic sphere, her daily toil in maintaining the household, bearing and raising children, goes unacknowledged and unappreciated. She is trapped in a cycle of unpaid labour, with her efforts merely taken for granted as part of her "natural" role as a woman. Her lack of subjectivity is evident in her inability to make decisions about her own life or the lives of Yusuf. She exists in the background, a shadowy figure whose only purpose seems to be to serve the needs of the male-dominated family, much like a goat waiting to be used and disposed of as per the will of its owner.

Aziz's wife, the Mistress, experiences a more blatant form of confinement and control. Confined to the walled garden, she is cut off from the outside world, her freedom of movement severely restricted. Her husband's authoritative actions reduce her to a prisoner in her own home, a possession to be guarded and controlled. Her body and her life are at the mercy of Aziz's whims, just as Amina's words that "the Seyyid's affairs were blessed, while the Mistress suffered from this strange disease (Gurnah 1994: 225) ." The Mistress is forced to submit to his will, just as a goat has no choice but to follow the commands of its herder.

Khalil's sister Amina is the victim of a more direct form of exploitation. She is adopted by Khalil's father. However, she is actually silenced. "Everybody in the town knew her story, but nobody came to ask for her (Gurnah 1994: 230) ." Afterwards, forced into marriage through debt coercion by Aziz, her body and future are traded away as a means to settle a debt. She is treated as a commodity, her value determined by her ability to serve the interests of men. Her own dreams and aspirations are crushed, and she is thrust into a situation where she has no control over her own destiny. This is a clear example of how women in this patriarchal society are reduced to prey, their lives and bodies up for grabs by men in positions of power.

These three women, each in their own way, embody the submissiveness and vulnerability of women as "preys" in the patriarchal society depicted in *Paradise*. Their stories highlight the systemic nature of gender oppression, where women are systematically denied autonomy and dignity, and are instead forced into roles of subservience and sacrifice.

3.2.2 The Goat Metaphor: The Other with Femininity

The goat metaphor in *Paradise* operates as a multilayered symbol of feminized subjugation under patriarchal norms. As Judith Butler (1990) points out in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, as an identity, gender does not have an ontological entity; rather, it is constantly constructed through performance and imitation. To a certain extent, women's femininity just forms in such performance and imitation. In the novel, women are systematically reduced to animalized objects through two intersecting mechanisms: sacrificial rituals and economic exploitation, both of which crystallize in the goat imagery.

In African contexts, practices such as the historical sati-like traditions, where widows were expected to immolate themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres, and the contemporary scarification rituals of the Hamar tribe in Ethiopia's Omo Valley, highlight the gendered sacrifice. In the former, women were simultaneously glorified as martyrs and silenced as non-agents; their consent was presumed rather than sought, reflecting a patriarchal narrative that erases female subjectivity. Similarly, in the Hamar tribe's bull-jumping ceremony, women endure brutal whippings to prove their love, willingly subjecting their bodies to pain. This self-inflicted harm ultimately reinforces gendered power structures, as it is performed to meet male-defined standards of devotion.

In *Paradise*, these real-world parallels resonate strongly. The sultan's act of slaughtering goats mirrors the sacrificial role assigned to women in

patriarchal societies. Just as the goat offered up without voice or choice, female characters like Yusuf's mother, Aziz's wife, and Khalil's sister Amina are also sacrificed on the altar of male-dominated social order. Yusuf's mother's unpaid labor and erasure within the domestic sphere, the Mistress's confinement and illness-ridden existence, and Amina's coerced marriage all embody this sacrificial fate. Their bodies become sites of exploitation, commodified for economic gain or social status, much like goats traded in the marketplace.

3.3 The Other with Gender Inequality in Patriarchy

In the patriarchal society depicted in *Paradise*, the construction of women as The Other is not merely an individual-level phenomenon but a systemic issue deeply rooted in the social, cultural, and economic structures. The metaphorical representations of men as crocodiles and women as goats serve as powerful symbols that reinforce and naturalize gender inequality, highlighting the profound ways in which women are subjugated and marginalized.

The male characters, symbolized by crocodiles, wield power and dominance across various spheres of life. In the economic realm, men like Aziz control trade, determine prices, and dictate the terms of transactions, effectively relegating others to subordinate positions. This economic power translates into control over the domestic sphere as well, where men treat women as possessions. The way Aziz confines his wife to the walled garden and forces Khalil's sister into marriage through debt coercion is a clear manifestation of this male-dominated power structure. On the other hand, women, represented by goats, are objectified and reduced to the status of prey. The goat as a passive sacrifice echoes the women forced to sustain the patriarchal system through their bodies for reproductive and sexual functions and labor. Their worth is primarily measured in terms of their ability to serve male interests, whether through unpaid domestic labor or through being commodified for marriage and reproduction. The sacrifice of goats in the novel serves as a chilling allegory for the sacrifices that women are expected to make in this society. Their voices are silenced, their desires are ignored, and they are forced into roles of submissiveness and sacrifice.

That is to say, the cultural norms and values of the patriarchal society work together to naturalize this gender inequality, making it seem like an inevitable and unchangeable part of the social order. In Swahili societies of East Africa, patriarchy is maintained through ideological control. This social formation is particularly pronounced during the colonial period, as colonial economic,, and cultural systems further entrenched the dominance of men over women. By highlighting the ways in which women are oppressed and marginalized, the inherent injustice and cruelty of the patriarchal system are naturally exposed.

IV. THE RACE OTHER IN THE WESTERN-CENTERED WORLD

Many Western feminists believe that the root cause of gender inequality between men and women lies in patriarchy. However, according to Jin (2024), most Third World feminist scholars argue that gender discrimination is not the sole root cause of women's oppression. The relationship of domination and subordination in politics, economy, and culture between imperialist countries are the real sources (Jin 2024). Gurnah's *Paradise* also extends this critique of colonial racial hierarchies through the metaphorical pairing of Europeans as pigeons and Africans as dogs. On this score, the novel's interwoven scenes of the pigeon and the dog can just reveal:

The pigeons were all white, with wide trailing tail feathers. Hamid destroyed any young birds which looked different. He talked happily about the birds, and about the habits of birds in captivity. He called his pigeons the Birds of Paradise (Gurnah 1994: 65).

Just beyond the shade of the sufi tree, he found several piles of excrement, which the dogs were already eagerly nibbling at… The dogs had known a shit-eater when they saw one (Gurnah 1994: 247).

This allegory frames the Europeans/pigeons and Africans/dogs metaphors, manifesting how colonialism cultivates racial discrimination.

4.1 The Europeans: Superiority and Civilization
4.1.1 The Colonizer in Superiority

Under the Western-centered world order, the superiority of colonizers is manifested through multi-dimensional power

penetration and ideological construction. Relying on all-round political, economic, and cultural domination, colonizers have established a strictly hierarchical system of oppression in the colonized regions. This superiority is not only reflected in the plunder and control at the material level but also penetrates deeply into spiritual and cultural aggression, fundamentally distorting the self-awareness and value system of the colonized people.

In the colonial context of Africa, the power dynamics are complex and multi-layered. As Han and Ren (2023: 114) pointed out, merchants like Aziz assume the role of colonizers when trading with inland African tribes, yet they themselves are colonized by European powers. This intricate power relationship vividly mirrors the hierarchical oppression inherent in the colonial system. The protagonist Yusuf, along with the female characters in the story, endures dual colonization under the domineering rule of colonialism. Paradoxically, native Africans, influenced by colonial ideology, often see themselves as "civilized" and regard the primitive tribes in the western inland as "savages". This perception is actually a product of the colonial-imposed binary opposition between civilization and barbarism, which serves as a tool to justify colonial plunder.

For this, an illustrative example can be found in the interaction between Yusuf and Hussein. When Yusuf showed curiosity about the green-colored light, Hussein's response was laced with teasing, revealing his self-perceived superiority in knowledge and experience. He described the world in a way reinforcing a kind of dichotomy of civilization and barbarism that "the west is the land of darkness, the land of jinns and monsters. God sent the other Yusuf as a prophet to the land of jinns and savages. Perhaps he'll send you to them too (Gurnah 1994: 83)".

Hussein, as a merchant from Zanzibar who earns his living by running a store, is a representative figure embodying this colonial-induced mindset. His description clearly reflects the colonial-constructed narrative that categorizes and demeans certain areas as "barbaric". By promoting colonial languages, spreading Christianity, seizing land, implementing racial segregation, and using divide-and-rule tactics, colonizers employ various strategies to maintain their rule. They not only

plundered resources but also aimed to erode the national identity of colonized people at the cultural level. Through these means, colonizers established a false sense of psychological superiority and attempted to justify their unjust rule, thus perpetuating the cycle of colonial oppression.

Apart from that, the descriptions of the appearance and the portrayal of the images of European colonizers in the book also hints the construction of this superiority. At the beginning of this novel, Yusuf saw two Europeans on the railway platform at that time, the first he had ever seen. In Yusuf's eyes, the European colonizers are described as the following:

The man was large, so tall that he had to lower his head... The woman stood further back in the shade, her glistening face partly obscured by two hats... She was tall and large too, but differently. Where she looked lumpy and malleable, as if capable of taking another shape (Gurnah 1994: 1).

This implies that colonizers are outwardly "strong" and inwardly arrogant, being incompatible with the local environment and people. In particular, the eye contact between Yusuf and the European man vividly demonstrates a kind of inequal power structure. The European man first looks away, then looks back for a long time, and finally shows aggressive body language such as "bared his teeth in an involuntary snarl, curling his fingers in an inexplicable way (Gurnah 1994: 2)", while Yusuf finally flees out of fear. In fact, this interaction became a typical microcosm of the power relationship under colonial rule. The mythical descriptions of European colonizers by the indigenous people in Africa, such as "wearing clothes made of metal that don't chafe their bodies and being able to go for days without sleep or water (Gurnah 1994: 72)" and referring to them as "the big man" or "the government", reflect that in the early days of colonial rule, the colonized people deified the colonizers out of ignorance and fear. This perception further solidifies the superior image of the colonizers as being high above others.

In conclusion, the superiority of colonizers is achieved through oppression and construction at multiple levels, including politics, economy, culture, and psychology. This superiority is not based on true

civilization and progress but is established on exploitation, discrimination, and spiritual control of colonized people. Its essence is an embodiment of the irrationality and injustice of colonialism, which has a profound impact on the living conditions and spiritual worlds of the people in the colonies.

4.1.2 The Pigeon Metaphor: The Self with Civilization

The metaphor of the pigeon serves as a crucial entry point for analyzing how colonizers flaunt themselves as civilized. Through the portrayal of the pigeon's image and the arrangement of related plots, Gurnah reveals the aggressive nature and hypocritical facade hidden beneath the so-called civilized veneer of the colonizers, and demonstrates how the colonial discourse system beautifies the colonizers' own images while oppressing the colonized people.

In the novel, the merchant Hamid's obsession with and special treatment of pigeons endow the pigeons with rich symbolic meanings. Hamid's pigeons are described as "all white, with wide trailing tail feathers (Gurnah 1994: 65)".

> Hamid destroyed any young birds which looked different. He talked happily about the birds, and about the habits of birds in captivity. He called his pigeons the Birds of Paradise. They strutted on the roof and the yard with reckless pomp and arrogance, as if the display of their beauty was more important to them than safety (Gurnah 1994: 65).

This description, as a matter of fact, alludes to the white-skinned European colonizers. Whiteness symbolizes the purity and nobility that the colonizers claim for themselves, and their exclusion of the dissidents exposes their ambition to remove obstacles and achieve complete colonization. The contradictory setting of pigeons being in cages yet being regarded as the Birds of Paradise satirizes the absurd logic of the colonizers who beautify colonial rule as bringing civilization and beauty to the colonized regions.

In addition, pigeons are often seen as a symbol of peace. However, in the colonial context, European colonizers commit acts of aggression and plunder in the name of peace and civilization. This contrast further highlights their hypocritical nature. For example, in the plot of the storm's onslaught, houses collapse and

animals drown, but the pigeon houses miraculously remain undamaged. Hamid's relief at this situation that "It was a miracle that none of the pigeon houses were damaged (Gurnah 1994: 112)", reflects from the side that colonizers only care about the safety of their symbolic objects in the face of disaster and are indifferent to the sufferings of the colonized people, making the hypocrisy of their civilization blatantly obvious. Afterwards, Khalil's sarcasm towards Hamid of "That Hamid with the big buttocks and the empty shop! He calls himself a gentleman, a man of honor, but in fact, he's just a chubby lad, strutting around as arrogantly as his plump white pigeons (Gurnah 1994: 186)" also directly punctures the illusion of the colonizers' self-beautification. This shows that in the eyes of colonized people, the so-called civilization and nobility of colonizers are nothing but superficial arrogance and conceit, and their actions are completely contrary to true civilization. The metaphor of the pigeon not only reveals the colonizers' mentality of considering themselves civilized but also, through contrast with reality, exposes the oppressive nature and false appearance of colonialism.

In conclusion, the metaphor of the pigeon becomes an important symbol for interpreting the colonizers' civilized image in the novel. It not only reflects the civilized superiority that colonizers claim for themselves but also, through various details and plots, exposes aggression, hypocrisy, and irrationality behind this civilization. This metaphor deepens the work's critique of colonialism, enabling readers to clearly recognize the deceitfulness of the colonial discourse system in shaping the colonizers' images and the harm it has caused to the colonized people.

4.2 Africans as Dogs: Inferiority and Barbarism

4.2.1 The Colonized in Inferiority

In the colonial discourse system centered around Western superiority, African colonized people were plunged into multiple disadvantages, both spiritual and existential. Through religious encroachment, exploitation of livelihoods that deprive the colonized Africans of identity, colonialism constructed them as inferior to others. This inferiority was not only reflected in the tragic fate of individuals but also revealed the systematic destruction of the African social structure by the colonial system.

At the spiritual level, religious beliefs, as the

core pillar of African culture, were severely impacted by colonialism. In the novel, Christianity was forcefully introduced into Africa alongside colonizers, clashing violently with indigenous Islamic and traditional beliefs. Colonizers attempted to completely transform the religious beliefs of African people through large-scale missionary activities, integrating them into the Christian system. This not only disrupted the original ecological balance of African indigenous religions but also triggered sharp conflicts among different religious groups. Many Africans, under the intense impact of this religious and cultural upheaval, began to waver in their once-firm beliefs. Moreover, the newly introduced Christianity failed to truly meet their spiritual needs, leaving them in a state of confusion and bewilderment in terms of faith. Gurnah's rebellious rewritings of important figures Yusuf and Muhammad from the Quran just epitomize how colonial rule undermined the religious subjectivity of Africans. Unlike the handsome, kind, and successful Yusuf in the Quran, Yusuf in this novel was constantly haunted by nightmares, dreaming of being chased by ferocious dogs and sobbing in terror. Similarly, the portrayals of Muhammad as either a beggar or a ruthless merchant deviated greatly from his traditional religious image. These rewritings hinted at the colonizers' attempts to exert spiritual control over the colonized through the dissemination of Christianity, reinforcing the colonizers' cultural superiority.

In terms of livelihood, Yusuf's experience epitomized the exploitation of Africans under the colonial economic system. After being sold into slavery to pay off debts, he left his hometown with Aziz and entered a new world filled with suffering. Along the way, he witnessed the tragic plight of the people in East Africa under German colonial rule: forced to build roads for Germans, engage in piecework, and carry heavy luggage for travelers and merchants. Those who failed to meet the workload were brutally hanged by the Germans, their lives treated as worthless (Zhu & Zheng 2022). During his travels with Aziz's caravan, Yusuf also saw the continent's decay: rampant diseases, prevalent superstitions, corrupt trade activities, and unchecked slave trade. These were not isolated individual tragedies but rather a microcosm of how Africans were regarded as disposable labor within the

colonial economic system. Under the high pressure of colonial rule, they were compelled to accept the values and lifestyles imposed by colonizers, gradually marginalizing their own cultures and traditions. This ideological oppression left the colonized in a state of confusion and helplessness when faced with major life choices, further exacerbating their inferior status.

In conclusion, the oppression of African colonized people by colonialism is comprehensive. It destroys their spiritual foundation through religious means and exploits their labor economically, depriving them of their cultural identity. The formation of this inferior status lay bare the cruelty and injustice of the colonial system, where just as Zhu and Zheng (2022) maintained, "Heaven belongs to the colonial ruling class, while the gates of hell are open to the African people".

4.2.2 The Dog Metaphor: The Other with Barbarism

Intertwined with religious and cultural traditions and colonial discourse, the image of the dog has been imbued with negative connotations, serving as a metaphor for colonized Africans and embodying the barbarism constructed by colonialism.

From the perspective of religious and cultural traditions, in Islam, dogs are regarded as unclean animals. Islamic jurisprudence stipulates that utensils licked by dogs require special cleaning, and individuals who have come into contact with dogs must undergo additional purification procedures before religious ceremonies. This perception stems from the living environment and sanitation conditions of dogs in the Middle East. In Christian traditions, dogs also often symbolize evil, depravity, and impiety. The Bible compares evildoers and heathens to dogs, and in early Christian art and literature, dogs are frequently used to symbolize worldly temptations and sins.

In this novel, Gurnah skillfully employs the metaphor of the dog to represent enslaved Africans. At the novel's end, when German colonizers conscript African militiamen and the scene of chaos left in their wake is compared to dogs feasting on excrement, this imagery carries a double-edged satire. On the one hand, the colonizers' strategy of "using Africans to control Africans" turns some Africans into tools for oppressing their own people, suggesting that ideological enslavement is even

more harmful than physical servitude. On the other hand, "shit" symbolizes the false "legacy of civilization" left by the colonizers, laying bare the predatory nature of colonial culture and the fragmentation of the colonized's cultural identity (Zhu & Zheng 2022). In Yusuf's dream, his mother's transformation into a one-eyed dog crushed by a train further combines personal trauma with collective suffering. The animalization of the maternal figure seemingly symbolizes the violent dismemberment of the African continent by colonial forces, while the train symbolizing colonial industrial civilization, foreshadows the destruction of traditional African society.

Evidently, the metaphor of the dog is the result of the collusion between religious symbols and colonial discourse. By exploiting the negative associations in cultural traditions, it serves the hierarchical construction of colonialism, profoundly exposing the dual oppression, physical and spiritual, exerted by colonial rule on the colonized, as well as the alienation of human nature.

4.3 The Other with Racial Discrimination in Colonialism

According to the above, Gurnah in fact conducts a profound deconstruction of the race Other under colonialism through his literary creations, revealing the oppressive nature of the colonial discourse system and providing theoretical and practical support for the reconstruction of subjectivity among the colonized.

In terms of creative techniques, Gurnah's contrasting depictions of pigeons and dogs are highly subversive. European colonizers likened themselves to the pigeons of paradise, symbols of civilized purity, while maintaining their hegemony through massacres and cultural cleansing. In contrast, they denigrated Africans as dogs feasting on excrement, using the label of barbarism to construct a cognitive trap. This binary opposition is not merely a struggle over cultural symbols but also a destruction of the diversity of human civilizations. When colonizers regarded African cultures as impurities to be purified, they were essentially reinforcing the hierarchical order of civilized versus barbaric. Additionally, Gurnah appropriates Western and religious classics to tell African stories, deconstructing the centrality of Western discourse and breaking down Western cultural hegemony through a strategy of "writing back to the empire (Han & Ren 2023)".

This approach enables Africa to shed the imposed identity of the Other and showcase its own cultural subjectivity.

In terms of theoretical connections, Gurnah's works are in alignment with postcolonial theory which aims to subvert the colonial discourse system that distorts experiences and realities, imposes inferiority on the colonized, and seeks total control over them (Jin 2024). According to Jin, the task of postcolonial theorists is to insert the often "absent" colonized subjects into the dominant discourse in a manner that resists and subverts colonial authority. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) just analyzed the ideological systems long established by imperialism and colonialism, deconstructing cultural colonialism and cultural hegemony, thus laying the foundation for postcolonial theory. Said (1978) argued that in the 19th century, through imperialist expansion, Europe came into contact with other cultures and depicted other people as lazy, depraved, uncivilized, and barbaric, thereby creating The Other in contrast to the civilized and industrious British. On this point, Gurnah's literary works can just serve as a response to such colonial discourse, exposing the truth behind the labeling of Africans and criticizing the discriminatory perceptions constructed by colonialism to maintain its rule. For example, he portrays Aziz as a double agent of indigenous business, both exploiter and exploited. He borrows the framework of the Joseph story tell the African experience, subverting the authority of the Western canonical narrative.

From the perspective of historical reflection, Gurnah's critique transcends individual fates and ascends to an overall examination of colonial history. Tribal conflicts, superstitions, and diseases on the African continent are not evidence of its inferiority but rather the consequences of traditional social structures being dismantled by colonial rule. Yusuf's journey from being forced to receive colonial education to eventually joining the German militia reflects the torn identity of the colonized, who are caught in a dilemma of either being exploited or becoming an accomplice within the colonial system. This reveals how colonialism fractures the sense of identity due to "the look" from outside, and also the resulting alienation of self-perception. This dissects the multiple forms of violence exerted by colonialism in terms

of race, gender, and culture, calling on people to confront historical traumas and reject any form of civilization superiority.

In conclusion, through narrative techniques such as multi-voiced narration, intermingling of indigenous languages, Gurnah deconstructs colonial racial discourse through integrating individual fates with historical reflection, not only exposing the oppressive nature of colonialism but also giving voice to the colonized. Beyond a profound analysis of Africa's history and present, his creations offer crucial insights for the global community to reflect on colonial legacies and pursue a more equal and inclusive dialogue among civilizations.

V.   THE ALIENATION OF THE OTHER: TRADED AND TAMED

As a renowned postcolonial literary writer in the contemporary English-speaking world, Abdulrazak Gurnah's immigrant and diasporic identities have endowed his creations with a tint of anxiety and contradiction. Meanwhile, the historical backdrop of Africa and his bitter growth experiences have shaped the poignant yet tenacious character of his works. Such writing characteristics inevitably become an indispensable and precious cultural element in the context of globalization (Xiong 2022). According to Xiong (2022), generally speaking, research scholars hold that Gurnah's works mainly tell the stories of African immigrants, deeply analyze their pain and bewilderment when confronted with the lingering remnants of colonialism and racism that are prevalent in contemporary society, and use the alienated character traits of the characters to reflect the vulnerable side of contemporary British society. And the same is true of *Paradise*. Through the ingenious use of metaphorical animal symbols, these animal symbols transcend the biological attributes of the animals themselves and rise to become a carrier of cultural symbols and psychological projection, reflecting the alienation problems of different Others in postcolonial Africa. And the root of such alienation actually lies in commodity trade and slavery in this colony, which have made these Others traded and tamed, causing them to lose both liberty and dignity.

5.1 The Traded Other

5.1.1 From Person to Property in Commodification

In Gurnah's *Paradise*, the alienation dilemma of The Other under the colonial system is profoundly reflected in the process of their commodification from person to property. The root of this phenomenon can be traced back to the notorious triangular trade system in history. This system not only reshaped the global economic landscape but also completely subverted the value of the lives of the inhabitants of the African continent, alienating human beings into commodities that could be traded.

In terms of the operation mechanism of the triangular trade, its complete process presents a circular chain from commodities to slaves and finally to commodities again. In the first stage of the trade, European merchant ships were loaded with cheap industrial goods such as guns, textiles, and alcoholic beverages and sailed from European ports to the African coast. At this time, the objects of trade were ordinary commodities, which seemingly followed the logic of market exchange but actually laid the groundwork for the subsequent plunder of human beings. After the merchant ships arrived in Africa, European merchants colluded with local tribal chiefs and slave traders to exchange these commodities for African people, initiating the second stage of slave trade. The trafficked Africans were crammed into crowded cabins like goods and transported to American plantations and mines, where they were forced to work until death under harsh conditions. In the third stage, the merchant ships transported raw materials such as gold, silver, and tobacco produced in the Americas back to Europe, completing another round of commodity transactions. In this cycle, human beings were completely stripped of their subjectivity, becoming trading goods no different from tobacco and cotton, and their value of life was only measured by the price of labor.

This logic of commodification that alienates human beings into objects did not disappear with the end of the triangular trade but continued in new forms during the colonial rule period. Even though European colonizers halted the public slave trade under public pressure, the plunder of resources such as ivory and rubber continued. The story of *Paradise* is just set in German East Africa (now Tanzania) on the eve of World War I. Zhu and Chen (2023) pointed out that, at that time, German colonizers

further strengthened their control over inland resources by building the Usambara Railway and the Central Railway. In the novel, Yusuf's parents moved to the town of Kawa in pursuit of the trade dividends in fact brought by the railway:

> They came to Kawa because it had become a boom town when the Germans had used it as a depot for the railway line they were building to the highlands of the   interior... There was still good trade to be done in either of those places, he said. Sometimes Yusuf heard his father say that the whole town was going to Hell (Gurnah 1994: 5).

> Besides, other characters like Hamid and his wife Maimuna settling at the foot of Mount to serve the caravans, and the Indian mechanic Kalasinga providing technical support for the passing trains, all seemingly participated in economic activities voluntarily, but in contrast, they were indeed drawn into the huge machine of the colonial trade system, and their fates fluctuated violently with the rise and fall of the railway and the coming and going of the caravans. In this process, the inland residents of Africa gradually lost control of their own lives and became a passive link in the trade chain.

> In such a historical context, the alienation of The Other is made specific from the perspective of those native Africans, from which, just as DeCarde and Zhang (2023) declared, Gurnah challenges Ngugi's stance on the hegemony of the English language and defends the use of English by African writers to subvert and resist the distorted discourse of Europe. The traded Africans were just like traded property, first losing their personal freedom in body and becoming tools for colonizers to achieve economic interests. This transformation from person to property is not only a trampling on the value of individual lives but also a profound manifestation of colonial violence. From the level of individuals, it then extends to the African female group and the entire African continent, and such alienation is further revealed through multiple oppressions suffered by the alienated gender and race.

5.1.2 The Loss of The Other's Liberty

In this novel, the loss of freedom of The Other is a crucial and weighty theme due to their alienation. Such loss of freedom is mainly manifested as physical bondage. The narrative segments related to Mzee Hamdani who is a slave to the Mistress in the novel can just vividly reveal how, within the context of commodity trade, The Other has become prisoners of freedom under oppression. His fate serves as a typical example of the ruthless trampling of human freedom by colonialism.

> More than ten years ago, when she married the Seyyid, she offered Mzee Hamdani his freedom as a gift. Although the law at that time forbade the buying and selling of people, it did not require that those held as slaves should be released from their obligations. But when she offered Mzee Hamdani his freedom, he refused, and there he is, still in the garden singing his qasidas, the poor old man (Gurnah 1994: 221).

> Mzee Hamdani's experience profoundly reflects the distortion and paradox of the concept of freedom under the colonial system. He was given to the heroine by her father as a wedding gift and had been treated as private property that could be disposed of at will since his childhood, without any right to make independent choices. Although the law clearly prohibited the buying and selling of people at that time, it hardly brought about any substantial improvement to the actual situation of slaves. Because the law only prohibited the form of "buying and selling" while tacitly approving and maintaining the slaves' obligation of dependence on their masters. The existence of this legal framework fully exposes the hypocrisy of the colonial system. On the surface, it seems to safeguard human rights and prohibit the "buying and selling" of people, but in reality, it misinterprets the freedom and rights of The Other by tacitly accepting the slaves' dependence relationship.

> Under such a system, the freedom of The Other is no longer an inborn right but depends on the will of the master, becoming a kind of favor bestowed by the master. The heroine's act of giving Mzee Hamdani his freedom, in essence, is just a way figuratively for the colonizers to demonstrate their power over the colonized. And Mzee Hamdani's refusal of freedom is not that he truly doesn't want to be free but that his long-term enslaved state has seriously distorted his perception. He has internalized this dependence relationship as a necessary condition for his survival, and he has also lost the courage and ability to pursue freedom. And then

Amina's account of Mzee Hamdani's life story further reveals the intergenerational erosion of the freedom of The Other by the logic of colonial economy.

> "She says do you know why he was called Hamdani?" Amina said, her eyes dull with distance. "Because his mother, who was a slave-woman, had him late in her life. She called him Hamdani in gratitude for his birth. When the mother died, her father bought Hamdani from the family which owned him. It was a poor family, deep in debt (Gurnah 1994: 222)."

> Mzee Hamdani's mother was a slave, and her act of giving birth to Mzee Hamdani, under the colonial system, was actually a continuation and reproduction of the slave status. And Mzee Hamdani was eventually sold because his original family was deeply in debt, which clearly shows that the colonial economic system turned Africans into debt slaves that could be traded through the means of debt. This deprivation of freedom is not limited to individuals but has formed a vicious cycle of intergenerational transmission. That is to say, poverty leads to debt, debt leads to enslavement, and enslavement further exacerbates poverty, plunging The Other into the endless abyss of being in debt at birth and being enslaved because of debt.

> In this trade relationship, the human body is a raw material that boosts the plantation economy. Just as DeCarde and Zhang (2023) pointed out, this paradise is nothing but a product of an unequal social structure and a tool used by those in power to numb the oppressed and instill false hopes in them. It reveals how the colonial system beautifies exploitation and oppression in order through economic control, thus achieving a comprehensive deprivation of the physical freedom of The Other.

5.2 The Tamed Other

5.2.1 From Beings to Beasts in Slavery

Under the conditions of contemporary capitalism, the experience of the object is an alienated experience of the object, in which the object as the utterly other essentially degenerates into the object of consumption, that is, a commodity. It does not exist as a resistant and limiting entity to the subject, but rather as something dominated by capital. It is a tamed entity that seemingly satisfies the subject's desires in all aspects and at all times in form (Li

2024). To a certain extent, the commodity trade driven by capital has evolved continuously, eventually forming the triangular trade system with the slave trade at its core, laying the economic foundation for slavery. Slavery is not only a tool for economic exploitation but also a means of implementing spiritual control over The Other through cultural means, alienating human beings into beasts. This process of alienation is vividly depicted in the colonial scenes described in *Paradise*. The word "beast" appears 15 times and about "slave" 37 times in the book, profoundly revealing the essence of colonial oppression. Here are some specific examples:

> In his dreams they stood two-legged over him, their long mouths half open and slavering, their pitiless eyes passing over his soft prone body (Gurnah 1994: 26).

> If you run, they turn you into an animal or a slave (Gurnah 1994: 29).

> He buys anything... except slaves, even before the government said it must stop. Trading in slaves is dangerous work, and not honourable (Gurnah 1994: 34).

> You are her servant. I am her servant. Her slaves (Gurnah 1994: 44).

> It had shamed him to see Khalil slavering over Uncle Aziz's hand at the last moment, looking as though he would swallow it whole if he were given the opportunity (Gurnah 1994: 55).

> The breadfruit was to feed the porters and the slaves, who would eat anything after their long walk in the wilderness (Gurnah 1994: 64).

> At least there was no slavering dog rummaging into him. He thought wryly to himself, conscious of the tremors of terror subsiding within him (Gurnah 1994: 158).

> He says we will not wait until you have made slaves of us and swallowed up our world (Gurnah 1994: 160).

> Above all, it can be obviously inferred that, in the eyes of the colonizers, whether it is an individual like Yusuf or a woman, Africans are all alienated beasts as slaves. The merchant Aziz even himself compared the acquisition of slaves "buying slaves from these parts was like picking fruit off a tree (Gurnah 1994: 131)", which

vividly shows the objectified situation of those African slaves. And as a matter of fact, from the interior of East Africa to the islands of the Indian Ocean, slave trade strongholds are scattered everywhere. The plantation economy regards slaves just as labor units that can be arbitrarily disposed of. Their bodies are disciplined to become some fragmental parts of the plantation machinery, and they completely lose their human subjectivity.

On this basis, colonizers then used Christianity as an ideological tool to achieve spiritual control through the transformation of religious doctrines. German missionaries established churches in East Africa, grafted Bible stories into local myths, and forced slaves to convert to Christianity out of fear. The missionaries even claimed that the slave system is an order arranged by God, sanctifying exploitation and consolidating oppression at the spiritual level. In addition, the German colonizers also implemented racial segregation in education, forbidding Africans to learn to read and write, and only allowing a few loyalists to receive basic vocational training. The repeated appearance of words like "ignorance" is precisely the stigmatization of Africans by colonial discourse. This is just a kind of look of the colonizer, which objectifies Africans, making them ultimately undergo the self-alienation from human beings to beasts under the cultural oppression of slavery.

5.2.2 The Loss of The Other's Dignity

Under the shadow of colonial slavery, the loss of the dignity of The Other has naturally become a tragic reality that cannot be ignored. They endured immense spiritual oppression, completely losing their basic human rights and personal dignity. Through means such as religious infiltration and cultural hegemony, colonizers attempted to destroy the original cultures and belief systems of colonized people and forced them to accept Western values and religious beliefs. Such cultural aggression further made the colonized people doubt and deny their own cultures, thereby losing their cultural confidence and national pride, and their sense of dignity also crumbled as a result. The different psychological states and attitudes of Kalasinga and Hussein when facing external groups are sufficient to illustrate this point:

'Learn who they are, then. What do you know about them apart from these stories about snakes and men eating metal? Do you know their language, their stories? So then how can you learn to cope with them?' Kalasinga said (Gurnah 1994: 87)'.

'...They are our enemies. That's also what makes us the same. In their eyes we're animals, and we can't make them stop thinking this stupid thing for a long time... 'I'm afraid, you're right... We'll lose everything, including the way we live,' Hussein said. 'And these young people will lose even more. One day they'll make them spit on all that we know, and will make them recite their laws and their story of the world as if it were the holy word. When they come to write about us, what will they say? That we made slaves (Gurnah 1994: 87).'

In this dialogue, Kalasinga advocates getting to know the Europeans different from them. By learning about the Europeans' languages, stories and so on, he aims to learn how to cope with them. This reflects his attitude of trying to bridge cultural differences and promote understanding. However, Hussein expresses deep fear. He is worried that making contact with the Europeans would cause their own culture to lose everything, including their existing way of life. This fear thus leads him to adopt a hostile and exclusive attitude towards the Europeans. In reality, such a clash of ideas reveals the complex psychology of slaves in the colonial context: they both yearn to resist cultural invasion and have to face survival challenges, which are closely related to their dignity. The debate about freedom between Yusuf and the old gardener Mzee Hamdani can just further deepen such an exploration of dignity:

'But you were her slave... are her slave. Is that how you want to be? Why did you not accept your freedom when she offered it?' Mzee Hamdani sighed... 'They offered me freedom as a gift. She did. Who told her she had it to offer? I know the freedom you are talking about. I had that freedom the moment I was born (Gurnah 1994: 223).

From these words, Yusuf's confusion about the old gardener Mzee Hamdani's refusal to accept the freedom offered by the Mistress is obvious. And he tries to persuade him to pursue freedom. In response, Mzee Hamdani replies to Yusuf's doubts from a more profound and detached perspective. He firmly believed that he had

been free since the moment he was born and that it did not depend on the charity or recognition of others:

> When these people say you belong to me, I own you. It is like the passing of the rain, or the setting of the sun at the end of the day. The following morning the sun will rise again whether they like it or not. The same with freedom. They can lock you up, put you in chains, abuse all your small longings, but freedom is not something they can take away (Gurnah 1994: 224).

Here no doubt are some metaphorical meanings. The passing of the rain is brief and uncontrollable that comes and goes and does not stay, and the sun sets every day but rises again the next morning. This actually implies that the so-called ownership of slaves claimed by slave owners is equally transient and illusory. Although slave owners may verbally claim control over slaves, this control cannot truly change the essence of slaves as independent individuals, just as the passing of the rain and the setting of the sun cannot change the laws of nature. Here, Mzee Hamdani compared freedom to the rising of the sun, emphasizing that freedom, like the rising of the sun, is an inherent and inalienable right. In fact, it also represents the struggle to maintain the lost dignity at the spiritual level under the shadow of slavery.

5.3 The Alienated Other

That is to say, in the colonial contexts, where commodification and slavery are rooted, The Other is deeply caught in alienation not only from person to property without physical liberty, but also from beings to beasts without spiritual dignity. And this phenomenon reflects the profound impact of the colonial system on both individuals and the collectives.

At the individual level, the dilemmas faced by the protagonist Yusuf, in reality just that of the diaspora writers like Gurnah, vividly demonstrate the alienation of The Other, who strive to construct a national cultural identity but are constrained by the discipline of colonial culture and language. When they choose to write in their native languages, they risk being marginalized or voiceless in the global literary arena. This contradiction reveals the cultural alienation of The Other, who can neither fully integrate into colonial culture nor return to the roots of their native culture. From a gender perspective, women in colonized regions endure dual oppression as both colonized subjects and females. They are not only exploited by colonial rule but also harmed by Western feminists. Western feminists often mold the image of Third-World women according to their own perspectives and standards, ignoring the racial, cultural, social, and political characteristics of these women and speaking on their behalf without proper understanding, thus becoming potential oppressors (Jin 2024). In the struggle against colonizers, women in colonized regions may also be wronged by their male counterparts within the nationalistic discourse, which further plunges them into a state of alienation under multiple layers of oppression. For the colonized as a whole, the binary opposition between the colony and the metropole creates a double-bind regarding their practical needs and spiritual homelands. Economically, they rely on the resources and markets of the dominant country, while culturally and psychologically, they yearn to return to their spiritual roots. This contradiction exacerbates the fragmentation of their identities and deepens their sense of alienation.

Gurnah's writing just emerges from this complex context. Through his portrayal of the alienation of The Other, he not only reveals the pain and confusion of African immigrants in the face of the remnants of colonialism and racism in contemporary society but also deconstructs colonial discourse through literature, helping the colonized to reconstruct their subjectivity. Socially, the alienation of The Other undermines social harmony and stability, intensifying conflicts among different groups. Culturally, it hinders cultural inheritance and development, threatening cultural diversity. However, the writing of diaspora writers, with their works situated between different cultures, carries distinct ethnic characteristics who are described as the so-called alienated while engaging in dialogue with world literature. Their profound insights just offer a unique and valuable perspective for understanding the legacies of colonial history and the development dilemmas of post-colonial societies. This not only holds significant literary value but also provides important implications for resolving cultural conflicts and promoting social harmony in real-world contexts.

VI.   CONCLUSION

This thesis focuses on the novel *Paradise* by the 2021 Nobel laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah, integrating Sartre's theory of The Other and the perspective of animal metaphor to delve into the issue of alienation of subjected individuals, women, and Africans under the oppression of tradition, patriarchy, and colonialism. By analyzing the three pairs of animal images: wolf and wolf-people, crocodile and goat, pigeon and dog, it reveals how these symbolic metaphors map the predicament of different Others.

In traditional communities, the protagonist Yusuf, as an outsider, faces an identity conflict. Trapped between his original culture and Swahili traditions, he struggles to find a sense of belonging. The wolf symbolizes the locals adhere to their identities, while the wolf-people represents Yusuf, whose mixed identity becomes a struggle, revealing the conflicts and struggles caused by identity differences in traditional society.

In patriarchal society, men express predatory and dominant behavior just like crocodiles, while women are treated as the prey goats in a subordinate position. For example, Yusuf's mother, Aziz's wife, and Halil's sister show different ways of oppression and sacrifice under patriarchy. Their lives are stripped of subjectivity and become accessories of family and society, further highlighting the gender-unequal power structure.

In the colonial context, the pigeon symbolizes the deceptive civilization and superiority of European colonizers, while the dog labels the African colonized subjects as barbaric and inferior. At this point, The Self of natives and men also becomes The Other, where colonial discourse constructs false binaries, justifying oppression via cultural erasure and psychological control, revealing the racial discrimination essence of Western-centrism.

In essence, The Other in *Paradise* are actually alienated, that is, traded and tamed, mainly due to colonialism. More specifically, commodification reduces Africans to property, while slavery dehumanizes them as beasts, stripping both their physical liberty and spiritual dignity. Through this, Gurnah highlights the issues of alienation, revealing how economic exploitation and ideological control fracture identity in postcolonial contexts.

This study contributes to post-colonial research by providing a new perspective on understanding literary works and social issues. It enriches the theoretical discussion on the relationship between animal metaphors and The Others. Moreover, it calls on readers to reflect on historical traumas and advocate for a more inclusive and equal society that respects diversity and rejects all forms of oppression. Future research could further explore Gurnah's other works from similar perspectives to deepen our understanding of his literary world and the social issues he addresses.

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