CONCLUSION

The study of the selected novels indicates that the colonised communities share a common history, identity and oppression regardless of the differences in their race, caste, colour and creed. They were subjected to oppression, humiliation and forcible conversion to foreign religion. Initially land and labour were exploited by the coloniser and then they turned to the exploitation of the race and skin. Colonisation was possible due to the internal conflicts of the natives. Even though colonisation has come to an end the exploitations still take place. Even in the adverse circumstances the natives adore Indian, Caribbean, Ibo and Kikuyu practices. What Toni Morrison’s state about the black culture is true in the case of the entire colonised community: “Black culture survives everywhere pretty much the same, and that, black people take their culture wherever they go” (Wilson 86). Owing to the cultural attachment of the natives, they face geographical, emotional and psychological hindrances during their stay in foreign land. Though assimilation of culture takes place, the natives are not able to advance further after a certain stage. They make use of the facilities of the foreign land but deep in their hearts yearn for their native land. In
The River Between and Arrow of God, the cohesion is also evident in the native lands controlled by the foreign force.

In The Serpent and the Rope, the Brahmin Ramaswamy, who is mentioned as Rama, returns because of the clash which takes place between him and his wife, between Hinduism and Christianity, between East and West and between Spirituality and Materialism. The foreign culture has already influenced him and after his permanent return to India he will face another series of conflicts. His rejection by the Brahmins, which is mentioned in the first part of the novel, has not affected him much. He has not taken it seriously as he has a shelter somewhere else. After the permanent return, when he has no other place to go, the rejections and discriminations will be intolerable. Rejection in a native country leads to dejection – a wound which can never be healed. Even if he tries to settle down in India as a Brahmin, the French experience will haunt him. Ramaswamy’s crisis substantiates that even after the days of colonisation, “Past becomes the colonial prison from which no escape is possible” (Jelinek).

Neeloy Mukherji or Yogananda has no roots in A Dream in Hawaii. No hint is given of his parents or members of family or his bringing up. He is known as a lecturer with unparalleled knowledge in Vedanta. He returns to India because the Western society corrupts him
and he feels himself a fallen man. There are many conflicts taking place within him like the conflict between the ordinary man and a sage, dream and reality, materialism and spirituality. But the returned Yogananda will be a totally transformed man in India as he cannot be hundred percent Neeloy or Yogananda. If he takes up a material life, the swami in him will haunt him. If he continues his life in ashram, Neeloy will reassert. He cannot be the same Yogananda who he was before his visit to America. The predicament of man in the postcolonial situation is evident in the plight of Yogananda. Hence Yogananda becomes a metaphor representing this duality. The epithet K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar uses to define the Indian English writer can be attributed to these natives “a confused wanderer between the two worlds” – Indian and European.

Billy who returns to India realises the meaningless of life in India too in *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas*. The residue of colonisation lingers in the capital city as Billy does not find much difference between American cities and Delhi. He is satisfied only when he merges with the uncivilised tribal people of the Saal forest. Being a member of upper class society, he has dealt with the civilised community which gives importance to money over anything. This phoney group has not corrupted the man in him who yearns for real people, real love and a
real place. But the phoney society snatches him from the place of his bliss and forces him to retire to the other world. The members of his family are in the colonial spirits and he does not want to stick on to that hangover. His attempts to decolonise them turn futile. Later he decolonises himself, but that does not last for a longer period. He becomes a subject of violence and is murdered brutally by the authority. Ramaswamy and Billy are studious, have the spirit of youth to conquer the world and better their positions academically and professionally. But in the long run, the foreign soil produces a sense of insecurity which is engendered by age and maturity. The insecurity results in aloofness and alienation with the foreign and they get attracted towards their own blood ties, race, social setup and culture. The disturbed mind finds more comfort in religion and meditative ways.

In *Arrow of God*, Ezeulu is a man who is for progress, a kind of progress which will benefit humanity as a whole. He is misunderstood by his own people. He sends his son Oduche to a Christian school to learn the white man’s wisdom to fight back. His sweet revenge on his people, who were indifferent towards him during his imprisonment, results in the mass conversion of the people to Christianity. Though Ezeulu is a staunch supporter of native religion, his people embrace alien religion. His feverished mind loses its balance. Eventhough
Ezeulu’s “umbilical pull is towards the inherited culture,” (Maya 162) it does not match with the requirements of the times. Ezeulu’s stubborn nature hesitates to solve the problem of the starving people by declaring the New Year. Ezeulu who earlier stated “when two brothers fight the foreigner reaps the harvest” paves the way for foreign religion. Compromise and adjustment are unaccepted terms for Ezeulu due to which native religion loses its grip and Christianity paves the way. Social alienation is chiefly responsible for his insanity.

In The River Between, Waiyaki learns in a missionary school and is much inspired by Christians like Livingstone. He at first feels the native practices as uncultured. His father Chege, the circumcised Christian Muthoni and the uncircumcised Nyambura make him retreat to his own culture. Like Ezeulu, he feels education can cure all the evils of society and is ready to impart knowledge and enlighten his people. He is truly native but is not ready to give up his uncircumcised lover for the sake of native customs. He waits for the trial along with his beloved, when the novel ends. He makes a compromise instead of giving up his traditional belief or Christian Nyambura. This compromise saves him from insanity. Waiyaki is not ready to remain aloof within the margins. Though he is socially alienated, he does not face self alienation. He is not
ready to become powerless and meaningless like Ezeulu. Waiyaki and Ezeulu represent two different versions of the colonised.

In *Water with Berries*, Teeton’s desire to return is very strong but at the same time he appears to be very passive in the beginning. Teeton, the Caliban representative, decolonises himself by burning the coloniser the Old Dowager, who has provided refuge to him in the foreign land. Her affection and overprotection becomes a burden to him as he cannot free himself from the clutches of dependency.

Just as Prospero traps Caliban through love, the protagonists are different versions of Caliban existing in the postcolonial society. The French lady Madeleine’s love traps Rama, the impressive words of the American lady Stella Gregson take Yogananda to Hawaii, and the Westernised wife of Billy limits his freedom. Waiyaki is attracted by Livingstone’s teaching and Ezeulu by Winterbottom’s wisdom. Teeton’s movement is controlled and monitored by the Old Dowager who is over protective. Finally these natives break away from the coloniser. Rama and Yogananda are able to balance the situation because of their mental power. The civilised and disciplined society kills Billy. Teeton makes arson on his landlady, the coloniser who has safeguarded him throughout. Waiyaki and Teeton await their trial when the novel ends. The feverished mind of Ezeulu loses its balance. These natives are
followers of the resistance tradition (Ngugi). The experiences of the protagonists substantiate Frantz Fanon’s statement that the process of decolonisation also results in violence. Fanon’s idea is of great significance: “At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect” (WE 74).

The inferiority complex which arises from the feeling that only West is the best also alienates man from his culture. The colonised have a common problem of oppression and only through struggle –internal or external – they can bring a solution to their plight. There are people who belittle their own culture and identify themselves more with the coloniser’s culture than their own as in the case of Joshua, Billy’s wife Meena and Winterbottom’s servant John. Oppression creates self-hatred in the natives. A few natives like Rama and Yogananda are able to cope with this hostile predicament, but others like Billy turn “strange.” The psychic fragmentation results in insanity as in the case of Ezeulu. Most of the Caribbean natives like Teeton act violently and resort to violent measures. The haunting visions and feverished minds of these natives reflect the postcolonial trauma. The violence is the revenge of the colonised over the coloniser for exploiting their land, labour, race and skin. The violent natives like Teeton, Derek and Roger become Kipling’s
idealised victims who fight back and “pay the tormentor in his own coins” (Nandy 68). There are passive victims like Yogananda and Billy who fight back through noncooperation.

The novels reflect the tension inherent in the binary oppositions: East/West, man/woman, tradition/modernity and colonised/coloniser. The return deals with the people belonging to different walks of life and therefore has a universal nature. Rama, Yogananda, Billy and Waiyaki are teachers. Initially, Rama plans to glorify the European culture to his Indian students in Indian university. Later he realises the vanity of his vision and realises the serpent-like illusion of the Western culture. Yogananda attempts to Easternise Western community in Hawaii. He is a teacher transformed spiritual leader, a yogi who finds difficult to suppress the common man’s desires. He returns to that level from where he had started his journey. Even he falls from one trap to another during his stay in Hawaii. Billy conveys the message of vanity of material life and civilisation. Ezeulu is a priest, who is a mediator between God and his devotees. Teeton, an artist, faces creative sterility in alien soil. These protagonists with their vibrant roles as teachers, priests and artists have a moral obligation to balance the harmony in the society. The protagonists realise that their native lands, cultures and
religions are the reality and truth. The West is the serpent and the native is the rope.

The nostalgic elements also play a vital role in return. The native scenario, customs and traditions play a vital role in return. The Pumpkin Leaves Festival, New Yam Feast, Female Circumcision, and the Ceremony of Souls instill the traditional bond in the minds of the natives. When Rama longs to return, he has in his mind the nostalgic memories of his ancestoral home and family members. Due to the death of his father and passing of the time, his home has changed considerably. It is difficult for the Westernised Indians to return to their roots. The fusion of East and West is a harrowing experience to the natives. They despise the cultural and racial hybridisation. Colonisation never ends and one finds oneself trapped in other kinds of colonisation – social, cultural and economic. The doubly marginalised categories, females, play a vital role in return. In the case of Indian protagonists the trappers are females. Wonderful and unique characteristics of womanhood are portrayed by these women who cast their influence as mother, wife, friend, sister and caretaker. Their submissive, assertive and rebellious nature cast a spell over the protagonists. The restlessness and occasional depression of the protagonists hasten the return. During their return they try to supplant the residual effects of colonisation.
The urge to return links the protagonists irrespective of their country and continent. When the novel *The Serpent and the Rope* ends, Rama declares his decision of returning to his home country. A physical return takes place in the case of Yogananda, who flies in JAL to India. There are three phases in Billy’s return. He returns from America to India, from Delhi to the other side or the primitive world and then returns to the other world. The Indian protagonists are affluent and well educated. The African natives Ezeulu and Waiyaki, and the Caribbean native Teeton are not able to accomplish a geographical return. A psychological return takes place in their case. The lack of harmony between the coloniser and the colonised and the unfamiliarity created in the postcolonial situations are the major reasons for the return. The inner crisis and conflicts reflect that the “legitimate child”, the colonised, is never ready to accept the “illegitimate parent”, the coloniser.

Lamming states about the three artists in *Water with Berries*, “They are not going to return. What they will have to deal with now is the new reality in the experience – that is, the world of blacks in England, rather than what they propose to do about the world on the island” (Kent 95). By establishing the reality of the blacks who live in England, Lamming reflects the postcolonial trauma.
Return becomes an existential necessity. Owing to the conflict encountered, the protagonists feel themselves as fugitives who do not face the reality of their native land. After the stages of resistance and adjustment, the luxuries of the foreign culture debilitate the peace of mind of the natives. They become the fault finders of the foreign religion and culture, and vilify everything foreign. The protagonist yearns for a society which recognises them, a social setup which welcomes their presence and do not discriminate them on the basis of colour of the skin or creed. They want to shed out the mask which has become an existential necessity in mingling with foreign community. The traditional religion and Christianity are poles apart. A compromise between the two is also impractical as a result of the adamant nature of the religious leaders. Muthoni, who longs for this kind of a compromise by becoming a circumcised Christian faces a fatal death. The same condition awaits Waiyaki and Nyambura who wait for the trial of Kiama. Just as Caliban curses the coloniser, Prospero, using the coloniser’s language, writers use English language as a weapon to project their anguish. The flames of that anguish spread from country to country and continent to continent and gain universal significance.

The problem is serious in the case of West Indians. But for the entire returnees situation is not better than what they experienced
before. Just as the postcolonial writers, the natives feel “out of country” and out of language” because of “his present being in a different place from past” (Rushdie). This happen because of the constant journey they are involved in. The striking words of Ashish Nandy is of great significance, “...when I said that Kipling, when he wanted to be Western, could not be both Western and Indian, whereas the everyday Indian, even when he remains only Indian, is both Indian and Western”(76).

The dilemma Nandy points out of Indians is true in the case of all colonised subjects. A true decolonisation is neither possible nor desirable. Almost all the theoreticians and writers of postcolonial literature stay in the centre or margin of the West for a wider readership. They raise their voice for those who are in margins. The study establishes that ‘return’ which is one of the ways of decolonisation also results in violence. “...the spiralling violence, in which they have involved is unavoidable backfire of the violence suffered by the colonised”(Jelinek). The striking words of Frantz Fanon reverberate:

The native intellectuals, since they could not stand wonderstruck before the history of today’s barbarity, decided to go back further and to delve deeper down; and, let us make no mistake, it was with the greatest delight that they discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in
the past, but rather dignity, glory and solemnity. The claim to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture. (169)

A proper return is impossible or unachievable as the parent whether “legitimate” or “illegitimate” has an important role to play in the later stages of the child. Though the protagonists – Ramaswamy, Yogananda, Billy Biswas, Ezeulu, Waiyaki and Teeton – belong to different cultural, social and geographical backgrounds, the bond that links them is a universal one, which makes them realise the certainty of their own culture, forcing them to return to it. The domestic reasons of return are remarkable in the case of each returnee. Whether they are in India or Africa or West Indies, the trauma one suffers in the clash is similar, though the intensity varies. Decolonisation reaches its zenith with the argument of Ngugi that colonisation should be replaced by the precolonial and indigenous ways. Such a decolonisation envisaged by Ngugi is difficult to accomplish. A return to tradition has a Utopian nature. It is not necessary for the colonised to return to the past. All attempts to return to roots fail as the return process is based on idealism. Only to merge with the roots one cannot envisage a true return to the glorified past. The impossibility of retreat establishes the opinion
of Spivak and Bhabha that nativist reconstructions like decolonisation are inevitably subject to the processes of cultural intermixing that colonisation promoted and from which no simple retreat is possible.