

“We’re all the same—equally just—under the sky—under the sun—sailing over the sea—to the other side of the world—the kind side that takes count of the soul.” (O’Neill, 2014, p.145)

1. Introduction

Modern drama is pervaded with the theme of otherness because the twentieth century witnessed the appearance of liberation movements and modern playwrights called for liberating the female, the ethnic or the racial other. Eugene O’Neill, in particular, has defended the rights of the other because his Irish family went through an experience of estrangement in the United States. In his *All God’s Chillun Got Wings*, O’Neill puts on stage a tormented African American soul that has long suffered from external and internal otherness. The rationale behind choosing the play lies in its dramatization of the African American plight and in depicting the otherness of the oppressor and the oppressed. O’Neill describes the intricacies of the African American self because he spent much time in the sea with black friends and companions. Joe Smith is one of his intimate African American friends who invited him to learn about the depth, the spontaneity, the moral goodness and the integrity of blacks. His black friend lifted his spirits at his depressive moments and he used to treat him in a special and a humanitarian way. Indeed, when “O’Neill had drunk himself insensible. Joe took him to his sister’s home, where she nursed him back to sobriety” (Gelb and Gelb, 2016, p. 46). Smith and his sister were models of black inner beauty and they were sources of inspiration to the Irish American playwright. The biographical note adds certain authenticity to the play under examination because O’Neill was inspired by the intra-racial marriage between Smith and the white Miss Viola. Accordingly, the Irish-American playwright has developed an awareness about the suffering of the other and he has often called for setting free the muffled voices. He is obviously opposed to all forms of racial otherness. Before analyzing the theme of otherness in *All God’s Chillun Got Wings*, it is pertinent to grasp the meaning of black otherness. In this respect, in *Becoming Black*, Michelle Wright defines black otherness using the following terms: “I argue that [black] others are conflated rather than discretely defined, and, most importantly, the one racial group can have different types of alterity placed on it depending on which textual agenda locates it as other” (Wright, 1986, p. 31). Put differently, black otherness is not biological, but it is culturally constructed. Wright argues that black otherness is characterized by its plurality because there are many types of socially constructed myths of otherness. The present paper sets out to examine the politics of otherness in O’Neill’s *All God’s* and at analyzing the role of Manichean discourse in widening the chasm between races. The paper will demonstrate that black otherness is a cultural by-product. Another goal is to show the way the white Irish American playwright defends the rights of the black other and he criticizes the process of becoming an alienated other in a land which claims to encapsulate the key concepts of equality.

2. Literature Review

The play has been the source of debate among critics who do not agree over the idea of otherness and over O’Neill’s representation of blacks within the white majority. To start with, in *Eugene O’Neill and the Reinvention of Theatre Aesthetics*, Thierry Dubost uses a psychoanalytic approach and defines the white and black masks as elements of the Freudian uncanny. Dubost (2019, p.123) writes, “the uncanny presence creates an atmosphere that calls into question the capacity to meet the other”. The idea of otherness will be further developed in the present paper by referring to Fanon’s racial reading of psychoanalysis. Indeed, otherness takes another shape in Fanon’s canon

because he pays attention to the preoccupations of the black minority. On the other hand, in *Broadway and Corporate Capitalism: The Rise of the Professional-Managerial*, Michelle Schwartz focuses on the economic side of the play and he blames James for being obsessed with materialism and for being victimized by the machine of capitalism. He affirms: “the notion that life is the enemy is closely related to God being the enemy...The beleaguered black hero Jim denounces God” (Schwartz, 2009, p.193). This idea will be explored to discuss Jim’s otherness and to show that his tragedy originates in imitating the white dream of getting wealthy. Other critics, like David Karsner examined the experimental dimension of the play. In his *A Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama*, David Krasner studies the modern features of the play and he accentuates the innovative aspects of O’Neill’s *All God’s* and other plays. He writes, “to be a modern American dramatist was to be an experimenter, often examining the features of theatricality, how they worked to convey emotion....O’Neill’s characters make use of masks (*All God’s Chillun Got Wings*,) talk directly to the audience and express their true feelings.” (Krasner, 2008, p. 144). The present chapter will explore the same idea of masking in a deeper way by linking the idea of masking to the role of the discourse of power in dramatizing the issue of racial otherness. In her commentary on the play, Bette Mandl adopts a feminist perspective, she discusses the reversal of gender roles, she blames O’Neill for creating a submissive male character and she criticizes the failure of the playwright to debunk racial stereotypes or to “create an imaginative structure for his drama that didn’t implicitly reinforce the conditions he challenged” (Cited. in Schlueter, 1992, p. 734). Put differently, she pokes fun at his inability to challenge racial otherness or to go beyond the reiterated stereotypes. This view will be challenged by proving the ability of O’Neill to translate the realistic dilemma of blacks, to make the audience aware of racial otherness and to use the modern stage as a tool of resistance against racism. This view is well developed in Setyani’s paper entitled “Eugene O’Neill’s Protest about White Supremacy in *All God’s Chillun Got Wings*.” The Indonesian researcher argues that “the different treatments to racial differences did not only affect the oppressed but also the oppressor” (Steyani, 2019, p. 98). The current chapter will start from this idea about the effects of the machine of imperialism on the psychological well-being of both the oppressor and the oppressed. It will also develop this idea by approaching the otherness of the oppressor and the oppressed from a postcolonial perspective. Postcolonialism was used by Zhang in her essay “Eugene O’Neill’s Blackness in the *Emperor Jones*”. She refers to Fanon’s reading of the myth of inferiority and she notices that “Jones, likewise, wholeheartedly believes in his own myth that the natives are his inferiors and, therefore, deserve to be poorly treated” (Zhang, 2015, p. 195). In other words, internal otherness is incurred by the fact of internalizing the social myth on black inferiority. The same idea on the myth of inferiority will be applied in this chapter to analyze the metaphors of black otherness in *All God’s*.

The play has been approached from different perspectives, but many critics have focused on the racial attitude of the characters in Eugene O’Neill’s early plays and they have claimed that O’Neill has not raised the voice of rebellion against racism in his early plays and he has been limited to describing racism. Accordingly, many researchers have paid attention to racism in the late plays of O’Neill and they have embraced a postcolonial approach to prove that the Irish American playwright reached certain maturity and awareness about black otherness in his late plays. This view will be discussed in the current paper by studying the politics of otherness in one of O’Neill’s early plays. The paper will analyze metaphors of black otherness from a postcolonial perspective. The study is eclectic because it refers to Memmi and Fanon’s readings of black otherness. The chapter expounds

the role of imperialism in bring about psychological malaise on the oppressor and the oppressed. Delving into the causes and the nefarious effects of black otherness is the main concern in this chapter.

3. Postcolonial Readings of Black Otherness

Otherness is a major concept in the postcolonial world and it entails the existence of a cultural myth which divides races in terms of color and it presupposes the existence of an inferior race. Fanon is one of the postcolonial famous figures as he resists against black otherness and he believes that racism has negative effects on both the colonizer and the colonized. In his *Black Skins, White Masks* he deeply criticizes the superficial definition of otherness from a white perspective. He declares: "One can have no further doubt that the real other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man. And conversely, for the white man the other is perceived on the level of the body image,...for the black man, history and economic realities come into the picture" (Fanon, 1986, p. 161). In other words, external otherness starts when the white man defines the black human being as another because of his/her biological difference and the black citizen internalizes the idea of difference and otherness because of the long history of apartheid and the critical economic position. Accordingly, internal otherness torments the soul of some black characters who go through the anguish of self-denigration. Fanon vehemently reacts against otherness by instilling in his black fellows a sense of pride and by convincing them to resist the myth of negritude. Fanon attacks negrophobes by associating them with evil deeds. He empowers black militants using the following words:

Negrophobes exist. It is not hatred of the Negro, however, that motivates them; they lack the courage for that, or they have lost it. Hate is not inborn....Hate demands existence and he who hates has to show his hate in appropriate actions and behavior; in a sense, he has to become hate. That is why Americans have substituted discrimination for lynching. Each to his own side of the street. (Fanon, 1986, p. 53)

Fanon is obviously denouncing the American system, exposing the atrocious behavior of the colonizer and accusing the imperial powers of being inhuman. Dehumanization stems from going beyond human rights and it is in opposition with the rules of a civilized society. Insisting on the idea of hatred and claiming that 'hate is inborn' shows that Fanon believes that racism is not something natural and otherness is a process of becoming. The mission of the black militant is to abolish the culturally invented myth on black otherness. The idea of putting white masks to debunk the racial system from within will be deployed in the analytical part to better understand Jim's resistance against otherness and O'Neill's subtle way of attacking racism.

Albert Memmi develops Fanon's ideas about black otherness and he shares with him the same call for treating people in terms of their human depth and not in terms of color and race. Like Fanon who depicts the colonizer as an inhuman entity, Memmi writes, "the colonizer adds that the colonized is a wicked backward person, he thus justifies his police and his legitimate severity. The humanity of the colonized, rejected by the colonizer becomes opaque" (Memmi, 2013, p. 31). Memmi devoids the colonizer of his humanity because he legitimizes the use of violence for the sake of power. Memmi is implicitly and ironically representing the colonizer as a backward person because he uses illegal means to justify the end of manipulating, controlling and exerting power. On the other hand, Memmi glorifies the human aspects of the colonized and he is implicitly redefining him as a civilized creature. Memmi continues the process of devaluating the colonizer by arguing that the colonizer is also victimized by his own deeds and he goes through moments of internal otherness. Indeed, the colonizer is aware and "knows in his own eyes as well as the eyes of his own victims that he is a usurper"

(Memmi, 2013, p. 32). Self-devaluation suggests that even the oppressor goes through moments of self-denigration and he is retributed by his negative thoughts. This idea will be explored to analyze the otherness of the oppressor in *All God's* and to analyze the ambivalence of Ella.

While Memmi shares with Fanon the idea of empowering the marginalized other, he blames him for choosing to be another in the land of the colonizer and for not going back to his native country. In his "The Impossible Life of Frantz Fanon," Memmi (1973, p. 10) asks the following questions: "why did Fanon end by refusing to commit himself to his own people... Would not the best solution for him have been to return home to the West Indies? to become one of the leaders of the revolt against France and Europe? And to identify his revolt with that of his own people". Fanon is criticized because he is opposed to otherness, but he ends up being another when he embraced the Algerian identity and he denied his native land (The West Indies). Memmi accuses Fanon of being a traitor as he defends negritude, but he refuses to 'entrapment in an infinite web of otherness. In the same context of criticizing Fanon for his failure to cope with otherness, Memmi adds "the solidarity of the oppressed is another solution, by that miracle, without changing his skin and losing all memory, was he going to transform himself into a white Arab, and Muslim to boot, when he was Christian by birth" (qtd. in Alesandrini, 2014, p. 213). Put differently, the fact of being identified as an Algerian citizen is the tragic flaw of Fanon because it deepens his marginal position. It is also an impossible mission because he belongs to a Christian tribe which is totally different from the Islamic and Arab Algerian context. Memmi suggests a reconciliation with the African self and a return to the roots as the key secrets behind challenging colonial forces and going beyond the limits of otherness.

Memmi insists on the failure of Fanon to understand the process of decolonization because he ignored his native roots instead of glorifying them. He is implicitly attacking Fanon who has a limited scope about decolonization. From the perspective of Fanon, decolonization "transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the glare of history's floodlights upon them" (Fanon, 1986, p. 28). This definition is deemed as simplistic by Memmi because decolonization is not just a movement from being a mere spectator to an active agent, it is rather a moment of a positive return to the liberated self. In his *The Pillar of Salt*, Memmi insists on the importance of being loyal to the ethnic self and he addresses the reader using the following words: "Do not become a stranger to yourself, for you are lost from that day on; you will have no peace if there is not, somewhere within you, a corner of certainty, calm waters where you can take refuge in sleep" (Memmi, 2013, p.76). Memmi is obviously warring against the effects of self-estrangement and the dangers of self-denigration. He believes that otherness can be defied through being engrossed in self-glorification and in accepting and appreciating the native roots. Fanon and Memmi have many areas of divergence, but they share the same postcolonial line of thoughts and they agree that "colonization produces a pervasive structural and psychological relationship between the colonizer and the colonized" (Larocque, 2010, p. 121). The psychological effects will be studied through the mixed marriage in the play and the way it affects the white wife and the black husband.

4. The External Otherness of Jim Crow and His Black Community

External otherness is one of the major forms in the play under consideration and it is manifested through the marginalization of black characters by their white neighbors. According to Fanon, "the hypervisibility of the black inscribed skin is entrapped in an imposed othering and dehumanization from which there is little escape" (Cited. in Linke, 2010, p. 130). External otherness is reflected from the very beginning of the play through the structure of the streets. In fact, "the fire escapes are

crowded with people. In the street leading left, the faces are all white; in the street leading right, all black. It is hot Spring. On the sidewalk are eight children, four boys and four girls. Two of each sex are white, two black” (Act1, Scene 17). The separation of the streets indicates that segregation reigns supreme and that external otherness is made visible through the exclusion of blacks from the white neighborhoods. However, the gathering of the innocent children evokes that race is the outcome of cultural prejudice and children are spontaneous in the sense that they have not yet developed feelings of racial hatred. Spontaneity will vanish at school where white characters will be taught the rules of superiority and racism, while black students will be stereotyped as being inferior and unsuccessful. The hints of external otherness are also enhanced through the special use of music. For instance, the opening stage directions describe the cultural differences at the level of music: “From the street of the whites a high-pitched, nasal tenor sings the chorus of "Only a Bird in a Gilded Cage." On the street of the blacks a Negro strikes up the chorus of: "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby." As this singing ends, there is laughter” (O’Neill, 2014, p.17). The song coming from the white neighborhood tells the story of a white woman who is obsessed with materialism and who gives priority to material prosperity over emotions. The use of the song highlights the superficiality of the white woman and the fake preoccupations of members of the white community. However, the song coming from the black neighborhood is loaded with a sad cadence as it dramatizes the plight of a traveler who is overwhelmed with bitter feelings of homelessness. Indeed, “the performer is stranded far from his home, his friends, his family” (Finson, 2004, p.151). This song is also subversive as the singer uses music as a tool of resistance against external otherness. The rebellious tone is revealed through rejecting the commodification of blacks. In reality, “the rude comedy of blackface lent itself well to the flippant ease with which Americans had customarily regarded [blacks] as machines” (Finson, 2004, p.151). The same enthusiasm for improving the position of blacks will be analyzed through Jim’s dream of becoming a lawyer in a white community to readjust illegal rules and to disseminate the roots of justice. The name of the character itself is used in an ironic way to attack the Jim crow laws which are based on the doctrine of “separate but equal.” O’Neill criticizes this doctrine by showing that separation is another type of racism. In short, the opening stage directions introduce the audience to the alarming racist attitudes and the physical separation of the white and the black communities. Spectators are invited to ponder over the myth of equality and to sympathize with the alienated African American characters.

The secondary position of the African American characters is traced from the first utterance of the play. It is not a coincidence that the first speaker is a white girl “tugging at the elbow of her brother) Come on, Mickey!” (O’Neill, 2014, p.7). This choice of starting the play with a white voice shows that white voices are more audible within the American social fabric. Mickey is the rival of Jim because he tries to convince him not to get acquainted with a white family and not to be involved within the American school of law because it is based on a huge gap between theory and practice. “MICKEY--Coons, why don't yuh say it right! De trouble wit' you is yuh're gittin' stuck up, dat's what! Stay where yeh belong, see!” (O’Neill, 2014, p.19). Mickey’s words reflect his racial attitude and his attempt at curbing Jim’s dream of social integration. This type of segregation leads to the otherness of Jim and it multiplies his estrangement. Mickey’s attitude is the outcome of being influenced by the discourse on power which classifies the colonized as an uncivilized object. In this respect, “Memmi draws a portrait of the other as described by the colonizer. In dominant colonizing discourse, the colonized emerges in the image of everything the colonizer is not. The colonizer

appears as civilized, hardworking, intelligent, moral resourceful, and compassionate while the colonized is positioned as lazy, wicked, backward and immoral” (Monk et al, 2008, p 63). The colonizing discourse is internalized by Mickey who carries on displaying an antagonistic attitude against Jim. He addresses him: “yuh're tryin' to buy yerself white--graduatin' and law, for Christ sake! Yuh're gittin' yerself in Dutch wit' everyone in de ward--and it ain't cause yer a coon neider. Don't de gang all train wit' Joe dere and lots of others? But yuh're tryin' to buy white and it won't git yuh no place, see!” (O'Neill, 2014, p 20). The recurrent use of the verb ‘to buy’ is meant to accuse Jim for imitating whites and to indicate the objectification of blacks who can be bought and sold. Mickey’s limited way of thinking is another example of the cultural myth on black inferiority.

Jim challenges external otherness from the very beginning of the play and he attacks Mickey by exposing his black deeds. He reacts to external otherness by insulting Mickey as being an ill-behaved white character. He attacks him using the following words: “D'you think I'd change--be you--your dirty white(with hysterical vehemence) You act square with her--or I'll show you up--I'll report you--I'll write to the papers--the sporting writers--I'll let them know how white you are” (O'Neill, 2014, p 25). The use of the white color in a sarcastic way is meant to deliver the message that the white skinned color cannot function as the paragon of moral integrity. Jim is questioning the whiteness of Mickey and he is implicitly referring to the fact of leaving Ella with her unborn baby and treating her as a mere object of male desire. The external otherness of Jim is multiplied when Mickey and his white and even black peers envy Jim for being ambitious to get graduated and they underestimate Jim by describing him as “a negro.” For example, the black character Joe addresses Jim “(with disgusted resentment) You mean tell me dat nigger's graduatin'?....(with a snort) Fo' Chris' sake, nigger!” (O'Neill, 2014, p 27). The repetitive use of the pejorative term ‘Nigger’ highlights the exclusion of the black self from the white community and the minimization of Jim who is associated with bestiality. The idea of negritude is better explained by Fanon who is opposed to the colonizer’s perception of “the negro[as] an animal. The negro is bad. The negro is wicked. The negro is ugly” (Fanon, 1986, p 93). This negative association accentuates the otherness of the African American self. In this respect, Jim offends Joe for being a traitor and unfaithful to his native roots: “(fiercely) Don't you call me that--not before them! JOE--(pugnaciously) Does you deny you's a nigger? I shows you”(O'Neill, 2014, p 29). Jim is irritated because Joe denies his origins and he tries to extricate the African American self. Jim reacts to the myth of inferiority by using the word nigger as a positive sign of uniqueness.

5. Internal Otherness of the Oppressed

Internal otherness is the outcome of external otherness because black characters unconsciously internalize the stereotypes inflicted upon them by their white peers. Internal otherness is represented from the rising action to the final scene as racism is reigning supreme throughout the play and “nothing has changed much. One street is still all white, the other all black. The fire escapes are laden with drooping human beings” (O'Neill, 2014, p.45). In one of the tragi-comic utterances, Jim expresses his fervent wish to become a white citizen and to change his skin color. He reveals to Ella: “(suddenly) You know what, Ella? Since I been tuckin' yo' books to school and back, I been drinkin' lots o' chalk 'n' water tree times a day. Dat Tom, de barber, he tole me dat make me white, if I drink enough. (pleadingly) Does I look whiter?” (O'Neill, 2014, p.35). Jim naively believes that mixing chalk and water is the recipe for becoming a white Adam. This humorous utterance has a dramatic dimension as it reflects the role of external otherness in bringing about self-denigration. Another form

of internal otherness is reinforced through the device of masking and the wish to be a white citizen. When he is asked about the causes behind his dream of becoming a white-colored person, Jim answers: “just because--I lak dat better.” (O’Neill, 2014, p.24). The use of the comparative form shows that Jim internalizes the discourse on black inferiority and he believes that white characters are endowed with better socio-economic conditions because of their white color. Another example of dramatic otherness is exemplified through the inner torment of Jim. His voice is tinged with self-debasement and he criticizes Ella when she expresses her wish to become a black citizen. He answers: “(sort of *shrinking*) No you don't. Dey'd call you Crow, den--or Chocolate--or Smoke.... (Somberly) Dey'd call you nigger sometimes, too” (O’Neill, 2014, p.37). Jim is obviously irritated because of the stereotypical classification of blacks and their dehumanization.

Jim invited Ella to move to another place where differences will be respected and black citizens will be treated regarding their inner depth and not their racial belonging. His dream of equality appears when he informs his white beloved: “Yes! Yes! We'll go abroad where a man is a man--where it don't make that difference--where people are kind and wise to see the soul under skins. I don't ask you to love me--I don't dare to hope nothing like that! I don't want nothing--only to wait--to know you like me--to be near you--to keep harm away--to make up for the past--to never let you suffer any more--to serve you” (O’Neill, 2014, p. 37). These lines reflect the ambivalence of Jim as he is longing for equality, but he displays a submissive behavior. Submission, the reversal of gender roles and the promises to serve Ella stem from his inner feelings of self-loathing. Fanon argues that the postcolonial discourse is responsible for this self-debasement and he asserts that “the oppressed will always believe the worst about themselves” (cited in Schuman, 2009, p.19). This is the case of Jim who feels he is inferior and he does extra-efforts to satisfy his white woman. From the early days of his childhood, Jim has been yearning for becoming a successful black scholar, but he has been blocked by external and internal otherness. Institutionalized otherness at school dramatizes the otherness of Jim as he works hard to achieve his goals, but he is curbed because of his African origins. In *An Encyclopedia of Education and Human Development*, otherness at the educational institutions is explained in the following words: “race is implicitly and explicitly used to negatively impact a child’s educational experience.... [Otherness] is sustained in relation to a perception that African American students are generally lazy, undisciplined and unintelligent” (Farenga and Ness, 2004). Racism at school has a negative impact on the psychological well-being of black children because their efforts are undermined, they develop certain feelings of self-loathing and they internalize the prejudice about black ignorance and inability to achieve something. In the same context of institutionalized otherness, Jim is traumatized by the past of racism at school, but he pursues his dream of becoming a lawyer to be able to grab black rights. The failure of his dream is revealed when he informs the audience in a pathetic tone:

I study all night. I can't sleep anyway. I learn it all, I see it, I understand it. Then they give me the paper in the exam room. I look it over, I know each answer--perfectly. I take up my pen. On all sides are white men starting to write. They're so sure--even the ones that I know nothing. But I know it all--but I can't remember any more--it fades--it goes--it's gone. There's a blank in my head--stupidity--I sit like a fool fighting to remember a little bit here, a little bit there--not enough to pass--not enough for anything--when I know it all!. (O’Neill, 2014, p.73).

We infer through these perplexing lines that Jim internalizes the idea of internal otherness as he has the potential, but he does not make it and he is contaminated by the stereotypes on ‘black unintelligence. His tragic flaw lies in imitating the white way of life and forgetting about his inner

worth. Jim goes through dramatic moments of internal otherness because “it is ingrained within himself that black is lower than white and thus, in order to achieve a better life, he needs to copy what white men do....He tried to imitate white people from their appearance [and] their concern about study” (Steyani, 2019, p.101). The imitation of his white peers stems from his unconscious consideration of white people as models for success and the degradation of black people. Accordingly, Jim longs for being integrated with the white community and he is ready to be enslaved by his white beloved. He expresses his love to Ella in a submissive way and he tells her: “[I am ready] to lie at your feet like a dog that loves you. To preserve and protect and shield you from evil and sorrow, to give my life and my blood and all the strength that's in me to give you peace and joy,-to become your slave!-, yes, be your slave,-your black slave that adores you as sacred!” (O'Neill, 2014, p.3). The remarkable use of the possessive pronoun ‘your’ shows that Jim accepts to have a secondary position and to be the slave of Ella. He displays an inferiority complex and he idolizes his wife because of her white skin. In this context, in the *Psychology of Colonization*, Octave Manonni argues: “[a black] adult cut off from his normal environment is liable to show signs of inferiority, which is almost irrefutable proof that the complex was already present in him in latent form, but masked by dependence” (Manonni, 1990, p.64). Jim has a remarkable inferiority complex which has deepened his dependence on Ella and it heightened his internal otherness.

The inner divided house of the black self is further enhanced through the conflictual relationship with the black characters of the play. Self-split can be analyzed through the antagonism between Jim and Joe. For example, Joe envies Jim for getting graduated and for being in a relationship with a white girl. He “spits on his hands aggressively and strides up to the oblivious Jim. He stands in front of him, gradually working himself into a fury at the other's seeming indifference to his words.) Listen to me, nigger: I got a heap to whisper in yo' ear! Who is you, anyhow?” (O'Neill, 2014, p.38). The aggressive behavior is a fine example of self-hatred and for the minimization of the black self. The rhetorical question “Who is you” is meant to remind Jim of his ‘backwardness’ and to question his origins. The violent reaction of Joe shows that he is ensnared by the process of cultural assimilation which is based on going being ethnic roots and embracing the values of the main stream of culture. Assimilation rises in Joe the desire to cut off any yoke linking him to his African roots. He insults Jim and he reminds him of the deeds of his father: “Who does you think you is? Don't yo' old man and mine work on de docks togidder befo' yo' old man gits his own truckin' business? Yo' ol' man swallows his nickels, my ol' man buys him beer wid dem and swallows dat--dat's the on'y diff'rence. Don't you 'n' me drag up togidder?” (O'Neill, 2014, p.38). Joe ‘s words echo the postcolonial discourse on black inferiority and the oppressor’s views on black fathers as irresponsible and lazy men who do not provide their families with any financial or psychological support. Instead of defending the rights of his oppressed fellow, Joe imitates the limited ideas of the colonizer and he pokes fun at Jim because he tries to climb social ladder. In his interpretation of assimilation as a form of otherness and self-estrangement, Fanon (1986, p.13) argues: “In order to assimilate the culture of the oppressor and venture into his fold, the colonized subject has to pawn some of his own intellectual possessions. For instance, one of the things he has to assimilate is the way the colonialist bourgeoisie thinks”. This is the case of Joe who denies his origins and he adopts the American way of thinking and of perceiving black people as unsuccessful creatures who do not have the right to be educated. In this respect, he mocks Jim because of his dream of becoming a recognized lawyer: “What's all dis schoolin' you doin'? What's all dis dressin' up and graduatin' an' sayin' you gwine study be a lawyer? What's all dis fakin' an' pretendin’

and swellin' out grand an' talkin' soft and perlite? What's all dis denyin' you's a nigger-an' wid de white boys listenin' to you say it... What is you?" (O'Neill, 2014, p.42). Joe has a limited way of thinking because he assumes that "a negro" does not have the right to thrive or to be successful and integrated within the American fabric. He degrades Jim by pushing him to think twice about his humble origins and to understand that black characters do not have the right to climb the socio-economic ladder. The belief in black inferiority deepens the internal otherness of Jim who keeps silent and he does not react to the stereotypical vision of Joe. The latter reacts "vehemently: (*He grabs Jim by the throat with one hand and d'aws the other fist back.*) Tell me befo' I wrecks yo' face in! Is you a nigger or isn't you? (*shaking him*) Is you a nigger, Nigger? Nigger, is you a nigger?" (O'Neill, 2014, p.42). Joe is obviously internalizing the stereotypes about negritude and he is assuming that a black man is denied the rights of achievement. Joe and Jim are not equipped with the same ideological mindset, but they share the same feelings of internal otherness. Unlike Jim who seeks for a better representation within the American society, Joe denies his origins. They react differently against the racist attitudes, but deep inside they are affected by the machine of imperialism. Indeed, "the most significant component of the negro personality is his self-hatred for being a member of a downtrodden group" (Cited. in Houston, 1990, p.8). Jim and Joe share the same feelings of self-estrangement, but Joe chose to assimilate and Jim chose mixed marriage as a way of getting integrated within the American social fabric.

To conclude, it has been demonstrated that black characters internalize the racial stereotypes on negritude and their external otherness is transformed into internal otherness. Fanon's perception of negritude has shown that black inferiority and black internal otherness are incurred by the gigantic machine of imperialism and by the myth of white superiority. After delving into the intricacies of the black self and studying the role of the discourse of power in heightening Jim's feelings of internal otherness, the next part will examine the role of mixed marriage in multiplying the dilemma of the oppressor and also of the oppressed.

6. Mixed Marriage: The Otherness of the White Oppressor

Mixed marriage is the climactic moment of the play because it has created certain tension and it stands for overturning racial stereotypes. Jim and Ella have decided to transgress the different social norms when they got married and they moved beyond the tight sphere of racism. Marriage is considered as an ominous event within the white and the black communities because it unites two different communities. The gloomy atmosphere is traced through the use of music in the third act and through the pessimistic tone in the white neighborhood. In fact, the day of union is characterized by the absence of any festive features of celebration and joy: 'There is no laughter from the two streets. From the street of the whites the tenor, more nasal than ever and a bit drunken, wails in high barber-shop falsetto the last half of the chorus of "When I Lost You.... Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee.'" (O'Neill, 2014, p.87). The voice of the white chorus is loaded with feelings of lamentation over the loss of Ella. Besides, the presence of Robert E. Lee is another sign of rejecting racial equality and of refusing any type of racial integration. Otherness is also represented through the separation of the white and the black guests "As if it were a signal, people--men, women, children--pour from the two tenements, whites from the tenement to the left, blacks from the one to the right. They hurry to form into two racial lines on each side of the gate, rigid and unyielding, staring across at each other with bitter hostile eyes" (O'Neill, 2014, p.80). The presence of two lines is another indication of otherness as it entails the unacceptance of whites within the black community and the refusal of white characters

to get integrated within a black family. Accordingly, Jim has decided to spend his honeymoon in France away from the American racial surroundings. They have partially succeeded at leading a comfortable life based on equality, love and the absence of any racial classifications. The contradiction between the comfortable life in France and the development of racial stereotypes in the United States shows that social determinants have a pivotal role in fostering external and internal otherness.

Going back to America has led to the disharmony of the couple and the presence of Ella within members of the black American community have raised her feelings of otherness. This part will focus on the otherness of the oppressor and the unacceptance of Ella in the black neighborhood. The otherness of the white oppressor within the black community is made obvious through the disharmony of Ella with her mother and her sister-in-law. For example, the mother-in-law believes that mixed marriage is doomed to failure and she is unhappy with Jim for choosing a white wife. She declares in a tone filled with regret: “(solemnly) De white and de black shouldn't mix dat close. Dere's one road where de white goes on alone ; dere's anudder road where de black goes on alone” (O'Neill, 2014, p.57). The mother is not convinced with mixed marriage and she assumes that her son's tragic flaw lies in imitating the white way of life. From the perspective of Fanon, “the black man thus seeks to marry white culture, white beauty, white whiteness and dignity... The white woman is a means to an end, directed towards the end of becoming white” (qtd. in Nayar, 2013, p. 39). Jim's sister shares the same interpretation and she deeply criticizes her brother for being impressed by white beauty and for internalizing the postcolonial discourse on white superiority. She overturns the racial discourse by redefining black beauty and by glorifying the African American self. She presents the Congo mask as a symbol of black heritage: “It's a mask which used to be worn in religious ceremonies by my people in Africa. But, aside from that, it's beautifully made, a work of Art by a real artist--as real in his way as your Michael Angelo. (*forces Ella to take it*) Here. Just notice the workmanship” (O'Neill, 2014, p.68). Hattie is obviously proud of her cultural origins and she refers to the spiritual depth of members of her community.

The perception of black beauty is not shared by Ella who defines the Congo mask as a source of horror: “I'm not scared of it if you're not. (Looking at it with disgust) Beautiful? Well, some people certainly have queer notions! It looks ugly to me and stupid--like a kid's game--making faces! (She slaps it contemptuously.) Pooh! You needn't look hard at me. I'll give you the laugh” (O'Neill, 2014, p.69). The violent act of slapping the mask provokes Hattie as it stands for minimizing blacks and for the otherness of the black oppressor. However, the white oppressor also undergoes moment of otherness when she succumbs into moments of depression. She is over blamed for preventing Jim from attaining his dream of becoming a lawyer. In this context, Hattie attacks Ella: “Yes, he could! He can! He'll pass them now--if you'll give him a chance!” (O'Neill, 2014, p.15). The use of the conditional form highlights the misery of the black intellectual who is not given the chance to move forward and who is classified as another alien citizen because of his color. Hattie's Heart is laden and she is accusing the white wife of blocking him and for being an obstacle to his dream of becoming a famous lawyer. She is accusing the whole white race for being responsible for the otherness of members of the black community. Hattie blames the white oppressor, but she is also rebuking the oppressed for being passive and for accepting inferiority instead of challenging otherness. She attacks her brother: “Oh, you soft, weak-minded fool, you traitor to your race! And the thanks you'll get--to be called a dirty nigger--to hear her cursing you because she can never have a child because it'll be

born black--!" (O'Neill, 2014, p. 78). Jim can be criticized for being meek and for accepting the racial attitude of his wife. The refusal of giving birth accentuates the feelings of otherness and shows that mixed marriage is a failed relationship. Hattie's attitude may reflect O'Neill's voice of resistance against black otherness and his attempt "to debunk politically motivated racial myths" (Zhang, 2015, 1958). He debunks the myth of black primitivism when he represents Jim as an educated person who goes beyond gender stereotypes and who gets married to Ella who was deceived by the father of her illegitimate child. Jim believes in racial and in gender equality, but he is blamed for accepting otherness and for being influenced by the degradation of his wife. In this respect, Jim asks his sister to avoid the Manichean discourse, to believe in humanity and to accept the white other. He defends his wife using the following words: "Let her call me nigger! Let her call me the whitest of the white! I'm all she's got in the world, ain't I? She's all I've got! You with your fool talk of the black race and the white race! Where does the human race get a chance to come in?" (O'Neill, 2014, p. 81). His words are loaded with ambivalence because he refuses to identify Ella as another white creature, but he accepts the otherness of the black self. This acceptance enhances his feelings of inferiority and it suggests his warring ideas. He is torn between self-denigration and love and love has not functioned as a source of union between the black husband and the white wife. Fanon insists on the negative impact of love: "today, I believe in the possibility of love, that's why I endeavor to trace its imperfections, its perversions." (Fanon, 1986, p. 42). At the beginning. Even love has not functioned as a source of relief for Jim because he has negatively been patronized by the white wife who has demolished his dream of becoming a recognized lawyer.

The white wife and the black husband share the same feelings of otherness and of being victimized by racial stereotypes. The otherness of the oppressor and of the oppressed has affected the psychological side of the couple. In fact, both of them have fits of depression and they escape otherness by freezing the sweeter moments of the past. Hattie argues that the couple has not reached true happiness because they are entrapped by a web of social disintegration and continuous otherness. She addresses her brother: "We don't deserve happiness till we've fought the fight of our race and won it!" (O'Neill, 2014, p. 83). The failure of the couple at achieving racial equality resulted in their neurotic attitudes. In this context, Fanon (1986, p. 60) argues: "The negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation". The couple has decided to go beyond the bitter reality of bitter social disconnection when they have been indulged in unearthing the phase of childhood. Indeed, one of the desires of the neurotic persons is to escape reality and to recreate a new mental mindscape. "Indeed, the neurotic escapes reality, but in his own way. No doubt he does not feel at ease in this reality because he became neurotic" (Waelhens and Eecke, 2001, p. 204). Ella and Jim do not accept the reality of otherness and they return to the instants of childhood because they are marked by spontaneity, innocence and the absence of social prejudice. The final scene is punctuated with the use of expressionism which reinforces the tragic dimension of the play. The expressionist style is unveiled through Ella's desire to recapture the memories of the past. She believes that the couple has the chance of revival after going beyond the racial stereotypes. She tries to appease the tension of her husband by the end of the play using the following expressionistic style:

Well, it's all over, Jim. Everything'll be all right now. (Chattering along) I'll be just your little girl, Jim--and you'll be my little boy--just as we used to be, remember, when we were beaux; and I'll put shoe blacking on my face and pretend I'm black and you can put chalk on your face and pretend you're white just as we used to do--and we can play marbles—only you mustn't

all the time be a boy. Sometimes you must be my old kind Uncle Jim who's been with us for years and years. Will you, Jim? (O'Neill, 2014, p.116).

We infer through Ella's long statement her desire to dismantle the barriers of otherness, to be identified as a black girl and to escape the bitter reality of racism. Ella and Jim have failed at achieving their dreams of social integration, but they have partially succeeded at escaping otherness and at creating a world of their own. The recurrent use of "black" and white colors evokes the erasure of racial classifications and the fusion of the black and white souls. Eternal love is a source of relief for the couple because it allowed them to transgress the limited stereotypes on black inferiority. The union is manifested when Jim expresses his infinite love and Ella treats him as an equal partner. Before leaving the stage, Ella debunks racial stereotypes and Jim utters words of endearment. He uses a romantic tone when he promises her: "[exalted] Honey, Honey, I'll play right up to the gates of Heaven with you! (She tugs at one of his hands, laughingly trying to pull him up from his knees)" (O'Neill, 2014, p. 116). The happy ending of the play helps the playwright deliver his final message about challenging the different forms of otherness and treating the other as an equal human being. O'Neill succeeds at showing through the characterization of Ella that inner peace can be achieved through accepting the culturally different other.

7. Conclusion

To conclude, a postcolonial reading of otherness proves that the metaphors of racial denigration result in the otherness of the black and also the white characters. The intersection between Fanon's arguments and Memmi's interpretations of otherness has led to the conclusion that racial otherness is a cultural by-product and it is divided into two types. Jim and Ella have the stamina of tragic heroes because they are victimized by cultural prejudice and they can be deemed responsible for their failure because they have internalized the different metaphors on black barbarism. Love functions as a source of resistance against the oppressor and the oppressed. The paper is significant because it challenges the claims about O'Neill's failure at subverting racial stereotypes. Unlike the critics who attacked O'Neill and they claimed that the play "displeased as many blacks as it upset whites," (Diggins, 2007 278) the paper has shown that O'Neill revises racial stereotypes and he criticizes the metaphors on black inferiority. He invites the audience recognize that perennial love is the gate for cleansing racial mindsets and for going beyond external and internal otherness. Another innovative aspect of the paper resides in dramatizing the otherness of the oppressor. The merit of the present study lies in accentuating the negative impact of otherness on the psychology of the oppressor and the oppressed. However, the happy end of the play delivers a message about the role of equality in endowing the human being with psychological well-being and it invites black and human rights activists to rebel against the different forms of otherness.

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