

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



Nationalism and Identity in
Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat*

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for a **Master degree in English Language,
Literature, and Civilization**

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Academic Year : 2014- 2015

Dedication

This humble work is dedicated to:

❖ My dear parents.

❖ My dear sisters and brothers.

❖ My friends, and all those who directly and indirectly

contributed to accomplish my research work

Acknowledgments

- ❖ I extol God for giving me health, strength, and patience to accomplish this humble work.
- ❖ To Miss Slimi, thank you for your patience, help and comprehension. Thank you for your instructions, comments, corrections, and especially for your valuable pieces of advice.
- ❖ To the members of the jury.
- ❖ To all the teachers of the Department of English .

Abstract:

The aim of this dissertation is to explore the common points that unite and bring Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* closer. I have tried to dig into the lives of the two writers and demonstrate that even if they are from different countries, under the rule of different colonizers , and express themselves through different languages, they share the same ambitions to write. By referring to the New Historicist and Post colonial theories, I have attempted to show how the two authors succeeded to embody the history of their countries and call for nationalism in their novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat*. Then, I have tried to demonstrate the events of violence and the bad living conditions of the Algerians and Kenyans under the French and British colonial controle. Finally, I have intended to show how the two writers strongly defended their cultures and called for the importance of preserving history and land.

Key Words: Colonizer, History, Identity, land, Nationalism, violence.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	II
Acknowledgments.....	III
Abstract.....	I
Table of Contents.....	IV

General Introduction	1
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I.Chapter One: Socio-Historical and Literary Background.

I.1.Introduction.....	10
I.2.Socio-Historical Background of the novels.....	11
I.4.Theoretical Background:.....	17
I.5.Literary Background of both Novels.....	
I.6.Kateb Yacine's Biography.....	28
I.7.Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's Biography.....	31
I.8.Conclusion.....	34

II.Chapter Two: Nationalism and Violence

Introduction.....	36
II.I. plot of <i>Nedjma</i>	36
II.2. Nationalism and the Embodiment of History in <i>Nedjma</i>	37
II.3. Plot of <i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	45
II.4. Nationalism and Embodiment of History in <i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	47
II.5.Violence in <i>Nedjma</i>	55
II.7.Violence and Betrayal in <i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	59

Conclusion.....	63
III.Third Chapter: Defending Identity and Culture	
III.1.Introduction.....	65
III.2.Introduction to Bhabha's Hybridiry.....	65
III.3.Identity in <i>Nedjma</i>	66
III.4.Identity in <i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	73
III.5. Conclusion.....	79
General Conclusion.....	80
Bibliography.....	84

GENERL INTRODUCTION

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life, but define yourself.” Harvey Fierstein

There are numerous ways to identify who we are , what is our race, what is our religion, what is our ability, what is the history of our identity , are these categories important to how we view ourselves , have we changed, have we always been the same ? What is the aim of knowing about our identity?

One may define identity as the distinctive characteristic belonging to any given individual or shared by all members of a particular social category or group. Nation without culture and identity is seen as a dead nation, as a nation without future nor history since identity is the source of warmth and safety. Its effect pushes us to preserve our heritage and move forward to achieve new hopes.

Since ancient times, Africa suffered from many attempts to blur its identity through colonialism .Clearly native Africans were banned from all manners of well being and were victims of greed and hegemony. They were subjected to hard labor, racism, and poverty.

Colonialism is generally defined as the control of one nation by another. European nations managed to colonize many areas of the world .As far as Africa is concerned, it was colonized from the late 19th century until the mid 20th century. The reasons were various, but the most important ones may include the need for raw materials as well as markets for manufactured goods in Africa. Additionally, there was an intense competition towards colonial expansion between European nations. This expansion in this period took many forms, including economic companies, direct rule, indirect rule, and settler rule.

Colonization of the third world in general and African continent specifically begun with armed invasions then moved to cultural colonialism. Africans, indeed, resisted and are still resisting. This recent resistance to preserve the African identity after the independence is through several means such as science and literature and through the revival of culture that is cleared from myths made by the enemy to tarnish its features.

The effects of colonialism past and present are visible all over Africa. As Chris Kortright explains in his journal article *Colonization and Identity*, "Although direct colonialism has largely ended, we can see that the ideology of colonialism has lingered in the identity of people within the general cultural sphere as well as the institutions of political, economic, and social practices"(Kortright 2003). And all over the Arabic countries that were colonized such as Egypt, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, we have to bear in mind that one of the strategies that the colonists used to handle these nations was "Divide and Conquer".

African writers are always defending their identities through their ideas, novels, poems and theater. African writers tried and still trying to retrieve their cultures. They support their nations' fighting to make their traditional knowledge, values and lifestyles known and prevent them from loss. They are teaching through their glorious works the culture of the past, and of the present to both their nations and the colonizer himself using both languages: their native language and the one of the colonizer. They take a pen as a tool of defense to show the difference between their identities and the one that the colonizer distorted, alleged and disoriented her values.

The aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate the impact of western colonialism on Africa and the fighting of Africans for their countries and identities. It discusses the links that bind the African literature together. It aims also to explain the contexts in which two authors Kateb Yacine and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o write, and their noble message in the two novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat*. I will analyze two different novels from different societies, different colonizers, and in different languages. *Nedjma* (1956) by Kateb Yacine from Algeria written in French, and *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) written by Ngugi Wa Tthing'O from Kenya in English. Both Kateb and Ngugi depict their peoples' and their warriors' struggle with the European colonizer and they reflect in their works the harshness, the violence and the betrayal in which their peoples live under the French and British rules.

Indeed, it was in my third year of graduation that I learned to love the African literature as I never did. I was attracted more specifically by Algerian writers (mainly Mouloud Feraoun) and French ones such as the French Alphonse Daudet and Victor Hugo, but in studying the module of African Literature I discovered the beauty, the deepness of meanings, and the moralities embodied in the African novels that inspired me a lot. The first novels that I read were Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*. The deep meanings and the wave from tragic to joyful tones in flexible and smooth ways are the factors that inspire in the readers a kind of thirst to scrutinize the body of each novel in an attempt to satisfy their enthusiasm.

In fact, these two novels inspired me and they were the source of motivation that led me to treat the current topic. I want to bring new analysis gathering two African literary works written in different colonial languages (French and English),

from different societies (Algeria and Kenya), but that share the same goal which is fighting for the independence of their lands and the revival of their identities.

It is a commonplace to find comparative studies that examine two or more literary works. Such task requires a set of literary skills that constitute the basis for the analyst to accomplish his comparison. In this light, we mention: a mastery of the topic, a deep understanding of the two novels, a critical eye of every prominent or slight detail, and a good command of the theories of comparative literature. For the purpose of this research, we have chosen New Historicism and post-colonialism as theories of analysis.

New Historicism is a school of literary theory, which first developed in the 1980s. Stephen Greenblatt, the critic and Harvard English Professor, was the first to develop New Historicism that gained widespread influence in the 1990s. For that Greenblatt is regarded by many critics as one of the founders of New Historicism. New Historicists attempt simultaneously to understand the work through its cultural context and to understand intellectual history through literature, which follows the 1950s discipline of history of Ideas and refers to itself as a form of Cultural Poetics.

post-colonial theory is concerned with literature produced by writers who were/are colonized. Post-colonial theory looks at issues of power, economics, politics, religion, and culture and how these elements work in relation to colonial hegemony.

In relation to the novels in hand, which are my primary sources, a mass of literary critics have taken part in the analysis and evaluation of both novels. These studies differ in terms of aims, the elements under investigation, the theories and the methods of analysis and the final judgment and conclusion drawn about the works.

Kateb's *Nedjma* has been widely studied and analyzed in both French and English languages. Jacqueline Arnaud In her book: "*Recherches sur la Littérature Maghrébine de Langue Française. Le cas de Kateb Yacine*" (1982) states that *Nedjma* is the novel that deal with the Algerian society before the events of 1945. She stressed as well that no one among the Algerian writers invokes precisely the repression of 8th of May, 1945 as Kateb did. She adds that the words of Kateb are full of truth. Nevertheless, she argues that it is useless to look for a structure in Kateb's *Nedjma* because of the unchronological way in which the events of the novel are listed.

Charles Bonn in his book *Histoire et Production Mythique* which is a part of his lengthy book *Nedjma de Kateb Yacine* argues that Kateb in *Nedjma* (1990) and through the four main characters, tells his own story and recounts his own experience with the French colonizer. He refers to this technique as the “ Autobiographie plurielle”.(Bonn 72) Unlike Arnaud, Bonn argues that *Nedjma* strongly deals with the events of May 1945. Moreover, he argues that *Nedjma* is a Historical document that deals with the early history of Algeria, the reality of violence Algerians lived under the French colonial rule, and the hope for unity. Bonn adds that *Nedjma* is also a mythic novel. According to him, Kateb introduced myths in his novel to cover the inconsecutive relation between the Algerian society and its history.

Réda Bensmaïa in his book *Experimental Nations* 2003 explains that French school is not presented in Kateb's *Nedjma* as an instrument designed to lead to assimilation. Through the educated character Lakhdar; He argued that school is a source of loss and betrayal because it engendered indifference between the Algerian educated population and the illiterate ones. Bensmaïa adds that Kateb in *Nedjma*

interwove his high school memories with those of the uprising that led his country to the independence from the colonial rule.

León Ernesto Berdichevsky in his thesis *Distorted Historical Fictions Of The Holocaust , The Chilean Dictatorship, And The Algerian War Of Independence*, has concentrated on texts that provide retrospective accounts of traumatic historical events. He analysed the two Algerian novels Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* (1956) and Mohammed Dib's *Qui se souvient de la mer* (1962). His special interest in his analysis of these novels is what Franz Fanon views as the process of "decolonization". He sees that Kateb uncovers the energies that underlie the contemporaneous and historical struggle for independence, and reveals the socio-historic trajectories of those energies.

Villasenor Leticia in the journal article published recently in 2015 '*Kateb Yacine's Nedjma: The Dismembering of Algeria's "Étoile de Sang"*', states that the central role of the novel is the literary and figurative violence and "dismemberment". Kateb's novel portrays the political situation of Algeria at the time of its publication.

Many other critics dealt with Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*. In '*Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's Fight Against Colonialism And Neocolonialism: An Exploration of The Theme of Betrayal*' (1972) James Stephen Robson dealt with the theme of betrayal in the novel. He argues that Ngugi is a revolutionary writer. He confirms that *A Grain of Wheat* presents the village of Thabai as a community whose characters are obsessed with the discovery of a betrayer of the "Mau Mau" Revolution in the week before Kenyan independence.

Gideon Nteere M' Marete, in his book *An Anatomy Of Third World Literature: Northrop Frye's Theory of Modes in a Post-Colonial Context* (1992), explains that

Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* is one of the post colonial novels that deal with the cultural rebirth of their nations. According to him, this novel deals with the theme of the colonial and post colonial experiences of the writer's society. He argues that the third world author does not pay attention to what is considered fashionable in Europe, however he tries to depict and defend the issues of his nation. He concludes his book by stating that *A Grain of Wheat* is a proof of Ngugi's mastery of the art of the ironic writing .

Dr. Sarala Krishnamurthy says of *A Grain of Wheat* in her *Analysis Cause And Effect: A Stylistic Analysis Of The Story In Ngugi's "A Grain Of Wheat"*.: "This novel is a complex one with multiple narrations spanning an important period in the history of Kenya dealing with colonial encounter as well as decolonization",.

In his essay "*Characterization and Symbolism in Olu Obafemi's Wheels And Ngugi Wa Thiongo's A Grain of Wheat*" Ogunsanya Funmilayo A. argues that Ngugi wa Thiong'O in his book *A Grain of wheat* is considered as a spokesman of his people. He considers *A Grain of Wheat* as Ngugi's post colonial novel. He considers *A Grain of Wheat* as a turning point in the formal and ideological direction of Ngugi's works . Many other analysts have studied and analyzed in depth Ngugi's fight against colonialism in his writings and mainly in his novel *A Grain of Wheat* such as A.Doshi Nail. (2009). In our analysis we rely also on writings that treat the colonial African literature like Abiola Irele F (2009) and Kehinde Ayo(2004).

In order to succeed this analysis we guided it with three main questions:

- How the colonial oppression is represented in the African works of literature?
- Why is the colonial reality represented?

- What are the hermeneutical effects for the reader of engaging with the historical context?

The present dissertation is divided into three chapters:

➤ The first chapter will be devoted to the historical Sketch of the two countries Kenya and Algeria. Some references to the British colonization of Kenya will be necessary to relate the coloniser's oppression and dispossession that lead to the increase of violence through the Mau Mau rebellion in the 1950s. Similarly, the Algeria that is described in *Nedjma* is that of the French colonization, characterized by the expropriation of peasants from their fertile lands and the large-scale repression that reached its peak during the events of the 8th of may 1945. This chapter will be devoted to the literary contexts in which Ngugi and Kateb have produced their novels. Then I will deal with the biographies of the authors.

➤ The second chapter will deal first with the summaries of the two novels. Then, with the thematic Analysis of *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* with a deep analysis of events of the novels according to some Kenyan and Algerian historical events: the 8th of may 1945 and the MAU MAU revolution between 1952 and 1960. Next, I will treat some major themes such as discrimination and violence in *Nedjma* and violence and betrayal in *A Grain of Wheat*.

- The Third and final chapter will deal with the representation of culture and identity in both novels, and the last point will be concerned with Ngugi's and Kateb's commitment to rehabilitate their cultures.
- In the general conclusion I am going to sum up the whole work by giving some answers to problems exposed and studied in the analysis.

CHAPTER ONE : HISTORICAL SKETCH

Introduction:

"History is important because it teaches us about the past and by learning about the past you come to understand the present, so that you may make educated decisions about the future".

Richelle Mead. *Bloodlines*(2011)

It is clear that my analysis is concerned with neither the history of Algeria nor that of Kenya. Rather, my purpose is to select some historical facts, referred to or focussed upon by the two authors Kateb and Ngugi in the selected novels *Nedjma* (1956) and *A Grain of Wheat* (1967). By analysing the events described by the two authors, I will attempt to show the similarities between the two struggles by drawing the parallels between the two settler colonies coped with colonialism. I may put emphasis on some historical events such as the 8th of may uprising and Mau Mau rebellion and the causes propelled these revolts. It is worth noting that our emphasis on these two events is justified by their relevance, their importance, and their respective impact on the writers that I am going to study in detail in the following chapters.

In this chapter, thus, I will deal briefly with the historical sketches of the two countries Kenya and Algeria. Then, the literary movement in which the two writers produced their novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* . Next,i move the two theories on which I will relay on during my analysis. Finally, I am going present the biographies of the two authors Kateb Yacine and Ngugi Wa Thiong'O.

Historical sketch:

Throughout the European *scramble for Africa*, European colonizers faced

stiff resistance in many parts of Africa.

By the beginning of World War I in 1914, all of Africa, with the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia, had been colonized, and initial African Resistance had been overcome by the colonial powers. Over the next decades as colonial rule became institutionalized, African resistance to colonialism became more focused and intense. By 1950s, there were organized nationalist parties that demanded political independence in almost every colony in Africa.

In both Kateb Yacine's *Nedjma* and Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *A Grain of Wheat* the first sections in the novels are dealing with the histories of Algeria and Kenya. The first section of *Nedjma* is dealing with the events of the May 8th 1945. Ngugi's novel as well, treats the British colonisation of Kenya that forms the cornerstone of the narrative. At the very beginning of chapter one in both novels Kateb and Ngugi embrace the whole contemporary histories of their countries. For this reason we are going to present a brief historical sketch of the two countries.

I.2. Socio-Historical Background of *Nedjma*:

The history of Algeria is related to its geographical location. Algeria might be considered as the linking point between many continents. This resulted in its contact early with other civilizations.

According to historians, the first inhabitants of Algeria were the Berbers. The Berbers call also themselves Imazighen that is the plural of Amazigh, which means "the Free People" or "Freemen". Surely, as most African people, Berbers had their first contacts and established their first relations with other cultures through Trade. Their first contact was with Carthage (modern day Tunisia) .

The first Berber kingdom was established after many clashes with both

Carthaginians and Romans. Massinissa founded a state called Numidia and gathered Berbers. He gathered the Berbers of nowadays Algeria and a small part of Tunisia. Massinissa set up his capital in Constantine, the city in which Kateb Yacine was born and which is cited many times in *Nedjma*.

Mubarek Mohamd El Mili, one of the great Algerian Historians argued in his book “ Histoire de l’Algérie de l’antiquité à nos jours” in Arabic that many philosophers and historians such as Ibn Khaldoun maintain that Berbers or Amazigh people are known by their love of freedom, their courage, bravery, and faithfulness for their nations. They also argue that the Berber nation is one of the oldest nations of the world and its known generations attended Arabs and Persians, Greece and the Greek. For instance, Arabs contacted the Numidians first through Islamic missionaries in 670. This connection resulted in the spread of Islam in North Africa among most of Amazigh people.

The contact was characterized by a clash that was not a military one but was ideological. The Berber nation soon converted to Islam. They realized that their message did not come to destroy what they built, but to give it a cosmic spiritual dimension.

Many Islamic states ruled Numidia such as Umayyads then Fatimids, Rustumits, Hammadites...till the Turkish Ottomans who renamed Numidia by Algeria and which was the last Islamic state before the French invasion in the 1830s.

Surely, the French invasion of Algeria was for its economic benefits and without any doubt none of its pretexts were true. In view of the fact that we still bear the consequences of its settlement such as the economic and educational backwardness, the loss of language and culture. Moreover, French colonisation of Algeria as many European colonists, Britain in Kenya, and Spain in Morocco was characterized by

harshness and inhumanity.

Hence, Algerian fighting against France had many stages. It would take too much time and space to give information on all instances of resistance. For this reason, I am going to emphasize the most important events mentioned in the novel *Nedjma*. The Algerian population resistances, however, were neither uniform nor organized, which made it easy to the French army to stop those revolts. A new generation of Muslim leadership emerged in Algeria at the time of World War I and grew to maturity during the 1920s and 1930s.

Algerian resistance knew many strategies among them the political parties such as the Algerian Popular Party. It was also through peaceful demonstrations such as the demonstrations of May 8th 1945 that inspired the writing of the novel *Nedjma* by Kateb Yacine. For that, we shall discuss some details about these events of 1945.

May the 8th, 1945 means the end of Nazism. But the savagery of French colonialism wanted the 8th of May 1945 to be also marked by such monstrous crimes as those practiced by the defeated German Fascism. So it also corresponds to one of the bloodiest moments of the Algerian national history. The colonial repression had just done its first snag facing a population fiercely determined to promote the noble ideals of peace and independence.

Algerians began to demonstrate on May the 1st, 1945 that corresponds the occasion of the International Day for the Workers. The Algerian People's Party took the initiative to organize demonstrations across the national territory, that were mostly peaceful. They sew the Algerian flag and was attended by slogans such as "the liberation of Messali el Hadj" who was an Algerian politician fighting for the Algerian cause, "the independence of Algeria", and other demands. The demonstrations were attended by tens of thousands of Algerians in different parts of the country: Setif,

Algers, Constantine, Bejaia, Guelma...etc. Moreover, through these demonstrations the party of “Les Amis du Manifèste et de la Liberté” (AML), wanted to remind the French government of its promise of democracy and equality. Indeed, France promised the Algerians democracy and equality if the Algerians accepted to fight as French soldiers against Germany during the Second World War. After the war ended, France wanted to break its promise, but Algerians revolted, and kept demanding their rights.

The response to the demonstrations was through the repression and massacres in the right of indigenous peoples. To illustrate more, and since Kateb's novel is concerned with the Algerian war and mainly with the events of the 8th of May 1945, I witnessed a conference about "The Algerian War of Independence 1954_1962" on November the 3rd 2014. This conference gathered fighters and eyewitnesses of the war. One of them is called Amaad Boualem, from Bejaia and who is an actual member in the department of fighters of the city of Bejaia. He was an Algerian fighter who took part in the demonstrations. He described vividly the events of May the 8th 1945:

The demonstrations were on May, 8th, 1945 that was a Tuesday. It was in the morning. In Setif, the participants gave the Algerian flag to a boy Scout called Bouzid Saal. He was in the front and the rest of the population followed him. the French police and army interrupted the march. One of the French soldiers tried to tear out the Algerian flag from the young man, but the young man was fraught patriotism, did not relinquish; he tried to keep the flag with all his strength. We did not believe that such young man could have the courage to face a soldier and to keep the flag in his hands despite the violent beatings of the soldier. This led French soldier to shoot him, he was the first martyr of the incident, one of the demonstrators shouted Allah is great, long live Algeria! ... Panic and fear prevailed the location...!

Subsequent attacks by French authorities are estimated to have caused much greater numbers of deaths amongst the Algerian population. This massacre resulted in

the killing of more than 45,000 of people, among them the first martyr of the demonstrations, the young man Bouzid Saal who was 22 years old.

They caused destruction of complete villages and properties. Foreign statistics show that between 50,000 and 70,000 of unarmed civilians died during this inhumane massacre the French army, who often boasted urbanization, freedom and humanity. The number of deaths is still unsure due to the colonial authorities who avoided in 1945 to mention the dead people in death records. Historians including Mubarek Mohamed El Mili, asserts that the demonstrations of May 8th, 1945 are one of the main causes that engendered the Algerian war of independence in 1945 which led to Algerian independence in 1962.(Ibid 312)

I.3.The Socio-Historical context of *A Grain of Wheat*:

A Grain of Wheat is set during the passage of Kenya from late colonialism to its liberation from British colonial rule.

British colonisation of Kenya dates back to the establishment of a German protectorate over the Sultan of Zanzibar's coastal possessions in Berlin conference in 1885. Meanwhile, most of European countries took the African continent as a piece of cake that they split among themselves. Then, in 1894, the British Empire declared the East African Protectorate over Kenya and Uganda. In 1920, the protectorate became a colony.

Kenya's colonial history was, indeed, in 1920s when the first organized African Movement Protest emerged. The colonial state maintained an air of indifference, not hostility to African demands. The formation of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) in 1924 and the African Kenya Union (AKU) in 1944 did not by any means alter the position of the state, which was that Africans had no complaints at all.

Kenyan people rejected the British colonial rule despite of the benefits that the

colonizer used as a pretext of colonization such as religious missionary, education, modern commerce, civilization...,but they fought throughout time to stop the colonizer's extension in their lands. Kenyans' struggle for freedom is similar to the Algerian fighting since it witnessed many stages from political resistance to the armed defence. In 1944, the Kenyan African Union (KAU) formed to campaign for independence and in 1947, Jomo Kenyatta, whose name is apparent in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*, becomes KAU leader.

In the same year of 1947, The Mau Mau rebel movement was born. This latter, led the colonial government to declare a state of emergency because of its activists strength. The movement resulted in the arrest of Kenyatta, Achieng Aneko and other warriors. It was essentially an uprising of the peasants of Kenya (especially in the central province) against the colonial state, its policies and agents, in the 1952. The Mau Mau was also called the nationalist, anti colonial, Peasant Movement. Thus, we may say, or define the Mau Mau rebellion as an act , an uprising, or a revolt which involved mostly kikuyu people against British colonial rule in Kenya. This revolt lasted from 1952 through 1960 and helped to hasten Kenya's independence in 1963.

Besides, colonial powers created many strategies and plans to hamper the struggle and to separate those fighters. Lunyabari O. Maloba confirmed in his book *Mau Mau and Kenya An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt*: "What was happening, the colonial logic dictated was the fomenting of trouble by a few disgruntled educated Africans who wanted to use their uneducated people to advance their own selfish political aims."(Maloba, 12)

The strategies of betrayal and divide and rule followed by the British colonist in the Kenyan society led many revolts to failure until the Mau Mau revolution that rose up in the 1950s. Kenyatta, hence, the leading warrior and the great personality in

Kenyan history was sentenced to seven years imprisonment on charges of leading the Mau Mau in 1953.

I.4.Theoretical background:

Literature has been traditionally considered as a principal source of ideas, a tool by which humans express their emotions, boast and show their pride of their ancestors , cherish and protect their dignity, identity and nation.

In view of the main themes selected to be under study from both novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat*, New Historicism and Post colonialism are apparently the suitable theories that help to accomplish the analysis of this study.

I.4.a. New Historicism:

New Historicism is a school of literary theory. It aims to understand the work through its cultural context. Its aim also is to understand history through literature.

Prior to 1800, literature in European languages meant writings or books of knowledge. At that time, pieces of works written in English or Latin were treated as fine examples of the use of language, rhetoric, structure, and grammar. Students of that era were asked to memorize texts, and seek to explain what they were really about, but not to interpret them as most schools and universities around the world do in recent times.

What makes New Historicism a new theory comparing it with post structuralism and reader-response theory of the 1970s, as well as by the thinking of feminist, and Marxist critics whose work was also "new" in the 1980s is that these theories are less likely to see history as linear and progressive, as something developing toward the present.

Many writers argue that New Historicism is a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period. It envisages

and practices a mode of study in which literary and non-literary texts are given equal weight and constantly inform or interrogate each other. It was offered by the American critic Louis Montrose who defines it as a combined interest in the textuality of history.

The birth of New Historicism as a literary critical phenomenon is generally linked to the publication of Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning in 1800*. In this book Greenblatt as a literary critic rather than a historian drew new attentions to how literature reflects not only the writer's self-conscious spending to his period of time but the ways in which a variety of systems of power and responses to power are reflected in a given text. These powers include politics and economy, fear and hope, violence and betrayal.

According to Michael Delahoyde in his internet article "Introduction to literature" argues that "New Historicism seeks to find meaning in a text by considering the work within the framework of the prevailing ideas and assumptions of its historical era. New Historicists concern themselves with the political function of literature and with the concept of power, the intricate means by which cultures produce and reproduce themselves. These critics focus on revealing the historically specific model of truth and authority not a truth but a cultural construct reflected in a given work." (Delahoyde, 1)

New historicists acknowledge the importance of the literary text, but they also analyze the text with an eye to history. New Historicism gives a careful consideration to the production of dialogue and political style. What makes it unquestionable that New Historicism is part of the post modern trend in literary history and culture studies.

The critical practice of New Historicism is a mode of literary history who's

literariness¹ lies in bringing imaginative operations closer to the surface of nonliterary texts and briefly describes some of the practice's leading literary features and strategies. (Laden,1)

New Historicism has become a literary term that is closely associated with Greenblatt, who is generally regarded as the leader of New Historicist theory and, as a predictable result of his sudden prominence, the focus of much criticism. Next, Greenblatt set four enabling presumptions of New Historicism in genre which are:

1. Literature has a historical base and literary works are the products of authors' consciousness and social and cultural forces. To understand literature, one has to take recourse to both culture and society that gave rise to the work.
2. Literature is not a distinctive human activity, but another vision of history.
3. A literary interpretation can reconstruct the ideology of the age through a given text. That is to say, by reading a text and analysing its events one can recognize the social and political forces of the period in which the text is written.
4. Caught in his own historicity, a historian cannot escape the social or ideological constraints of his own formation and therefore he cannot understand the past objectively on his own terms.

To conclude, New Historicism, indeed, aims to re-figure and re-present the past for the life of the present and future.

The reason for choosing this theory lies in the historical conditions in which the two novels are written. One of the pillars of New Historicist theory according to Greenblatt is that the literary text reflects the personal experience of its writers that is exactly the case of Kateb and Ngugi. Then, the events are mostly described and

created in the writings since they are the ones that affect the reader.

Moreover, it views all literary texts as historical documents as I will deal with the two novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat*, that I do consider as literary and historical documents since they are deeply reflecting the events of May 1945 and the Kenyan state of emergency that led the two countries, Algeria and Kenya, to independence.

New Historicism welcomes as well the breakdown of genres and invites the analysis of discontinuities, linking anecdotes to the disruption of our understanding history. This criterion, then, makes from both of Kateb's *Nedjma* and Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* complicated novels that are full of flashbacks and interrupted events.

I.4.b.post-colonialism:

Post-colonialism is an intellectual direction that exists since around the middle of the 20th century. It developed from and mainly refers to the time after colonialism range of postcolonial societies. The post-colonial direction was created as colonial countries became independent. Nowadays, aspects of post-colonialism can be found not only in sciences concerned with history, literature and politics, but also in approach to culture and identity of both the countries that were colonised and the former colonial powers. However, post-colonialism can take the colonial time as well as the time after colonialism into consideration.(Barry, Bhabha, and Boohemer pp.3, 23,29)

Post-colonialism thus, according to writers, is a concept embedded in identity politics. Post-colonial theory addresses matters of identity gender, race, ethnicity and racism. It shows how knowledge was used against the colonized people in service of the colonizer's imperial interests.(ibid)

Many postcolonial theorists deal with the literature of the independent nations

mainly the African ones. They focused on exploring and questioning the artificial boundaries, made by the colonizer to separate the colonizer from the subaltern. These artificial boundaries include racism, and violence.

Many critics define Post colonialism or postcolonial studies, as an academic discipline featuring methods of intellectual discourse that analyze, and respond to the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism. This study explains the human consequences of controlling a country and establishing settlers for the economic exploitation of the native people and their land, the case of France in Algeria and Britain in Kenya.(Kikandi, kihendi pp.69,158)

Drawing from postmodern schools of thought, critics assert, that postcolonial studies analyse the politics of knowledge (creation, control, and distribution). To achieve this latter, critics analyze the functional relations of social and political power that sustain colonialism and neo-colonialism. They ask for the how and the why of an imperial regime's representations (social, political, cultural) of the imperial colonizer and of the colonized people.

In most of postcolonial works of literature, we find that characters are struggling with their identities in the wake of colonization, or the establishment of colonies in another nation. Postcolonial theory, however, asks the reader to analyze and explain the effects that colonization and imperialism, or the extension of power has on colonized people and nations.

As a genre of contemporary history, post colonialism questions and reinvents the modes of cultural perception the ways of viewing and of being viewed. As anthropology, post colonialism records human relations among the colonial nations and the subaltern peoples exploited by colonial rule. As critical theory, post colonialism presents, explains, and illustrates the ideology and the praxis of neo-

colonialism, with examples drawn from the humanities history and political science, philosophy and Marxist theory. Post-colonialism tries to show the relationship of the colonial power to the (formerly) colonised country, its population and culture and vice versa, that seems extremely ambiguous and contradictory. This contradiction of two clashing cultures and the wide scale of problems resulting from it must be regarded as a major theme in post-colonialism.

In the essay "Postcolonial Criticism" (1992), Homi K. Bhabha has shown how certain cultures (mis)represent other cultures, thereby extending their political and social domination in the modern world order, the point that i will attempt to study in detail in the third chapter.

It is significant to note that Ali A. Mazrui in his book "*the Development of Modern Literature Since 1935*", has mentioned that there are seven conflicts in the themes of the post-colonial writers: the clash between indigenous and foreign, between individual and community, between socialism and capitalism, between development and self-reliance, and finally between Africanity and humanity.(Mazrui.13,14,15)

Moreover, African literature witnessed the appearance of new themes because of the social and economic state of the newly independent countries such as: corruption and economic disparities that the writers through their novels tried to awaken their nations, and draw their attention that such phenomena that are the affects of colonialism on their societies. The famous Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe (1930) exposed his work internationally and as the first series editor at Heinemann, became an important arbiter of writing across the continent. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) has released a great success because it has discussed the conflicts western and African traditions.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'O (1938) is one of the foremost and most prolific African

writers. He is famous for not only his fine narrative style, but also for the use of his native language Gikuyu and then having his work translated into English. His novel *The River Between* (1965) depicts in details the Kikuyu encounter with the early white settlers in Kenya.

In addition to all that had been said, it is worth mentioning the female contribution to African literature. Bessie Head, the South African novelist has tested themes of spiritual exile, political corruption and racial hatred. Head's novels reflect her own experience of departure and settlement. In this light, there is the Nigerian Buchi Emecheta, who has examined the women's lives under male dominated social structure.

In this vein, we agree that African literature has passed through phases of development, which have enriched its quantity and quality. During its progress, the African literature has witnessed the emergence of many great writers who have produced their masterpieces that, in their turn, have made this type of literature internationally well estimated.

Literary background:

From its beginning, African literature was written in different languages and various genres. It shifted from oral literature including stories, dramas, riddles, histories, myths, songs, proverbs, and other expressions, to the printed literature.

Colonial literature was written during colonial period and in colonial languages as the novels under analysis, *Nedjma* by Kateb Yacine in French, and in English Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*.

Knowing that literature is the mirror of society, we may say that the shifts in genres and literary movements are the results of the changes occurred in their societies since slave period. African literature produced at that time was known as

slave narratives.

The famous work Olaudah Equiano *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789) described vividly the horrors of slavery and the slave trade. Then during the 19th century, African intellectuals and writers had always succeeded to depict their societies in their novels, and reflect the situations of their people in their plays and their works of art expressing nascent nationalist feelings. French-speaking Africans in France, led by Léopold Senghor, were active in the *négritude* movement ²from the 1930s, along with Léon Damas and Aimé Césaire, French speakers from French Guiana and Martinique. Their poetry not only denounced colonialism, but also proudly asserted the validity of the culture that the colonists had tried to crush. In addition, they strongly reinvented the African history that colonialism denied. Simon Gikandi argues:

... what is now considered to be the heart of literary scholarship on the continent could not have acquired its current identity or function if the traumatic encounter between Africa and Europe had not taken place. Not only were the founder of modern African literature colonial subjects, but colonialism was also to be the most important and enduring theme in their works. From the eighteenth century onwards, the colonial situation shaped what it meant to be an African writer, shaped the African writing, and over determined the culture of letters in Africa. (Gikandi,69)

Indeed, African literature till the late colonial period between the end of World War II in 1945 and 1960s increasingly treated themes of liberation, independence, and *négritude*.¹

Writers in Western Africa, such as Chinua Achebe, and in Eastern Africa, such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o, produced poetry, short stories, novels, essays, and plays. In the north, most writers wrote in French language such as, Mouloud Feraoun, and Kateb Yacine.

These writers often share the same themes: the clash between indigenous and colonial cultures, condemnation of European subjugation, pride in the African past, and hope for the continent's independent future. Many of the African writers produce a kind of text that is classified as anti-colonial discourse as opposed to colonial discourse, which aimed at hiding the Europeans' intention in their colonies reflecting the effect of that event on their societies. In their struggle against colonialism, the work of the post-colonial writers involved claiming back their own history.

Meanwhile, the anti-colonial thought has focused on the response of both the colonised and the colonialist people to the Western discourse. It came to provide the target audiences both at home (Africa) and abroad with abundant details of the underlying political and material aims of colonisation that the colonial discourse had obscured.

As Ayo Kehinde confirms in his book *Post-Independence Disillusionment in Contemporary African Fiction: The Example Of Meja Mwangi's Kill Me Quick*:

African writers have an enduring propensity for social and political commitment. Their texts mostly reflect and refract the socio-political events in their societies. Initially, African literature was a tool for celebrating the heroic grandeur of the African past; later it was used for anti-colonial struggle (Kehinde,158)

For the purpose of the research, I am going to focus on this period of time between 1945-1963. Like it was mentioned in the historical background *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* reflect the situation of the authors' societies, May 1945 and the Mau Mau rebellion of 1954. Hence, their writings had been influenced by politics what lead commitment and realism hold their grounds especially in novels.

Both Kateb and Ngugi, such as most of African writers, treated in their novels the violence of war and the fighting of their peoples to gain independence. Ngugi asserted that:

I am a writer, Some have even called me a religious writer. I write about

people: I am interested in their hidden lives; their fears and their hopes; their loves and hates, and how the very tension in their hearts affects their daily contact with other men: how, in other words, the emotional stream of the man with the social reality (Ngugi, 1987.Qtd.in Curry,2006)

Then most of these writers were "the spokesman" of their people. Chinua Achebe was one of those writers who supported their people's cause and depicted the feelings and the conditions of their societies. He argues that: "After all, the writer's duty is not to beat this morning's headline in topicality: it is to explore in depth the human condition" These writers, also, explore the detrimental effects of colonialism and imperialism. Thus, Ngugi confirmed also in an interview about *A Grain of Wheat*:

Actually, in the novel I have tried to show the effect of the Mau Mau war on the ordinary man and woman who were left in the villages. I think the terrible thing about the Mau Mau war was a destruction of family life, the destruction of personal relationship. You found a friend betraying a friend, a father suspicious of the son, a brother doubting the sincerity or the good intentions of a brother, and above all these things the terrible fear under which these people live .(ibid)

Kateb, on the other hand, like many Algerian writers depicted the French colonist and the sufferings of the Algerian population from the ravages of colonialism. Abdelkader Aoudjt says that: "Feraoun, Dib, Mammeri, and Kateb put Algerians center stage. They revealed the suffering of Algerians, showed their discontent, and envisioned their dreams."(Aoudjt 7)

Moreover, many critiques argue that the writers of this period are the founders of the Maghrebi literature. As Tahar Ben Djelloun who strongly asserted that in a news papers known "Le monde" on November 3rd 1989 that Kateb is not only the famous Maghrebi writer but the content of his works exceed the local boundaries to achieve universal dimension. He adds that Kateb lives with his people as well as inside his people's preoccupations; kateb ,however , expresses through the novel, the speech,

poetry, and theater their deep aspirations :

Non seulement il est l'écrivain maghrébin le plus puissant, celui dans l'oeuvre dépasse les frontières locale pour atteindre une dimension universelle, mais il fut aussi un homme populaire, c'est à dire proche de son peuple, vivant à l'intérieure des ses préoccupations exprimant par l'écriture, la poésie, le roman, la parole le théâtre ses aspirations profondes

(Le monde,1989)

Patrick Corcoran adds in *The Cambridge Introduction to Francophone Literature*:

Kateb's experience as a 16-year-old participant in the demonstrations at Setif on 8 May 1945, and his witnessing of the repression and the massacres that ensued, go some way to providing a context for understanding the complexity of his views on these links between poetry and politics... it would seem reasonable to identify the traumatic events of 1945 (including his own imprisonment, his simulated execution by firing squad and his mother's descent into madness as a consequence of these events) as at least linked to those obsessions.(Corcoran,45)

Then, colonialism had not only exploited the richness of the colonies but also has reshaped their histories and cultures as well. During the post-colonial period, most of African writers including Kateb Yacine and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o defended their identities as the focus will be laid on this point in the third chapter.

I.6.Kateb Yacine's Biography:

I.6.aEducation:

Kateb Yacine is an Algerian writer, poet, novelist, journalist and playwright notable for his novels and plays, both in French and Algerian Arabic dialect, as well as his advocacy of the Berber cause.

Kateb yacine was born on August 6th, 1929 into a scholarly maraboutic Berber family from Sedrata or Nadhor which is actually in the city of Guelma named Kebeltiya or Kablout.

The young Kateb attended the Quranic school of Sedrata in 1934. In 1935 he moved to the French school in Lafayette (Bougaa actually in the wilaya of Setif) where his family had moved. His mother was against sending him to French school to learn the French culture. She was afraid of Kateb's influence by the colonizer's culture. Indeed, Kateb's entry to the French school was his first experience with colonialism.

In 1941, Kateb studied in a high school in Setif. He was in his third year when the demonstrations of May 8th, 1945 occurred. He participated in these demonstrations that ended with the massacre of thousands of Algerians by the police and the French army. Three days later, he was placed under arrest and imprisoned for two months by the French army. From that point on, he became a partisan for the nationalist cause and, consequently, took the literature as a tool that described and reminded the colonial oppression.

Dropped out from school, through this period of depression, his father sent him to the school of Bone (Annaba). There he met "Nedjma" (which means a star in Arabic), his cousin already married and with whom he lived for a short period. This period of his life has greatly influenced his novels. As it will be discussed in the following chapters, many events in *Nedjma* portray the life of Kateb.

I.6.b. Writing career:

Kateb went to Paris in 1947, and in May 1947, he joined the Communist party and gave a lecture in the 'Salle des Sociétés Savantes'. During a second visit to France the following year he published '*Nedjma* ou le *Poème du Couteau*' in the magazine 'Le

Mercure de France'.

He was a journalist at the daily 'Alger Républicain' between 1949 and 1951. His first great reports were written in Saudi Arabia and Sudan (Khartoum). After returning to Algeria, he published under the pseudonym Said Lamri an article denouncing 'swindling' at the holy place of Mecca.

Following his father's death in 1950, Kateb worked as a longshoreman in Algiers. He returned to Paris until 1959. During this period in Paris, he worked with Malek Haddad ², developed a relationship with M'hamed Issiakhem ³, and in 1954, spoke extensively with Bertold Brecht ⁴. In 1954, the magazine Esprit published Kateb's play '*Le cadavre encerclé*', which was staged by Jean-Marie Serreau but was banned in France because it dealt with the brutality of May 1945.

After a stay in Cairo, Kateb Yacine returned to Algeria in 1962, shortly after the independence celebrations. He resumed writing for 'Alger Républicain' but travelled frequently between 1963 and 1967 to Moscow, France and Germany. '*La Femme sauvage*', which was written between 1954 and 1959, was performed in Paris in 1963. '*Les Ancêtres redoublent de férocité*' was staged in 1967. '*La Poudre d'intelligence*' was also staged in Paris in 1967 and an Algerian Arabic version in Algiers in 1969. In 1964, Kateb published six essays on 'our brothers the Indians' in 'Alger Républicain' and recounted his meeting with Jean-Paul Sartre. He left for Vietnam in 1967, completely abandoning the novel and wrote '*L'Homme aux sandales de caoutchouc*', a controversial play celebrating Ho Chi Minh that was published, performed and translated into Arabic in 1970.

In same year of 1970, Kateb Yacine returned for a more permanent home in Algeria. During this period, he had a significant change in philosophy: he refused to continue writing in French, and instead began working on popular theatre, epics, and

satires, performed in dialectal Arabic. Beginning this work with the theatre company 'Théâtre de la Mer' from Bab El Oued in 1971, sponsored by the "Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs", Kateb travelled all over Algeria for five years, putting on plays for an audience of workers, farmers and students. His main shows were entitled '*Mohamed prends ta valise*' (1971), '*la Voix des femmes*' (1972), '*La Guerre de deux mill ans*' (1974), '*Le Roi de l'Ouest*' (1975) and '*Palestine trahie*' (1977). In 1986, Kateb Yacine performed an excerpt of a play about Nelson Mandela, and in 1987 he received the "Grand Prix National des Letters in France."

In 1988 the Avignon Festival staged '*Le Bourgeois sans culotte ou le spectre du parc Monceau*', a play about Robespierre that Yacine wrote at the request of the Arras Cultural Center for the bicentennial commemoration of the French Revolution. Kateb settled in Verscheny in Drôme, travelled often to the United States and continued to make frequent trips to Algeria. At his death, he left an unfinished work on the Algerian riots of October 1988.

To conclude, taught in the language of the colonizer, Kateb Yacine considered the French language as the Algerians' booty of the war for independence. He declared in 1966 "La Francophone is a neo-colonial political machine, which only perpetuates our alienation, but the usage of the French language does not mean that one is an agent of a foreign power, and I write in French to tell the French that I am not French". Trilingual, he also wrote and supervised the translation of his texts into the Berber language.

Kateb Yacine died on October 28th, 1989 and left behind him a set of works that manifest his multicultural country's search for identity and the aspirations of its people for more progress, peace and mainly unity as their ancestors Massinissa and Yusef Inbo Tashfin did before.

I.7.Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's Biography:

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o is a Kenyan writer, formerly writing in English and now working in Gikuyu language which is his mother tongue and the first language of his country. His works include novels, plays, short stories, and essays, ranging from literary and social criticism to children's literature. Ngugi Wa Thiong'O has been in exile for more than two decades because of his sharp and satirical writings unfolding the bitter reality of Africa in general, and Kenya in particular. He is a true spokesman for his people and a chronicler of Kenya's modern history. He is regarded as one of the most significant writers of East Africa.

Ngũgĩ was born on January 5th, 1938 in Kamiriithu, near Limuru in Kiambu district, Kenya, of Kikuyu descent, and baptised James Ngugi. His family was caught up in the Mau Mau War; his half-brother Mwangi was actively involved in the Kenya Land and Freedom Army, and his mother was tortured at Kamiriithu homeguard post, what led his works to be strongly influenced by this period of Kenyan history.

I.7.a.Education:

Through education, Ngugi experienced the fraught relation between the indigenous African system and the imported and surely imposed Western one. Markedly, as Kateb, Ngugi's primary education, was in the variety of schools, as a consequence of run by the Church of Scotland Mission, the government, and most importantly independent Gikuyu system. Ngugi says on this point in one of interviews in Carle Sicheman:

In those national [Gikuyu]schools, I was made aware of colonialism as an oppressive

force, whereas in the foreign mission schools colonialism was seen as a good thing... In other words, the national schools peasant cultures were the centre ; they were glorified or upheld, developed and perpetuated. But in missionary schools foreign cultural forms of expression were glorified and used to destroy all peasant cultures." Ngugi(1990)

Ngugi was one of the few students from Limuru to attend the elite Alliance High School. During these years of education, Ngugi became a devout Christian. For the most part, Ngugi's experiences at Alliance High School are reflected in his novels. The Christian teaching at Alliance High School gave him a thorough Knowledge of the Bible. Thereupon, the Christian religion has been a constant subject and source of material throughout Ngugi's writing career especially as portrayed in biblical idioms and images.

Then, as Kateb Yacine did in the demonstration of the 8th of May 1945, Ngugi as well, while at Alliance participated in a debate in which he contended that Western educations were harmful to African students. Ngugi next attended Makerere University in Uganda and later the University of Leeds in England.

I.7.b.Writing Career:

Ngugi became influenced by the writings of Karl Marx, Franz Fanon and Friedrich Engels, developing an ardent opposition to colonialism, Christianity, and other non-African influences in Kenya. Cook and Odenimpke call this phase in Ngugi's writing "... a period of Maturing vision... a focus on events such as "Mau Mau" capitalism, socialism and nationalism..."(Cook and Orenimpke: p-13).

Besides, Ngugi's fiction reflects his abiding concern for the poor of Kenya who have been displaced by white colonialists and by African opportunists who seized power after independence. His early novels, *Weep Not, Child*, *The River Between*, and *A Grain of Wheat*, all explore the detrimental effects of colonialism and imperialism.

In 1976, after the independence of Kenya, he helped set up The Kamiriithu

Community Education and Cultural Centre, which, among other things, organised African Theatre in the area. The uncensored political message of his 1977 play *Ngaahika Ndeenda* (I Will Marry When I Want) led the Kenyan Vice-President Daniel Arap Moi to order his arrest. While detained in the Kamiti Maximum Security Prison, Ngũgĩ wrote the first modern novel in Gikuyu, *Caĩtaani mũtharaba-Inĩ* (*Devil on the Cross*), on prison-issued toilet paper.

After his release, he was not reinstated to his job as professor at Nairobi University, and his family was harassed. Due to his writing about the injustices of the dictatorial government at the time, Ngugi and his family were forced to live in exile. Only after Arap Moi was voted out of office, for 22 years. His later works include *Detained*, his prison diary (1981), *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986), an essay where he supported and argued with African writers' expression in their native languages rather than European languages, and *Matigari* (1987), one of his most famous works, a satire based on a Gikuyu folktale.

His most recent books are : *An African Renaissance*, a collection of essays published in 2009 making the argument for the crucial role of African languages in the resurrection of African memory, and two autobiographical works: *Dreams in a Time of War, a Childhood Memoir* (2010) and *In the House of the Interpreter: A Memoir* (2012).

Like Ngugi asserts:

Literature is indeed a powerful weapon. I believe that we in Africa or anywhere else far that matter have to use Literature deliberately and consciously as a weapon of struggle in two ways: a) first by trying as much as possible to correctly reflect the world of struggle in all its stark reality, and (b) secondly, by weighting our sympathies on the side of those forces struggling against

national and class oppression and exploitation say,
against the entire system of imperialisms in the world
today. I believe that the more conscious a writer is about
the social forces at work in his society and in the world,
the more effective he or she is likely to be as a writer.
We writers must reject the bourgeois image of a writer
as a mindless genius.(James Curry,28)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'O is then one of the most known African writers who uses literature as a weapon against colonialism, its injustice and its impact on the African countries. He uses in his novels, humour as in *Matigari*, and revelation to emphasize its powerful meaning. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has written compelling novels that reflect the African society and treat its issues.

I.8.Conclusion:

In this chapter, I dealt with the socio-historical context of both novels. Then the literary movement as well as the biographies of the two authors and the theories on which I will rely on in my analysis. My aim through this chapter is to introduce the novels to make the analysis easy to understand and the events familiar.

End Notes:

¹ **Literariness :**

Roman Osipovich Jakobson was the first to coin the term literariness in 1921. according to Jakobson literariness can be defined as a characteristic set of text properties. According to Don Kuiken literariness is a product of a distinctive mode of reading. Evidence that appears difficult to understand.

² **Negritude movment:**

The literary movement, Negritude, was born out of the Paris intellectual environment of 1930s and 1940s. It is a product of black writers joining through the French language to assert their cultural identity. These black intellectuals converged around issues of race identity and black internationalist initiatives to combat French imperialism.

Aimé Césaire was the first to coin the word in his epic poem, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, declaring "my negritude is not a stone, its deafness hurled against the clamor of the day" but instead, his negritude "takes root in the ardent flesh of the soil. The best-known Negritude works from these poets were *Damas' Pigments*, *Senghor's Hosties noire* and *Chants d'ombre*, and Césaire's *Cahier*. These poets were brought together in the creation of the journal, *L'Etudiant noire*.

³**Malek Haddad** is a French-speaking Algerian poet, novelist, and cultural adviser. He is born July 5, 1927 in Constantine from berber origins. He died in Algiers on June 2nd, 1978. As Kateb He saw the French language in schools as the stronger exile of the Algerian population : "The colonial school colonizes the soul ... For us, it's true, every time we did a bachelor, we did a French ". "There has always been a school between my past and me." "I am less separated from my homeland by the Mediterranean by the French language.

⁴**M'hamed Issiakhem** born June 17th, 1928 in Tizi Ouzou. Issiakhem is one of the founders of the modern Algerian painting. He illustrated many works of Kateb Yacine. M'hamed Issiakhem realized posters for the performances Kateb . In 1967 he directed a film with Kateb for television, "Poussières de juillet" July's Dust. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs published a brochure in Algiers which Kateb Yacine wrote the foreword under the title Issiakhem. He died on 1 December 1985 following a long illness.

⁵**Bertolt Brecht** was a German poet, playwright, and theatre director of the 20th century. He made contributions to dramaturgy and theatrical production, the latter through the tours undertaken by the Berliner Ensemble he established the post-war theatre company operated by Brecht and his wife.

CHAPTER TWO : EMBODIMENT OF HISTORY AND VIOLENCE

Introduction

The following chapter deals with a comparative study between the novel of the Algerian writer Kateb Yacine *Nedjma* and the one by the Kenyan Ngugi Wa Thiong'o which is *A Grain of Wheat*. Even though this task has not yet undertaken a lot according to critics, I think that the similarities between the two fictions are striking enough in order to prompt a comparative analysis. This analysis will explore the political, social, economic and cultural contexts that make possible the literary and ideological convergence between writers. I will attempt in this analysis to show how the two writers are likely to produce similar works even if they live in societies widely separated from one another in space and time, knowing that they have experienced similar enabling conditions. I am going to analyse their success to call for nationalism, their description of violence exercised by colonial rule on their nations.

II.1.Plot of *Nedjma*:

The Novel, takes place in Constenine and Bone. It begins in the wake of the period of chaos which followed the demonstrations of 1945.

The four male characters Mustapha, Lakhdar, Rachid, and Mourad find work on a building site. One of them, Lakhdar, is imprisoned following an altercation with M. Ernest, their French boss. In jail, his memory takes him back to his first arrestation that followed his participation in the demonstration of 1945. Lakhder, then, escapes from the prison and does not care to be exposed to prosecution or trial.

Shortly after this, still in the first part of the novel, another of the characters, Mourad, is involved in a brawl at a wedding which results in his

being responsible for the death of M. Ricard, another French entrepreneur.

Each of the four male characters Mustapha, Lakhdar, Rachid, and Mourad has a connection to the other ones through the blood ties, the similarity of dream and the seek for origin and identity, and is attracted to, Nedjma.

Nedjma is the same age as these male characters. She is already forced by her mother to marry Kamel, the son of the fundamentalist Si Mokhtar.

When she is three years old, Nedjma is adopted by Lella Fatma, a Kabyle woman. Her mother is a mysterious French Jewish woman and her father is Si Mokhtar, an almost legendary figure who has fathered uncountless offspring, including one of Nedjma's four suitors. Later, Nedjma is ripped by one of her suitors. The identity of her ripper remains in doubt through the novel.

Finally, each one of the main characters is trying to plan for himself his own path amid the mines of the past, the present and the future. To flee their daily problems, they find refuge in alcohol and drug. Despite of this state of disillusionment, these four young men remain clinging to their dreams and hopes that drive them to the most degrees of rebellion and revolution.

II.2. Nationalism and the Embodiment of History in *Nedjma*:

Through *Nedjma*, Kateb Yacine fixed the foundation stone of the Algerian modern literature. Taher Djaout argues that *Nedjma* is undoubtedly the fundamental text of the Algerian literature in French language: "Nedjma est sans conteste le texte fondamental de la littérature Algérienne de langue française." (preface of *Nedjma* Gille Carpentier edition, 2012)

The novel is characterized by the novelty of the brilliant style, and the novelty of the surprising narrative structure. *Nedjma*, is a poetic, romantic novel and at the same time a historical product. Historical events are clearly manifested throughout the entire novel. As Kateb explains: "*Nedjma* is the link between the past and the present" (Yacine 1956:146). The circumstances of *Nedjma*'s birth are shrouded in the same mystery that characterizes the birth of Algerian nationalism and of the new Algerian identity.

II.2.a Definition of Nationalism:

The Oxford English Dictionary defines Nationalism as "patriotic feeling, principles, or efforts, policy of national independence" or "the desire by a group of people who share the same race, culture, language, etc. to form an independent country". (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 8th Edition)

From the beginning of the novel till its end, Kateb's expressions were full of love of country, faithfulness to the land of the ancestors, and his readiness and call for sacrifice for the liberation of the beloved country:

J'ai ressenti la force des idées.

J'ai trouvé l'Algérie irascible. Sa respiration...

La respiration de l'Algérie suffisait.

Suffisait à chasser le mouches.¹(70)

In order to call for nationalism, Kateb chooses the riots of the 8th of May 1945, that marks a turning point in relations between French and Algerian people, to be one of the major themes of *Nedjma*. Through these riots, Kateb portrays the penury, the illegal treatments and the privation of the Algerians under the French rule. He tries to show the legitimacy of these riots and call his people to support the Algerian cause and gain their patriotic feeling.

Firstly, in the very beginning of the novel and through the memory of Lakhdar, Kateb introduced the events of May 8th of 1945 and its monstrosity that caused his arrest for

the first time:

Lakhdar y trouve l'atmosphère de son arrestation. Le printemps était avancé, il ya un peu plus d'un an. Mais c'était la même lumière ; le jour même. Le 8 mai, je suis parti à pied. Quel besoin de partir? J'étais d'abord revenu au collège, après la manifestation ; les trois cours étaient vides. Je ne voulais pas croire; j'avais les oreilles semblables à des tamis, engorgées de détonations; je ne voulais pas le croire. Je ne croyais pas qu'il s'était passé tant et tant de choses² (68).

Kateb Yacine was an active participant in the Algerian demonstrations of May the 8th, 1945. When he was sixteen-years old, he found himself in direct confrontation with French tactical uses of repression and violence. Like it is mentioned in the first chapter, he was arrested and tortured by the police and imprisoned for several months, Kateb witnessed then, the oppression of the Algerian nation under the French system of colonialism. He survived and experienced the harshness that his nation lived and described it in his novel. Charles Bonn argues that Kateb through his main four characters, is narrating his own experience under the name of " plural autobiography":

« Autobiographie plurielle », *Nedjma* n'est pas un espace de parole prêté, comme outil pour la maîtrise de leur situation socio- politique, à d'autres que l'auteur. Parlant de l'Algérie, Kateb parle de lui. Ses quatre héros, tous en quête de Nedjma, sont en partie des aspects divers de son propre drame personnel, biographique³(Bonn,72)

The writer narrates his personal experience in a very important period in history of Algeria that marked him and his nation through his characters, which is an aspect of new historicist theory. Spiegel argues that: “New Historicists point to the culture all specific nature of texts as products of particular periods and discursive formations...” (Spiegel 1997: 190)

Then, with the fresh memories of Setif massacre, Kateb embarked on the eight-year long process of writing *Nedjma*. The novel as its preface emphatically states, “bears witness to a people” and despite being written in French, it remains a profoundly Algerian work. The use of memories in both Kateb's and Ngugi's novels

are also, one of the characteristics of the postcolonial theory. Elleke Boehmer's *Colonial and Post-colonial Literature*(1995) claims that :

From what we have observed, it becomes apparent that many acts of remembering which characterize the post-independence writing partake in an over-arching meta-narrative of journeying and return...A writer may also choose to focus on specific periods in greater narrative of journeying : the idyllic childhood, and the dawn of self-consciousness ; or the time following, of severance an departure, and the loss of roots, home, or motherland.(Boehemer199,200)

Additionally, through Kateb's call for nationalistic feeling, he mentions many times his love for his country, his ardent desire for freedom, and hope of the Algerian self-rule. To encourage his people, to gain their conviction, and their support for the legal Algerian cause, Kateb cites the example of the red ants in unity and calls his people to imitate the ancient Algerian fighters in their cooperation and bravery.

Kateb, hence, strongly underestimates the strength of the colonizer despite the military hardware it possesses, because he knows that the spirit of patriotism and the pride of belonging to the nation reach what cannot be achieved by the advanced weapons nor by the heinous plans. He compared the colonizer to flies, and the Algerians to the red ants for their hardworking, solidarity, and unity, and then he expressed his feeling of responsibility of awareness since he is an educated citizen:

Les fourmis rouges venaient à la rescousse. Je suis parti avec les tracts.[...]J'ai tracé sur le sable un plan... Un plan de manifestation future.[...]Je me battrai avec du sable et de l'eau.[...] Moi j'étais étudiant. J'étais une puce. Une puce sentimentale [...]Moi j'étais en guerre. Je divertissais le paysan. Je voulais qu'il oublie sa faim..⁴(70,71)

Next, the nationalist sentiment that gained popularity under Abdelhamid Ben Badis⁵ , the leader of the Association of Muslim Algerian scholars, and Messali el Hadj and the Etoile Nord-Africaine (ENA) in the 1930s revived on May 8th, 1945. Kateb mentioned both of these political and religious parties via the events of

Nedjma.(190)

II.2.b. Embodiment of History in *Nedjma*:

Kateb starts with the recent events of May 1945, to make an introduction that tells the Algerian reader in particular and the world as whole about the Algerian successive fighting against colonialism using his characters' flashbacks.

Kateb mentions events that dated back to 1830, which is a very important date in the Algerian history. It refers to 19th of June 1830, the date of the French colonial forces embarkation in Sidi Fredj seaport. This means that it is the date of the French conquest to Algeria. (127).

The response of Algerians, however, to this settlement since 1800 was characterized by the rejection of the foreign domination and by the defence of their lands to which Algerian government, senate, and religious scientists called.

Algerian resistance focused initially on trying to stop the operations of the occupation, and to ensure the survival of the state. Nevertheless, most of these attempts failed due to the lack of balance of power, and the dispersion of revolutions geographically against the organization of the French army that had increased and multiplied his supplies. Algerians' attempts of freeing their land took a long period, through many strategies political, armed fighting, and through social awareness in mosques and markets.

Additionally, through the events of May 8th 1945, Kateb goes back to early times in the history of Algeria. He cited the years that refer to important events in Algerian colonial history such as 1870 and 1918. When the two characters Lakhdar and Mustapha wrote the banners with some peasants to the demonstrations Kateb describes in detail how the movement occurs to go back also in a period of Algerian

history :

Lakhdar et Mustapha quittent le cercle de la jeunesse à la recherche des banderoles.

Les paysans sont prêts pour le défilé.

-pourquoi diable ont ils ramené leurs bestiaux ?

Ouvriers agricole, ouvriers, commerçants. Soleil.

Beaucoup de monde. L'Allemagne a capitulé.

Couple. Brasseries bondées.

Les cloches.

Cérémonie officielle ; monument aux morts.

La police se tient à distance

contre-manifestation populaire.

Assez de promesses. 1870. 1918. 1945.

Aujourd'hui, 8 mai, est-ce vraiment la victoire?

Les scouts défilent à l'avant, puis les étudiants.

Lakhdar et Mustapha marchent côte à côte

La foule grossit.

Quatre par quatre.

Aucun passant ne résiste aux banderoles.

Les Cadres sont bousculés.

L'hymne commence sur les lèvres d'enfants:

De nos montagne s'élève

La voix des hommes libre.

Mustapha se voit au cœur d'un mille-pattes inattaquable.⁶ (282.)

The date of 1870 refers to the year in which Crémieux decrees⁷ modified the French decree. He granted French nationality to Jews living in one of the three Algerian departments. The decree of October 24, 1870 confirmed that Algeria has become a part of the three French provinces and French laws would be applied to Algerian Muslims. Rather, continuing the fiction that the "indigenous is French", the Code of "l'indigénat" or the right of citizenship enabled French authorities to subject a large, alien population to their rule by legal separation and a practice of indirect institutions to supplement a tiny French governing force.

In 1918, by the end of WWI, a new Generation of Muslim Leadership emerged and grew to maturity during the 1920s and 1930s. It consisted of a small but influential class of intellectuals, of Algerians whose perception of themselves and their country had been shaped by wartime experiences, and of a body of religious reformers and teachers. Some of these people were members of the few wealthy Muslim families. They had managed to insinuate themselves into the colonial system in the 1890s and had with difficulty succeeded in obtaining for their sons the French education coveted by progressive Algerians. Others were among the about 173,000 Algerians who had served in the French army during World War I or the several hundred thousand more who had assisted the French war effort by working in factories.

In France, the Algerian population became aware of a higher standard of living than at home and of democratic political concepts, taken for granted by French people in France. These standards that the colons, soldiers, and bureaucrats had refused to apply to the Muslim majority in Algeria. This pushed the Algerians to fight for such democracy in their country.

Meanwhile, scholars say that the novel's title *Nedjma*, which means a star in Arabic, explicitly refers to an Algerian ancient political party that was named "the North African Star". His members were the first Algerian nationalists to call for independence. The movement took an organisational form among the Algerian workers in France in 1926 where Messali el Hadj was one of leaders. This political party was widely supported in Algeria as well by The Communist Party militants, who advocated the freedom of the press and schooling in Arabic. In 1937, the party changed its ideology and took the new name of "le Parti du Peuple Algérien (PPA)" the Party of the Algerian People. Jacqueline Arnaud sees that Nedjma's significance

from the North African Star: " prend toute sa signification quand on se rappelle que le premier rassemblement nord-africain d'inspiration laïque qui ait revendiqué l'indépendance s'appelait « l'étoile nord-africaine », d'où est sorti le P.P.A. " (Bonn and Arnaud,19,738)

We notice that there is a close relation between *Nedjma* the novel, the demonstration of May 1945, and the North African star. The North African star's leader was a subject of the main claims of those demonstrations. The demand was the liberation of Messali el Hadj. Those demonstrations in which Kateb took part are the major theme of the novel. Therefore, *Nedjma* is in fact an extract and inspired from the party's name as Bonn and Araud confirm.

In addition to that, Kateb refers to another important date in the history of Algeria 1942, which is the year of marriage of Nedjma with Kamel (*Nedjma* 107). This date also coincides with the alliance of some Muslim leaders and Ferhat Abbas (who call for assimilation between French and Algerian populations).

Ferhat Abbas was with French side during the Second World War provided the French response to the demands of his political party containing the right to call a conference of Muslim representatives to develop political, economic and social institutions for the Algerians within an essentially French framework.

In the same year, Ferhat Abbas shifted from his Assimilation Tendency and Full Integration with France to self-determination. This represents, obviously, an important turning point in the history of Algeria.

Greenblatt believes that although each individual or writer is fashioned or shaped by the generative rules and conflicts of his culture. The writers, according to Greenblatt, are also provided by ideological beliefs and views that accordingly transform individuals in their novels into subjects. (Greenblatt,65)

Nedjma has many interpretations among them Algeria, Kateb's mother, or the Algerian political party the North African Star. Ngugi in the same way, in *A Grain of Wheat* gives his main characters the names of great personalities in Kenya's history such as Waiyaki wa Hinga who is a great warrior and symbolic personality in Kenya, and the character Contigo, who was his innocent brother shot by British army. Greenblatt confirms that:

Inescapable but not simple: New Historicism, as I understand it, does not posit historical processes as unalterable and inexorable, but it does tend to discover limits or constraints upon individual intervention. Actions that appear to be single are disclosed as multiple; the apparently isolated power of the individual genius turns out to be bound up with collective, social energy: a gesture of dissent may be an element in a larger legitimating process, while an attempt to stabilize the order of things may turn out to subvert it' (Greenblatt, 164-65).

Through the voice of Si Mokhtar, memories of Mustapha and Lakhder, through the dates referring to important events in history Kateb is not simply presenting his nation or merely telling its story. Rather, he teaches his people about their history that is full of sacrifices and redemptions for dignity and freedom, and calls them to follow and keep the bravery of their ancestors. He shows also the sense of fighting and hoping, in a parallel manifestation to his personal attachment and the one of his people to his motherland, with regard to the nations.

II.3. the Plot of *A Grain of Wheat*:

The central action of *A Grain of Wheat* takes place in December 1963 in the village of Thabai, near Rung'ai Market, in rural Kenya during preparations for the approaching celebration of Uhuru, that is, Independence.

When the British colonizer came to Kenya, it strengthened its hold on the territory by building a great railroad. Waiyaki and other warrior leaders took up arms against

this imposition, but they were defeated. Most Kenyans gradually learn to make accommodations with the new regime, though the seeds of revolution spread underground in “the Movement,” known to the British as Mau Mau.

While Gikonyo is away, the town is punished. The huts are burned down and the people are forced to rebuild in a contained area. They are put into forced labor building a trench around the town, and they have no food. People are beaten, raped, and starved. During this time, Mugo protests a guard beating a woman in a trench and is arrested and taken away.

Mumbi works hard and is faithful to Gikonyo, though she doesn't know if he's alive or dead. She finds out finally that Gikonyo is coming home, and in a moment of weakness, allows Karanja to have sex with her. Afterwards, she rejects him again, and never wants to see him. Karanja has embraced the white government to gain power.

Meanwhile, Mugo struggles with his own guilt. Before Karanja's death, he hopes to have a quiet life, building a home, business, and family. One day after shooting a government official, Karanja comes to his house and asks him to join the Movement. Mugo is afraid that either the rebels or the government will kill him. He turns Karanja over to the government, but immediately regrets it.

At the detention camp for intervening in the beating, Mugo truthfully claims to have taken no rebel oath. No one believes him. He is beaten mercilessly and inspires a hunger strike. Afterwards, the townspeople consider him a hero, but Mugo is driven by his conscience to confess at the Ururhu celebration, and later is taken away by the former Freedom Fighters to be punished.

Finally, at the celebration, Gikonyo breaks his arm. In the hospital, he realizes that he needs to open up communication with Mumbi and that he wants to rebuild their marriage.

II.4. Nationalism and Embodiment of History in *A Grain of Wheat*:

Introduction:

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's historical inspiration, came from a number of primary sources. like Katbe's inspiration with the manifestation of May 1945, Ngugi is inspired by the most obvious and evident event of most of his novels which is the independence movement of the Kenyan Land and Freedom Army ("Mau Mau").

Ngugi a novelist-historian focuses on key phases in the history of Kenya that covered most of his novels. Throughout his novels mainly the three first ones *Weep Not Child*, *The River Between* , and *A Grain of Wheat* which according to critics, provide Ngugi's version of Kenya's history from the 1920s to the time of its independence. G.D. Killam (201) and Andrew Gurr (92) view it within the post-colonial frame in which 'received history is tampered with, rewritten, and realigned from the point of view of the victims of its destructive process.' (Ashcroft et al 34)

Ngugi tells the story of people fighting for freedom in *A Grain of Wheat*. These people sacrifice themselves for the Uhuru, the Swahili word for freedom. As many critics argue, the title of the novel also conveys the idea of sacrificing. It is taken from the Bible, "Unless A Grain of Wheat die" (John, 12:24).

II.2.a Nationalism through the Illegal Treatments of Whites Towards

Kenyans:

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi chooses to depict the destitution and misery in which his people live as means of awareness that may lead his people to react against the British rule.

Kamiriithu village has been the centre of Ngugi's life. It is just 12 miles north of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Despite the fact that Ngugi has not actively involved in the 'Mau Mau' independence movement, he experienced the division that this revolutionary period produced within his own family.

Ngugi embodied many important incidents of British colonization to Kenya and its treatments to the Kenyan natives including Ngugi's family to convince and call his people for nationalism.

With this intention, in *A Grain of Wheat* the pointless killing of the strongly build, deaf and dumb 'Contigo' by the British soldier is precisely what happened to Ngugi's own deaf and dumb step-brother of the same name. This offense is also a testimony of the typical of the brutal treatment of innocent people in that period (4,5). Ngugi depicts then his sufferings and the ones of his family, village and the entire Kenyan nation as well. In the Preface to *Secret Lives*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o recalls the problems and conflicts within his own family:

As I write to remember the nights of fighting in my
father's house, my mother's struggle with the soil so that
we might eat, have decent clothes and get some
schooling; my elder brother, Wallace Mwangi, running
to the cover and security of the forest under a hail of
bullets from colonial policemen ; his messages from the
forest urging me to continue with education at any cost;
my cousin, Gichini wa Ngugi, just escaping the
hangman's rope because he had been caught with live
bullets; uncles and other villagers murdered because
they had taken the oath; the beautiful courage of
ordinary men and women in Kenya who stood up to the

might of British imperialism and indiscriminate terrorism. I remember too some relatives and fellow villagers who carried the gun for the Whiteman and often became his messengers of blood. I remember the fears, the betrayals..., the moments of despair and love and kinship in struggle and I try to find meaning of it all through my pen. (Ngugi, Preface to *Secret Lives*, 1976)

Meanwhile, Ngugi recalls the problems and the conflicts within his family. Whenever his father loses title to his land, because properties were based on oral commitment by the Kenyan society and the British colony only recognized written documents as legally Land ownership. Next, actually, Ngugi's elder brother, Wallace Mwangi, was involved in the Land and Freedom Army ("Mau Mau"), the cause by which his village Kamiriithu was destroyed. Ngugi describes his reaction to the rubble that was once his village home and to the construction of a "New Kamiriithu" within the structure of the colonial government strategic hamlet policy in 1955:

I came back after the first term and confidently walked back to my old village. My home was now only a pole of dry mudstones, bits of grass, charcoal and ashes. Nothing remained, not even crops, except for a lone pear tree that swayed in sun and wind. I stood there bewildered. Not only my home, but the old village with its culture, its memories and its warmth had been razed to the ground....

All around me, I saw women and children on rooftops with hammers and nails and poles and thatch, building the new homes because their men were in detention camps or away with the people's guerrilla army. (Ngugi, p-73- 74.)

In *A Grain of Wheat*, hence, Ngugi, by means of Kihika, expresses his thoughts about freedom. In every case, Kihika tries to motivate his people for the independence. Kihika says "Choose between freedom and slavery and it is fitting that a man should grab at freedom and die for it" (186). Kihika also believes that black people are the owners of Kenya. It does not belong to the Whiteman. This soil belongs to Kenyan people. Thus, nobody has right to sell or buy it. He sees Kenya as their mother and also thinks that all her children are equal before her. She is their common inheritance (96).

II.5.The Embodiment of History in *A Grain of Wheat*:

Ngugi in *A Grain of Wheat*, in much the same way as Kateb in *Nedjma*, it is through the flashbacks of his characters that he lived the oppression of the colonial rule. He portrays in detail the Kenyan resistance to the British rule during the Mau Mau emergency of 1950s.

II.5.aThrough the arrival of the Whiteman:

Ngugi starts the colonial history of Kenya by the arrival of the Whiteman. In the beginning of the story, Ngugi traced back to the time when British settlers arrived in Kenya, holding Bibles and claiming to be messengers of the Lord. "Its origins can, so the people say, be traced to the day the Whiteman came to the country, clutching the book of God in both hands, a magic witness that the white man was a messenger from the Lord" (10;1988).

The Kikuyu were at first interested in the stories of these white men, because they too had a female ruler of their land in the past. Through the flashbacks of his characters Ngugi describes the beginning of the struggle in Kenya when The Kikuyu realized '...that white man had imperceptibly acquired more land to meet the growing

need of his position'. they also 'suddenly saw a long line of other red strangers who carried, not the Bible but the sword' and they were losing a foothold in their own country, and began to fight back. Warui, then a young man, walked all the way from thabai to join the procession. He never forgot the great event. When Jomo Kenyatta and other leaders of the Movement were arrested in 1952, Wariu recalled the 1923 procession. (p.10, 12, 13)

II.5.b. Through Characters:

Ngugi in *A Grain of Wheat*, lists the names of those Kenyans who martyred themselves over a period of more than sixty years for Kenya's independence from foreign domination. The list includes, as Messali El Hadj in Kateb's *Nedjma*, Waiyaki was one of the founders of Kenya's future ruling party, the Kenya African National Union, KANU. He was as well the grandson of the Kikuyu Senior Paramount Chief. Waiyaki wa Hinga was buried alive by the British colonial authorities in 1892 for defying their rule.

Then Ngugi mentions Harry Thuku, who was a Kenyan politician. He was one of the pioneers in the development of modern African nationalism in Kenya. Ngugi refers also to Jomo Kenyatta, and Dedan Ketika. Their actions are recounted here both for historical reason and, more specifically, to show their inspiration effect on Kihika.

Next, Ngugi chooses the character Kihika, the young rebel who eventually becomes the Mau Mau leader, to make his first major speech in the novel, because Kenyatta does not show up. By this choice, Ngugi provides the most significant clue to his approach to history. This choice is loaded with significance, because Kenyatta according to Ngugi is an example of the old leaders who had compromised their ways and changed the very tenor of the independence struggle. This Resulted according to Ngugi, in many tragic happenings in post-independence Kenya. Ngugi

thus, through the characters of the novel, tries to teach his people about their history, he draws their attention to the efforts of people who staked their lives for the cause, but others took the rewards.

If leaders like 'Jomo Kenyatta and Waiyaki are unavoidably mentioned as part of the history of Kenya, it is because they had a role at some time in the past, but now figure in the novel only as part of the background.

When the struggle had entered its final and decisive phase, they were no longer the leaders that they had started out as. Their attitude towards the struggle, its aims, methods, and more importantly, its ultimate shape, had changed dramatically. After independence Jomo Kenyatta became a leader of Kenya but he kept the British system rule which was based on social class and inequality.

Ngugi criticised a lot that system and wrote against as in his novels what led him to live in jail for many years. Ngugi thus in *A Grain of Wheat* recounts the history of Kenya with his personal point of view. This argument is further reinforced by Greenblatt, who claims that the writers are "conditioned by the expectations of their class, gender, religion, race and national identity, are constantly effecting changes in the course of history"(Greenblatt 164)

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi refers also to Harry Thuku. Harry Thuku was a clerk in Government service who founded the Young Kikuyu Association in 1921p.(12). The members of Thuku organisation demanded mainly African representation in the Legislative Council(p.66). They based their protest on some important issues, such as the Kipande card, the doubling of Hut and Poll taxes and the reduction of wages paid by settlers, mainly after the First World War (p. 218).

By his arrest, the British government expected the organisation would thereby collapse. However, the arrest of Harry Thuku did not prevent other political groups to

spread widely among the Kikuyu who saw the arrest of their leader as a direct attack against their economic and political interests.

As Algerians' reaction to the arrest of Messali el Hadj, Kenyans as well to show their discontent, they organised a general strike in Nairobi. The police fired upon the demonstrators and the strike ended, equally to the terrible ending of the Algerian demonstrators in Setif, with the massacre of some demonstrators. Nevertheless, repression did not stop the protest. Resistance among the Kenyans continued and in 1925, the Young Kikuyu Association was renamed as the Kikuyu Central Association.

It is important to realize that Ngugi, equally to Kateb, through these detections of important events in their history and their societies during the colonial rule such was in the hope that they encourage the resistance of native people, who go to the mountains and to forest so that they fight against the colonizers. They wanted to awaken their revolutionary spirits so they become collaboratively organized to defeat imperialism and create higher system of democracy. All of the characters look forward to freedom. Ngugi confesses that:

This was what I was trying to show in *Petals of Blood*: that imperialism can never develop our country or develop us, Kenyan. In doing so, I was only trying to be faithful to what Kenyan workers, peasants and workers have always realized as shown by their historical struggles since 1895. (Ngugi -96-97)

Both *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* are, according to many critics, complex novels. They share similarities in shifting back and forth between the past and the present and shifts events. Both are formed of multiple narrative lines and, far from being linear in

structure. They are composed of a large number of flashbacks.

In both novels, different characters are presented in similar circumstances at similar times but in different spaces and each character experiences the similar situation from a different perspective and in a different way. This makes both novels hold dazzling and brilliant styles, and surprising narrative structures that attract reader's attention and gain his admiration which would push them automatically to reaction. This point is further supported by Greenblatt, he called it 'wonder' according to him: "Wonder has not been alien to literary criticism, but it has been associated (if only implicitly) with formalism rather than historicism. I wish to extend this wonder beyond the formal boundaries of works of art, just as I wish to intensify resonance within those boundaries" (Greenblatt, 170). Wonder, thus, is something or someone that causes people to feel astonishment or great admiration.

Greenblatt points out that the knowledge that derives from the wonder of the other may not be very useful in the attempt to understand another culture. Nevertheless, it is vitally significant in the attempt to understand and identify our own' '(Greenblatt, 180). Greenblatt in this point, however, strongly corresponds Kateb's and Ngugi's attempt through those novels *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* which aim to call people to learn about their identities and cultures through the important events in the histories of their nations. This quest for identity is also phenomenon of repressed history in the postcolonial condition. Postcolonial literature characteristics' are highly apparent in both novels through the wonder of anecdotes that is, in fact, one of the most effective ways that the unsaid histories of otherness come into history. In addition, these anecdotes are expressed through Lakhdar in *Nedjma* and Kihika in *A Grain of Wheat*.

To conclude, according to Bonn the fact of telling and writing the history of Algeria by the Algerians is helping its renaissance. Because people without writing, is

a population without history. so through *Nedjma* and *A Grain of Wheat* the authors give back the Algerian and the Kenyan populations their histories, their identities and therefore, they try to pave the way to these nations to draw new goals and hopes for the future.

II.6. Violence in *Nedjma*:

Kateb is characterized by his youth. He wrote his first masterpiece, *Nedjma*, when he was only twenty years. It is through this ardour and this revolt , that characterize youth, that Kateb made for himself a place in the French literature.

Kateb is compared by his youth to Arthur Rimbaud. The young French poet also wrote his finest masterpieces *Le Bateau Ivre* and *le Dormeur du Val* in a young age. Kateb since his teenage depicts the great pains of his people and the cruelty of who is supposed to be the humanist country. France is known as the country of the Enlightenment and the country of Human Rights.

After the liberation of France thanks to foreign allied powers and a handful of French diehard, the French government established relationships and, indeed, worked with the greatest criminals of the world, who were the Nazis under the pretext of limiting the French defeats. French barbarity and savagery is clearly seen through policy taken in Algeria during the colonial period and through the terrible massacres of the civilian population as much as Algerian military.

As we dealt with in the first chapter, the period in which *Nedjma* is written was marked by the period of violence and struggle that Algerians were living. Violence, persecution, and oppression were the circumstances that gave birth to the novel *Nedjma*.

In fact, the chapters of this novel aim to denounce the discrimination against the Algerian population who was victim during the French occupation. Many passages

and events in the novel show the reality of the miserable life the Algerians were obliged to live. The passages that show these kinds of discrimination are quite numerous, so I am going to present some important ones.

Violence and force throughout the events of *Nedjma* become inescapable in the lives of the characters. The first page of the novel, is about the prison and the knife. Violence appears early in beginning of the novel by the escaping of Lakhder from the prison which is seen as a normal act by Mourad saying to Lakhdar that his refuge is not something of extraordinary since he will be captured later:" _Rien d'extraordinaire. Tu sera repris.

Ils savent ton nom."⁸ (15)

Besides, in the beginning chapters also, the explosion of violence is appropriated by Mourad who reclaims authority and power by declaring his own form of violence that results in the death of Mister Recard (36.38). In going deeper in the cause of this crime, we find that it was due to the discrimination, and the feeling of inferiority that Arab population felt. Mourad killed his master because of a girl that he loved but could not marry with.

Moreover, Mourad could not to speak with the girl he loved because she is the daughter of a master and he considers himself as a poor Arab worker ": Qu'est-ce qu'on peut dire à une jeune fille debout sur une route, et encore: la fille du chef d'équipe! Et d'une autre race par-dessus le marché... Vaux mieux rester entre amis..."⁹

(18) The main aim of the author, here, is to denounce the injustices his countrymen suffer at the time of writing the novel.

Kateb shows also the effect of discrimination on his nation. It led the self-underestimation. "Malheur de s'appeler Mustapha. Française. France[...]Son fiancé joue au ballon. Il shoote fort. Fiancé. Français. Moi je suis un Arabe. Mon père est

instruit’’¹⁰ (252).

The colonizer used the policy of superiority to impose his hegemony on Algerians, to break their impulsion to freedom, to keep Algerians dependent to the French rule. It aims also to create conflicts inside the Algerian society.

Charele Bonn affirms that *Nedjma* begins and ends by the image of the knife, that we see circulating in the first part of the novel. This breathless first part is all bathed in the violence of colonial relations with the other, reports culminating in the murder of Mr. Ricard by Mourad, during this burlesque and tragic marriage that constitutes one of the vertices (Bonn,199) .

Then, in the other passage the town named Kablout is completely destroyed for his support for Algerian cause. This passage, surely, shows the inevitability of violent attacks on not only individuals but also groups, cities and the whole nation.

Furthermore, Kateb is referring back by this passage to early origins. He shows that his nation's origins are dying and disappearing due to the colonists' machination. Kateb considers that the riots of 1945 failed in its attempt to save the nation and the country since all the ways drawn to achieve freedom lead to the prison and torture. Jacqueline Arnaud confirms

Le retour au Nadhor des origines a abouti à l'échec ; la manifestation est apparue comme un soulèvement avorté ; pour l'instant, tous les chemins mènent à la prison, ou à l'exil, ou au point de départ, à la mort lente de Rachid sur son Rocher natal. L'amour est impossible, la révolte est impossible, c'est l'impasse. Pourtant le cercle n'est pas irrémédiablement clos. Le couteau reste symbole d'explosion latente, et Rachid prédit la future forme de la patrie : le cercle est en réalité une spirale qui se détendra le moment venu¹¹. (180)

When kateb describes the town of Kablout that was destroyed, he keeps hope and affirms that this harshness would bring light and freedom for the people of the town:

Gloire aux cités vaincues ; elles n'ont pas livré le sel des larmes, pas plus que les guerriers n'ont versé notre sang : la primeur en revient aux épouses, les veuves

éruptives qui peuplent toute mort, les veuves conservatrices qui transforment en paix la défaite, n'ayant jamais désespéré des semailles, car le terrain perdu sourit aux sépultures, de même que la nuit n'est qu'ardeur et parfums, ennemie de la couleur et du bruit..¹² (183).

The repetition of certain events allows emphasizing on certain passages and reinforcing Kateb's message. For Kateb it accentuates the sense of an impasse, of loss, and betrayal. Critics assert that the most powerful image of the uprising in *Nedjma* is that of the old Si Mokhtar. In May 1945 in Constantine he walked through the city alone, past the fascinated police officers, with a gag in his mouth showing two slogans of his own invention which crowds of people engraved in their memory: "Vive La France/Les Arabes silence!"¹³ (206)

It is clear that Kateb through these passages of inhumane treatments toward Algerian native population intends to call for revolution, for claiming for justice and equality. Kateb's style, hence, is, according to scholars, intrinsically revolutionary. This follows from his conviction that writers have a definite political responsibility. As early as 1958, he declared that:

The true poet, even in a progressive era,
must voice his disagreement s. If he does
not truly express himself, he suffocates .
Be makes his revolution inside the political
revolution. Be is the eternal disturber
at the heart of the perturbation. L'Action. Qtd. Jean Déjeux(158)

Kateb reaffirmed this position in 1967 when he announced: "We must revolutionize the revolution. Nothing is immutable. We have to lead a fight for freedom. ". Above all, for to Kateb, " the poet must be free to express everything. " Consequently, in *Nedjma*, Kateb, dealt with the social and political themes. As always, he takes sides with the poor of his nation and his people. He deplores their

living conditions and the social injustices exercised on them by the ones who had stolen their lands and their freedom.

II.7. Violence and Betrayal in *A Grain of Wheat*:

As in *Nedjma*, in *A Grain of Wheat* there are four central characters. Through whom both writers Kateb and Ngugi captured vividly the social and political realities of Algeria and Kenya during the years that lead to the end of colonial rule in their countries.

The interaction between the colonial power and the colonized was fraught with violence and danger. Ngugi in *A Grain of Wheat* shows that British colonists are responsible for the oppression of the poor people of his country. All his characters are responsible for their actions and the several stories of betrayal are symptomatic.

Moreover, it is clear that the main theme of the novel is colonization, which logically turns into decolonization. However, decolonization always comes with violence. Decolonization is seen through this novel as a violent event that sets out to change the state of the oppressed nation. It is the total disorder that attempt to bring the light to Kenya. It is also described as a complicated and hard historical movement. The novel is built, thus, by the events that are full of violence and that are saturated with betrayal.

The first portray of violence is through Github. Github is one of these sufferers, who lost one of his hands. He says “I tell you before the Emergency, I was like you; before the Whiteman did this to me with bullets, I could work with both hands, man”(3)

Next, in the novel, the beginning of colonialism is demonstrated vividly, and how native people are restrained in their own land is reflected remarkably.

One day people in Thabai and Rungei woke up to find themselves ringed round with

black and white soldiers carrying guns, and tanks last seen on the road during Churchill's war with Hitler. Gunfire smoked in the sky, people led their stomachs. Some men locked themselves in latrines; others hid among the sacks of sugar and beans in the shops. Yet others tried to sneak out of the town towards the forest, only to find that all roads to freedom were blocked. (4)

Ngugi portrayed the violent treatment against the Kenyans, in the murder of Contigo the innocent deaf and dumb character:

...the shopkeeper in stupid terror stared back blankly at Contigo. Contigo suddenly remembered his aged mother sitting alone, in the hut. His mind's eye vividly saw scenes of wicked deeds and blood...Halt! The Whiteman shouted. Contigo continued running. Something hit him at the back. He raised his arm in the air. He fell on his stomach. Apparently the bullet had touched his heart.(4,5)

This description in the very beginning of the novel summarises the inhumanity of the coloniser towards the innocent Kenyans. Ngugi, also, describes the use of power by the Whiteman against all Kenyans including innocents to interrupt the legitimate Mau Mau fighters. Settlers consider that Mau Mau warriors are outlaws and delinquents and their adjudication is murder:" The soldier left his place. Another Mau Mau terrorist had been shot dead." (13)

Then, in addition to the conditions depicted in the novel as well as the horror and intense suffering of the Kenyan civilians, the Kenyans were forced to suppress their feelings. : " when the old woman heard the news she merely said My God!" The old woman whom her beloved and only son was shot by the Whiteman did not express her suffering and pain in losing him.(10)

In the second chapter, Ngugi describes the miserable daily life of the Kenyans. The Whiteman stole the lands, dispossessed them from their native owners, and exploited those lands treating Kenyans as slaves. When the natives asked for their lands, housing, and rights as humans, the coloniser responded brutally. Ngugi described that through Waiyaki the warrior leader who first took arms and revolted against the

British savagery who was, consequently, buried alive by the British soldiers.(12,13).

Another character, Harry denounced peacefully the British injustice by sending letters to the coloniser, but he was also tortured and imprisoned:

Harry denounced the Whiteman and cursed that benevolence and protection which denied land and freedom. He amazed them by reading letters aloud letters to the Whiteman, letters in which he set out in clear terms people's discontent with taxation, forced labour on white settler's land, and with the soldier settlement scheme which after first big war, left many black people without land around Tigoni and other places. (12)

Kenyans, then, opposed the imprisonment of Harry through marches. As the demonstration of the 8th of May in Kateb's novel, the march of the Kenyans were responded by the harshness of the settler: "On the fourth day they marched forward, singing. The police who waited for them with guns fixed with bayonets, opened fire...Aman and women fell, their blood spurted out..."(13). These passages in the novel explore the hardships and courage of African men and women.

Mumbi, another victim, as a beautiful woman and as Kihika the great warrior's sister, she would hold a place of high regard within her village and important social position within the Kenyan struggle for independence.

However, she becomes a mere pawn and victim in the local power struggle. While her husband, Gikonyo, is imprisoned in the British concentration camp, she is raped by Karanja, a British collaborator, and the individual rumoured to be the traitor who revealed her brother's identity leading directly to his hanging. She is a victim because as Léon Mugesera argues in his journal article "*Présence Africaine*" she submits to Karanja when he informs her that Gikonyo has been released from detention and is on his way home..." her betrayal was in construct a result of her joy in hearing that her husband Gikonyo released from prison.

Even if Ngugi portrayed Mumbai as a good, sensitive, caring, and generous wife

but, left, later after her sin, without an identity through these struggles, although none of it is her fault or even the result of her actions. Much like Africa itself, she is left ravaged and forced by successive settlements to carve her own identity in a new and confusion world.

The theme of betrayal among the Kenyan society is a result of the oppression exercised by the British government. This harshness resulted in the failure of many revolts such as the peasant revolt, the failure is the result of oppression and harshness of the colonist. It also consequences of betrayal created among Kenyan citizens and the problems of Kenya's divide into freedom fighters and loyalists.

Another character, Kihika the educated person who discovers, after being excluded from school, that the Christian education will bring him the freedom he hopes. Through the positive description of Kihika's thinking and actions, Ngugi describes Christian teachings should inspire people to fight injustice and colonial oppression. Kihika, one of the main characters of the novel who died for his own country, was also excruciating by the colonizers. "Kihika was tortured. Some say that the neck of a bottle was wedged into his body through the anus as white people in the Special Branch tried to wrest the secrets of the forest from him" .(17) His sufferings ended with death. He "was hanged in public, one Sunday, at Rungei Market, not far from where he had once stood calling for blood to rain on and water the tree of freedom". (ibid)

Ngugi explains also that the reason that led Kenyan fighters to react violently to the British settler and went into the forest because Whiteman treated them with contempt and they had never behaved toward them in a good way as he declared . "He ruled with the gun, the lives of the all black people of Kenya"(95). General R. talks to the public to make them aware about the colonizers and why they chose to live in the

forest : "The Whiteman went in cars. He lived in a big house. His children went to school. But who tilled the soil on which grew coffee, tea, pyrethrum, and sisal? Who dug the roads and paid the taxes? The Whiteman lived on our land. He ate what we grew and cooked. And even the crumbs from the table, he threw to his dogs. That is why we went into the forest" (216)

These scenes show the legitimacy of the Mau Mau revolution and the legitimacy of the Kenyans' quest for independence. It shows how the presence of the colonizer is marked by hideousness and horribleness. It shows the distortion and nastiness of its British policy towards the colonised population and its attempts of obliteration and perversion of the Kenyan culture and identity.

Conclusion:

To conclude, Although Kateb Yacine and Ngugi Wa Thiong'O have their individual styles and approaches in writing, these writers have one thing in common a deep concern for their countries and their peoples. They have produced a literature of denunciation and revolt against the colonial system and, thereby, have been responsible for the awakening of a national consciousness. Kateb as Ngugi through violence shows the desire for freedom.

End notes :

¹« I felt the ideas strength.

I found Algeria irascible. Its breath.....

Algeria's breath was enough.

Enough to hunt flies.”(70)

² “ lakhdar finds there the atmosphere of his arrest. “ the spring had been stepped forward there's a little more than a year. But it was the same light, the same day. May the eighth, I went walking on feet. What was the need to go ? first ; i had initially returned to college after the march ; the three classes were empty. I didn't want to believe, my ears were like a sieve, congested with denotations, I didn't want to believe. I didn't believe that so many things had occurred”(68)

³ Plural Autobiography "*Nedjma* is not space of borrowed words used as a tool to control their socio-political situation, for the readers of the author. Speaking of Algeria, Kateb is speaking of himself . His four heros, all in search of Nedjma, are part of the various aspects of his own personal drama, biographical " (Bonn,72)

⁴“ Red ants came to the rescue. I left with leaflets. [...] I have drawn on the sand a plan ... A future event plan. [...] I will fight with sand and water. [...] I, I was a student. I was chip. A sentimental chip [...] I, I was at war. I entertained the peasant. I wanted him to forget his hunger .. (70.71)

⁵ **Abdelhamid Ben Badis** : born in December 4th, 1889 and died in April 16th, 1940. He was an emblematic figure of the Islamic Reform movement in Algeria., Ben Badis founded the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema in 1931. This association was a national grouping of many Islamic scholars in Algeria from many different and sometimes opposing perspectives and viewpoints. The Association would have later a great influence on Algerian Muslim politics up to the Algerian War of Independence. In the same period, it set up many institutions where thousands of Algerian children of Muslim parents were educated. The Association also published a monthly journal, the *Al-Chihab* and Ben Badis contributed regularly to it between 1925 and his death in 1940. The journal informed its readers about the Association's ideas and thoughts on religious reform and spoke on other religious and political issues.

⁶“Lakhdar and Mustapha leave the youth circle to find streamers.

Peasants were ready for the march

Why the hell did they bring their beasts ?

Farmworkers, laborers, traders. Sun. A lot of people. Germany has surrendered.

Couples. Crowded brasseries.

Bells.

Official ceremony ; monuments for those who died.

Police stays away

People's cons' demonstration.

Enough promises . 1870. 1918. 1945

Today, may the 8th, is it really the victory?

Scouts march in front, followed by the students

Lakhdar and Mustapha march side by side

The crowd enlarges.

Four by four.

None of the passers resist to the streamers.

The executives are jostled.

The anthem starts in children's lips :

From our mountains rises

The voice of the free men.

« what can we say to a young girl stepping in the road, yet, the team's chief's girl! and of another race, above it all... worth more to stay friends..."(282)

⁷ **Adolphe Crémieux** : was a French-Jewish lawyer and statesman and staunch defender of the human rights of the Jews of France and freemason. While in the government of the national defence, he secured full citizenship for the Jews in French-ruled Algeria, through the Crémieux Decree on October 24th 1870. The decree allowed for native Jews to become French citizens while Muslim Arabs and Berbers were excluded and remained under the second-class 'indigenous' status outlined in the Code de l'Indigénat. This set the scene for deteriorating relations between the Muslim and Jewish communities, and proved fateful in the Algerian War of Independence, after which the vast majority of Algerian Jews immigrated to France.

⁸'' Nothing extraordinary. You will be taken.

They know your name. " (15)

⁹ « what can we say to a young girl stepping in the road, yet, the team's chief's girl! and of another race, above it all... worth more to stay friends..."(18)

¹⁰ " Woe to be called Mustapha. French. France [...] Her fiancé playing ball. He shoots strongly. Fiancé. French. I am an Arab. My father is educated" (252).

¹¹ " The return to Nadhor of the origins resulted in failure; the event was seen as an aborted uprising; for now, all roads lead to prison, or exile, or starting point, the slow death of Rachid on his native Rock. Love is impossible, revolt is impossible, it is deadlocked. Yet the circle is not irrevocably closed. The knife remains a symbol of latent explosion, and Rachid predicts the future shape of the homeland: the circle is in reality the spiral that will relax the coming moments " (180)

¹² “ Glory to the vanquished cities ; they didn't deliver tear salt, not more than worriers had delivered our blood: the scoop returns to wives, eruptive widows that settle in every death, conservative widows that turn the defeat into peace, that never despair of sowing, because the lost ground favors the graves; just as the night is eagerness and smells, enemy of colors and noise..."(183)

¹³ ‘‘Long live France/ Arabs silence!’’(206)

CHAPTER THREE : CULTURE and IDENTITY

Introduction:

In this chapter, I will relay on Homi Bhabha's hybridity to analyze the two novels' aims to defend the identities of their authors. I shall offer first some introductory comment as to what this concept of heredity means. Then, I will apply it to analyze the passages that defend the land and the identity of each author. I set out in the previous chapter how Kateb and Ngugi place Algerians and Kenyans at center stage. They revealed the suffering of their nations, showed their discontent, and envisioned their dreams. Now, I will try to show how they glorified their history, dignified their countries, and mainly honored and defended their national identities.

Bhabha's Heredity:

Homi K. Bhabha, is a leading figure in contemporary cultural discourse. His theory of cultural difference provides the conceptual vocabulary of hybridity and the third space. (Rutherford 1990; Bhabha 1994; Bhabha 1996)

He treats the cultural conflicts between the colonized nation and the European cultures during the post colonial era. Bhabha explains how the cultures of the colonizer remain in the African and Asian societies. He argues that the colonial cultures, because of the long period of colonialism, are mixed by the colonized culture, this mixture is called by Bhabha Hybridity.

Heredity refers in its most basic sense to mixture. The term originates from biology and was subsequently employed in linguistics and in racial theory in the nineteenth century.

The concept of hybridity occupies a central place in postcolonial discourse. Bhabha has developed his concept of heredity from literary and cultural theory to describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity. For Bhabha, heredity is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonized (the Other) within a singular universal framework, but then fails producing something familiar but new.(ibid)

Bhabha confirms that a new hybrid identity emerges from the interweaving of elements of the

colonizer and colonized challenging the validity of any essentialist cultural identity. As it is mentioned before, I shall expose the effects of colonialism on the identities of the two nations the Algerian and Kenyan one. How the colonizer tried to deny the natives' identities. Finally, how both writers tried to defend them.

III.1. Algerian Identity through *Nedjma*:

It is worth noting that most of Algerian writers and intellectuals, from the French conquest of Algeria in 1830 to its independence in 1962, were treating the drastic form of colonialism.

Besides, Algeria has been the object of massive writings around the world. Many writers treated every aspect in Algeria and wrote about its smallest parts as well as its surroundings, and its past Punic, Greek, Roman, Arab, Turkish, and, of course, French.

Keteb Yacine is one of these writers, whose major theme in *Nedjma* is focused on seeking for Algerian identity. According to the Algerian critic Salah Ameziane in his article '*Le roman Algerien: Un espace de questionnement Identitaire*', the major theme is based on two movements. A first vertical movement seeking a historical precedence of Algerian identity through the patriarch Si Mokhtar, storyteller memory of his tribe, the Keblout (term meaning thread, filiations), and by extension of the old memory including the convening of the Berber past (Numidia) of Eastern Algeria. A second horizontal movement, it reflects a present identity, 'moving' and in construction through the main character Nedjma that has several origins.(3,4)

In this passage, Salah Amezian divided the major themes of *Nedjma* on two important ones. The first one is looking for the ancient history of the Algerian identity through the memory of the old storyteller Si Mokhar. The second major theme, is trying to present the new Algerian identity and culture. The Algerian culture that is influenced by the French one is presented through the young character Nedjma.

III.1.3. Identity through the Memory of Characters:

In addition, it clear that in many passages in the second part of the novel, Kateb conveys and expresses his ardent desire to discover his ancestors, he shows his deprivation, and his attachment to

his origins. Rachid said that the individual stories are not only marked by the weight of history, but also by the ancestral past, that determines the fate of a whole race of an entire people:

- Comprends-tu? Des hommes comme ton père et le mien...Des hommes dont le sang déborde et menace de nous emporter dans leur existence révolu, ainsi que des esquifs désarmés, tout juste capables de flotter sur les lieux de la noyade, sans pouvoir couler avec leurs occupants: ce sont des âmes d'ancêtres qui nous occupent, substituant leur drame éternisé à notre juvénile attente, à notre patience d'orphelins ligotés à leur ombre de plus en plus pâle, cette ombre des impossible à boire ou à déraciner...¹ (122)

Then from the third part on, Kateb presents the early history of Algeria mentioning the great civilizations his country knew. Indeed, many events in the novel go back to the early history. These events go back to the origins of Algeria from Numidia the first Algerian kingdom. Kateb venerated many times Cirta the capital of Numidia. Cirta refers to the brave history of Algeria. It refers to natives, that is to say the origins Algeria. Kateb's purpose in seeking for his origins or for his ancestors was not simply for narrating his history or merely for pride. His aim was to take morals from his ancestors, to move forward and to plan new intentions.

Constantine luttant pour Cirta et Bône pour Hippone comme si l'enjeu du passé, figé dans une partie apparemment perdue, constituait l'unique épreuve pour les champions à venir: il suffit de remettre en avant les Ancêtres pour découvrir la phase triomphale, la clé de la victoire refusée à Jugurtha le germe indestructible de la nation écartelée entre deux continents, de la Sublime Porte à l'Arc de triomphe, la vieille Numidie où se succèdent les descendants romains, la Numidie dont les cavaliers ne sont jamais revenus de l'abattoir,[...]Ni les Numides ni les Barbaresques n'ont enfanté en paix dans leurs patrie. Ils nous la laissent vierge dans un désert ennemi, tandis que se succèdent les colonisateurs, les prétendants sans titre et sans amour...²(217)

Next, the character Rachid and through the tribe called Nadhor, Kateb demonstrates in details many Algerian traditions and customs. He shows the essential characteristics, mores and conventions of the Algerian community. First of all, Rachid introduces himself and his nation as nomads which is the characteristic of the ancient Algerian Berber people. «"Et c'est moi, Rachid, nomade en résidence forcé, d'entrevoir l'irrésistible forme de vierge aux abois"³(ibid)

Critics argue that through the characteristic of the Algerians nomads Kateb aims to point the

changes that occur to the Algerian culture during the war and even before the war. Nomads are in permanent travel; they have to adapt themselves to the changes they face each time they move to a new place, and their idea of nation is linked to movement, to change, which is heterogeneous and synchronic, and, without stopping. This is the case of the Algerian traditions. They could not stop borrowing new costumes from the French culture. H.Bhabha argues on this point that these new habits borrowed from the colonizer "must be turned into the signs of a national culture" (Bhabha145).

Another characteristic of the Algerian culture, in the novel, is its influence before the arrival of the French colonizer by the Islamic, Arabic, and Turkish cultures. Kateb has deeply described the Islamic manners. Lakhdar first remembers his origins and his awareness of his history when considering a group of faithful people praying in a mosque. Kateb, then, mentions the Islamic medersa (82,190). He hallows many times the Friday, since it is the sacred day of Muslims; he mentions Islamic prayers and ablutions (80, 108, and 138). Kateb mentions, also, the fasting month Ramadan and sacred the pilgrimage (80, 123, 137,145). He describes in detail the Islamic Pilgrim's journey, mentioning the holy black stone in Makah (140,) ,and the clothing of Pilgrimage (144) .

Furthermore, Kateb demonstrates, also, Algeria's influence by the Tunisian culture and by both of the Lebanese and the Egyptian music (98, 102, 108), and when Si Mokhtar dresses up an Egyptian fez (115).

Kateb sites as well the influence of Algeria by the Turkish culture. The collapse of the Islamic state in Andalusia in the late fifteenth century caused the exposure of the coast of North Africa to the armed invasions by Spain and Portugal. After recognizing the weakness of the Zayyanid state to protect its territories from these invasions, and the conflicts between its sultans, led the Algerians to call the Ottoman state for help and ask it for protection. Ottomans stood in Algeria for 315 years from 1515 to 1830. During this period, Algerians were influenced by the Turkish culture such as architecture and clothing.

«< voyez, nous ne sommes pas françaises, mais leur médecine, leur manières n'ont pas de secret

pour nous, filles de vieilles familles arabes, turque ou kabyles»)..."⁴(134)

"..".depuis le raidillon de la place d'Armes, les terrasses turques, la mosquée, jusqu'au flanc de la montagne abrupte plongeant sur les eaux, le maquis d'ou les hommes de Bugeaud purnt dominer la ville..."⁵(228)

Additionally, Keteb demonstrates also the chaos, the deprivation and loss they face in their life under the harshness, the supremacy, and dominance of the French colonizer. The loss of the identity caused the division of Algerians. The colonizer succeeded to deny the Algerian identity and culture then he succeeded scatter the unity of its population. This made it easy to the colonizer to split the nation and cause a profound cultural divide between the parties:

...il me fallait tenter toujours ma même partie trop de fois perdue, afin d'assumer la fin du désastre...Nomade d'un sang prématurément tari, il m'a fallu naître à Cirta, capitale des Numides évanouis, dans l'ombre d'un père abattu avant que j'aie vu le jour: moi qui n'étais pas protégé par un père...je me sentais comme un morceau de jarre cassée insignifiante ruine détachée d'une architecture millénaire.⁶(218)

Rachid lived the loss and confusion since his childhood. As a pupil in School, and by the arrival of the sacred day of the birth of the prophet. Unlike him, his classmates did not come. His love for the natural sciences let him go to the school, but he decided not to give back his sheet for his teacher, but to write a letter and explain for his teacher the situation.

...Chère maitre je ne remettrai pas la copie... c'est aujourd'hui le Mouloud...Nos fêtes ne sont pas prévue dans vos calendriers. Les camarades ont bien fait de ne pas venir...J'étais sur d'être premier à la composition...Je suis un faux frère!...J'aime les sciences naturelles. Lakhder ne l'entend pas de cette oreille. Je suis venu seul. Je remettrai la feuille blanche...Je suis venu seulement pour connaître le sujet...Pour éprouver l'impression solennelle de la composition. J'aime les sciences naturelles. Je remettrai la feuille blanche.⁷(273)

Besides, when Rachid and Si Mokhtar went to their hometown in Nhador, the citizens of this town did not let them to enter; they considered them as betrayers and cooperatives with the French army. Furthermore, Kateb depicts the division of the Algerian population as an obstacles made by the colonizer to obstruct Algerians' seek for identity.

...les Français ne vous ont rien appris...On dit que l'un de vous, un Keblouti de la branche des magistrats, était devenu colonel ; [...]Il s'est battu pour eux, à épouser une Française, gagner de l'argent .Celui là pouvait venir en traître, avec sa nouvelle puissance, racheter nos terre stout en déshonorant la tribu. Il faut croire qu'il avait oublié le serment de ses pères.⁸(183)

Constantine et Bône, les deux cités qui dominaient l'ancienne Numidie aujourd'hui réduite en département français... Deux âmes en lutte pour la puissance abdiquée Numides. ⁹ (217)

I shall now move to the analysis done on the novel. Charles Bonn the critic who analyzed deeply the novel of Kateb Yacine, agreed on the harshness Algerians lived during the French colonization, he agreed that the demonstrations of May the 8th 1945 are the legitimate ones. My aim in relying on Bonn is to accord on many interpretations, which are reflecting the Algerian society, and explain Kateb's intentions. I intend also to add some points to Bonn's analysis and disagree on other ones.

Firstly, *Nedjma* is composed certainly of six parts, each have two sets of twelve chapters. According to Bonn, the recurrence of the number 12 may suggest the flow of twelve months of the year. He argues that this flow is according to the Christian calendar, and does not belong to the Hegira (the Islamic calendar) that could return the religious symbolism of the star, "*Nedjma*". He adds that we would have then, an opposition of two calendars that could be material, both of colonial cultural violence, and the opposition between the historical time of a secular (laic) revolutionary modernity , that of religious prostration.

It is clear that the analysis of Bonn is a deep one and it gives a lot of knowledge about *Nedjma* precisely and about Algerian society and Algerian literature as well. Bonn gives *Nedjma* a laic interpretation, or if I may say, he lacks knowledge about both the Algerian history and Islamic religion.

As I have mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the novel is saturated with Islamic teachings because the writer depicted carefully components of the Algerian society. Moreover, the Higiri calendar contains also 12 months as it is mentioned in the holly Quran:

Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. And know that Allah is with the righteous [who fear Him]. [9;36]

In addition to that, Bonn argues in his article *Le jeu avec l'Histoire dans Nedjma* published in 2011, that Rachid's tale about the Algerian ancient history was under the effect of the fever and cannot be reliable. According to Charles Bonn and José Carlos Marco Vega, Algerian fighters for independence invented the lie of the Algerian nation and identity that France had denied. They agree that Algeria has never been existed as a nation, and never had an identity.

José carlos Marco Vega in his book *La Résistance contre l'oppression dans Nedjma de Kateb Yacine et les hauteurs de la ville d'Emmanuel Roblès* published in 2011, has strongly agreed that the Algerian nation did not exist before 1962. He adds that Rachid's ancestral speech is an attempt to convince the masses of the existence of a common past. Recall that it was precisely because of this lack of roots that Paris authorities had always talked about the Events of Algiers, not War in Algeria. Legally, only war can make those who have legal personality under international law, in part because a declaration of war is a treaty and must have the legal capacity to sign it. Since France recognizes not to Algeria statehood before 1962, it becomes impossible to refer to events in Algeria as if it were a war.

Besides , he states that in May the 8th, 1945, the fate of Algerians saw the birth of a star (a nedjma), which symbolizes their homeland. Nevertheless, this star is empty in its center, since Algeria had never been a nation nor possessed an identity.

Both Charles Bonn and José Carlos Marco Vega denounced the harshness and the inhuman treats of the French colonizer towards the Algerians as we have seen in the previous chapter. However, they have also, denied the existence of the Algerian identity, and culture. They described Algeria as an

empty nation, that is to say, a nation without personality, without identity nor mores.

According to them Kateb's invention of the ancestral tales in *Nedjma*, are only an endeavor to gather the Algerian masses and convince them to fight for independence. They completely denied the ancient Berber history and the civilizations Algeria had known.

Evidently, many historians from Africa, Europe and Asia wrote about the history of Berbers. The most ancient source that I may rely on in my critic to Bonn and José Carlos Marco Vega is the Jewish holy book in which it is mentioned that Sheshonaq; one of the ancient Berber leaders; fought against Solomon in palestine where Berbers let their personal touch. (2 Chronicles 12:5) According to San Diego university of California, The monuments of Sheshonaq are still proofs of the Berber society as a nation with its army in Egypt. Sheshonaq army is still depicted in great walls In egypt according to the historians of University of San Diego in California. They describe Sheshonaq impacts before Christianity is born and Islam as well.

Next, during the recent centuries, Berbers were dispersed throughout all north Africa and lived as Nomads. According to Abderrahman Al Mili, the main cause of the split of Berbers is the natural conditions. Algeria contains mountains, Plateaus, hills, and desert. He adds that even if the Berber population was dispersed because of the different terrain, but they kept relations and shared traditions and language. They built paths to exceed the natural obstacles. Each year, the people of Sahara used to move to the hills with their cattle for commercial transactions.

The people from hills exchange grains by wool and dates from the Saharan people. These relations gathered Algerian Berbers since ancient times. In addition, they were able to establish great kingdoms.

Moreover, it is worth to mention that, the Berbers were known by their strength and bravery since many centuries. This is mentioned in torah, through the brave shoshenaq who is the pride of Berbers till nowadays. Another proof of Berbers community is the kingdoms they founded.

Syphax inducted sixty thousand militant to fight against Scipio the African. Juba the first gathered fifty thousands of militants against Caesar. In the second century B.C Massinissa, Missipsa and

Jugurtha were the Kings from Tripoli to Marrakech. Then, Berber kings could be the cause of collapse of the Carthage.

These Kings used to have deputies sent to many regions and judges known as "SUFFETE" .

Berbers had also traditions, beliefs, and costumes and the proofs of that are clear in many books of history and even in torah. I agree with Bonn that may be Berbers could not be a united nation for a long period. However, they have their identity and culture. They have their way of life such as all the populations of the world and France is one of its colonizers who are described by Kateb as flies. Historians agree that Berbers had not been united as a nation because of their love of freedom as it is mentioned in the first chapter.

Finally, recently three years before the French invasion to Algeria. Algeria participated with the Ottman military fleets in the Battle of Navarino was fought on 20 October, 1827.

I argue that France had its influence on Algeria. The recent Algerian nation has borrowed many pillars on which the new Algerian state of 1962 is built. Nevertheless, France is not the one who gave civilization to Algeria.

II.4.Identity in *A Grain of Wheat* :

A Grain of Wheat deals the Kenyan society from the arrival of the British white man to the four days before the Uhuru day, which is the day of independence of Kenya.

Evidently, the first coming of the white man was fraught of great messages. Christian missionaries came with the strong desire to serve humanity and bring about material and social changes, which would improve its quality of life. They bring religion that is the life and the light of spirit to the Africans in general, and particularly to Kenya. Unfortunately, missionaries' who were possessed of a moral self-righteousness corrupted these supreme and majestic qualities. This latter led them to make hasty and uninformed judgments upon indigenous mores, norms and values they were scarcely equipped to understand.

Ngugi portrays in this novel *A Grain of Wheat*, how did these missionaries exploit the poor

Kenyans' lands before the arrival of the colonists. He, thus, believes that Christian missionaries, and not Christianity, is one of the causes that led the poor Kenya to suffer more. Christian missionaries, because of their wrongdoings, caused the suffering and the tragic life that Kenyans experienced for a long time of oppression during colonisation. And that lasted, as well, highly affecting even after independence, that is to say during the post-colonial period.

Colonial discourse produces the colonized as a fixed reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible. It resembles a form of narrative whereby the productivity and circulation of subjects and signs are bound in a reformed and recognisable totality. It employs a system of representation, a regime of truth, that is structurally similar to Realism. (Bhabha. 70-71)

By using the Bible and mild language, missionaries attracted several people. But their attitudes changed day by day, they threw the Bible and used sword.

The few were converted, started speaking a faith foreign to the ways of the land. They trod on sacred places to show that no harm could reach those protected by the hand of the Lord. Soon people saw the whiteman had imperceptibly acquired more land to meet the growing needs of his position. He had already pulled down the grass-thatched hut and erected a more permanent building. Elders of the land protested. They looked beyond the laughing face of the whiteman and suddenly saw a long line of other red strangers who carried, not Bible, but the sword" (11-12).

In this novel, Ngugi criticizes Christianity through Kihika. His purpose according to many critics, including Rebecca Miller in her essay argues that Ngugi in *A Grain of Wheat* depicts the "corruption of the Christian Church and the cultural imperialism perpetuated by missionaries as they impose European practices and abolish Kenyan cultural values"

Ngugi, also, introduces Christianity through Kihika's school. When Kihika discovered that some Christian practices oppose and are different from his culture, he asked his teacher. The teacher thus who fails to answer Kihika and justify missionaries' deeds, he wanted to punish him what pushed Kihika to escape from school. Coming back home, Kihika decided to ask his father to work in his land. When returning to the land of his roots, Kihika as Rachid in *Nedjma* recognized his native

heritage. Later, Kihika explains;

Kenya belongs to black people...Whether the land was stolen from Gikuyu, Ukabi or Nandi, it does not belong to the Whiteman. In addition, even if it did, shouldn't everybody have a share in the common shamba, our Kenya? This soil belongs to Kenyan people. Nobody has the right to sell or buy it.(98).

Kihika the man who kills missionaries, considers as oppressor the one who considers himself to be a Christian. Kihika, however, uses Biblical stories and rhetoric to encourage people to rebel and resist imperialism. Ngugi uses such irony to depict exactly what christian missionaries bring to Kenya. They bring the truth, the The holy book, the morality and the high qualities that humans should acquire, but they discriminated the black Kenyans and exploited their lands. Ngugi hence, uses Kihika's religious background and his use of scripture to justify the Mau Mau rebellion.. "Kihika believed in prayer. He even read the Bible every day and took it with him wherever he went" (22)

Kihika thus, used the truth and the guidance of the the holy scripture to entitle justice and nullify Falsehood that is the whiteman .The whiteman destroyed the Kenyan society and spread hatred, violence and betrayal among the Kenyan population that are portrayed through Mugo and Karanja.

Moreover, through Kihika, Ngugi recounts his own experience with the Christian education. He shows how Christian education civilized his society and enlightened it. Rebecca Miller adds that in *A Grain of wheat* "revises Fanon's theory because he depicts a character, Kihika, who rejects Christianity as practiced by the missionaries, but not Christianity as a whole. Through the positive portrayal of Kihika's actions, Ngugi demonstrates how Christian teachings should inspire people to fight injustice and colonial oppression."

Admittedly, by Kihika's leaving the missionary school and returning to the land and his acquisition to the communal view of property, Kihika takes a middle ground between the two cultures. As a result he combines elements of religious upbringing and traditional practices, the process that is called a hybrid religion. Kihika represents a middle ground between Christianity and

traditional African beliefs. He resists capitalism and the abolition of certain cultural practices like clitoridectomy but he still invokes those aspects of Christianity, which advance his position.

Ngugi, thus wants to introduce the identical conflicts that African population suffer from. Ngugi argues that colonial cultures brought civilization and mainly religion, but it is not the motif that may lead African heritage and traditions to loss and disappearance. Ngugi tackled shortly before the independence what colonists will leave after their departure. Kenyans ended their struggle for the retrieval of their lands by gaining independence. Nevertheless, they still have another fighting, which is an ideological one. They still have to fight for their identities and cultures that are reshaped because of the long period of colonialism.

African nations were influenced by their colonizers' cultures. This influence is done in purpose by the colonizer. In some societies it is done to create dependency of Africans on the colonists' beliefs and then discrimination considering his own culture and ideology as a perfect and a supreme one. Njogu Waita says in this context that :

The question of Identity and the African personality runs deep into African history. It can be viewed against the backdrop of decade's slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and now globalization. Throughout history, the aim has been uniform; to uproot or distort the cultural identity of the African people for ultimate economic gain of the Western World...Njogu Waita (2013)

Ngugi through *Kihika* and his teacher depicts, also, his own bad memories about his native language that he experienced when he was in high school, he once more gives a testimony to the colonizer's attempt to discriminate and torture Kenyans and their identity:

"The culprit was given corporal punishment three to five strikes of the cane on bare buttocks or made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM DONKEY or I AM STUPID. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teacher catch the culprit? A button was initially given to one pupil who was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him

and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. These children were turned into witch hunters and in the process were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community' (Thiong'o, 11).

British colonists just similar to the French one, it used school and language to crush the colonised societies. Ngugi is in fact Committed to the cause of his homeland since he shows how the coloniser suppressed children just to deform the identity of the future generation. It is clear that children are the future citizens, leaders, and population of a given country. They are the nation's treasure and ammunition. They are its hope for prosperity and progress. Colonialism worked to destroy this category of the society just to let the post independent countries without identity, to let them forever indebted by civilization and dependent ideologically to their colonizers'.

As a result after the colonization, colonized people would see themselves as inferiors; on the other hand colonizers make them feel that they are civilized, rational, and intelligent. This is related to the psychological impact of colonizers on the colonized. Frantz Fanon, one of the remarkable postcolonial writers, asserts that the end of colonialism meant not just political and economic change, but psychological change too. So, "freedom from colonialism comes not just from the signing of declarations of independence and the lowering and raising of flags" (McLeod, 22).

Both Kateb and Ngugi early before their nations gain independence, they tackled such issue to raise awareness. They were sure of a radical change in the minds and psychology of the colonized people. As Albert Memmi argues "the colonizer resorts to racism... Racism encapsulates and symbolizes the essence of relationship between coloniser and colonized... A paternalist is a person who pretends to be generous, once racism and inequality have been established" (89_94)

As a matter of fact, Ngugi uses, as he believes and mentions it in many interviews, that literature should be as a weapon and should be considered as a part of African people's anti-imperialist struggles to liberate their system of inequality after their independence that had been created during the British colonial era.

Additionally, it is true that post-colonialism is widely defined as a theory that deals with the after

independence of colonized countries. It analyses the effects of colonialism on the colonized populations. However, many scholars and critics argue that colonialism had never ended it continues its impact even during the post colonial period because post colonialism is another kind of colonialism because it investigates relations between colonized and colonizer nations.

John McLeod utters that, The term post-colonialism is not the same as after colonialism, as if colonial values are no longer to be reckoned with. It does not define a radically new historical era, nor does it herald a brave new world where all the ills of the colonial past have been cured. Rather, post-colonialism recognizes both historical continuity and change. On the one hand, it acknowledged that the material realities and modes of representation common to colonialism are still very much with us today, even if the political map of the world has changed through decolonization. But on the other hand, it asserts the promise, the possibility, and the continuing necessity of change, while also recognizing that important challenges and changes have already been achieved.

By writing *A Grain of Wheat*, and through one of its major theme which is betrayal, Ngugi illuminates the consequences of damage done to the social fabric of Kenya during the State of Emergency in Kenya between 1953 and 1963.

Ngugi shows metaphorically that with assimilation with the colonist culture the native tradition will disappear, colonized people will spend their lives as followers to their colonisers in both destroyed societies and cultures just like Mugo who tills his land as an isolated orphan, without commitment to family or village:

Why should Kihika drag me into a struggle and problems I have not created? Why? He is not satisfied with butchering men and women and children. He must call on me to bathe in the blood. I am not his brother. I am not his sister. I have not done harm to anybody. I only looked after my little shamba and crops. And now I must spend my life in prison because of the folly of one man" (168-69) .

Through Mugo It has shown the destroyed lives and the cultures of the colonized and implanted a

culture of destruction upon all inhabitants, it is clear that Mugo's questions and loss are the result of his threat to his natives.

Unlike Mugo, the great Kihika who sacrificed his life for his land. He is described by Ngugi as a man who has origins, who cares for his nation fight for his identity. Metaphorically also, Ngugi shows that thanks to people such as Kihika the identity will be preserved and will pass from generation to another :

Kihika who had a mother and a father, and a brother, and a sister, could play with death. He had people who would mourn his end, who would name their children after him, so that Kihika's name would never die from man's lips. Kihika had everything, Mugo had nothing .(169)

Conclusion:

Both Kateb and Ngugi call their people to preserve their countries and identities. Kateb recalls Algerians through the history of his ancestors, through the history of Numidia and Ngugi through Christianity through the biblical quotes. Both succeeded to depict and defend their nations, origins, and their identities. They portrayed and depicted the chaos in which the people of their countries lived and they succeeded to give them a cure, which is the perseverance of the land of the ancestors.

End Notes

¹"- Do you understand? Men like your father and mine ... men whose blood overflows and threatens to take us in their bygone existence and skiffs clueless, barely able to float on the scene of the drowning, unable to flow with their Occupancy These are the souls of ancestors that occupy us, substituting their eternalized drama into our juvenile expectation, into our patience of orphans tied up to their increasingly pale shadow, that impossibly drunk or uprooted shadow, - the shadow of fathers, judges, guides we follow the track, despite our way"" (122)

² " Constantine struggling for Cirta and Hippone for Bone as if the issue of the past, frozen in an apparently lost part, was the only event for the future champions: simply put forward the ancestors to discover the triumphal, phase the key to victory denied to Jugurtha the indestructible germ nation torn between two continents, the Sublime door to the Arch of Triumph, the old Numidia where Roman descendants will follow one another, Numidia whose riders are never earnings the slaughterhouse, [...] neither the Barbary nor the Numides have given birth to peace in their homeland. They leave us in a pristine desert enemy, while the colonizers succeed one another, the pretenders without charge and without love ... " (217)

³« And it is up to me, Rachid, nomad in forced residence, to perceive the irresistible form of the desperate virgin, my blood and my country (...) I neither did not know that it was my unlucky star, the Salammbô that would give sense to torment (...) it only was the sign of my defeat.”(ibid)

⁴ ""See, we're not French, but their medicine, their ways have no secrets for us, daughters of old Arab families, Turkish or Kabyle") ...' (134)

⁵ " .. ". Since the steep path to the Place d'Armes, the Turkish terraces, the mosque, up to the side of the steep mountain diving into the waters of the maquis where Bugeaud soldiers dominate the city ... " (228)

⁶ “... I had always to try my same game, too many times lost, to assume the end of the disaster ... Nomade with a prematurely dried up blood, I had to be born at Cirta, the capital of Numidia vanished in the shadow of a father killed before I emerged: Me who was not protected by a father ... I felt like a piece of broken jar, detached, insignificant ruins of an ancient architecture.”(218)

⁷ « Dear master I will not return the copy... The Mouloud is today... Our holidays are not planned in your calendars. The schoolmates did good by not coming... I was sure to be the

first at the exam...I am a false brother! I love natural sciences. Lakhdar does not hear it that way. I cam alone. I will return a blanc copy. I came just in order to know the subject... to improve the solemn impression of the exam. I love natural sciences. I will return a blanc copy.”

⁸ " ... the French taught you nothing ... they say that one of you, a Keblouti from the magistrates branch , became colonel; [...] He fought for them to marry a French woman, to earn money there .This person could come treacherously with is new power, redeem all our earth by dishonouring the tribe. We must believe that he had forgotten the oath of his fathers. " (183)

⁹ " Constantine and Bone, the two cities that dominated the old Numidia now reduced to a French department ... Two souls struggling for power abdicated Numidians. " (217)

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

Throughout this research paper, I have aimed to explore the common points that unite and bring the two authors and novels closer. I have tried to dig into the lives of the two writers and demonstrated that even if they are from different countries, under the rule of different colonizers, and use different languages, they share the same ambitions to write. Moreover, their concerns are the same as both attempt to portray the situation of African nations under the harshness of the European colonial rules. Adding to this, I have tried to show success in revealing their cultures and identities denied by the colonizer.

In the first chapter of my work, at first, I attempted to refer to the socio-historical context of both novels and highlighted the colonial experiences that both writers' countries received. Then, I tried to present the theories on which I relied on in the analysis of the novels. Next, I referred to the literary background of the novels. Finally, I tried to introduce the two authors and disclose the commonalities that unite their lives, writings and ideologies.

Nedjma a great Algerian novel written by Kateb Yacine after the events of 1945. *Nedjma* was written in the core of the Algerian society by both an intellectual and ordinary citizen who lived and was able to depict the real life and the suffering conditions of the Algerian citizens ruled by the injustice, harshness and the malignity of the French colonial government.

Through *Nedjma* Kateb satisfied his impulsive need and desire to record his existence, feelings, and his own observations as well as the one of his nation. *Nedjma*, although published in 1956 during the Algerian war of independence which began on November 1954, but it was largely written between 1947 and 1953, and the novel's

political dimension applies specifically to this period rather than to the war itself.

Likewise, Ngugi is seen as a spokesperson of his people and a chronicler of Kenya's modern history. He is widely regarded as one of the most significant writers of East Africa. His first novel, *Weep Not Child* (1964), was the first English language novel to be published by an East African, and his account of the Mau Mau Emergency in *A Grain of Wheat* presented for the first time an African perspective on the Kenyan armed revolt against British Colonial rule during the 1950s. Then in this novel Ngugi reflects the poor condition the Kenyan population is living during their struggle for independence.

A Grain of Wheat is about the events that led up to Kenyan independence, or Uhuru. Ngugi makes a considerable use of conversation in his narration to convey information about the Gikuyu land, and the political issues troubling Kenya. Dialogues further the plot at the same time as the paraphrase motifs that are used to report events which have taken place in the past such as the first coming of whites to Kenya as messengers of God.

Through this study, I intended to depict how Kateb and Ngugi described the histories of their countries and the struggle of their nations for independence.

To start with, I have attempted to show how the two authors succeeded to embody the history of their countries in their novels. Then I have tried to extract the passages of violence and the bad living conditions of the Algerians and Kenyans under the French and British colonial rules. I agreed that both Kateb and Ngugi used these descriptions of the miserable lives of their nations as a means to call for nationalism and to sensitize their people to react against the colonizer.

As my interest went further, I referred to Greenblatt's concept of Admiration in analyzing the styles of the novels. I agreed that the novels hold the dazzling and brilliant styles, and surprising narrative structures that attract readers' attention to gain their admirations. I argued that the writers aimed to sensitize their nations through their novels. Through their styles, they wanted their readers to admire their works, and this admiration logically transforms to reaction. The beauty of the styles, therefore, intends to reinforce the reality depicted by the authors, and helps to appeal for the preference of the country and the land.

As I have demonstrated throughout this study, my focus lies on another important issue in the novels that is identity. Both novelists presented their desire to preserve their identities from loss. They revealed the suffering of their nations, showed their discontent, and envisioned their dreams. Kateb referred to the Algerian identity through the Berber kingdom of Numidia. Ngugi on the other hand, defended his Kenyan identity through Christianity and through the biblical quotes.

Moreover, both writers show in their novels the loss in which their societies lived under the colonial attempts to blur their identities. The authors tried to deny the false pretenses of their colonizers in distorting their cultures. They strongly defended their cultures and called for the importance of preserving history and land.

I agreed that Kateb's and Ngugi's purpose in seeking for his origins or for his ancestors was not simply for narrating his history or merely for pride. Their aims were to take morals from his ancestors, preserve their cultures to move forward and to plan new intentions.

To conclude, through this dissertation I wanted to show the similarity between the conditions of the African countries under colonialism. My aim has been, also, to

General Conclusion

present the resemblance in rejecting colonialism and defending identity through literature despite of the separation in terms of time and space of the authors. I wanted also to focus on the importance of the history in establishing peace, growth, and prosperity in a nation. However, are the works of literature are sufficient to preserve history and identity ?

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