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Colonial Education and Agency In Francophone and Anglophone Literatures

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Dedications

To my dear parents,

To my sisters and brothers,

To my husband and my son Ahmed Yacine

Abstract

This thesis deals with the issues of colonial education and agency in four selected autobiographical novels: Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre (1950)*, Camara Laye's *L'enfant Noir(1953)*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not (1964)*, *Child* and Francis Selormey's *The Narrow Path(1966)*. It aims at inscribing the authors under discussion into the national literature of heroism and anti-colonial struggle despite the absence of direct and bold condemnations of the colonial education in their fiction. My approach is comparative and foregrounds the importance of locating agency within literary and socio- historical contexts. This thesis suggests that different socio-historical backgrounds generate different kinds of agency. For the purpose at hand, it puts the reactions of the Francophone authors concerning their colonial educational experiences in juxtaposition with those of the Anglophone ones. This thesis is divided into three parts. The first part cautions against the restrictive theorizing of agency and offers a new understanding of the term in postcolonial context so often overlooked by critics. Relying on, mainly, Gayatri Spivak, Louis Althusser, and Homi Bhabha's ideas, it argues that agency depends, so much, on the authors' 'temporal orientations' and requires reflexive skills to use language strategically and to communicate the desired messages which may be either direct or indirect. The first part reveals that agency is a term highly embedded in subalterneity. As a result, this part concerns itself with the methods, strategies and the suggested plans of the colonial educational policies of Assimilation and Indirect Rule and it demonstrates how the two policies depart from each other in aim and application. The two subsequent parts which deal with the analysis of the four autobiographical novels bring to the surface, in the light of the new understanding of agency, the authors' agency which they have maneuvered through their strategic writings, comments, selected themes, and the traits of their chosen characters. The analysis of the four novels shows that the Francophone authors adopt different reactions to the experience of colonial education from the Anglophone authors. The thesis, therefore, contributes to the field of postcolonial literature towards a greater recognition of the contextual specificities that characterize each literary work as it invites critics to reread works so often excluded from the literature of commitment using the new understanding of agency.

Keywords: Agency, Colonial Education, Postcolonial Literature.

ملخص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة قضايا التعليم الإستعماري والفاعلية في أربع روايات من الأدب الإفريقي: ابن الفقيرلمولود فرعون، الطفل الأسود لكمارا لاي، لاتبكي ابني لنقوقي واثايونقو، والطريق الضيق لفرانسيس سيلورماي. تهدف إلى إعادة إدراج المؤلفين قيد المناقشة في الأدب الوطني المناهض للإستعمار على الرغم من عدم وجود إدانات مباشرة وجريئة ضد التعليم الإستعماري في مؤلفاتهم.النهج المقارن المتبع في هذه الأطروحة يبرز أهمية وضع الفاعلية ضمن السياقات الأدبية، الإجتماعية، والتاريخية. كما تقترح هذه الأطروحة أن الخلفيات الإجتماعية والتاريخية المختلفة تولد أنواعا مختلفة من الفاعلية. لهذا الغرض، فإن الجزء الأول يسلط الضوء على السياسات التربوية الإستعماريةالفرنسية والإنجليزية كما يوضح كيف تنفصل السياستان عن بعضهما البعض في الأهداف والتطبيق. يعرض الجزئين اللاحقين اللذان يتناولان تحليل الروايات الأربع إلى تسليط الضوء على فاعلية المؤلفين الأربعة التي أثبتوها من خلال كتاباتهم الاستراتيجية، تعليقاتهم العميقة، موضوعاتهم ، وسمات شخصياتهم المختارةبالإضافة إلى ذلك، يظهر تحليل الروايات الأربع أن المؤلفين الفرنكوفونيين يتبنون ردود أفعال مختلفة لتجربة التعليم الإستعماري من المؤلفين الناطقين بالإنجليزية. وبالتالي، فإن هذه الأطروحة تساهم في مجال الأدب البوستكلونيالي حيث تشجع على الاعتراف بشكل أكبر بالخصوصيات السياقية التي تميز كل عمل أدبي كما تدعوا النقاد إلى إعادة قراءة الأعمال التي غالبا مايتم استبعادها من أدب الإلتزام باستخدام الفهم الجديد للفاعلية

Résumé

Cette thèse traite des questions de l'éducation coloniale et de l'agentivité dans quatre romans autobiographiques: *Le Fils du Pauvre* de Mouloud Feraoun, *L'enfant Noir* de Camara Laye, *Weep Not, Child* de Ngugi Wa Thiong'o et *The Narrow Path* de Francis Selormey. Elle a pour but de réinscrire les auteurs en question dans la littérature nationale de l'héroïsme et de la lutte anticoloniale malgré l'absence de condamnations directes de l'éducation coloniale dans leurs romans. Mon approche est comparative et se focalise sur l'agentivité dans des contextes littéraires et socio-historiques distincts. Cette thèse suggère que différents contextes socio-historiques génèrent différents types d'agentivité. En l'occurrence, elle met les réactions des auteurs francophones concernant leurs expériences éducatives coloniales en juxtaposition avec celles des auteurs anglophones. Ce travail est divisé en trois parties. La première partie révèle la théorisation restrictive de l'agentivité et propose une nouvelle compréhension du concept dans le contexte postcolonial, qui est souvent négligé par les critiques. S'appuyant principalement sur les idées de Spivak, d'Althusser et de Bhabha, cette partie soutient que l'agentivité dépend en grande partie des "orientations temporelles" des auteurs et nécessite des compétences réflexives pour utiliser le langage de manière stratégique et communiquer les messages souhaités, qui peuvent être directs ou indirects. Cette partie révèle que l'agentivité est une notion fortement ancrée dans la subalternité. Par conséquent, elle s'intéresse aux méthodes, aux stratégies et aux plans proposés par les politiques éducatives coloniales d'assimilation et de domination indirecte et démontre comment les deux politiques s'écartent l'une de l'autre en termes d'objectifs et d'application. Les deux parties suivantes concernent l'analyse des quatre romans, et démontrent l'agentivité des auteurs à travers leurs écrits, leurs commentaires, les thèmes sélectionnés et les personnages choisis. L'analyse des quatre romans montre que les auteurs francophones adoptent des réactions différentes de celles des auteurs anglophones face à l'expérience de l'éducation coloniale. La thèse contribue donc au champ de la littérature postcoloniale car elle prend en considération les spécificités contextuelles caractérisant chaque œuvre littéraire, tout en invitant les critiques à relire des œuvres si souvent exclues de la littérature de l'engagement à l'aide de la nouvelle compréhension de l'agentivité.

Table of Contents

General Introduction

As soon as the European colonial powers tightened their grip on Africa by submitting practically the whole continent at the end of the 19th century, they reshuffled the policy of military conquest and land grabbing into new strategies of domination that intended to control the mind of the natives' elite and transform their culture. One of the policies that promised the consolidation of the colonial rule and guaranteed the spread of colonial values and ideals, at the expense of African ancestral traditions and values, was the implementation of a strategic and well-structured colonial education. Indeed, the infamous 'civilizing mission' that the colonizers ascribed to themselves, presumably to help African people to lift themselves up from the bottom of 'primitive' and 'irrational' traditions and values, by teaching colonial languages and spreading Western culture, was based 'explicitly on racist premises' (Phillipson, 1992: 44).

The aim behind that policy was to create a class of educated, operative, native agents versed in Metropolitan language and culture but without any sense of agency. This is the case of many native literary authors who emerged between the Two World Wars, writing in colonial languages, including English, French and Portuguese. The writings of these authors, who counted, among others, Abdelkader Ould Hamou from Algeria and Bakary Diallo from Senegal, tended to espouse Western worldview, regard Western literature as the norm, and to dismiss local literary and cultural expressions as being mere folklore lacking in the 'sophistication' , 'elegance' and 'refinement' of Western literature, seen as 'high' and 'universal'.

In postcolonial literary studies, the fiction which celebrates aspects of Western culture, such as the experience of education in colonial schools, are seen with utmost skepticism, and are most often excluded from the realm of national (ist) literature of heroism and anti-colonial

struggle. This is the case of the four novels selected for study in this thesis, namely: Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils Du Pauvre*, (1950), Camara Laye's *L'Enfant Noir (1953)*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child (1964) and* Francis Selormey's *The Narrow Path(1966)*. All these works are autobiographical novels that are denied by nationalist postcolonial African criticism political commitment because, supposedly, their discourse is not enough anticolonial.

This thesis aims at offering a new understanding of the selected body of Francophone and Anglophone literary works that have been excluded from the literature of commitment. It seeks to show that Mouloud Feraoun, Camara Laye, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Francis Selormey are authors rife with agency despite the fact that they did not attack the colonial powers directly in their respective autobiographical novels mentioned before. For this, it explores the connections between the concept of 'agency' as a psychological and philosophical concept that can take various literary forms, and the policy of "education" as a strategy deeply related to colonial domination.

The objective of this literary reading is to argue that the colonial educational system could not erase all the native features of traditional African identity, and that native authors had room enough in their discourse to negotiate their sense of belonging and political commitment. In other words, this thesis argues against the claim which conflates Francophone and Anglophone postcolonial reactions to the experience of colonial education, and colonialism in general, by highlighting how Agency is differently embraced and practiced by the postcolonial writers in the two contexts of British and French imperialisms.

To examine the ways in which Francophone and Anglophone authors deal with questions pertaining to the policies of colonialism and their possible subversive reactions, Agency, which stems from them, is highly crucial. Broadly, Agency is the ability to assert

one's identity and negotiate one's position in a world that prepares roles for individuals to play.

The centrality of this concept in the appraisal of early African literatures in colonial language leads us to raise important research questions: how did the African writers maneuver their agency in the colonial context? What are the various critical attitudes embraced by the Francophone and Anglophone writers to reveal their position concerning their own history and Western colonialism? More importantly, do the writers of Anglophone and Francophone literatures perform the same reaction to colonial education or they take divergent paths? This study's research hypothesis postulate that colonial educational systems adopted by both Britain and France had a great impact on African people, but yielded different reactions. Furthermore, the various historical backgrounds of the writers under discussion lead me to stress the differences between the novels more than the similarities.

In undertaking this research, I am looking forward not only to enrich the area of research pertaining both to agency and colonial education, but also to add to the debates surrounding Francophone and Anglophone postcolonial studies. Indeed, my thesis seeks to offer a new perspective on the analysis of Anglophone and Francophone novels in the light of my conceptualization of the concept of agency**.**

The Assimilation of Western worldview in the fiction of early African authors is regarded as a proof of the success of colonial education. As early as 1950, however, on the eve of the first decade of decolonization, when he published his seminal study *Black Skin White Masks,* Frantz Fanon demonstrated that the 'cultural imposition' of the west fostered by the two European imperial powers, France and Britain, had deprived the Black man, that is all peoples living under European colonialism, of all forms of agency. In a bold, opening statement, he writes: 'the Black is not a man' (Fanon, 2008: 01), meaning that European

colonial domination had striped Africans off their old identities and created individuals suffering from various psychological problems, such as alienation, inferiority complex and schizophrenia.

In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Frantz Fanon pursues his study of the colonized mind and argues that the native is 'an envious man' for his obsessive, unconscious desire to be in the colonizer's position (39). This obsessive desire is reflected in the 'évolué's', i.e. the assimilated native who believed in the emancipation promise of modernity inscribed in colonial discourse. Those assimilated natives adopted the white man's lifestyle and followed his ways, by learning the colonial language and embracing European worldview. In other words, this time borrowed from Albert Memmi, the colonized ended up accepting the fact that native 'backwardness' is the essence of his misery (Memmi, 1974: 131). According to Fanon, despite the hegemonic values embedded in Western colonial education, which sought to erase traditional ideals from the Africans' minds and cultures, most of the colonial ideals were adopted willingly by the *évolués*, because colonial hegemony created a false consciousness whereby native élites espoused wholeheartedly the intellectual premises of their alienation (1963: 46).

References to Fanon's clear-cut argument against colonial education should not obscure the fact that, in fact, colonial education had also merits, like a two-edged sword. As it ensured the dissemination of Western ideals in the African continent, it also created a group of intellectuals who assumed the responsibility of challenging the racist ideologies that relegated the Africans to a lower and inferior position. The vanguard of change in the African continent were, almost all, educated in European schools, including Fanon and Memmi themselves. Thus, colonial education seems to have been a necessary step in the process of native political agency. The subversive mind of the African elite was the result of their growing awareness of the rigid and racist nature of the system that marginalized, isolated and

segregated the educated Africans and denied them the right to work and enjoy most, if not any, of the amenities the white people enjoyed. In a few words, subversion of the colonial order began in Africa when the few educated natives realized that they could never be considered on a par with white peoples.

Under the colonial system, African elites were denied recruitment in white people's administrations. Stranded in a hybrid identity, being neither Westerners since they had been born Africans, nor natives because they had been uprooted from their origins by the colonial school, the educated elites had no choice but to stand against the unjust colonial system and its false promises of emancipation. This unjust situation reversed the balance of power when the educated Africans started to decry colonialism and to call for independence under the banner of nationalism.

This view can be adduced in one of Fanon's last chapters, included in *The Wretched of the Earth*; this is 'On National Culture', where he traces the three stages of development of revolutionary consciousness among African intellectuals during the anticolonial struggle. For Fanon, in the process of coming to age, the native African intellectual is first absorbed in European culture and intellectuality. This is the stage of acculturation leading to assimilation. The second stage starts when the native intellectual becomes aware that assimilation is not synonymous to equality and that he is rejected by the western world despite his absorption of its culture. The native intellectual feels also that he is ostracized by his own people due to his distinctiveness.

As a reaction to the feeling of rejection, the native intellectual resorts to revive his old traditions and finds in the pre-colonial past a source of inspiration to frame his cultured personality. In other terms, the pre-colonial past and traditions are seen as 'secure anchorage' (Fanon, 2008: 217). Finally, the native intellectual moves to the third phase which is called

the ‘fighting phase’ when he realizes that colonialism cannot be resisted through the pre-colonial past and that he needs to move beyond traditions and culture to validate the nation.

‘A fighting literature’ becomes the only solution to be an active participant in the movement of independence of the educated person’s own country. His role becomes ‘an awakener of the people’ (Fanon, 2008: 223). In time of upheaval, the native intellectual must speak to the people and incite them to rise against the oppressive powers that subjugated them. For Fanon, agency can be traced only in writings of the authors who resort to the fighting literature. However, this social claim should not be taken at face value as it is impervious of the various psychological and discursive strategies used by native intellectuals to manage their agency in a creative and subversive manner.

After achieving awareness that he had no place in the colonizer’s empire, and after being thoroughly persuaded that resistance was the only way to restore the lost dignity, the colonized intellectuals found themselves in an awkward situation wherein it was difficult to find a strategy of resistance leading to intellectual agency, self-autonomy and national independence. This is why the first challenge of African literature in colonial languages was the very language of literary expression. The decision over the language to be used for subversive ends triggered controversies among native authors who found themselves unable to choose between the language of the colonizer and their own language. To state it differently, the native writer being the product of western education, had developed an ambivalent identity.

The existence of two languages in his mind created a situation of ‘permanent duality’. This ‘linguistic dualism’ had much greater significance than the mastery of two languages, by constantly reminding the colonized of the torn personality he/she had inherited from the dominant culture. The existence of two languages meant the existence of two cultures that

were in a constant opposition. To use one language means to favor its culture and to promote its ideals, beliefs and worldview over the same aspects conveyed by the other language (Memmi, 1974: 150). Yet, what this came to mean in the colonial contexts was varied from one writer to another.

In the history of postcolonial literature in colonial languages, the discussion over the medium of artistic expression became quickly dichotomized, not to say entrenched. For one group of native intellectuals the use of the language of the former European colonizer meant the continuation of the hegemonic policy that sought to promote the western colonial language over local languages. In this context, it should be reminded that colonial cultural politics relegated African languages to the status of dialects and projected the West as 'nations with languages' and their colonies as merely 'tribes with dialects' (Phillipson, 1992: 38) This is why the authors who belonged to the first group have extensively discussed the issue of language and demonstrated its colonial roots as well its consequences within the complex interplay of trends in Africa.

Inspired by Fanonian thought, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, for example, opposes those authors who have chosen to write in the language of their oppressors and harshly condemns them for confusing between the message they want to convey and the people they intend to address as the latter 'were not schooled in European languages' (quoted in Loomba, 1998: 92). Isola, in his article entitled: 'The African Writer's Tongue', invokes this paradox and illustrates how 'the implied reader' of African Europhone writers are Westerners with little knowledge of African culture and reality (1992: 25). In fact, the dilemma of language indicates that there is a serious problem in African literature and society. In Isola's words, it constitutes 'a disaster that rendered it [i.e. Africa] incapable of supplying its citizens with their first language or made it impossible for that language to support the production of written literature' (Isola 1992:17).

In other words, Language is an important element in the agency as it is more than a simple means of communication and interaction, but rather 'a carrier of culture' and a marker of identity. Indeed, the distinctive features that characterize individual languages protect the innermost of their corresponding cultures. Thus, culture is preserved through time and transferred to different generations via language in its particular sense, what Ngugi Wa Thiong'o calls 'the language of a specific community with a specific history' (Ngugi, 1981: 15). As a result, using another language- such as the colonizer's language- to speak of one's culture disrupts this logical connection between the writers, their identity and their people and history.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o argues that language is the mediator between the writer and the people (1981: 15). The use of a foreign language results, therefore, in nothing but the alienation of the writer from the community as he does not share with his people the same code. Alienation is not the only consequence of this expression in a foreign tongue. As stated earlier, using the Western colonial language implies the fulfilment of imperial linguistic project and its entire neocolonial political agenda (Philipson, 1992: 131). This is why Ngugi sees that his writing in Gikuyu language is an act of resistance against the hegemonic ideological policies of Western Imperialism. This is, also, the case of the Algerian writer Malek Haddad who feels alienated from his own people and community as a result of his use of the French language. He declares: 'La langue Française est mon exil' (quoted in Khodja, 100: 07). To cease his torture the writer decided to refrain from using the language of the colonizer.

However, there is a dramatic consequence at the heart of this choice; after mastering one's language thoroughly and in such an appropriate way as to express themselves creatively, African authors would face the deafness of their local audience (Memmi, 1974: 152). Their message would be scarcely heard and understood by international audiences;

consequently, the cause they are defending could be forgotten within the lines of their own language that is read only by the minority of the people – the educated few. Writing in the African language does not mean that, necessarily, the coverage of a large number of Africans since orality still prevails in the continent.

Unlike the advocates of native African languages in literature, such as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o mentioned before, other African authors have found no issue in using the former colonizer's language in their fiction. This is the case of the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe who responded to the language issue in an essay entitled 'the African Writer and English language' in which he clearly enquires and states: 'is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks, he adds, like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling, but for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it' (1975: 433). Chinua Achebe belongs to the second group of African authors, those who do not mind using the colonial languages to speak of African political struggles, including the anticolonial one and historical experiences, past and present. For this group, the language of the former colonizer cannot only be used for subversive ends, but also to save African languages, cultures and traditions from their insularity from the outer world, which might cause them to disappear.

Likewise, Leopold Sedar Senghor, argues that the use of the French language is not a sign of acculturation and assimilation as long as the act of writing in French does not denote an attachment to the French culture (Senghor, 1968:131). To settle this problem out, the proponents of a Europhone African literature have claimed that the European language becomes an African property since it is larded with African heritage. Gabreil Okara declares in this line of thought: 'there are American, west Indian, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand versions of English. All of them add life and vigour to the language while reflecting their own respective cultures. Why shouldn't there be a Nigerian or West African English

which we can use to express our ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way?' (quoted in Ngugi, 1981: 9).

The problem that is brought to surface through the entrenched positions on the use of former colonial languages in African literature is how local writers could be agents in their own societies while writing in the language of their former oppressors. The authors who openly condemn western colonial policies are seen as committed authors who defend boldly their identity. The problem is with those who believe in the relevance of colonial languages to speak of authentic African experiences and who have been, accordingly, excluded from the continent's nationalist literature of resistance because their medium of literary expression is considered to be alienating and estranging. It is precisely this issue that this thesis seeks to address by bringing forward the concept of agency in the autobiographical fiction mentioned before.

The significance of the study of agency carried out in this thesis extends the mere investigation of each author's strategies of self-assertion to reach the fundamental project of postcolonial scholars and critics interested in the comparative studies of French and British imperialisms as well as the exploration of differences across African borders, between Francophone and Anglophone African authors.

Remi P. Clingnet and Philip J. Foster, for instance, in their article entitled: 'French and British Colonial Education In Africa' trace the similarities between the French colonial education and the British one in Africa and stress the fact that the contrast between the two educational systems has been exaggerated, because the nature of the differences between the two can be grasped in terms of 'degree' not 'nature'. The two critics explain that both imperial powers adopted assimilationist systems of education and indirect political rule policy. France, for instance, which conducted an aggressive policy of Assimilation in Algeria

and sub-Saharan Africa, abandoned it, to some extent, in Morocco and Tunisia. The same hold for Britain, whose Indirect Rule policy could not be stretched to many African and Indian areas, because they were not united enough to withhold the policy of Indirect Rule (1964: 192).

Likewise, the author of 'Colonial Education and the State of Contemporary Socio-Cultural Relations in Africa', Junanne K. Ngohenyo, argues that an understanding of contemporary education in Africa needs an analysis and an understanding of pre-colonial ethnic and colonial education together. To clarify this point he analyzes ethnic pre-colonial and colonial educations in four countries: Cameroon and Cote D'Ivoire (former French colonies) and Nigeria and Ghana (Former British colonies). The colonial education of the two countries was considered as one since, according to the researcher, the aims of the occupying powers coincided in trying to subjugate the colonized people and mold their minds to serve the colonizer.

Nicola Viegi draws a bridge between institutional development and economic growth in his article. He believes that what hinder African economy from growth and prosperity are educational institutions since they are still celebrating European colonial ways of teaching and learning. On that account, he furnishes a detailed explanation of colonial education and the way it operates. It is true that the article contrasts the British colonial education with that of France but the overall conclusion shows that both institutions had the same impact on the African economy. They are the direct cause behind the underdevelopment that plagues the African continent.

The author of 'Education as a Social Institution and Ideological Process: From The Negritude Education in Senegal to Bantu Education South Africa' Mbukeni Herbert Mnguni (1998) deals with the concept of colonial education from a social point of view that could be

applicable to all African countries- be it a French colony or a British colony. This tendcy of generalization overlooks the specificities that distinguish each country.

The research mentioned above is placed in opposition to the one that stresses the differences in educational policies of the two Western empires under discussion. In his article entitled: 'Formal Education in Western Yoruba Land, 1889-1960: A Comparison of the French and British Colonial Systems', Asiwaju highlights the differences that entail both systems and how the application of colonial education in African lands varied as both imperial countries– France and Britain- adopted two different systems, respectively based on the policies of Assimilation and Indirect Rule. He concludes: 'The French who spoke about the creation of an elite as an object of policy, were paradoxically far less successful than the British who in the period under study distrusted the elite which had been generated by their system'(1975: 434).

In the same vein V. Subramarian in 'Consequences of Christian Missionary Education' explains that Christian missionary education had different impacts on the colonized people as French Africa, British Africa, and India received different types of religious education. In other words, Subramarian argues that Ivory Coast and Ghana, former French and British colonies, respectively, implemented different policies after they regained their freedom. For instance, the government took hold of the majority of the schools in Ivory Coast as the country was under the control of France that favoured secular education. However, in Ghana, the Christian missionaries were in charge of the majority of the schools. (1979: 129).

Yannic Durpaz (2015) in 'French and British Legacies in Education: A Natural Experiment in Cameroon' assesses the effects of British and French educational policies on natives. He concludes that, according to the data collected, the British colonial education

generated positive results more than the French colonial education. For him, the policy of Indirect Rule which gave power to local government to establish schools encouraged the sense of autonomy among the natives. However, French policies of Assimilation created a group of people who were completely dependent on colonial policies.

The differences in Western colonial objectives are underlined by Phillipson, who writes: 'the overall of the colonial powers were conceived differently, the French aiming at *la France outre-mer* and ultimate union with metropolitan France, the British accepting the principle of trusteeship, leading ultimately to self-government and independence' (1992: 112). The French endorsed a policy of Assimilation, and advocated the superiority of French ideals, norms, values, and above all, the French language, as the main vector of its self-proclaimed 'mission civilisatrice' (Irele & Jeyifo, 2010: 102). To elevate the African people to a higher level of civilization, presumably, the French colonial policy intransigently stressed the use of the French language excluding the use of indigenous African languages in all stages of education.

Bob W. White underlines the centrality of the French language in French imperial hegemony and writes: 'the French language is the cross that France bears on its universalizing 'mission civilisatrice' (1996: 14). Contrary to France, Britain applied the 'Indirect Rule' policy in its African colonies and encouraged the use of indigenous languages in the primary schools.

The apparent similarities between the educational systems of the two colonial powers, the British and the French, have pushed critics, scholars and activists in the field to deal with issues pertaining to identity, nationhood and agency in a way that could be applicable to both Francophone and Anglophone authors. By so doing, they eclipsed the importance of context and the specificities that characterize each group of authors who emerged in Africa as a

consequence of the linguistic impositions. For example, the authors of the *Empire Writes Back* declare:

> More than three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism. It is easy to see how important this has been in the political and economic spheres, but its general influence on the perceptual frameworks of contemporary peoples is often less evident. Literature offers one of the most important ways in which these new perceptions are expressed and it is in their writing. . . that the day to- day realities experienced by colonized peoples have been most powerfully encoded and so profoundly influential (Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, 2002: 1).

The passage is quoted at length because it incorporates a fallacy that has been circulating in various postcolonial works, claiming the overlapping histories of African countries whose experiences were profoundly shaped by Western colonialism. As a result, the common understanding among historians and social commentators alike, as reported above, tend to conflate the various responses to colonial policies of domination and seggregation, leading postcolonial critics and scholars to advance literary affinities in their studies of postcolonial texts.

However, despite the fact that African countries were all, in a way or another, subject to two major, direct Western colonialisms, there is a serious problem in conflating the hybrid identities accentuated in most of African works written in French or English, resulting from the various colonial policies implemented by Britain and France. The problem was brought to the surface since the inception of anglophone and francophone literatures by the way African authors managed their agencies within their fiction within a colonial context and the way they dramatized conflicts that voice personal concerns and articulate cultural claims in their autobiographies.

The denial of agency to early Europhone African authors has led to two consequences among the early postcolonial critics. The first of the two consequences is the conflation of the Anglophone and the Francophone literatures. This trend is represented by the writers of *The*

Empire Writes Back, who align the conclusions of their study of Anglophone literatures with those produced in other colonial languages. In the opening lines of the book, the three critics write: 'This book is concerned with writing by those peoples formerly colonized by Britain, though much of what it deals with is of interest and relevance to countries colonized by other European powers, such as France, Portugal, and Spain' (Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin,2002: 1). The second consequence is the utter exclusion of Francophone authors from the postcolonial paradigm.

This is the case of Elleke Bohemer in his *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (2005), which situates his research exclusively within the Anglophone context, despite that he is conscious that doing so may result in narrowing the field of Postcolonialism. Bohemer declares: 'This study is chiefly concerned with literature written in English, which even if only to an extent narrows the field. It is on the British Empire that my attention will be focused'(2005: 1). Echoing the works of Griffiths et al. and Bohemer, Harish Travedi announces that 'the postcolonial has ears only for the English' (quoted in Forsdic &Murphy, 2014:7).

Furthermore, in the field of literary studies, the importance of the varied colonial legacies and the specific reactions of African writers who attended different colonial schools has been overshadowed by a tendency that celebrates two types of comparative research: the study of similarities, whenever African authors are compared among themselves, and the study of influence or indebtedness, whenever they were put in perspective with Western Authors. Gada writes:

> For many years, the discipline of comparative African literature has been overshadowed by the study of literary influences. The tendency was to compare African writers with western ones to delineate some influences. The majority of academics works in comparative African literature to date has mostly been within the framework of influence of western authors. This influence is the outcome of the education they have received in Western-type schools (2014: 06).

However, as Ania Loomba stresses, there are many legacies inherited from colonialism and it is important to realize that they are different despite the characteristics they share (1998: 16). In the same vein, the editor of the *Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (2007) cautions against the danger of generalization in the field of literary studies. He clarifies: 'the field's [postcolonialism] gravity is shifting' as 'Recent postcolonial initiatives in francophone studies, for example, have been inspired by an unhappiness with the Anglophone bias in the field, as well as the prevailing tendency to resume that the critical and conceptual models pursued in Anglophone postcolonial studies can be neatly applied to non-Anglophone historical contexts' (Mcleod, 2007: 11).

Indeed, Forsdick and Murphy declare that the recognition of the specificity and the uniqueness of the Francophone postcolonial field as a separate field from that of the Anglophone lessens the danger of generalization and encourages postcolonial critics to pay more attention to the specificities that characterize other postcolonial situations (Forsdick & Murphy, 2014: 13). For them, the Francophone postcolonial studies exclude the total definitions of the postcolonial within the exclusive experience of the British imperial history (ibid: 13).

As a result of the recent trend in comparative African studies under the umbrella of postcolonial thought, the differences between Anglophone and Francophone authors are of much greater importance as they open up new ways into exploring the various, at times different, native African responses to British and French colonial systems of education and cultural policies, in general, as well as in investigating the sense of agency embraced by those whose minds were shaped by colonial ideologies. The specificities that characterize different post-colonial contexts- in our case the French and the English-, when juxtaposed, entail a fruitful comparison emphasizing the uniqueness and usefulness of each. To attain this goal, the study of the history and objectives of colonial education and the strategies of

appropriating the colonial language under the light of individual agency constitute the most appropriate task to highlight the identity and uniqueness of each Anglophone and Francophone author.

Choice of the Theories:

This thesis attempts to offer a new understanding of agency that does justice to the authors excluded from the committed literature such as the authors under discussion. To attain this goal, the different definitions of the concept of agency will be traced. For this task, I have selected the writings of Gayatri Spivak, Louis Althusser, and Homi Bhabha that explore the issues related to subalternity and agency. Among the issues that Spivak engaged is the one of subaltern studies pioneered by Guha (Landry &Maclean, 1996: 4-5). Her ideas concerning subaltern studies are voiced in her seminal essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak? (1989). In the essay, the critic makes a landmark effort to show how the subalterns have no sense of agency. However, Spivak's argument is not beyond all reproach, and it is my intention to discuss some of its premises in this thesis by excavating a hidden cavity in the meaning of the concept of subaltern.

The limitation in Spivak's concept presses us to include Althusser's theory of 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' (1971). Althusser's ideas are found to be fruitful here to show the ways in which the colonial education creates submissive people. In his work, Althusser answers the question of how ideology is able to distort reality (ibid: 84), and argues that ideology is not merely about some ideas that stand and defend some beliefs. However, it is, Wolfreys says, '[a matter] of material practices which exist in the form of apparatuses and institutions' (Wolfreys, 2002: 3). Referring to Althusser's ideas, I argue that colonial education that is designed and taught by colonial power is the repressive force that

hails the colonized people to accept the inferior position they occupy and that is imposed upon them.

Louis Althusser's theory can be said to be very beneficial in explaining the way hegemonic powers manipulate other people like pawns in an imperial game of chess. However, his theory seems to leave no room for human agency. His implied deterministic view of ideology resists the positive potential of individual agency. As a result, the inclusion of Bhabha's ideas is likely to explain how the colonial educational systems are subverted by the subaltern subjects to achieve agency. For this, the concepts of hybridity, ambivalence, and mimicry will be mobilized to highlight the failure of the colonial project in its attempt to produce subjects who are subordinate to the white men.

In finding unifying threads that connect the works with the ideas of Spivak, Althusser, and Bhabha, I attempt to explore matters related to the oppressed subjects and the possibility of empowering them to become free agents in their societies despite the socio-political circumstance that chain them. In other words, in the forthcoming chapters, I will demonstrate how Mouloud Feraoun, Camara Laye, Ngugi Wa Thing'o, and Francis Selormey negotiate their agency in their works by studying the ways in which they give voice to their autobiographical characters. As I bring to light their agency through delving into the intricate nuances of their techniques.

The Structure of the Thesis:

This thesis is divided into three parts and each part includes two chapters. The first chapter of part one, entitled ' Colonialism, Education and Agency', constitutes the theoretical framework of the study. It aims at situating the concept of agency in postcolonial context. It attempts to come up with a suitable definition of agency that is applicable to the analysis of the novels under discussion. The authors under consideration were all the product of colonial

schools. The latter sought to create submissive people whose literary voices align with the colonial aspirations. The authors are thought of as being subalterns because they received their education in the realms of colonial schools which used various hegemonic strategies of domination.

The section entitled 'In Search of Agency' in chapter one presents the most important theories which deny the flickering presence of agency to elaborate more on how colonial schools operated and how their training was buttressed by an ideological domination and subjugation. However, these arguments are not wholeheartedly adopted. There are some theorists who argue that agency is not beyond reach and that the human beings are capable of adjusting the social roles ascribed to them. In addition, those theorists argue that the human beings have a sense of volition that enables them to refute their passivity. They can be free people capable of innovation and creation in their own societies. The ideas of those theorists are used to negotiate and investigate a new understanding of agency that can do justice to the authors who have been excluded from the literature of commitment.

Mouloud Feraoun, Camara Laye, Ngugi W'a Thiong'o and Francis Selormey, respectively from Algeria, Guinea, Kenya and Ghana, are all authors excluded from the national narrative of resistance. They are, more often than not, labeled as assimilated and acculturated authors who celebrate in their writings the culture of the colonizer. Their inability to denounce explicitly colonialism in their respective fiction made it difficult for critics and scholars to see them as agents in their respective societies defending and asserting the identities of their people.

One of the objectives of this thesis is to highlight the impact of colonial education on African writers, through tracing their reflections on, and reactions to, the colonial educational experience. As a result, the main concern of the second chapter is to present French and

British colonial policies and practices in Africa. Examining the policy of Assimilation adopted by France and the policy of Indirect Rule adopted by Britain helps me uncover the hidden motives of these two kinds of education as both of them sought to strip the colonized elites in their colonies of their identities.

For this, I will examine approaches, methods, techniques of teaching, plans, and declarations of people in power concerning education and will analyze them to deduce the aim behind them. I will also carry out an assessment to understand to what extent the colonial education was successful and whether it could really shape the minds of the educated Africans. More importantly, I will, in that chapter, highlight the differences between British and French colonial educational policies. The aim behind this endeavor is to elicit the types of reactions and coping strategies generated in the authors I am dealing with.

Part two of the thesis is entitled 'Colonial Education and Agency in Francophone Literature'; it comprises two chapters and is devoted to the analysis of Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvr (1950)e* and Camara Laye's *L'enfant Noir (1966)*. The two novels have always drawn criticism for being literary works that are loyal to colonial aspirations since their respective authors pictured the French colonial education as a redemptive one, more likely to ameliorate their mesirable lives. The argument of this part is put forward to counter this claim by stressing both authors' agencies that have been overlooked by so many postcolonial critics and scholars.

The first chapter of this part seeks to reread Feraoun's autobiographical novel from a new perspective by showing how his discourse fosters empowering symbols of belonging that refute the erroneous stereotypes made by the colonizer against the Algerian people. Feraoun's agency is also reflected in the way he innovates in autobiography as a genre to challenge the dominant narrative of the colonial power.

The second chapter of this part deals with Camara Laye's *L'Enfant Noir*. Despite the fact that it recounts the journey of a child from the house of his parents to the realms of colonial schools, this autobiographical novel actually celebrates African costums, culture and ways of thinking and living. As a result I will demonstrate that the autobiographical novel of Camara Laye defends cultural emblems in an indirect way. In addition, this part seeks to stress Laye's agency in creating his own methods of learning which are based first and foremost on Guinean culture.

The objective of the third part, entitled: Colonial Education and Agency in Anglophone literature, is to highlight Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's and Francis Selormey's respective senses of agency by analyzing their autobiographical fiction: *Weep Not, Child (1964) and The Narrow Path*. (1966). In other terms, the analysis is an attempt to bring to light Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's and Francis Selormey's strategies in repudiating western colonial racist ideologies which sought to deprive the African people from their identities. Furthermore, it seeks to argue that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Francis Selormey are vigorous native voices who deal with a variety of topics that are germane to the well being of their African societies. It demonstrates, as well, how they suggest solutions to the identity problems of post-colonial Africa.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Francis Selormey in their first novels do not make bold claims concerning western colonialism, what pushed critics to see them with outmost skepticism and to exclude their works from national narratives of resistance. As their novels are autobiographically inspired, the vested interest of this part is to trace their thoughts, reflections, general remarks and indirect expressions and speeches by dramatic characters that are, definitely, speaking for the authors to assert their agency and to portray them as militant writers negotiating with fidelity their position in a world full of contending claims. In sum,

this part is concerned with bringing to light the previously concealed agency of the tow authors.

Part one: Theoretical Considerations and Historical Background

In this part, divided into two chapters we are going to present the postcolonial understandings of agency and a historical view of the birth and the implementation of the French and English colonial schools in Africa. I will approach the subject of literature and identity from the issue of agency in the postcolonial context. To attain that goal, I will present the most important theories which investigate the negotiations of agency in general and in the postcolonial context in particular. These theories are mostly based on the ideas of philosophers and critics such as Louis Althusser who was the first to speak of the influence of power over subjects through what he calls 'Ideological State Apparatuses' and Gayatri Spivak the author of 'Can the subaltern speak?' in which she tackles the issue of agency and subalterneity.

The presentation of the theories mentioned above does not mean that I, wholeheartedly, welcome their ideas. I am going to put their ideas in juxtaposition with other thinkers to offer my own understanding of agency that will do justice to the postcolonial authors who have been accused of acculturation and assimilation.

As one of the main objectives of this study is to show how the first generation of African authors produced in colonial schools, depart from the European tradition in which they were educated and how they empowered their native culture and sense of identity through their agency, I find it of crucial importance to include Bhabha's ideas. Bhabha tends to tie the subject's agency to the instability found within the colonial discourse. His explicit endeavors to highlight the cracks of colonial discourse, which have consequently led to its demise, help address the possibility of subversion by means of negotiation. Hybridity, ambivalence, and mimicry are the means by which Bhabha highlights the 'blind spots' and 'loopholes' of colonial narratives through uncovering his anxiety and at the same time the tools for aesthetics and socio-political commitment in postcolonial narratives of the colonized

subject to achieve agency (Hidlleston, 2009: 144). He claims that resistance and agency are often channeled through a satirical rendering of the colonial discourse and the hybridization of colonial language as well. His engagement with subaltern studies has set him the task of digging for possible ways for agency.

I consider that the agency of the colonized people is a term highly embedded in subalternity; as a result, the strategies made by the colonizer to create subaltern and voiceless pro white men and women are to be explored in the second chapter of this part. The second chapter of this part is, therefore, historical. It seeks to sketch the main educational policies adopted by France and Britain and to discuss possible differences and distinctions between them.

Chapter I: Theoretical Considerations

1.1 Introduction:

This chapter, which constitutes the core of this part, is a review of the intricate and the complex link that binds literature to politics and identity. Its vested interest is to present a new definition of agency by fitting it within a postcolonial context. The new definition runs counter to the ideas of the postcolonial critics who, so often, argue that agency is based on open and direct rejection of colonial domination.

In other terms, this chapter suggests that agency, depends heavily on the author's 'temporal orientations' and 'reflexive skills' to communicate the intended messages which are not necessarily direct declarations or forthright condemnations. Authors can use a variety of strategies to dismantle and circumvent the chains of colonialism. To elaborate more on some strategies that paved the way for the possibility of agency, I have included Bhabha's theories of Mimicry and Hybridity in addition to other key concepts such as: 'The Unhomely and 'The Nation'.

1.2 In Search Of Agency:

There is perhaps no other relationship that arouses enthusiasm among researchers than that of social structures and individuals. In establishing the relationship between the social structures and individuals most researchers, mainly sociologists, have pictured the human being as passive receivers in their own societies. The absence of agency is a key critical issue that has called for critics, theorists and scholars' attentions. Instead of shedding light on human beings' ability to create, change, or even obliterate the circumstances surrounding them, their attentions have shifted to concentrate on the ways power spread its wings causing, or leading to collective paraplegia. Among the proponents of this advocacy, we find Foucault who in his book entitled *The History of Sexuality*, abandons the idea of agency in favour of

power which, according to him, has some pervasive values. He clearly expresses this belief stating:

> Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. And "Power," insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement ... there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. But this does not mean that it results from the choice or decision of an individual subject...(quoted in Ahearn, 2010: 116)

The majority of those who negate any possibility of agency and exclude any account of free will argue that social structures have already prepared for human beings specific roles that they are supposed to play. In other words, it is held that social structures shape the individuals' identities. Presumably, within a specific society with specific economical and cultural values we ought to perform specific roles. The looking Glass theory developed by Charles Horton Cooley in his work *Human Nature and the Social Order* in 1902 best explains this process. The theory holds that human beings see themselves according to the way they believe others see them.

In other words, the others are like mirrors reflecting the images we ought to be. In the same vein, Luis Althusser excludes the possibility of human agency. His insightful essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' lives little room for human's ability to resist the ideologies imposed on them as they are programmed to willingly accept the roles they play in their societies, and that are prescribed by a mesmerizing power enshrined in the state apparatuses such as the church, the school, and so on.

One of the major concerns of Louis Althusser is to unveil the negative reality of ideology because it is the main reason of human's blindness. In other words, ideology makes people blind to see 'the real state of affairs' as they believe that they are free to think and choose in a natural and harmonious world. In his influential article he argues that ideology is not merely about some ideas that stand and defend some beliefs. However, it is, Wolfreys

says: ‘[a matter] of material practices which exist in the form of apparatuses and institutions’ (2002: 4).

Those material practices include religion, law, political systems and last but not least the educational system. The latter fact leads to the idea that ideology ‘has a material existence in the sense that it is embodied in all sorts of material practices’ (Bertens, 2001: 84). This means that we cannot escape ideology since it is infused into all the aspects of our lives. Thus, Althusser believes that there is a strong relationship between ideology and the unconsciousness. People are blind to see their real state condition as 'men represent their real conditions of existence to themselves in an imaginary form' (Althusser, 1971: 163). This imaginary form is the reflection of a distorted perception of reality within one’s society inculcated through a subjugating ideology. According to him, the individual within his society is everything but a concrete subject.

Ideology can attain its objective through what Althusser calls ‘interpellation’. The term refers to the way ideology hails people to accept willingly their subjective positions and to act submissively in their societies. Althusser argues: ‘I shall then suggest that ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing’ (1971: 174). For Althusser, ideology is eternal in the sense that no one can be outside ideology for ‘an individual is already a subject even before he is born’ (1971: 176).

Ideology, thus, fills in the empty space that is found in our personality. It convinces people that they are complete and real. As a consequence, the internal consent of the people is secured and tamed to fit into the state’s desires and the political status quo (Barry, 2002: 110).

Ideology is implanted in people's minds not only because of the state apparatuses such as the church, the school, and art including literature but also because of "the existence of a small number of cynical men who base their domination and exploitation of the 'people' on a falsified representation of the world which they have imagined in order to enslave other minds by dominating their imaginations" (Althusser, 1971: 163). Those 'cynical men' can be regarded, in this case, as the Western colonial powers that seek to make people sympathetic to their own aims through their colonial education. In this sense, European colonial education that is designed and taught by colonial powers is the repressive agent that hails the colonized people to accept, with an open heart, the position they occupy and that is imposed on them unconsciously.

Thus, colonial education arose as the application of the oppressive ideological formation. In relation to this fact, 'Hence' Althusser advances: ' I believe I have good reasons for thinking that behind the scenes of its political Ideological State Apparatus, which occupies the front of the stage, what the bourgeoisie has installed as its number-one, i.e. as its dominant ideological State apparatus, is the educational apparatus'(1971: 153) The argument suggests that education is wielded as a dangerous tool used by powers to reach their ends as the school is the place where people are officially transformed into pro- white men. He argues: 'one ideological State apparatus certainly has the dominant role, although hardly anyone lends an ear to its music: it is so silent! This is the School' (1971:155). Indeed, as it will be illustrated in the coming chapter, the colonial powers used schools and education to cultivate a subordinate class among the colonized, ultimately advancing the objectives of the colonial authorities. When referring to those who have received an education, Althusser emphasizes:

> There is a category of schooled people who end up : white-collar workers, small and middle executives, petty bourgeois of all kinds. A last portion reaches the summit, either to fall into intellectual semi-employment, or to provide, as well as the

> 'intellectuals of the collective labourer', the agents of exploitation (capitalists, managers), the agents of repression (soldiers, policemen, politicians, administrators, etc.) and the professional ideologists (priests of all sorts, most of whom are convinced 'laymen'). Each mass ejected en route is practically provided with the ideology which suits the role it has to fulfill in class society : the role of the exploited (with a 'highly-developed' 'professional', 'ethical', 'civic', 'national' and a-political consciousness) (1971:155).

For the above stated reason, it is logical to establish a correlation between the the notion of ideology which is dominating in its essence and Antonio Gramci's concept of 'hegemony'. In this regard, Raymond Williams defines ideology as 'the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings, values and beliefs of a kind which can be abstracted as a "world-view" or "class outlook"' (quoted in Barry, 2002: 110). Thus, ideology creates good subjects who 'are inserted into practices governed by the rituals of the ISAs' (1971: 179) and at the same time feel obliged to 'Subject' that can be 'God', 'conscience', 'the priest', 'the boss', etc and we can add the colonizer since I am trying to demonstrate that colonial education is the hailing ideology that interpellates the colonized people. If we hold this premise as tentatively true, we are compelled to believe that distinguishing between the 'good subjects' who uphold the established order and the 'bad subject', discussed in Althusser's essay, those against the prevailing ideology, becomes relatively straightforward.

In the eyes of so many scholars, in a colonial setting those who have been molded by a western education are undoubtedly acculturated. In other terms, the success and the failure of colonial education depend in an exclusive manner on the reactions of people who received a western education. In the context of African authors, openly denouncing the colonizer and the associated regimes can serve as a clear indicator of whether the authors have been influenced or ingrained within western regimes or not.

Another influencial figure who has valuable contribution in the issue of agency in relation to the colonized people is Gayatri Spivak. In so many ways, Spivak questioned the

‘high ground of philosophical discourse’. Her engagement with literary criticism, philosophy, ethics, political economy, and social theory enabled her to stand against the pitfalls of so many critics and scholars. Among the issues that Gayatri Spivak engaged herself with is the one of subaltern studies pioneered by Guha (Landry& Maclean, 1996: 4-5).Her ideas concerning subaltern studies are voiced in her seminal essay entitled: ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’

Gayatri Spivak's essay ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ first appeared in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg's Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture (1988). It is, first, of crucial importance to shed light on the word ‘subaltern’ and its meaning before making any attempt to discuss and interpret the ideas of the essay. The term subaltern was first used by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci in his article entitled:‘Notes on Italian History’. Gramsci used this term to refer to the lowest groups of society who suffer ‘under hegemonic domination of a ruling class that denies them the basic rights of participation in the making of the local history and culture as active individuals of the same nation’ (El Habib, 2011:4).

Gramsci at that time used the term to speak about peasants who were controlled and subjugated by the National Fascist Party (Ibid: 4). In clarifying the term he further says: “The subaltern classes by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a "State”: their history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society, and thereby with the history of States and groups of States (Quoted in El Habib, 2011: 5). Moreover, his six step plan to study issues related to the subaltern groups suggests the autonomy of the subaltern that, according to his explanation, could be achieved or realized through freeing the consciousness of the non-elite from what has first subjugated them(Ibid: 5).

Spivak rejects the notion of subaltern introduced by Antonio Gramci. She makes of the term a further complex concept as in presenting it, she focuses mainly on the strategies of

capitalism in creating silenced subjects. She argues, opposing Gramsci, that the notion of the subject's autonomy results in nothing but a homogeneous notion of 'the subaltern subjective identity'.

Thus, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' is written as an answer to questions pertaining to subaltern agency and 'voice in history'. In this essay, Gayatri Spivak introduces her notion of 'alternative narrative of colonialism' instead of what she calls the western discourse that of post-structuralism. She brings the idea that the subaltern subject can have a voice in his society under increasing attack, and challenges the west in their claim that they can speak on behalf of the colonized. In her analysis she stresses the fact that the political position is of great importance to be taken into account before any representation can be made (Rhode, 2003: 13).

Writers and critics in general believe that they can voice the ideas of the marginalized groups who have long been subjugated by hegemonic powers through standing against 'the dominant discourses' since the latter act is the ultimate aim of the marginalized and colonized people. Among those critics, we can name Deleuze and Foucault whose ideologies have been vilified by Spivak (Ibid: 13)

Spivak refuses vehemently the 'autonomy and consciousness of the subaltern subject' and excludes any possibility of 'self-representation'. She embraces the Marxist ideology which denies the subject the ability to make distinction between their desire and interest. The latter fact makes self representation a delusion. Spivak uses deconstructionism, as well, as a guiding theory which enables her to unravel the 'difficulties' and 'contradictions' related to the debate about finding a 'speaking voice' for the subaltern. In her Marxist definition of the subject Spivak opposes the post structuralist definition that of Foucault and Deleuze. Both critics stand for the claim which presents the subject as a unified entity, and in the name of

desire they [Foucault and Deleuze] reintroduce the undivided subject [in which the desire and interest work in harmony] into the discourse of power' (Spivak, 1988: 69). However, her definition concerning the nature of the subject finds a shelter in Marxist ideas. Just like Marx, Spivak favours the 'models of a divided and dislocated subject whose parts are not continuous or coherent with each other' (1988:71).

Spivak consolidates her affiliation with Marx through presenting the two forms of representation: representation as *Vertretung* (the constellation of rhetoric-as-persuasion) which is a political representation and *Darstellen*, (or rhetoric-as-trope) as re- presentation (Hinddelston, 2009: 155). This demonstration is made in order to, once again, accuse Deleuze and Foucoult of silencing the subject as in their 'conversation, the issue seems to be that there is no representation […] and the oppressed can know and speak for themselves'(Spivak,1988: 74) and further advises them to 'note how the staging of the world in representation - its scene of writing, its *Darstellung*– dissimulates the choice of and need for (heroes: paternal proxies, agents of power - *Vertretung'* (quoted in Hiddelston, 2009: 156). In other word, Spivak hints at the fact that those critics must consider the question of whether the subaltern can speak? and revise their works to see whether they made the oppressed mute instead of giving them a voice (ibid: 156).

Moreover, Spivak believes that what the post structuralists are doing as Rhode states: 'is just another form of or a continuation of colonial process of constructing a subject position for the subaltern subject and of articulating their 'voice' for them' (2003: 17). Moreover, for Gayatri Spivak, Foucault, Deleuze and other Western critics are just bringing the humanist model to life again concerning identity and agency. Spivak further hints at the fact that 'Neither Deleuze nor Foucault seems aware that the intellectual within socialized capital, brandishing concrete experience, can help consolidate the international division of labour' (1988: 69).

Thus, the idea of the role of intellectual advocated by Deleuze and Foucault is totally rejected by Spivak in favour of what she calls specific intellectuals. In other words, the western intellectuals who claim that they can speak for, represent or even find a healing cure for issues related to the oppressed people in different places can only do that from the angle of the west as the world even if they seem, at a certain point, that they are not operating towards that goal. Foucault, for instance, explains the role of the intellectual suggesting that his function is 'to struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of 'knowledge' , 'truth', 'consciousness', and 'discourse''(Harasym, 1990: 2).

However, Spivak tries to argue against that claim demonstrating that 'the substantive concern for the politics of the oppressed which often accounts for Foucault appeal can hide a privileging of the intellectual and the 'concrete' subject of oppression that, in fact, compounds the appeal' (1988: 87). In an attempt to highlight this idea, that is central to western intellectual who seem to be deluded to claim their specificity, Spivak remarks:

> it seems to me that at that point that, when this matricial concept of power as the same system begins to emerge, is at that point that the intellectual defined in this very situation-specific way, which is then seen as 'universal', and against that, the intellectual begins to declare and claim a sort of specificity, that's the moment when the intellectual begins to abdicate. We would say that that claim for specificity which is in reaction against a universality which is itself specific but cannot be given this specificity that it has- that claim for abdication is not a refusal, but a disavowal. We don't think that the intellectual placed in that situation is free to abdicate…[for] the intellectual –is imprisoned within an institutional discourse which says what is universal without noticing that it is specific too- so that its own claim to specificity is doubly displaced. It seems to me that their desire is being defined by their discipleship which is very quickly transforming them into universal intellectuals. (Harasym,1990: 4).

It is worth noting that the institution that imprisoned those intellectuals is not a place of 'pure learning' rather it is a place that produces 'cynical men' who base their advocacy, as it is the case of Foucault and Deleuze, on a falsified representation of the world. It is this fact that pushes Spivak to stress the importance of taking into account the position that the intellectual

occupies. Hence, those universal intellectuals that are caught up within western institutions can do nothing but reviving the hegemonic practices. When questioned about the position of the intellectual and the relation between non institutional and institutional environment Spivak answers:

> within hegemonic practice , a method is identified with proper name. In spite of all efforts to dismantle the notion of watershed or universal intellectuals within western context, what is happening to the work done by the powerful intellectuals against that theory is in fact a transformation of that critique into a celebration into of these figures as universal intellectuals (Harasym, 1990: 7).

Gayatri Spivak turns to the phenomenon of widow immolation in India; sati, to clarify her point of view concerning agency and representation in an ample way. She states that the mere fact that the widows are not speaking for themselves and are being represented by both colonial powers and the patriarchal Hindu society is a solid evidence of woman's inability to be a free person exercising her own agency in her society (Rhode, 2003: 18). On the one hand, the prohibition of the sati had another dimensional meaning from that claimed by the British. The latter were not just 'saving brown women from brown men' to build a harmonious world rather they were reducing a seemingly 'religious practice that had long been a basic creed in the Indian society, and a real indicator of their identity to a brutal crime calcifying, by this act, their purported civilizing mission consequently paving the way for imperialism'(Ross, 2010: 386).

To use Spivak's words: 'imperialism's image as the establisher of the good society is marked by the espousal of the woman as *objects* of perception from her own kind' (Spivak, 1989:94). On the other hand, natives as a response to the British colonialists claimed that the suicide of the women was out of their free will. By so doing, the widows glorify and preserve their tradition. According to Spivak neither the British nor the nationalists are representing or giving 'voice to the widows'. What they are doing actually is just speaking for their own

interest since the former's claim serves pure colonial selfish ends and the latter's claim guarantees the survival of the patriarchal society (Rhode, 2003: 18).

Spivak goes further explaining how the subaltern cannot speak through using the example of Bhuraneswari Bhaduri the Indian girl who committed suicide because she failed to speak and make other people listen. It is these two examples, and the different misinterpretation of the young girl's suicide that pushes Spivak to conclude that the subaltern cannot speak as she says: 'there is no space from which the subaltern woman as subject can speak' (1988: 94). It is true that in her later version she seems to offer a different conclusion, but the aim was as Hiddelston puts it 'to leave the text open enough to reveal the ambivalence of her gesture, to allow the uncertainty of the act to emerge through the lines of her own reading rather than to speak in the other's place' (2009: 159).

Therefore, Spivak makes it the responsibility of the intellectuals to represent the subaltern 'Through' Rhode states 'speaking to her not listening to or speaking for the historically muted subject' (2003: 19) just like the way Spivak did concerning the young girl who killed herself. She states that through bringing her case to public attention, she gives a real proof that the subaltern cannot be represented by someone who shares the same experience (Ibid: 19). When discussing the narrative of the young girl, Spivak makes the following comment:

> What I was doing with the young woman who had killed herself was really trying to analyze and represent her text. She wasn't particularly trying to speak to me. I was representing her, I was reinscribing her. To an extent, I was writing her to be read, and I certainly was not claiming to give her a voice […] what we do toward the texts of the oppressed is very much dependent upon where we are (Harasym, 2009: 57).

In other words, the subaltern should be as Rhode puts it: 'theorized out of existence in order to make it possible for the intellectual to represent her' (2003: 21). Moreover, Spivak as Ania Loomba states: 'takes seriously the desire, on the part of post colonial intellectuals, to highlight oppression and to provide the perspective of oppressed people' (1990: 234). To

reach this aim, the intellectual must 'unlearn that their privilege is their loss'. This suggests that the intellectuals who are supposed to speak for the oppressed must be aware enough to forget about their power and the fact that they have never been oppressed to be able to 'edit the script prepared for them' and construct another way of speaking(Cooper, 1998: 10- 11). They have to consider their class, gender, race as obstacles hindering them from understanding the other, the subaltern they intend to represent, not because of the lack of information but because of the natural boundaries that separate these positions (Landry, 1996: 4). It is through this process only that the intellectuals can be taken seriously (Cooper,1998: 10- 11). At the same time, they have to be powerful enough to protect the oppressed. Spivak provides insight on the matter. She declares:

> Proprietors 'cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power that protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above (Spivak, 1988: 71).

However, it is little comfort to approve claims of the theorists and the scholars who deny the existence of agency. If one were to grant that power is a notion having a pervasive value in the world, this would not necessarily imply that the possibility of agency and opposition is beyond reach.

On the other side of the issue, there are those who equate agency with free will and see it as an internal power – highly associated with 'intentions', 'presence of the self', rational point of view' and so on. The proponents of this claim believe that agency has nothing to do with the outer world in which it is exercised. They maintain that conscious choices are the engine that motivates the subject's actions, and the compass that directs his steps towards a desired and a well structured planned end. The proponents of 'agency as free will' concentrate in an exclusive manner on 'the nature of reason or intentions in human activity' thereby ignoring the key role socio-cultural context plays in shaping those intentions and

consequently creating those actions(Ahearn, 2001 : 114). A more accurate definition of agency Hill suggests is a number of 'internal powers and capacities that define a person's identity and capacity (or incapacity) to actively engage in their world' (2010:115). In the same vein, Coliss Lamont states:

> One of the strongest supports for the free choices thesis is the unmistakable intention of virtually every human being that he is free to make the choices he does and that he is free to make the choices he does and that the deliberations leading to those choices are also free flowing. The normal man feels too, after he has made decision, that he could have decided differently. That is why regret or remorse for a past choice can be so disturbing (quoted in Caruso, 2012: 08).

It is true that choices rely upon conscious and active decisions, but they might also be the result of unconscious feelings and thoughts. Indeed, Freud's theory of the unconscious explains well this idea. He advances that childhood experiences and repressed thoughts and feelings are all the time present in the process of decision making.

Nevertheless, treating agency as 'a free will' is not only a misguided approach that leaves numerous actions and choices unexplained, it also places agency within a narrow path that leads to nowhere. As it can be applied on small a minority of individuals who can exert power on themselves without taking into account what surrounds them. Agency as a free will cannot stretch to include the largest number of people proving by that its utility.

Contrary to the Looking Glass Theory, Goffman argues that the human beings can participate and adjust the roles ascribed to them. There is always a constant tension between the social structures and the human agency because there is always a difference between how people perceive themselves and how they are seen and perceived by others. The latter fact does not mean that the individuals are capable of editing the roles ascribed to them. People can offer their own version of interpreting things and visualizing themselves in a specific manner the thing that gives birth to some degree of agency (Heller, 2000: 15). This agency or control, Goffman argues:

> Is achieved largely by influencing the definition of the situation in which the others come to formulate, and he [the individual] can influence this definition by expressing himself in such a way a s to give them the kind of impression that will lead them to act voluntarily in accordance with h is own plan. Thus, when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey (1959: 02).

Victor Gecas and Michael L. Schmalbe have developed the theory of the Looking Glass and taken it a step further. In their seminal article entitled: 'Beyond the Looking Glass Self: Social structure and efficacy Based Self Esteem' in 1983, they argue that the self of the human being is an autonomous self fuelled by a 'sense of volition or causal agency'. This means that 'individuals are motivated to view themselves as causal agents in their environment' (79).

Thus, in contrast to the Looking Glass Metaphor, the researchers believe that this perception of the self as a causal agent creates a more 'active self' (Gecas and Schmalbe: 1983: 79). Along similar lines, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) have pictured the individuals as active subjects able to construct their reality. The construction of reality, according to them, is the result of three complementary processes: Internalization, Externalization and Objectivation. The first means that the outer social world is internalized into our consciousness. Externalization is the process that pushes and motivates people to create a specific social world. The last one means that once the particular reality is produced through the process of externalization it becomes objective reality (Buechler: 1989: 210). The latter piece of information is important, because as it portrays human beings as active subjects it hints at the fact that human beings are not offered blank sheets to write their own realities (Buechler, 1989: 211).

The power that social structures exert cannot be ignored and at the same time it cannot be seen all the time as a negative aspect. Indeed, one of the key figures in sociology is Giddens who in theorizing agency contends that knowing the social rules is the key to

transforming them as rules are never fixed and immovable (Tucker, 1998: 81). He believes that 'people are rule following and rule creating creatures who are knowledgeable about their actions' (ibid: 81). Bourdieu is another central figure in theorizing agency whose works are seen as complementary to that of Giddens. Agency and the Habitus is the argument by which Bourdieu finds way to stand against the claim of 'free will' though he does not deny the 'possibility of social transformation (Ahearn, 2001: 118).

The Habitus can be defined as 'A generative process that produces practices and representations that are conditioned by the 'structuring structures' from which they emerge. These practices and their outcomes –whether intended or unintended- reproduce or reconfigure the Habitus' (ibid: 118). According to Ahearn the emphasis here is 'on the social influence on agency; human actions are central, but they are never considered in isolation from the social structures that shape them' (2001:117).

Moreover, there is Ortner's definition which I take to heart since it is related to the present work. He argues: 'hegemonic social orders' are never pure or complete systems in the sense that they never achieve fully what they desire. In other words, these hegemonic structures, being political or cultural, are prone to foment and the flaws that exist within result in human's agency. Because these powers are 'either total or exclusive' the subjects within that system are neither too determined nor thoroughly free. 'They are' as Ortner has pointed 'Loosely structured'. (Ahearn, 2001: 120). It is for the same objective, Gecas and Michael Schmalbe warn that the active self should all the time be positioned in a specific physical and social environment (1983: 79). The latter conclusion brings to surface the importance of context-because without context we cannot achieve agency and agency differs from one context to another.

When we speak here about context, the first thing that comes into mind is society and nation. Society as a term, despite the different definitions offered through time, represents a specific culture, a specific set of rules and notably a specific language. Despite the specificity of each culture, the ideals of one's society cannot be kept within limited borders. Societies, through history, have not been able to keep this uniqueness for them (Glyn, 2010: 01) in the name of universalism for example France sought to spread its norms of life to create a unified citizenry through disseminating a homogeneous culture inculcated via a single language. (Glyn, 2010: 04).

Language operates in the same manner as culture does. They both evolve change and are influenced by the circumstances that surrounds them i.e. contact and time (Ahearn, 2001: 128). Consequently, language is a very powerful tool used by countries, especially countries that have colonies, to control individuals. In this case and as remarked by Glyn language is perceived as a 'set of technical skills' separated from the subjects using it (2010: 140). Language here becomes a political weapon aiming at creating citizens regulated by some set of prescribed rules.

However, and as argued earlier these social rules and constrains can be broken and this can be applied on language when it is perceived as intrinsic 'talent' rather than a set of 'technical skills'. Indeed, linguistic anthropologists see literacy the direct reason that leads to agency. Basso, Baynham, Besnier, and Street approach literacy from an ideological point of view. The 'New literacy studies', that they have presented stress the specific effects that literacy can exert in each society. They argue that there are no common homogenous characteristics of literacy all over the world and no such a thing as a neutral acquirement of 'literacy skills' (Ahearn, 2001: 128). Besnier, in explaining the aim of this model, says: 'rather than seeking an overarching and context free characterization of the cognitive and social consequences of literacy, proponents of ideological model focus on the activities,

events, and ideological constructs associated with particular manifestations of literacy' (quoted in Ahearn, 2001: 128).

The crucial matter in the new literacy studies is that they situate literacy within a social context that makes it possible to regenerate agency. Thus, to pay adequate attention to the peculiarity of literacy is to recognize the various ways people's lives are constructed as a result of the interaction between 'literacy', 'ideologies', and 'institutions' (ibid: 128). This model expands the ranges and promises of agency beyond its universal peculiarity allowing scholars to accentuate the different kinds of agency each society performs.

This understanding, once again, paves the way for innovation as fixity of meaning will be highly challenged if not abandoned once the dynamic value of meaning emerges as a substitute. Meaning is not a fixed element rather it is a changing one that 'social praxis' which implies the way a statement is both produced and perceived exert a great influence upon it (Glyn, 2010: 141). Thus, meaning can never be theorized outside the socio-historical conditions that constitute it as the linguist forms such as 'narratives, argumentation, discursive forms as well as syntax' are important in demystifying it. The focus here is on how the subject uses language rather than on language as an object.

In the light of the centrality of agency in the discussions of identity and art of the subaltern intellectual one wonders how African writers can be considered as agents in their contexts which imposed on them new cultural and economical orders. Critics such as Hiddleston, discusses the role of the African intellectual in the midst of these contending arguments and criticism. The upshot of her seminal work entitled *Decolonizing the African Intellectual: Politics, Culture, and Humanism at the End of the French Empire (2014)* is the order she establishes between literature and politics that has long been a bone of contention amongst critics. For her: 'the political force of literature […] is not so much the result of its

communication of a message, but the effect of its experimental quality, its exploration of alternative 'modes of thinking and writing, which might work indirectly to challenge orthodoxies including that of colonialism' (32).

Probably, the best way to understand agency is to look into the writings of the Postcolonial African writers because they are themselves 'theorists of agency' as affirmed by Olakunle (2003: 104). Boehmer asserts that 'Writers could claim agency in giving conceptual shape to their history, culture, and society' (2005:116). Olakunle George shares Boehmer the same opinion. He says:'Creative literature is well suited as a site for seeking out agency in motion. For what literary texts give us are structures wherein subjects are imagined in the performance of various strivings and conflicts –that is to say, in performance of (or failure of) agency' (2003: 104). Actually, despite their exceptional and various origins African writers have all in common the ability to reflect upon their own experiences and interpret them in a subtle way to stress their unique identities that are subversive by nature and typically postcolonial.

Hence, an important feature of meaning construction is that of reflexivity. 'Reflexive skills and processes' Glyn suggests 'enable persons imaginatively to monitor their experience in creating a 'shared world' which, in turn, facilitates the reproduction of social relationships, practices and ideologies as collective legacies' (2010: 141). Moreover, Kobayashi argues: 'Reflexivity has no meaning if it is not connected to a larger agenda' (Quoted in Sheehan, 2011: 366). In other words, reflexivity requires the negotiation of one's positionality in an entangled world of relations and relationships (ibid: 367).

The idea of entangled world brings to surface one of the most important theories in sociology, the Actor network theory (ANT) developed by Michel Callon and Bruno Latour. Though the the theory does not necessarily speak about human beings as actors as it includes

non-human objects in its analysis, it stresses the fact that thinking 'in term of nodes' instead of 'surfaces' or 'spheres' is the most convenient way to think about modern societies. Latour in his article 'On Actor Network Theory: A Few Clarifications' advances:

> ANT is a simple material resistance argument. Strength does not come from concentration, purity, and unity, but from dissemination, heterogeneity and the careful plaiting of weak ties. This feeling that resistance, obduracy and sturdiness are more easily achieved through netting, lacing, weaving, twisting of ties that are weak by themselves' (1996: 370).

Thus, acquiring 'reflexive skills' requires the recognition of the heterogeneity of the world in which one lives to detect and distinguish his position to adapt to the circumstances surrounding him and modify them if possible.

Hence, those who want to protect their culture are nothing but danger to that very culture. Yet, one ought not to forget that the war of the colonized people is a cultural war. Notoriously, the culture of the colonizer afflicts his culture, and by all means the colonized one tries to purge it, and above all protect it from extinction in the face of the sweeping culture that seems almost impossible to be resisted. In the face of this upheaval, it is better to speak of the empowerment of one's culture rather than the protection of it. No words can best illustrate this opinion than those of Richard kings who states:

> Colonialism may have inextricably transformed non-western form of knowledge. I refuse to believe, however, that it has wholeheartedly eradicated them. Moving then must also involve looking back with renewed vigour at the legacy of pre-colonial forms of indigenous knowledge. To fail to do so is to concede defeat to colonialism and to accept as unproblematic western derived notions of 'modernity'. Thereby, cutting ourselves off from our disparate past. Accepting the modern world is rooted in variety of historical tributaries and that these traditions remain alive within in spite of modernity is a first step in the displacement of this central post- enlightenment dichotomy [of tradition and modernity] (quoted in Hyo, 2013: 271).

This leads one to believe that an interest in the past is anchored in a desire rooted in the present and which is projected towards the future. Therefore, others have taken agency a step further by linking it to time. Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische define agency as:

> a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its "iterational" or habitual aspect) but also oriented toward the future (as a "projective" capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a "practical-evaluative" capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment) (1998: 962).

In the same manner, Hitlin, Elder, and Jr link the concept of agency to temporal orientation. In their article the 'Time, Self, and the Curiously Abstract Concept of Agency' approach agency from a social behaviorist point of view arguing that the 'self is at root a temporal phenomenon' (2007: 171). That is to say, agency can perform different roles according to the actor's 'temporal orientations'. They argue:

> Actors' temporal orientations are shaped by situational exigencies, with some situations calling for extensive focus on the present and others requiring an extended temporal orientation […]The intra-personal perception of what might be termed a "time horizon," a concentrated focus on a particular zone of temporal space, is a response to social situations and conditions of agentic action(ibid: 171).

Thus, tradition that is linked to the past time and modernity that is embedded in the present moment are all indispensable elements in the process of defining agency.

This is the case of the African writers whose complex social and political situation propelled them to seek new aesthetics that would suit their constant changing world phenomena. Abiola says:

> The new literature of Africa expressed in the European languages, the correspondence is a direct one between the themes and preoccupations that have governed the direction of the creative imagination and the distinctive aspects of modern African experience. Indeed those aspects that have gone into the shaping of modern African consciousness, as much in its bold and broad configurations as in its more intimate manifestations, have also determined the lines of articulation of our contemporary literature. In the process of expressing the tensions set up in our modern awareness by the varied and often contradictory experience and to carry its imprint in the modes and particular accents with which our writers have sought to formulate its manifold character and to register its significant moments. This literature has served both as direct and objective representation of our modern experience as well as a symbolization of the states of mind induced by that experience (quoted in Gada, 2014: 11)

Therefore, writers are agents because they rethink the old traditional approaches and use new techniques to communicate with the targeted readers or audiences. In talking about the real shape of things and decoding sociological phenomena they act as intruders with the

system that has tried to silence them. Glyn says: 'the fact of speaking, of employing words, of using the words of others (even if it means returning them), words that the others understand and accept (and possibly, return from their side) – this is in itself a force' (2010: 141).

Returning the words is not a random act, it requires once again reflexivity and the ability to choose the right and appropriate words to make reality accessible and bring about change if possible. So, engaging in writing, which is in its essence a political act in time of upheaval can be said to be an economical act. In other words, in this tough competition, in a world or better to say a context with so many contending realities with each one seeking to impose itself, The African writers are obliged to situate themselves through their writings to attract the largest number of readers and raise the interest of their audience, as the overall objective is not merely portraying but making the audience active participant able to evaluate the current situation.

from the different definitions sketched above, agency, I can define as the ability of the writer to negotiate via strategic language that incorporates reflexive skills his position and identity which is not fixed, not unconsciously hybridized but wittingly created as a result of his agency. Writers can be rife with agency because they are both producers and consumers in their own societies. They consume the language it has been transferred to them and they reproduce it according to their own needs, perspectives, past experiences, present circumstances, and future orientations. This definition can do justice to the authors who have been excluded from the national narrative of literature as their agency can be brought to surface if all the aforementioned elements are taken into account: reflexivity, strategic use of language that may include direct or indirect messages, and temporal orientations of the authors which are used purposefully.

1.3.Bhabha's Theories

One figure that has deep influence in the field of postcolonial literature and criticism is Homi K Bhabha. The latter is an Indian thinker who was born in 1949 in Mumbai. He brought terms such as ambivalence, mimicry, difference, liminality, and hybridity. His focus was mainly on the agency of the colonized people that he perceives as the outcome of the rigid policy of the colonizer and which at the same time contains some cracks that caused its downfall. His most important book is entitled *The Location of Culture*and so many essays such as 'the home and the world'

1.3.1 The Concept of Mimicry

Bhabha perceives the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized from a different angle and instead of concentrating on the political dimension that results from that relation he shifts his focus toward a more ethical approach that 'question [s] assumptions of European hegemony, to rethink the relation between the self and other and to conceptualize differently the creation of that relation through language' (Hidlleston, 2009: 99).

Homi Bhabha draws on many poststructuralist critics and thinkers like Derrida, Lacan, in order to point out that 'communication is a process that is never perfectly achieved and that there is always a slippage, a gap between what is said and what is heard' (Loomba, 1999: 89).This communication that is embodied, in colonial context, in all the forms of the 'English book' symbolizes the 'English authority' that can never reflect a complete image of the original and results in colonial subversion (ibid: 89). Hybridity, Ambivalence, and Mimicry are concepts used by Bhabha to highlight the failure of the colonial project in its attempt to produce subjects who are subordinate to the white men.

First, Mimicry appears as 'one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge' (Bhabha: 1999: 126). It is further Bhabha explains' the desire for a

reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference (1999:126). The most important thing that captures Bhabha's interest is the difference between the white man and the indigenous who is 'almost the same but not quite'. In other words, the colonial discourse's ultimate aim is to make of the colonized another version of the white men but by no means genuine versions.

The difference between the colonizer and the colonized guarantees the colonial rule that justifies its domination through 'the non- equivalence' between the two groups. Colonial mimicry is best illustrated in Macaulay's words who 'can conceive of nothing [in teaching indigenous people] other than "a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern-a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect' (Bhabha, 1999: 128). The function of those 'English educated Indians' or the surrogate English men is to enlighten the natives through spreading the ideals of the white people (Loomba, 1998: 89).

However, the colonial discourse was blind to perceive the colonized's agency that results from this difference or better to say the slippage (Huddart, 2006: 39) '[It is] this slippage between 'white / not quite' 'Fuches says 'which, in the colonial context, turns into the very menace of mimicry ultimately disrupting the authority of colonial discourse' (1999: 138).

As a matter of fact, Mimicry causes 'partial presence' which is true for both the colonizer and the colonized (Huddart, 2006: 44). This partial presence makes Mimicry operate just like metonymy (Hiddelston, 2009: 119). For Roman Jacobson, metonymy is a very important structure of language which operates by means of contiguity (Culler, 1997: 71). However, Bhabha uses Lacan's argument that metonymy is linked to the unconscious to explain the way

Mimicry functions. In other words 'the unconscious is structured like language'. The primacy of the signifier advocated by Lacan explains well this idea. Gurewich states:'the signifier is the instrument by which the missing signified expresses itself' (2004: 45).

In these elements of Lacan's thought we find the principal theoretical arguments justifying the thesis that the unconscious is structured like language' he further adds that 'the primacy of the signifier operates not only with regard to the signified but also with regard to the subject, who unwittingly, is predetermined by it' (Ibid: 50). Metonymy is further linked to the concept of supplement that is central to Derrida. The signifier is, in the case of metonymy, the part that substitutes the whole. The latter can be said to be the missing signified whose function is just like the supplement that fills the lack. However, this signifier or the part which is the supplement is an incontrovertible proof of this lack. Meinig hints at the imbalance the lack causes saying:

> [According to Bhabha] the imbalance of "the part substituting a whole" […] must not be read as a form of simple substitution or equivalence", rather it is analogous to Derrida's concept of the 'supplement'. It fills a lack, but by doing so, serves as a constant reminder of the lack. Moreover, the replacement filling an absence can never be a true substitute for what caused the absence in the first place. In contrast mechanism like that of stereotyping posit a – seemingly balanced- binary opposition of self and other that obscures both the lack and imbalance (2004: 104).

Taking the fact above into account, we come to Lacan's claim that the signifier operates with regard to the subject. So the impact of Mimicry and its partial presence causes the colonizer a kind of imbalance reminding him constantly of his lack. But in the case of the colonized metonymy has a different impact.

> On the one hand, mimicry appears to ensure the control and regulation of the native, but on the other hand, it inserts difference into the dominant discourse of colonial power. The mimic men seem to be "authorized versions of otherness': but in mimicking the colonizer only in part, they reveal the limits of the colonizer's drive to authorize, regulate an control his subjects (Hiddlestone, 2009: 118-119).

That is to say, the colonized subject through imitating the colonizer partially can achieve nothing but partial presence. In other words, those men which Bhabha labels as mimic men

have neither identity nor difference. They are, precisely, anglicized but not English. This in-betweeness creates ambivalent people (Seldom, 2005: 227). Ambivalence 'which means two divergent instincts that exist at the same time' is a word that is central to Freudian psychoanalysis. Bhabha adopts the term in his book *The Location of Culture* and makes it conducive to postcolonial ends (Lam: 2010: 9-10). According to Bhabha the term 'can reveal that the colonial subjects experience irresolvable tensions between desire and derision simultaneously, as the colonized will not be simply entirely opposed to the colonizer but appears to be both 'complicit' and 'resistant' in colonial discourse' (ibid: 9-10). This ambivalence is the result of Mimicry.

However, this imitation or Mimicry instead of producing meek mimic men creates ambivalent subjects who make of Mimicry a kind of mockery. Thus Mimicry becomes 'a figure of irony, farce, or comedy, mocking the authority which it mimes'. (ibid: 138). Irony is what allows the writer both to discredit and to reappropriate what is discredited (Rooney, 2006: 274) Indeed, Bhabha explains how the 'authorized versions of otherness' are at the same time 'the figures of a doubling, the part-objects of a metonymy of colonial desire which alienates the modality and normality of those dominant discourses in which they emerge as "inappropriate" colonial subjects (1999: 129). It is this fact which pushes him to say that Mimicry is at once resemblance and menace. It is a menace because the slippage Mimicry causes as explained earlier creates ambivalence which unsettles the taken for granted authority of colonial discourse as it interferes with the binary relationship between colonizer and colonized.

This ambivalence is clearly illustrated in the case of Charles Grant who tried to convert the Indian people to Christianity in 1792. Grant's feverish desire to introduce a religious reform was hampered by his own anxiety. His awe stemmed from his fear of a rebellious movement resulting from the 'Christian doctrine' that would be imposed on the

natives (Freeden, 2013: 275). In an attempt to unravel this issue, Grant suggested to create a 'partial reform' which was a mixture of Christian religion and the caste practices of the natives. The aim behind such a reform was to inaugurate 'an empty imitation of English manners' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin, 1998: 14). Thus, the contradictions that exist within the colonial system are the direct cause behind its own destruction (ibid: 14). Arguing in a similar vein, Freeden asserts that 'mimicry is not deliberate strategy employed by the colonized, but an effect of the colonizer's own discourse' (2013: 275).

In another influential essay, 'Signs Taken for Wonders', Bhabha stresses the fact that Mimicry is a form of resistance, and a means of disempowerment (McClintock, 1995: 64) that can generate agency. Bhabha says: 'the ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention' (1999: 130). Thus, as Mimicry can be one of the 'strategic effect[s] of colonial power', it can be considered as 'typical subversive behavior' (Lee, 2002: 89). It is in this context that metonymy of the colonized that is the core idea of mimicry, differs from the metonymy of the colonizer. Because as the latter is a self-defeating, the former promises resistance (McClintock, 1995: 64) as it reverses the gaze of the colonizer escaping his own 'suveillance'. Returning the gaze of the colonizer by means of mimicry is 'strategic reversal of the process of domination' (Beardsell, 2000. 18). However, as Ashcrofts says:

> This is not a simple reversal of binary, for bhabha shows that both colonizing and colonized subjects are implicated in the ambivalence of colonial discourse. The concept is related to hybridity because, just as ambivalence 'decentres' authority from its position of power, so that authority may also become hybridized when placed in colonial context in which it finds itself dealing with, and often infected by other cultures (1998: 14).

1.3.2 The Concept of Hybridity:

Hybridity is another influential theory that has contributed to postcolonial theory in rather tentative ways. Bhabha, through hybridity, again exposes the frailty of the colonial

powers and undermines the essentialist thinking which tends to fix the colonizer and the colonized as stable entities. He suggests that culture can never be protected from the influence of the other cultures as the buttresses of that very culture are never fixed and constant. They are, rather, changeable, unsettled and, to a great extent, mingled with other cultures (Haj, 2010: 35). In the colonized world, culture is the result of the interaction between the rival countries. This mixture gives birth to what Bhabha coins as 'Third Space' which is the ground upon which the colonized people stand to repudiate the Western colonizing powers. Bhabha declares:

> The intervention of the Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as integrated, open, expanding code.Such an intervention quite properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the people. In other words, the disruptive temporality of enunciation displaces the narrative of the native nation which Benedict Anderson so perceptively describes as being written in homogenous, serial time (1994: 37).

The colonizers in their impulsive determination to assimilate and transform the indigenous people into submissive others produce nothing but a heap of hybridized identities. However, a hybrid identity 'is not an alternative identity, but an effect that can in turn be deployed as a ruse against the authority from which it is, in part, derived' (1994:120). The hybrid colonized uses all that he has acquired from the colonizer and reverses it after being put in an African mold. Thus, Hybridity further, 'marks those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of civility: signs of spectacular resistance' (Raman Selden, 1993: 227). Hybridity, and 'third space' which is enshrined in it, are terms that promise emancipation by means of negotiation. It is in Homi Bhabha's terms 'interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative' (Quoted in Meredith, 1998: 03). Under such circumstances of (competitive world) mimicry becomes conscious for reasons different from those suggested by bhabha. Homi Bhabha declares:

> The language of critique is effective not because it keeps forever separate the "terms of the master and the slave, the mercantilist and the Marxist, but to the extent to which it· overcomes the given grounds of opposition all' opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, 'where the construction of a ·political object that is new, neither the "one nor the other, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes, as· it must;-the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics (1994:25).

1.3.3 The Nation:

The nation is another term that has called for Homi K Bhabha's attention and he, as the rest of the terms explored by him, offered a valuable explanation that fits the colonial and the postcolonial contexts. Bahbha's definition of a nation questions the previous definitions of the term which present the identities that flourish within those nations as stable. For him, the identity associated with nations should be open. His claim is sustained by the examination of the narration of the nation. In *Nation and Narration,* a book that Bhabha edited, an attempt is made to shed light on the existence of an open national identity. The latter could be traced through an examination of the narratives of the minority groups that challenge the prevalent representation of the national identity encompassing the various other identities within the same nation (Huddart, 2006: 70). Bhabha gives the example of Princess Diana as a public figure who altered and resisted the image or the common known identity of the royal family and the nation in general.

> Her affiliative community, in the realms of public concern and communication, was not limited to the victims of social inequity traditionally contained within the platform and prerogative of national politics—the unemployed, the working classes. Her concern for AIDS victims, and those who were threatened, life and limb, by the presence of landmines, gave her an international demesne and a cosmopolitan appeal that the royal family had stoutly resisted (quoted in Huddart, 2006: 68).

Homi Bhabha takes advantage of Benedit Anderson's book *Imagined Communities* published in 1991. Hudart argues: 'it is important to remember that imagined things are not imaginary or unreal, at least not in the sense that we could dismiss them from our thinking. You could argue that imagined communities are simultaneously real and unreal, ghostly or virtual'(2006:70). Benedict Anderson's understanding of a nation as a myth influenced

Bhabha to conclude: ‘Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind’s eye’(quoted in Huddart, 2006: 71). However Bhabha refuses vehemently the idea of Aderson and so many others who tried to explain that the nation is a solid entity that work and walk simultaneously in the history. Bhabha’s ideas are different because he believes that there are some minorities that do not fit into the simultaneous movement of the nation and they are outside the realms of that solid nation (Huddart, 2006: 71)

To explain the idea of minor identities that challenge the overall image of the static national identity, Bahabha suggests two key terms: the pedagogical and the performative. The pedagogical refers to the way the nation presents itself as a solid and static entity as it includes all the people with the same identity. The performative is the opposite of the pedagogical as the minor identities that keep emerging within the same nation are a constant reminder of the instability of that very nation. Moreover, the performative has a strong power over the pedagogical as the nations keeps presenting a new definition of it according to the performative. Huddart again points out: ‘On the one hand, pedagogy tells us that the nation and the people are what they are; on the other, performativity keeps reminding us that the nation and the people are always generating a non-identical excess over and above what we thought they were’(Huddart, 2006: 73). These two elements are also guided by time. Bhabha explains in the Location of Culture:

> We then have a contested conceptual territory where the nation’s people must be thought in double-time; the people are the historical ‘objects’ of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin in the past, the people are also the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the people as contemporaneity: as that sign of the present through which national life is redeemed and iterated as a reproductive process (quoted in Huddart, 2006: 73).

As a result Bhabha urges people to see the nation in terms of narration not in historicist terms. Bhabha states:

> The linear equivalence of event and idea that historicism proposes, most commonly signifies a people, a nation, or a national culture as an empirical sociological category or a holistic cultural entity. However, the narrative and psychological force that nationness brings to bear on cultural production and political projection is the effect of the ambivalence of the 'nation' as a narrative strategy. As an apparatus of symbolic power, it produces a continual slippage of categories, like sexuality, class affiliation, territorial paranoia, or 'cultural difference' in the act of writing the nation. What is displayed in this displacement and repetition of terms is the nation as the measure of the liminality of cultural modernity (quoted in Huddart, 2006: 74).

National narrative is linked to colonial authority because it tried to fix its image of national identity however she fails to do so because of the existence of the minor identities that challenge that very fixity (Huddart, 2006: 75).

1.3.4 The concept of the Unhomely

Another influential essay that has contributed to the postcolonial studies in rather tentative ways is 'the home and the world' by Homi Bhabha. The latter's concern has always been deciphering the entangled relationships between different forma of binary divisions: colonizer, colonized the west and the rest, the different antagonistic cultures and the liminal space between them. In the essay under discussion Bhabha turns his focus to a very important issue: the relation between the private and the public. The private is represented by the home, often seen as a cosy place that nurtures feelings such as love, compassion and peace. The public is the outside world that is separate from the inside life of the home. However, Bhabha argues that sometimes the peaceful life of the home is interrupted by outside circumstances resulting in what he terms as 'the unhomely'.

Again, the main interest of Homi Bhabha has always been the analysis of the psychological status of both the colonizer and the colonized and how, in most of the time, the colonized managed to situate and represent himself to the world in his writings. Indeed, literary writings of postcolonial writers and the investigation of techniques and tools that can help the colonized craft his identity in a heterogeneous world has been the main concern of Bhabha's analysis. The essay of 'the home and the world' is no exception to this rule. In that

essay, Homi Bhabha tries to explain how postcolonial subjects manage their own identities when the boundaries between the public and the private are blurred. The essay starts this way: ‘in the house of fiction you can hear, today, the deep stirring of “unhomely” (Bhabha, 1992: 141).

Bhabha draws on Freud’s theory of the uncanny to show how the idea of the homogenous home is rendered impossible and leads to what Freud termed ‘unheilmich’ and Bhabha translated it to ‘unhomely’. Bhabha says: ‘To be unhomed is not to be homeless’ (1992: 141). Bhabha argues that the unhomely does not refer to a lack of place of living in its literal meaning. It refers to a sudden uncanny moment that blurs the stability and the familiarity of the home. The individual; as a result, would feel a sense of loss and alienation inside his own house as it becomes unfamiliar.

The home becomes a strange and a dangeous place as it is invaded by the public. Homi Bhabha states: ‘In a fever stillness, the intimate recesses of the domestic space become sitesof history's most intricate invasions. In that displacement the border between home and world becomes confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that it is as divided as it is disorienting’ (1992: 141). In other words, the unhomely occurs when the borders between the home and the world are blurred and rendered invisible. There will be no difference between the outside dangerous public world and the inside private life. According to Bhabha:‘The home does not remain the domain of domestic life, nor does the world simply become its social or historical counterpart. The unhomely is the shock of recognition of the world-in-the home, the home-in-the-world (1992: 141).

The ‘shock of recognition’ is the uncanny moment that unveils the invisibility of the limits between the home and the world. According to Freud, the uncanny is those negative

feelings of fear, awe, loss, shock and so on which are hidden and repressed in the subconscious of the human being but tend to reappear in the conscious as a result of some events that evoke similar feelings. They are some unwanted and negative experiences that happened during childhood and are generally forgotten but they can come again in the adult life to cause strange 'uncanny' moments. But in the case of Bhabha, those past events are not personal. They are rather public in the sense that they are common with the past experiences of the community the individual lives in. In other words, it is the history of the whole country or the whole community that reappears in the 'historical present' of the individual which causes a kind of trauma. Bhabha claims in his essay: 'the unhomely relates the traumatic ambivalences of a personal psychic history to the wider disjunctions of political existence' (1992: 144).

The past that tends to emerge again is public. In his attempt to capture the present, the author finds himself in a situation similar to some experiences lived before. He realizes suddenly, that his actual life is but a repetition of a shared history lived before perhaps in his own private home. As such the binary division between past and present, and private and public is blurred causing a kind of ambivalence. Bhabha explains:

> The present that informs the aesthetic process is not transcendental passage but a moment of "transit", a form of temporality that is open to disjunction and discontinuity and sees the process of history engaged, rather like art, in negotiation of the framing and naming of social reality- not what lies inside or outside reality, but where to draw (or inscribe) the "meaningful" line between them (1992: 144).

The shock, the trauma, or the uncanny moment that one feels and experiences as a result of the amalgamation of public/private and past/present constitutes the beginning of the author's agency in finding for himself a suitable identity that belongs not to the public or private, past or the present but that is in between all these elements in a place that can benefit from them all Bhabha declares:

> Private and public, past and present, the psyche and the social develop an interstial intimacy. It is an intimacy that questions binary divisions through which such spheres of social experience are often spatially opposed. These spheres of life are linkedthrough an "in-between" temporality that takes the measure of dwelling at home, while producing an image of the world history. This is the moment of aesthetic distance that provides the narrative with a double-edge which like the colored of South African subject represents a hybridity, a difference "within" a subject that inhabits the rim of an "in-between" reality(1992: 148).

But before managing a workable identity the historical subject must pass through a feeling of alienation. Bhabha declares:

The historical or the fictional subject is conscious of "the meaning"; or the intention of the act but its transformation into a "public" symbolic or ethical realm demands a narrative agency that emerges after the event, often alienating "intent" or disturbing "causal" determinism […] In order to appear as material or empirical reality the historical or the social process must pass through an "aesthetic" alienation or "privatization" of its public visibility (192: 143).

Chapter II: French and English Colonial Histories.

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reveals that, in the colonial context, agency is dependent on subalterneity. In other words, the theoretical chapter stresses the fact that agency could be maneuvered through trying to modify and subvert the scripts of the colonial regimes that seek to create subaltern people. To attain that goal one ought to understand, in an ample manner, the strategies, the methods, and the plans of the people in power. This chapter intends, therefore, to provide a presentation of the educational policies adopted by France and Britain in their colonies. It is divided into two sections. In the first section, I will examine the definitions of Assimilation and move to explaining how it was applied in Algeria as one prominent example of French colonies. This section concerns itself also with the way the French applied the Policy of Assimilation in Guinea, another French colony. Likewise, the

policy of Indirect Rule endorsed by Britain will be scrutinized in the second section and the reflection of its application will be seen in Kenya and Ghana as key colonies of the British Empire.

2.2 French Cultural Policies of Assimilation and Association:

To better understand the colonial history of French departments overseas, French colonial policies is often the point of departure. Contrary to what one would think, the French colonial policies were by no means linear and congruent. Opinions were contrasted, ideas differed from one another, and mutual agreement was rarely the case in parliamentary or congressional meetings. The history of France and the different regimes it knew conditioned the situation of the colonies. France of the old regime was not France of the second or third Republic. Each period had its own characteristics and principles which sought to mold the life of the colonies according to specific visions.

Controlling the colonies and make them obedient to French will was upheld as sacrosanct. However, disagreement abounded when it came to the methods that were supposed to be used (Aviel, 1994: 61). To state it differently, association and assimilation, as presumably two distinct policies, were a bone of contention amongst politicians, delegates, and leading exponents of colonialism. France adopted the policy of Assimilation and then replaced it with Association that was eventually abandoned for Assimilation. The latter, eventually, was readopted as the ultimate policy of the French Empire.

Even Assimilation that seemed to be the backbone of French colonial policies is not a well defined policy with fixed principles and this fact was expressed in the National Colonial Congress of 1889-1890 by a delegate who stressed the fact that no two can agree on the exact meaning or definition of the term. Along similar lines, a participant in the International Congress of Colonial Sociology of 1900 presented ‘assimilation’ as a precarious term since

the word was connected with various definitions (Lewis, 1962: 132). The absence of an exact definition of the concept did not mean that Assimilation was a policy without strategies, method, and aims.

The French ultimate aim, through Assimilation, was to 'Gallicize' the natives by teaching them the French language and introducing them to the French culture and principles (Aviel, 1994: 159). They claimed that the purpose behind such an endeavor was to create a civilizing agent who would transfer the ideas of enlightenment, of progress, and of the colonizer's well being status to the people of his own tribes (Claude, 1971: 354). They wanted to use the natives to their benefit to facilitate their occupation and exploitation of the African lands. The French claimed: 'The most common meaning of Assimilation stemmed from the tendency of French culture, with roots in both Revolutionary and Romantic thought, to see things in terms of universals, truths applicable for the good of all humanity.' (quoted in Lyons, 2001: 581-585).

Indeed, the French circulated the idea that their encroachment in the African lands was in the name of human rights and that their intention was not to conquer but to pacify the 'savage' people who were living for ages in darkness. So, according to them, colonization's aim was 'to enlighten' the Africans and introduce them to the benefits of the western civilization (Claude, 1971: 351). In 1885 Jules Ferry declared : 'Les races supérieures ont un droit vis-à- vis des races inférieures. Je dis qu'il a pour elles un droit parce qu'il y a un devoir pour elles. Elles ont le devoir de civiliser les races inférieures' (quoted in Lenzini, 2013 : 32). It is from these declarations that the French 'mission civilisatrice' became self-evident.

Yet, the primacy of these motives according to the plan, were meant to overshadow the cruel reality of colonialism. Deep down the most important aim was that the assimilated African would help 'l'œuvre colonial' in all the fields because he was well trained and

consequently well prepared to function as a mediator and an interpreter between the two rival cultures (Claude, 1971: 354). The purported aim of the assimilationist policy was the creation of an elite who were supposed to be black French men – since women were not given much importance - but by no means equal to the French people as the real impetus of colonial schools using Corby words was 'educating the Africans for inferiority' (Quoted in Bierschenk et al, 2010: 225). In other words, the education introduced by the French was malicious since the aim was to create a pro-white subject.

To what extent the natives were supposed to be assimilated was a point of disagreement and created conflict amongst policy makers. The total assimilation of the natives was not a welcome idea amongst many Frenchmen. For instance, Le Bon and Leopold de Saussure both argued for the impossibility of the assimilation of the natives. For Le Bon the danger resides in the French values of freedom, equality and fraternity that could be used against France. They were afraid that the Africans would use those principles to ask for their own liberty. He claimed: 'if European instruction becomes general in our Mediterranean colony, the unanimous cry of the natives will be Algeria for the Arabs! Just as India for the Hindus! Is the password of all the natives of India who have received an English education' (quoted in Lewis, 1962: 139).

In other words, the African people should not be taught the principles that led to the development of the western countries. Doing so would coincide with the colonization's aims which sought to keep the Africans inferior to exploit them. Saussure opposes Assimilation from a different angle. For him, the invalidity of the policy rests on a *scientific* theory: 'the heredity of mental characteristics' (ibid: 146). In other words, the natives are unable to incorporate the knowledge given to them as their 'infantile' mind cannot grasp its meaning (Claude, 1971: 354).

In1931, Brivié the general governor of A.O.F declared: 'Il ne faut pas leur donner une intellectuelle trop forte pour leur faculté d'assimilation.' (quoted in Claude, 1971 : 354). More importantly, the insistence of assimilation's advocators on 'a rigid universality' leaving little room for cultural diversities triggered discontent amongst French responsibles (Lewis, 1962: 145). The colonial expert René Maunier remarked that the weakness of the French colonial policy prior to the Vichy power 'was the idea that the colonies were a Tabula Rasa and that there was only one truth suitable for controlling all countries and all climates […] as the empire was not homogenous and contained diversified populations with different levels of civilization, the colonial policy must also be diversified and adjusted to the reality on the ground' (Ginio, 2006: 98).

Thus, France was obliged to change its strategies in early 20th century and the solution was the policy of Association. The latter policy reflected the incapacity of the Assimilation policy to realize the idealistic plans put forward by the proponents of that very policy (Abiola and Jeyifo, 2010: 102-103). Contrary to the policy of Assimilation which was rigid and to a large extent strict, the tenets that define this policy are 'simplicity, flexibility, and practicality' (Betts, 1960: 106). The advocates of Association stressed the importance of ethnic and the geographic specificities in any attempt made to deal with the African people. This means that the collaboration between the natives and the colonizers was of a paramount importance for the success of that very policy. To attain their aspired goals from association, the authorities made sure to associate their efforts with those of the natives. The thing that opened the door for less centered policy as autonomy was important to apply this policy. Association was meant to ensure domination through the help of the natives and all kinds of institutions that may render their arduous tasks easy (Betts, 1960: 113). The attraction of the method did not stem only from the attack made on Assimilation as it was politically, scientifically, and psychologically discarded, it was also the result of the great influence exerted by the British

and the Dutch policies of Indirect Rule. During that period The Indirect Rule policy seemed to be successful and the British seemed to be at ease in dealing with colonial affairs (Aviel, 1994: 61). Furthermore, the African elite created by the French started to demand for equality with French citizens, the thing that made the 'precolonial institutions' and local chiefs of such importance. Joseph Chailley in 1902 argued:

> The real need of the day was a native policy adapted to the existing situation in the newly acquired territories which, properly speaking, were not colonies but possessions such a policy should recognize differences of race, of genus, of aspirations and needs between the native inhabitants of a possession and their European masters and should see in these differences the need for different institutions (quoted in Lewis, 1962: 147).

In the same vein, Gallieni, one of the colonial officers who initiated this policy; insisted that 'the administrative organization of the new country must be in perfect rapport with its resources, its geographic configurations, the mentality of its inhabitants, and the goal that one proposes to attain' (Betts, 1960: 115). A coherent definition of the policy was given by Jules Harmand in his *Domination et Colonisation* as he saw association as a kind of 'contract' that 'envisages the coexistence and cooperation of two profoundly different societies placed in contact in a manner as brusque as it is artificial' (quoted in Betts,1960 : 121-122). The annual colonial congress approved the policy of Association in 1907 and the conclusion was that the policy was the demand of the whole colonial authorities (ibid: 122). Paul Deschanel declared: 'we are today about to apply this formula of association which the colonial congress have already determined and illuminated' (ibid: 122).

Despite the name that suggests a change in the methods, the aim was undoubtedly one. The focus was not only on the traditions of the natives, but on the problems that already existed in the colonies and could be used to the benefit of the colonizer. No doubt, as Fanon points: 'By its very structure, colonialism is separatist and regionalist. Colonialism does not simply state the existence of tribes; it also reinforces it and separates them. The colonial

system encourages chieftaincies and keeps alive the old confraternities' (2004: 94). In short, the Policy of Association was the other face of divide and rule policy.

It is true that this policy was built on mutual help but never meant equality. The fear of the excessive liberty that the natives might misuse led the colonizer to ensure the inequality of the two groups. In Bhabha's words, the French sought to create a group of indigenous people who are 'the same but not quite.' Association was another name given to Assimilation as it carried out the project of 'Mission Civilisatrice' as both policies sought to impose French values at the expense of the African ways of living. Aviel points that 'Association was based on a frank acknowledgment that the relationship between France and its colonies was an unequal one, but allowed for the possibility of some native self-rule' (1994: 74). The self rule was meant to guarantee the smooth application of colonial rules. The colonial powers were selective when it came to the traditions that were allowed to be practiced.

Association was again a failure as it could not find solutions to the problems caused by Assimilation. The African elite continued their struggle for equality, and 'the chiefs' authority' was a total mess (Ginio, 2006: 96). Indeed, 'the people appointed as chiefs generally had no claim to traditional authority in the eyes of their tribes and became little more than clerks on the lowest rung of a typically centralized French bureaucratic system' (Aviel, 1994: 74). The appointed chiefs were chosen by the colonial powers and they were not respected by the African people and viewed with outmost skepticism. The settlers were well aware that the chiefs were mere pawns in the hands of colonial powers.

However, France refused to admit that Association failed. Admitting that fact would lead France into a political impasse as the educated elite would clamor for the impeachment of the unqualified chiefs and ask for more power and for more political rights.

Nevertheless, Assimilation was reaffirmed in the Brazzoville Conference met in 1944 as the reasonable upshot of French 'Mission Civilisatrice'. All the declarations willingly agreed that the flickering idea of self autonomy in the French colonies should be dismissed (Lewis, 1962: 129).

It is worth stressing that French educational colonial policies were far from being a uniform with clear and straight rules and applications. Assimilation was not the norm in every colony as French policy for example in North Africa differed to some extent from that in South Africa. Phyllis Martin says:

> although France practiced policy of direct rule which insisted upon the legitimacy of only one sovereign authority, that of France, its colonial policy in Black Africa was nonetheless flexible enough to preserve and work through preexisting political structures in territories such as Mauritania, Upper Volta Chad, and Niger where the limited French presence necessitated a greater use of indigenous authorities (1995:144).

2.2.1 French Colonial Education in Algeria:

To better understand the strategies of the colonial powers concerning education it is important to shed light on the history of French education in Algeria to denounce all kinds of declarations which sought to inculcate in the minds of people that France occupied its colonies to enlighten the inhabitants. France considered her colonies as extended departments overseas belonging to the mother country. However, Algeria was considered as an exceptional case. It was declared in 1839 that Algeria was not a mere colony like the rest of French possessions but 'une terre a jamais Française' (Kateb, 2001: 186). For the purpose at hand, France had the obligation to make the Algerian population accept French norms and lifestyle without the least resistance (Lewis, 1961: 146).

Before colonization, the Algerians were not illiterate almost all the Algerians were able to read and write. Pellisier de Reynaud remarks: 'l'instruction élémentaire est pour le moins aussi répandue chez eux que chez nous. Il y'a des écoles de lecture et d'écriture dans la

plupart des villages et des douars' (Sayeh, 2005: 123). The primary schools were responsible for teaching the Algerians fundamental skills such as reading and writing, and the most important thing was the memorization of the Quran as Islam constituted the heart of the Algerian community (Durham, 218-219).

Children from 6 to 10 were enrolled in the primary schools to be taught by a teacher who had different functions: a lecturer, a muezzin, and an imam. There was a possibility for the Algerian children to continue their education in schools that were called Medersah to be rewarded in case of success a certificate of competency: 'Idjaza'. The graduated student from those schools is called 'a taleb' which refers to someone who is able to read Quran in mosques, or a 'khodja' which means someone who is able to write (Achour, 1985: 146). The Algerian pre colonial education offered also a secondary education that included the teaching of astronomy, law, theology, history, and so on (Durham, 218-219). These facts prove that Algeria, contrary to what the French claimed, had a well organized system of education.

Despite the promises made not to interfere with the Algerian religion and language, French policy in practice proved the contrary. Rinn, a commanding officer, on the onset of the Algerian colonization declared: 'a peineinstallésa Alger, qu'avons nous fait? Non contents de prendre les Medrsas pour y (mettre) des magasins, des logements, des écuries ou des casernes, nous avons fait main basse sur tous les biens des mosquées et surtout sur ceux affectés à l'instruction publique' (Quoted in Achour, 1985 : 146). This implies that the colonial authorities inended to destroy the well-organized Algerian system of education that could lead to the prosperity of the country to replace it by a fake type of education.

It is true that before 1870 France tolerated the hybrid Franco-Arab schools 'medarsa' but not to benefit the natives (Grandguillaume: 2014 406). The medersah was according to

the colonizers a helpful tool to assimilate the Algerians by making them within the colonial policy as, according to the plan, the French language had to be taught as the main language.

The Algerian people rejected the colonial education that was offered to them because they were quite aware of the hidden purposes of that very education. The Algerians by all means resisted the colonial education and continued to send their children to Quranic schools to protect their culture, religion, and identity. Furthermore, Reciprocal hatred and ignorance of the rival culture widened the gap between the two cultures and was the direct reason behind colonial educational policies' failure (Heggoy &Zingg, 1976: 572). Lanzini states:

> Du coté des *indigènes musulmans*, la situation reste inchangée. Comme ils refusent d'abandonner leur religion il ne peuvent prétendre à une assimilation. Et aucun décret n'est proposé pour passer outre cette apostasie légale on ne compte que 4298 demandes de 'naturalisations' entre 1865 et 1937. La plupart émanent de fonctionnaires civils ou militaires aspirant à l'égalité avec leurs collègues français. Les *indigènes* berbéro-musulmans continuent de jouir de leur statut personnel fondé sur la loi coranique (2016 : 34).

The French for their part blamed the Algerians for not sending their children to French schools and claimed that ' si les enfants indigenes ne frequentent pas l'école, ça n'est pas la France ou la colonization qu'il faut incriminer. C'est toujours la faute de cette civilization arriérée et imprafaite a laquelle la France doit mettre un terme sans retard' (Lenzini, 2013: 54).

The eradication of Algerian schools and Quranic schools that were free after the colonization was the direct reason behind the illiteracy of many Algerians. Despite the building of the Franco-Muslim schools in Oran, Algiers, and Constantine that taught both Arabic and French, illiteracy rose after the French occupation. Alexis de Tocqueville in 1847 confirmed that the French Colonial policies had rendered the Algerians even more ignorant. He said:

> Ce n'est pas dans la voie de notre civilisation européenne qu'il faut à présent les pousser mais dans le sens de celle qui leur est propre […] nous [la France] avons

> rendu la société musulmane beaucoup plus misérable, plus désordonnée, plus ignorante et plus barbare qu'elle ne l'était avant de nous connaitre (Sayeh, 2005 :124).

The number of school boys and girls in 1865 was only 700. By 1871, that number rose minimally to 1300 (Achour, 1985: 153). It is true that in 1891 there was a slight increase in the number of native pupils that reached 11000 children, but that number was so small in comparison with the number of the population that was 3 400 000. In other words3 children per 1000 were schooled (Lenzini, 2013: 53). Thus it should come as no surprise to know that literacy rates were below 1%. These numbers prove that colonial education in Algeria was just a lie.

In a nutshell, up to 1880s all attempts made by the French to assimilate the Algerians failed (Heggoy, 1973:183). Yvonne Turin, a French authority concluded: 'the first steps in the intellectual history of colonization in North Africa [were nothing more than] treading in one place indefinitely for fifty years' (Heggoy, 1973:183). Numerous reasons were at work. The future of Algeria was not clear and France focused more on the military occupation that consumed all the energies of the colonizer (Achour, 1985: 149). Assuredly, in its bare reality, French colonialism was a cataclysmic force that smashed all obstacles it encountered to conquer the African countries. Notwithstanding the fact that France was so powerful, the occupation of Algeria was not an easy process without fierce reactions. France encountered 'une société bien organisée à la civilisation propre […] dont l'amour de la liberté, l'attachement à la terre, la cohésion, la culture, les sens patriotique les ressources et les idéaux communs à défendre contre l'ennemi national donnent leurs preuves tout au long d'une guerre de conquête de prés de 40 ans' (ibid : 156). It is worth mentioning that despite the fact that the early armed resistance to colonialism was 'rural or tribal', it was buttressed by religious discourse that nurtured the rejection of everything considered to be alien to the religion of Islam (Ruedy, 2002: 187). As a result, the colonizer shifted his focus toward the natives who

were not Arabs as Arabic; the language of the Quran was considered to be an obstacle. Youcef Nacib remarks:

> La colonisation a tenté d'exploiter le particularisme linguistique de la Kabylie pour y établir une sorte de bastion de la civilisation occidentale. Raisonnement simpliste: puisque c'est la langue arabe, vecteur du Coran, qui constitue un obstacle à l'implantation de la culture dominante, faisons converger nos efforts vers les colonisés non arabisants (Quoted in Lenzini, 2013 : 26).

Thus, the colonizer invented the Kabyle myth as one of the strategic policies of the French colonial administration. It meant to disrupt the heterogeneous, yet the harmonious Algerian world by making the Arabs and the Kabyle people alien to each other. The revival of old identities seemed to offer a glimpse of hope in mobilizing the Kabyle at the service of the French against the Arabs.

The Kabyle people in the early years of occupation were portrayed negatively. They were in most of the time described as savage cruel and harsh. Rozet in 1833 had concluded: 'the first thing that must be done to civilize those cannibals [kabyl people] was to change their religion' (quoted in Ageron, 2011: 11). In the same vein, general Berthezène in 1834 declared : 'le cabyle se distingue par ses gouts sédentaires et plus de férocité dans le caractère'. Bolle in his *Souvenirs d'Algérie* presented the kabyl people as 'les plus redoutables de tous les indigènes' (ibid: 11). However, the close observation of the Kabyle people made the possibility of creating links between the kabyl people and the French a very welcome strategy. This idea was taken seriously and the adherents of the Assimilation/Association policy worked tirelessly to make it a reality.

Alix de Tocquville in 1837, Duvivier in 1841, Bodichon in 1845, Daumas in 1847, and Carette in 1848, to name just a few, all hinted at the possibility of a fusion between the Kabyle and the French (Achour, 1985: 88). So the Kabyle was tended at the outset to be an important element in the policy of divides et impera. They claimed that the Kabyle people were the original settlers and the Arabs were mere colonizers who occupied Algeria illegally.

General Hanoteau in his book '*la kabylie et les coutumes kabyles'* remarked that kabyl people were willing to deal with the French more than any other race in Algeria. He even concluded that the Kabyle had some ways and rules that were deprived of religion (Ageron, 2011). Even those who admitted publically to be Muslims were regarded to be less fanatical than their Arab compatriots (Goodman, 2005: 8).

The French missionaries believed that the Kabyle people were the descendants of the Romans as their name 'berbers' came from the barber , a word that has an indo-European origin (lenzini, 2013: 26). Moreover, the Kabyle life style recalled those found among the European societies and old Christian civilizations. The Tajma'at for instance was perceived as a civilized behavior anchored in the democratic principles that hark back to 'Roman Law'. For making those conclusions more valid, a series of features were attributed to the Kabyles. They were described as hard workers, disciplined and altruistic people (Goodman, 2005: 7). But those features were all the time juxtaposed to those of the Arabs who were in Ageron's words: 'mous, lents, en dedans, retentifs et reveurs, froids et presque tristes, fanatiques' (quoted in Achour, 1985: 90).

Despite all the efforts made to assimilate the Kabyle people, the great revolt of the Kabyle people in 1871 was like 'un coup de poignard dans le dos' (Lorcin, 2005:18). The thing that made Wahl affirms that the differences that separate the Kabyles from the Arabs rest on superficial approaches; socially, the Arab and the kabyle behave in the same manner regarding women and religion (Kateb, 2001: 206). But, the Kabyle myth as a strategy of divide and rule continued to nurture the French policies. Many schools contrary to other regions were built in the kabylia (Goodman, 2005: 09). The French wanted to establish a link between the Kabyle myth and education. In 1891 there were 150 schools for the Algerian population; one third of these schools were in the Djurdjura. Christian Achour states:

> Le Mythe Kabyle n'a cessé d'avoir des partisans durant toute la colonisation… et même au delà […]. Le "Mythe" édifié entre 1840 et 1857 a été consciemment renforcé entre 1860 et 1870 à des fins politiques et polémiques, puis largement célébré de 1871 à 1891. Une fois bien ancré, il n'avait plus qu'à se reproduire (1985 : 85).

Moreover, French Imperial policies encouraged migration to France and despite the fact that this process included all the Algerians, it was the Kabyle who got the lion's share. The confiscation of the Kabyle lands after the great revolt of el Mokrani led to their inevitable poverty. Thus, migration was seen as the only way out from that misery. Neil MacMaster notes:

> Because of her unusually low birth-rate, subsequently compounded by heavy losses in the First World War, France encouraged foreign labour immigration. The strict controls on the emigration of Algerians to France were partially re-moved by a circular of 28 January 1905 and scrapped entirely by the law of 15 July 1914. The opening of the door coincided with the growth of a large pool of underemployment and impoverished peasants, themselves the product of the enormously destructive impact of colonialism on the traditional Algerian economy and society (appropriation of lands, uprooting and dislocation of tribes, growing demographic imbalance between population and resources, etc (quoted in Stovall and Abeele, 2003: 2002).

Indeed, migration rose sharply from 30.000 in 1921 to 73.000 in 1936 and most of them were Kabyles (Bures, 2008: 1992). Migration to the mainland, France, facilitated the French task in educating the Algerians. In other words, the contact between the French and the Algerians in the economic sectors made the Algerian aware of the necessity of education and as the Algerian immigrants in France were treated badly not as French citizens, the French language constituted a cornerstone in the daily life of those newcomers to deal with the problems encountered every day.

At home, the Algerian population was aware of the immigrants' situation and the vicious cycle of poverty made education even more a favorable idea. However, education was not meant for everyone and it was very difficult to be schooled in French schools especially with the existence of a group of French people who were against the idea of educating the natives (Ruedy, 2002: 187). Certainly, 'les indigénophobes' like Pourquery de Boisserin, Warnier, and Thomson vehemently opposed the idea of educating the natives and strived for a

strictly professional and agricultural school. Despite the efforts made by 'les indigénophiles' like Rambaud, Rozet, Jeanmaire who defended 'une école elementaire et civilisatrice', the conclusion of the debates between the two opponent groups in 1892 was that the number of primary schools should be minimized as much as possible and the emphasis should be on the development of professional schools instead, and even the Medarsas should be reformed to meet the French goals (Achour, 1985: 176-179). George Hardy's declared: 'il n'est pas question de former l'esprit mais de render plus efficaces des bras dont le colon a besoin' (quoted in Achour, 1985: 188). Indeed, Strategies, methods, conferences, and policies were all the time guided and made with colonial benefits in mind.

Regardless of the preceding facts, education did not lose its glitter. However, acceptance of colonial education was accompanied by a rise in nationalistic institutions (Heggoy, 1973:184). The early twentieth century witnessed the rise of some anti-colonial institutions in Algeria. The beginning was with a group of young educated Algerians who despite their French education sought to revive 'An Arab race worthy of the benefits of France' (Smail, 1991: 13). These 'Young Algerians' who worked in most descent jobs as lawyers, doctors and teachers celebrated colonial education and perceived it as a powerful tool enabling the natives to live a better life. For the purpose at hand, they found numerous clubs in all over Algeria like Rashidiya in Algiers, the Cercle Des Jeunes Algeriens in Telemcen, and the Cercle De Saleh Bey in Constantine. Following the steps of this group, the nephew of Emir Abed El kader, Emir Khaled in 1922 became engaged politically to defend the Algerians' stolen rights. His aim was to make the colonial authorities treat the Algerians like French citizens (Smail, 1991: 13-14).

Other examples include (ENA) Etoile Nord –Africaine created by Messali Hadj in 1926, and the Association of Reformist Ulama founded in 1931 by Cheikh Abd El hamid Ben Badis (Heggoy, 1973: 187). ENA was originally a 'syndicalist organization' meant to defend

the maghribi immigrants in France, and then became a purely Algerian political party with Marxist ideas (ibid: 187). Following the steps of Jamal Dine el Afghani, Abd Hamid Ben Badis initiated the Islah Movement in 1889 in Constantine. He received his education in Arabic then moved to study at the University of Zitouna in Tunisia. His contact with the reformist men of the orient such as Mohamed Abduh made him open to the changes required to protect the Arabic language and the Algerian identity (Grandguillaume, 2014: 406). Fearful of the extinction of the Algerian character, the association built a web of schools teaching the Arabic language and the Islamic and Algerian history. Most of their writings were published in Al Shihab starting from 1925 (Zekkour, 2011: 23).

Association of Reformist Ulama's main objective was the teaching of Quran and the Arabic language as their slogan indicated: 'Islam is my religion, Arabic is my language, Algeria is my country'. They founded many schools because they wanted to create a generation of Algerian men who were supposed to be proud of their origins as the teachers themselves proudly declared that they were not able to communicate in French language; the thing that was perceived by the colonial authorities as an act of resistance (ibid: 188).

Contrary to the Quranic schools that concentrated only on the memorization of the Quran, the schools created by the Association of Ulama had a full programme for students with full time that included calculation, geography, and so on. For those attending French schools, the Medarsas made specific timing outside their French studies. The teachers of these schools were formed in the Zitouna University, but in 1947, they created a center in Constantine to train teachers.

There were two fundamental aims of the reformists: the first was to make the teaching of Islamic religion meet the requirements of the modern world and the second one focused on teaching of the Arabic language. France encouraged fanatic beliefs and wanted to distort the

Algerians from the real creeds of Islam. It was the aim of Association of Ulama to clean Islam from the wrong beliefs ingrained by the colonizer.

So around the thirties, the Algerians were able to enroll whether in primary colonial schools or in Quranic schools. There was also a possibility of attending both schools at the same time as most of the reformist and traditional schools were operating outside the regular hours of public schools. Concerning secondary education and university, very few Algerians had the opportunity to finish their higher education. Those who could do so were the sons of the native elites or rarely the sons of peasant families of good situation (Colonna: 2008, 287). However, those who received a Francophone education were by no means equal to those who had training in Arabic. The francophone students had more chance to be recruited than the arabopone ones. No doubt this was within the colonizer's plans which sought to degenerate everything that could calcify the Algerians' identity.

The initiative was received cordially by the Algerians who understood the importance of these schools and the the type of education they offered. By 1935, there were 70 schools (medersas) with 3000 students and by 1950 there were 124 schools, 274 teachers and 40 000 students. In addition, the number of those who attended Quranic schools was 40.000 pupils before the revolution. Not only this, conferences were made to inform the largest number of population about the pillars of Islam. The aim behind such an endeavor was to free Islam from the maraboutic practices that destroyed the image of the pure Islam (Grandguillaume, 2014: 407). Teaching became obligatory free and 'laique'. The application of Ferry's laws in 1882 marked the end of the Franco-Arab schools and separated religion from schools (ibid: 406). The zeal for religious education sprung from this initiative. Fanon argues:

> The struggle for national liberation was linked to a cultural phenomenon commonly known as the awakening of Islam. The passion displayed by contemporary Arab authors in reminding their people of the great chapters of Arab history is in response to the lies of the occupier. The great names of Arabic literature have been recorded

> and the past of the Arab civilization has been brandished with the same zeal and ardor as that of the African civilizations. The Arab leaders have tried to revive that famous Dar el Islam, which exerted such a shining influence in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (2014: 151)

As a reaction to these associations, the Arabic language started to be considered as a foreign language in 1936 (Grandguillaume, 2014: 406). Thus, the Algerians saw in the French schools a danger that threatensed their language, religion and identity. In order to lessen the heightened reaction of the Algerians concerning their language, the French authorities made of the Arabic language an official language in 1947 (Heggoy & Zingg, 1976: 577). Despite the reforms, the Algerian people who attended French public schools only rose from 33,000 in 1908 to 104,000 in I938**.** Little emphasis was paid to Arabic; it could be said that it was neglected by the French authorities as the teaching of this language was done outside the official hours of studies and (Heggoy&Zingg, 1976: 573) the French schools permitted only two hours and a half of dialectic Arabic and in rare cases one hour of classical Arabic. The teaching of Algerian Arabic was to ensure the unconsciousness of the Algerian population of a language with a complete literature and linguistic materials in order not to challenge the French language (Heggoy & Zingg, 1976: 576).

In 1944, the total number of primary classes was around 6500 in which the majority of pupils were Europeans and only 8.8% were Algerians. According to Emmanuel Sacriste : 'le décret du 27 novembre 1944 prévoit la creation de 20 000 classes permettant l'acceuil de 1 million d'élève (soit 50 enfant par classe) (quoted in Linzini, 2011: 125). We can notice that the reactions of the Algerian people controlled to some extent the strategies of colonial education. In the beginning, the Association of the Ulama represented no threat to French authorities, but when they became nationalist in 1956, the French authorities ordered the closing of those schools.

During the French Algerian war, colonial education required the involvement of 'the French military'. The aim behind this policy that is only an extension to the mission civilisatrice' was to attract the largest number of Algerians and make them refrain from joining the movement of the liberation war. For the purpose at hand, diverse programs were created such as 'SAS the *Service de Formation des Jeunesen Algérie,* the *Centres Sociaux,* the *Formation Professionelle Accélérée,* and the *Formation Professionelle des Adultes*'. Despite the fact that the French auhorities were promising the young Algerian people better opportunities and a better life through that education, they were very cruel and violent. As a resul, like the previous colonial educational systems, the military education was not cordially received (Durham: 220-221).

The peculiarity of the oppressive regimes bred a deep distrust of the colonial education and pushed the Algerians to refrain from joining them. Indeed, the General Union of Moslem Algerian Students (U.G.E.M.A) issued a manifesto on19 may 1956 calling the Algerians to boycott all French schools and all sorts of educational institutions. Even those who at an earlier time defended colonial policies at heart changed their opinions and became more sympathetic to the claims of the Algerian population. Ferahat Abbas, for instance, who had declared earlier in 1931: 'I have questioned history. I have questioned the quick and the dead. I have visited cemeteries. No one has spoken to me of such a thing [Algerian Nation] ... You cannot build on wind, we have eliminated all fogginess and vain imaginings to link our future once and for all to that of French endeavor in this country' (quoted in Smail, 1991: 16) became the first president of the Algerian government.

Nevertheless, the above mentioned policy was hardly a watertight or successful as Ana Isabel Madeira suggests: ' it would be misleading to think that the assimilation policy was to be the norm in every colonial situation or even that assimilation policies translated into effective control of the educational matters in all colonies' (2009: 187). Indeed, before 1930

the French policy encouraged everything but the 'excessive frenchification of the native populations' (Madeira, 2009:189).

2.2.2 Colonial Education in Guinea:

The first French schools in Guinea were established in the early nineteenth century. Like the rest of African countries and all the colonized countries in the world, the type of education offered in the onset of colonization was religious. The missionaries, mainly the priests of 'Saint Esprit' missionary, inaugurated the establishment of a religious school in Guinea, exactly in Boffa in1876. In 1890, the priest Rainbault founded a school in Conakry. Later on, many other schools were established like the schools of Sobané in 1897 and Taboria in 1898. They created even schools for educating the girls during the same period (Diallo,1999: 15).

In 1903, the type of education offered changed. The colonial authorities from that date on started a laic education. Their aim was to create a group of people who could serve as mediators between the people and the colonial authorities (Diallo,1999: 15).

In 1903 there existed three types of schools: primary schools, higher primary schools and the federal schools. The primary schools encompassed different types of schools. The first one was the school village whose objective was to introduce the learners to the French language and make them accept the forms of exploitation of the colonizer. Moreover, the few who succeeded in the village schools could move to the second type of schools which were the regional schools. In those schools learners who succeeded were given the Certificate of Elementary Primary Education. The third type was the urban school that received only the children of European settlers and the children of rich assimilated Africans. The program in those schools was similar to that of the metropolitan country (Diallo,1999: 15).

The higher primary schools' aim was to train a category of people to play the role of the mediators between the two rival countries. The chosen ones who were accepted to be enrolled in those schools were the best learners who succeeded in the village schools. At the end of their learning, they got the certificate of higher primary education. Those schools became operational only after 1907. The first school of this category was George Poiret primary school which took the burden of teaching carpentry, welding, and building (Diallo,1999: 15).

The third types of schools as mentioned above are the federal schools. These types of schools were not concerned with the education of the Africans. Their aim was to prepare workers for the whole western Africa (Diallo,1999: 15).

This system of education received no change until 1945. In other words, the Second World War had tremendous impacts on the colonial countries and shifted the policies of France with its corresponding colonies. France started to believe in the idea of self- and allowing the colonies to govern themselves (Diallo,1999: 16).

2.3 British policies of Indirect Rule:

Britain in its attempt to educate the largest number of the African people adopted the policy of The Indirect Rule. The latter was the hope of the nation to avoid the misfortunes faced in Asia and the magical plan that would naturally bring the African countries into British's fist. In its essence, the policy of the indirect rule originated from Lugardien's dogma of 'dual mandate' which sought to ensure the economic development of the colonies as well as the preservation of the Africans' interest. Instead of replacing all African institutions with British ones, the plan was that the 'native institutions' would thrive and perform even better under British direction and control(Perham, 1934: 325) as all 'inhuman practices' and

'uncivilized indigenous laws' would be purged to be conducive to the civilizing British's aims (Dibua, 2006: 58).

In Lugaurd's view 'collaboration' of all parts was of indispensible importance to the construction of an ideal world in which Britain played the role of a guide and a supervisor leading the African countries towards self control and management. He stated: 'co-operation is the key-note of success in its application- continuous co-operation between every link in the chain, from the head of the administration to its most junior member, co-operation between, the Government and the commercial community, and above all, between the provincial staff and the native rulers' (quoted in Kolapo and Parry, 2007: 112).

Through that policy Britain envisaged to put a hand on African services and education seemed to be the most promising tool to achieve that end. Thus, British authorities introduced 'a Christian civilizing education' to interpret the humanitarian work the 'dual mandate' necessitated (Parson, 2004: 37). The Indian experience which was considered to be, to some extent, a failure due to the secularization of the western curriculum, made the British aware of the importance of a Christian teaching. Certainly, the early years of occupation, Christian or religious education was paramount. Despite the fact that the conversion of the natives into Christianity was at the heart of the missionaries' role, the economic value was not ignored. Put in different terms, the British educators included practical training with moral education to guarantee the economic development of the region (Parson, 2004: 38). Of course, the aim was not to serve the interest of the colonial powers.

During the 19th century, Britain did not have a well planned and organized educational policy and education was the privilege of the few elite. For that reason, educating the black Africans was a drastic mission, and even the efforts made by the Members of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to teach the Africans using their skills and experience in working

with the poor of the East London were not promising. Indeed, the 1902 questionnaire on the African situation and its relation to the new order of things initiated by the British Foreign Office revealed an increasing skepticism of western schooling (Parson, 2004: 38- 39). Thus, The British educators saw in the American educational system, developed for the ex- slaves in southern America in the aftermath of civil war, a source of inspiration. The system was adopted because it suited the colonial needs for economic development as it emphasized the practical training (Bude, 1983: 341). One of the prominent English missionary figure that called for a combined 'Christian, western and native' curriculum was J, H Oldham (Parson, 2004: 40).

Even at home, education was designed to serve colonial ends as there was a shift towards the building of public schools that trained the English children to be able to rule colonial affairs. The aim of those schools, actually, was to inculcate in the learners' minds some virtues like 'obedience', 'thrift', and 'diligence' to carry on the 'burden of the empire'. In other terms, the main role of those schools was the creation of a group of citizens able to fight a battle, in Edmond Holmes' terms, 'a battle which will be fought in *all* parts of the British Empire' (Horm, 2012: 40). Imperialism during the nineteenth century was at the centre of the British school curriculum and was linked to nationalism as 'patriotism, militarism, adulation of the monarchy and imperial expansion' became at the heart of the school system (Mangan, 1993:16). In sum, and using Spivak's terms the colonial schools were not a place of pure learning.

However, in 1920 and in 1924, the Pheleps Stokes initiated two commissions under the direction of Jesse Jones to assess the colonial educational situation in Africa. Back then, the educational strategies adopted did not make good results. As a result, Britain wanted to know the reasons of that failure. The report revealed disappointing results related to 'school organization and inspection'. In addition, the report revealed that were was a remarkable

absence of a concrete and a sufficient cooperation between the natives and the colonial powers at the educational level (Bude, 1983: 341).

Thus, the British resorted to implement new strategies to teach the natives. The lessons were designed to enhance the inherited forms of the African's 'tribal identities' (Parson, 2004: 42). According to them, the Africans in their essence were 'tribal men' and interfering with this established order of things would generate negative consequences as the 'Bookish system', which was totally disconnected with the African traditions and mode of life, encouraged individualism and selfish competitiveness; the thing that was, for sure, not compatible with British colonial plans (Bude, 1983: 341). In sum, the reforms required by Jones after the reports obliged the primary schools to sustain the African traditional lifestyle and to prepare the African learners for social and economic challenges (Bude, 1983: 342). Here actually reside the contradictions of colonial education. On the one hand, they claimed that they occupied Africa to 'civilize' the inhabitants through getting rid of their traditional lifestyle, which was considered as primitive, and on the other hand, they made reforms to sustain the African traditional lifestyle.

The emphasis of the educational system on tribal belonging had suspicious aspirations. The strategy was adopted to encourage tribal division and preclude any attempt to make political organizations (Bude, 1983: 345). This strategy was within the British pursued policy of divide and rule. Certainly, colonial policies promoted tribalism through favouring one ethnic group over another creating by so doing the basis for heightened ethnic conflicts that stretched even in post colonial period. For instance, Uganda was divided between 4,000 local leaders. More importantly, to create problems between the different ethnic groups, the Baganda were put on the top of the list by appointing them as tax collectors in the whole land. (Appiah & Gates, 2010: 514). Even in Yoruba land the obas were given autocratic powers that provoked rebellions. Further, they even appointed local chiefs, or what was termed in Nigeria

as ‘warrant chiefs’, and granted them power over their people in areas where such a system was not applied during the pre-colonial period. Again, the warrant chiefs who were generally tyrant and violent gave rise to the Igbo women’s war in 1929 (Dibua, 2006: 59). A. J. Christopher in his seminal article ‘'Divide and Rule': The Impress of British Separation Policies concludes:

> Colonial authorities adopted a policy of 'divide and rule' allied to territorial separation. One community was separated from another as indigene had earlier been separated from immigrant. Allied to this, colonial administrations compiled reports and notably censuses in a classificatory manner. The simple Christian-Heathen or English-foreigner dichotomy was replaced by ever more elaborate classifications as governments divided and redivided populations into discrete groups, on the basis of linguistics, religion, ethnicity and skin colour. These, because they appeared in the official census reports, assumed a degree of permanence as officials operated on the assumption that the groups so distinguished were distinct entities to be treated differently (1988: 233).

To keep the African people within the borders of their traditional African fabric, the British authorities, during the 1930s, were obliged to reduce the number of years of primary school to six years instead of eight. British Colonial authorities sought to make young African learners attached to their lands and more devoted to agricultural life in their own villages. Furthermore, the African vernacular languages, crafts, and customs received noticeable attention and were a vital part of the ‘scheme of work’ (Bude, 1983: 343). The emphasis on handicrafts and practical agricultural training stemmed from the eugenicist study conducted by H. L Gordon which claimed that the African mind is inferior to the European one (Parson, 2004: 42). Despite the fact that this conclusion was discarded later on by many scientists, it was adopted by the British authorities as the scientific justification of the unjust education offered to Africans.

Indeed, Britain from the onset of colonialism used pseudo scientific theories like that of Darwin, Spencer, Morgan and Marx to defend its conquest and occupation of African countries. Mangan states: ‘African 'indulgence' led many missionaries to believe the African

was incapable of benefiting from a literary education. In their view he was incapable of conceptual assimilation and could not be taught any type of bookish knowledge; his perceptive faculties were strong, but his reflective and imaginative faculties were undeveloped' (1993: 13). Education did not revolve around tribal and agricultural issues only; the African pupils received other kinds of education through feasible demonstrations and examples (Bude, 1983: 343).

Actually, outside the confines of the theoretical purported claims of development and civilization, the reality of The Indirect Rule policy was a disappointing one. Britain did not take into account Africans' interests and benefits. As a matter of fact, Britain's welfare was regarded as a priority.

The reality in the African colonies necessitated a different lens to approach the Indirect Rule Policy of Britain. Firstly, the conservation of the African tradition was a lie created by the British as many customs were violated. In Nigeria, the abolishment of Zakat, which constituted a cornerstone of the Muslims' beliefs, led to an economic crisis in the country as the new system imposed by the British neglected the poor's welfare (Tibemderana, 1988: 86). As a matter of fact, the British had a very superficial knowledge of African traditions. As a result, they were unable to protect those traditions despite the fact that they claimed that the admitted ignorance of African institutions would be compensated by the work of well trained anthropologists (Matthews, 1937:436). The latter were themselves racist and permeated themselves to judge and evaluate the African traditions.

As the old African saying goes: 'A chief is a chief by virtue of his people' the African chiefs appointed by British authorities were not viewed as real chiefs who deserved the respect and the allegiance of the people. The latter fact, unfavorably, weakened the claims of

the British who declared that African and Metropolitan institutions worked in harmony. Indeed, (Matthews, 1937:434). In 1971, Robin Horton writes:

> With the advent of the twentieth century ... Europeans came to be seen as symbols of power, and Christianity itself came to be seen as part of a larger order, comprising Western education, colonial administration, commerce and industry, with which everyone had hence forth to reckon. These changes created a much more favorable climate for conversion (quoted in Nunn, 2010: 147).

In sum, the British colonial education attempted to attain two central objectives. First, it sought to reinforce the British's sense of superiority to perpetuate its expansion and exploitation of the African resources. Second, it tried to stress the inferiority of the natives to make them accept the white man and its '*civilization*' with an open heart. The purposes of education were never innocent. Indeed, J.A Mangan reflects: 'There was an education in imperial schools to shape the ruled into patterns of proper subservience and 'legitimate' inferiority, and one in turn to develop in the rulers convictions about the certain benevolence and 'legitimate' superiority of their rule' (1993: 6).

2.3.1 Colonial Education in Kenya:

The imposition of British colonial educational norms in Kenya revealed the colonialist policy in its destructive aspect. An extensive analysis of educational issues and policies in Kenya, that was considered to be one of the central African colonies of Britain, offers much more insight into the British adopted policies, methods, and strategies of education. After the Berlin conference of 1884 that was the origin of the African countries' plague as it paved the way for the division of the African countries to become annexed to European ones, Britain took over Kenya to become its protectorate. Officially, Kenya became a British colony in 1920.

The Kenyan people started to receive religious education from the Christian missionaries of other countries before the coming of the British. Nevertheless, after being a

British protectorate, the nature of education did not know a divergent path. Indeed, from 1895 until the establishment of the British education department in 1911 education was in the hand of the missionaries (Mwiria, 1991: 126). The main aim of the missionaries was to convert into Christianity the largest number of Africans. J. L Krapf one of the leading missionaries in east Africa declared that the early education offered to the Africans ' was a temporal means of instructing them in the principles of inculcating European Civilization' (Quoted in Koster et al, 2016: 3).

Actually, the interest of the missionaries was not only the spread of Christianity and the ideals of western civilization; trade, economic gains and the exploitation of Kenyan natural resources were strong impetuses that motivated most of them to attract African learners to their schools. As a result, the kind of education offered by the missionaries was all the time related to the kind of activities they sought to be engaged in. In other words, besides the preaching and the sermons of Sundays, the teachers had to train the Africans to work in fields such as carpentry, masonry and industry (Urch, 1971: 251). We can say that the education of that time was not free. It was meant to serve the British people and their interests.

It is true that reading and writing were included in the school curriculum, however; the aim behind was just decoding the meaning of the bible to be convincingly understood. Any kind of advanced literacy that could enable the Africans to pursue a higher education was to be avoided (Urch, 1971: 252). Nevertheless, education during that phase was judged to be unsatisfactory. Indeed, despite the efforts of the missionaries, inspection revealed that the level of the missionary teachers was very weak with the existence of hodgepodge curricula that did not meet the interest of the British aspired goals. During that period the government trusted the Christian missionaries and did not interfere with educational issues but when

Britain noticed that there were no positive results, it decided to put a hand on education in the colonies.

The establishment of the education department in 1911 marked the beginning of a new phase of the British colonial education in Kenya. From that period onward, government started to show some interest in education in the area (Mwiria, 1991: 261). Britain became interested in education because it thought that a more organized educational system would benefit the empire (Koster et al, 2016: 4). However, the intrusion of the government in education did not mean the complete exclusion of religious education. On the contrary, the government was against a secular education as it reinforced the teaching of Christianity and the technical training first initiated by the missionaries (Urch, 1971: 256). The aim of the government, actually, was to develop and organize what the missionaries had established earlier.

The creation of the department of education introduced the racially segregated system of education that divided the education system into three blocks: one for the Europeans, another for the Asians, and the last one, which was inferior to the two previous systems, was for the Africans (Koster et al, 2016: 4). In addition, Mr. J. R Orr the director of the education department along with his advisory board that included 'government officials, commercial men, representatives of the missions, and members of the settlers' association' organized the African education into three tier system. The first type of education was 'general education' which constituted a very basic elementary education engaged mainly in teaching reading and writing. The second one was 'the industrial education' and the last type was 'the education of sons of chiefs and heads-men' which was concerned with preparing some Africans to work in the administration of the empire (Urch, 1971: 254). The following quote made by Urch explains amply the reason behind the unjustified segregation that characterized colonial education:

> The political context of this education was that the British [as Spencer has suggested] 'saw an unbridgeable cultural gap between themselves and their African subjects' and pursued a policy of segregation and 'separate development' which held out only the long-term prospect of a limited elite group of Africans ultimately being raised to a European level (Urch, 1971: 127).

The new regime obliged teachers to be prepared at any time for inspection. Among the multifarious duties which the inspectors, who were required to visit schools so often, were called upon was to see whether the teachers had log books and lesson plans as required by the British government (Urch, 1971: 256). The importance of the lesson plans and the log books lies in the fact that Britain wanted to make sure that the teachers applied the methods and the strategies imposed on them to meet the required objectives.

Another important issue of colonial education was language. Using the vernacular languages as a medium of instruction was held as self evident, however, the disagreement that arose was whether Swahili should replace the vernacular languages used at early age of education or English. The latter issue triggered controversies between those who favoured the use of the Kiswahili language and those who thought that the English language should take over to instruct the African school boys and girls. For instance, 'the 1909 united missionary Conference in Kenya, the 1925 Educational Conference, the 1927 Decision Governors of Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya, the 1929 Education Conference, and The Legislative Council in 1929' were all for the use of Swahili whereas 'the 1919 Commission on Education in the East Africa Protectorate, the 1924 Pheleps –Stokes Commission and the 1937 on higher Education) were for the use of English (Cummins & Corson, 1999: 34). Actually, the norm was that Swahili should be used from standard three to junior secondary. Nevertheless, resolution came with the two Beecher Reports that urged the use of English as Lingua Franca (Cummins & Corson, 1999: 35).

Kiswahili was abandoned because it represented a threat as it was perceived as a possible unifying thread that would link all the Kenyan tribes for political action against the

British Rule through fuelling Nationalist sentiments (Cummins and Corson, 1999: 35). Indeed, the unjust and the unequal opportunities of teaching created discontent amongst the African people who were well aware that a mere technical and industrial teaching would not save the Africans from their own misery.

Moreover, in 1930 the imperial government introduced the black paper which emphasized that the objective of the colonial education should be projected towards the local affairs. In other words, the educated Africans should help in the daily affairs of their local areas. The proposal of the black paper raised some kind of resentment amongst the educated Africans especially after the campaigns launched by the missionaries who tried to stop female circumcision (Mackatiani et al, 2016: 57).

All the above mentioned facts culminated in the creation of some associations and organizations that attempted to defend the rights of the Kenyan people. Prominent examples include the Young Kikuyu association, the Kikuyu Central association, and the young Kavirondo association. Though the main aim behind these associations was not merely educational issues, they fostered nationalist calls and made the Kenyan voice heard (Harper, 2016:57). Indeed, it is through these associations that the Kenyan people started calling for equal opportunities in education and more importantly they started to establish their own independent schools. For instance, Kenya African Teachers College (K. A. T. C) was initially formed to train Kenyan teachers who were supposed to work in Kenyan schools. The latter were quite successful.

Actually, in 1946 there were 300 Kikuyu independent schools with 60 000 school boys and girls. The success of the independent schools was due to the fact that the creation of those schools coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War during which so many European teachers were obliged to come back to their homeland to provide help and

participate in the war. Actually even the Africans joined the army of their colonizer during the WWII for better wages (Mackatiani et al, 2016: 57).

The political awareness of the Kenyan people and their realization of the importance of education made the colonizer on the alert for upsurge in violence. The following declaration of a settler in a letter sent to a colonial office explains well their feelings of awe: 'we are living in troublesome times, and a Kikuyu rising is imminent. Settlers are beginning to hold meetings and vigilance committee has been formed […] for the last six months all the young Kikuyu have been apish and cheeky, and have refused to turn out for work. It appears that the more educated they are, the more they seem to be in it' (quoted in Campbell, 2007: 135). As a result, the reaction of the British Government was fierce. Many leaders of the Kenyan associations were jailed. For instance, Harry Thuku the 'secretary of the young kikiyu association' spent 11 years in detention.

2.3.2Colonial Education in Ghana:

Despite the fact that the claims of the colonizer were that Ghana or what was known as the Gold coast did not have a formal education, people before the coming of the white men were educated. In the pre-colonial era, the young people of the tribes used to receive their education from the elderly of the community. They were instructed to know the principles that governed their social life. The task of the parents, neighbours and, actually, all the members of the community was to make the young generations act in a an authorized and socially acknowledged manner through teaching them the acceptable and unacceptable behavious of the community such as taboos. The aim was to prepare a group of people to be able to mingle with the society they were born in. Moreover, the educators concerned themselves with transferring other important types of education such as rhetoric, music and above all 'survival' (Wiafe, 2021: 02).

The coming of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century marked the first contact between the Gold coasters and the European Education. The Portuguese opened the first Castle school in Elmina in 1529. The school's main interest was the education of little children whose European fathers were married with African mothers. The sons of rich African traders and the sons of African local chiefs could also enroll in the Castle school. The latter taught young boys and girls reading, writing and religious instructions. After that, the Dutch had landed on the Gold Coast and replaced the Portuguese. The Dutch seized Elmina in 1637. The type of education offered by the new comers was not different from that of their predecessors. The Dutch stressed the teaching of Christianity and were eager to spread the Dutch language among the settlers. They even established a school in Christiansborg (Yamada, 2005: 140).

During the seventeenth century, Ghana knew the presence of the Dutch, Danes, French, and British and they were all involved in the affairs that were related to education. By the nineteenth century schools in the Gold coast operated under the rule of three main agencies: the weslyan mission, the Basel mission, and the British government.(Yamada, 2005: 141).

One famous missionary back then was the Basel which landed on the lands of the Gold Coast in 1828. The missionary was determined to make successful results. During their stay, they established schools for both boys and girls and they even established teachers' training school. Another important missionary that had its own print in the country was the Bremen mission headed by Reverend Lorenz Wolf. Their beginning was in 1847 and in 1853 the mission went to Keta after spending years in Peki. They both emphasized the use of the indigenous languages and translated the bible into the original language of the settlers. Weslyan Mission is another important missionary that existed during that era. Before their arrival, the Castle school was flourishing under the leadership of Wesly Reverend Joseph

Dunwell but when they had taken hold of the school, they attempted to impose their own rules and methods concerning colonial education. Their aim, like all the missionaries, was to spread Christianity.

By 1841 the Weslyan missionaries established nine schools three of which were for females, and by 1880 they established 83 schools (Wiafe, 2021: 03). The mission schools were met with opposition by the local settlers who saw in the type of education offered a danger that would alienate them from their traditional life. Likewise, the priests rejected Christian education because they thought that it would lead to the loss of allegiance to traditional rituals (Wiafe, 2021: 02).

It is true that The Gold coast was put under the British authority in 1874, but real decisions concerning education were not made until 1882 when the Gold Coast Education ordinance was passed. The government established public schools and obliged teachers to use English as a language of instruction in order to train the largest number of 'commercial employees' and 'interpreters' who would serve the British authority. The British recommended the use of English as a medium of instruction because the use of the vernacular languages was beyond reach. Indeed, there existed more than 44 languages in the Gold coast and no exact number of dialects was detected (Yamada, 2005: 137)

Education in the Gold Coast knew a new phase with Governor Sir Gordon Guggisberg who made significant changes in the sector of education during his governorship in the period between (1919-1927). Right from the beginning of his rule, he made it clear that his main interest was the development of education in the area. He declared: '[education] was the first and foremost step in the progress of the races of the Gold Coast' (quoted in Yamada, 2005: 73). Yet, his focus was on the industrial education for his aim was developing the area

economically. He made valuable effort to provide the schools with programs that would help them reach the pursuied aim and he even raised the expenditures on education.

Moreover, Guggisberg created what was called Education Committee in 1920. The latter was in favrour of 'manual activities' at the expense of formal 'bookish' education (Shoko yamada, 2005: 73). During that period also education became the right of both sexes and teachers were formed and trained continually to be high quality teachers. In 1927, Achimota School was opened, a secondary vocational school that half of education expenditures was given to it (Yamada, 2005: 73). Despite the fact that the number of schools during his governorship increased, the changes brought forth by Guggisberg were merely the other face of the Indirect Rule policy.

2.4 Conclusion:

On the basis of the above analysis, I can say that the policies of colonial education adopted by France are different from that of Britain. Firstly, the French adopted the policy of Assimilation which stressed the use of the French language as the main language of instruction. In contrast, Britain allowed the use of vernacular languages. Secondly, France paid more attention to colonial education than Britain. Thirdly, France did not allow the interference of other associations or organizations or even the natives in matters related to education; however, Britain seemed to be more permissive allowing the religious associations to impose and apply their own rules and methods of teaching.

It is true that even France faced some problems concerning colonial education and that educational reality was not that perfect but when compared to Britain it seems that France was much more organized and committed to its cause than Britain. France dealt with colonial education as if it would remain in African lands forever, but Britain knew that its presence in

Africa was not for eternity. For that reason, exploiting the Africans and teaching them to be used as a labor force to help the British was its main objective.

It is true that the policy of Assimilation and the Indirect Rule were based on a racist agenda and they were both tyrant but the differences that underpin both policies are worth stressing since the differences created different reactions to the experience of colonial education amongst the authors dealt with in this thesis.

Part Two: Colonial Education and Agency in Francophone Literature.

The hegemonic colonial education introduced by France and its former Empire had much bearing on the idea of agency when applied to the francophone writers who came to an age during the colonial period. For most commentators colonial education involved the assimilation of native intellectuals into structures defined by the culture and language of the colonizer; for the suppression of natives' identity. The latter could not find a creative space to express itself not to say assert its belonging.

When applied to all Mouloud Feraoun and Camara Laye's respective body of novels, colonial education means a lot more than the simple acquisition and use of French language. For many critics, the two authors' enculturation into French culture led to a complete suppression of their identities. The problem lies in the belief shared by many postcolonial critics that the celebration of colonial education is a strong proof of the authors' acculturation. In other words, the writers or the intellectuals that seem to be less politically engaged are those who celebrate the ideals of 'la mission civilisatrice'.(Arab, 1990: 38).

The concern of this part is to bring to light the agency of Mouloud Feraoun the author of Le *Fils du Pauvre* and Camara Laye the author of *L'enfant Noir*. The choice of the two novels serves the overall aim of the thesis. Both authors tell their own stories. This means that their agency will be linked to the way they perceive colonial education and the way they want the reader to perceive it. In other words, the techniques and the strategies both authors use to reflect upon the experience of colonial education will be brought to light to stress that there are numerous ways of defending and asserting one's identity away from direct declarations of rejection. This part, in fact, seeks to demonstrate that Feraoun and Laye's respective autobiographical works are historically and culturally ambedded. The two writers incorporated cultural symbols in their fiction in such a way as to assert their sense of belonging.

For the purpose at hand, this part attempts to provide answers to the following questions regarding the selected authors' stances towards the issues of culture, language identity and agency: How are Feraoun and Laye''s agencies articulated in their respective writings? How could both authors negotiate, materialize and refashion their identities? How could both authors assert their identities and stress their sense of belonging without confronting the colonial education that they seem to have wholeheartedly welcomed?

Chapter III: Colonial Education and Agency in Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils Du Pauvre*

3.1 Introduction:

My objective in this chapter is to reread Le *Fils Du Pauvre*, the first novel of Mouloud Feraoun from a new perspective. In other words, the analysis of the book is meant to re-inscribe Feraoun's autobiographical novel into the nationalist literature and, by so doing, to refute the critical readings of his fiction which exclude it from the Algerian anti-colonial effort. My analysis seeks to demonstrate the subtle way Feraoun maneuvers his agency that remains obsecure for many of his critics.

The agency of Mouloud Feraoun is traced in three sections. The first section of this chapter entitled 'Ethnography, Mimicry and Anti-colonial Struggle' is concerned with the ways Feraoun's discourse fosters empowering symbols of belongings that refute the erroneous stereotypes made by the colonizer in their writings against the Algerian people. This section shows how Feraoun asserts his Algerian identity and agency through the use of those very symbols.

The second section entitled 'Interpellation, Colonial Education and Mimicry in *Le Fils Du Pauvre'* traces the impact of colonial education on the author through the analysis of his main character, Fouroulou Menrad, and the comments of the author on the experience of colonial education. In other words, the main aim of this section is to demonstrate that colonial education did not have a strong hold over Mouloud Feraoun. The third section of this chapter entitled 'Feraoun, The Use of Autobiography, and the Birth of Postcolonial Subjectivity' deals with the genre of autobiography and the ways Mouloud Feraoun brings innovations into it in order to disturb its established rules as a strategy that destabilizes and resists colonial discourse.

3.2 Feraoun: A Critical Reading of Life and Work

Mouloud Feraoun is a prolific Algerian Writer in the French language. He was born on March the eighth 1913 in Tizi Hibel, a small village in the Kabylie. He was the third-born among five siblings in his family. His father was one of those who sought refuge in the colonizer's mother country due to financial difficulties. After an accident at work, the father returned home and was remunerated for his injury. That incident left profound psychological and sociological effects on Mouloud Feraoun, and made him consequently a vigorous voice speaking for the tormented souls of the Algerian population. In other terms, the experience of immigration and the hardships of immigrant people are all themes tackled by the author in his novels.

Mouloud Feraoun received his primary education in the small local scool of his village before being awarded a scholarship that allowed him to pursue his studies in Tizi Ouzou. The poverty of his family and the misery of the period did not deter Feraoun from pursuing his goals. On the contrary, education became his route to happiness and a chance for a new life without hunger. Through diligent effort and perseverance he could attain his goal in becoming a school teacher. He graduated from the school of teachers of Bouzereah and became a teacher in Tizi Hibel in 1935. Afterward, He worked as a headmaster and as an inspector at 'Centres des Services Sociaux Educatifs'. Above all, he became a well renowned writer whose books have influenced many generations. He married his cousin and had seven children: three boys and and four girls.

Mouloud Feraoun wrote many books that are still read and admired all over the world. They are even translated into many languages. He started writing his first novel, *Le Fils du Pauvre,* during the late thirties, he completed it in 1948, and it was published in 1950. The novel was received positively by the French community and Mouloud Feraoun was awarded the Grand Prize. The second novel of Feraoun was *Earth and Blood* that was published in

(1953) followed by *The Paths that Rise*, which was released in (1957), as the third novel of the author. In addition, Feraoun wrote his *Journal* (1962) and *Letters to his Friends* that were published posthumously. Mouloud Feraoun was assassinated by a commander of OAS on March 15, 1962, four days before the cease fire.

Mouloud Feraoun was born in a period of social and political malaise and was brought up in an atmosphere of uncertainties. Change was the norm that characterized the early twentieth century in Colonial Algeria. New policies were introduced under the pressure of colonial and political exigencies. For instance, the policy of Assimilation that had long been the backbone of the French colonial strategies was relinquished in favour of the Association Policy. The inevitable change, that touched everyone in one way or another, limited the lives of the Algerian population. Awareness of poverty, hunger, and overcrowding became unavoidable as those social issues had existed on a colossal scale. The first work of Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils Du Pauvre*, addresses all these issues in addition to theme of colonial education.

Le Fils Du Pauvre is an autobiographical novel that recounts the story of the protagonist Fouroulou Menrad. It traces his life within his family sphere and outside it from birth to adulthood in the mountains of kabylia, a renowned town in Algeria during the interwar period.

Fouroulou Menrad was born in an extended family composed of two brothers, their wives, and their children, all headed by their strong and independent grand mother Tassadit. The latter became a widow at a young age and was obliged to raise her two boys alone. Fatma the mother of Fouroulou, an orphan herself, was chosen by the grand mother as a wife for her son Ramdane because she had a great interest in providing help to those who are less fortunate, especially orphaned individuals.

Fouroulou is the first boy in the family of Menrad after the birth of many girls. Consequently he is cherished by all the members of the family especially his uncle Lounis who consideres him as his own son and consistently stands as his protector from any harm that may befall him. Fouroulou takes advantage of this special position and starts to be quarrelsome and even unfair with his sisters. Outside the realms of his house, Fouroulou embraces a life filled with thrilling adventures alongside his friend Akli who assumes a formidable role as his unwavering shield.

The education of Fouroulou was not planned. One morning the father comes from 'djema' and orders the mother to clean the face of Fouroulou so that he could take him to school. First, the little boy does not show any interest in education. Yet, he later starts to care about it as he realizes that it is the only way to escape his life as a shepherd. Actually, education becomes the center of his life. This fact becomes evident for the reader when the little boy loses hope of recieving the scholarship letter on time and starts to imagine a miserable life different from the one he has long imagined.

However, when the scholarship letter, finally, arrives, it opens a new door of hope for him. Directly he goes to Tizi Ouzou to be enrolled in a high school. His poverty obliges him to stay in a protestant house that affords free accommodation. In Tizi Ouzou Fouroulou proves that he is a serious student willing to succeed through hard work and dedication. His aim is to gain admission to the teachers' school of Bouzzereah to become a renowned teacher and to escape poverty. Indeed poverty is a theme that is carried out throughout the whole novel. All the families presented in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* are on the verge of hunger. No one is safe from being thrown in the vicious circle of poverty. The father of Fouroulou suffers a lot to feed his family and finally decides to immigrate in order to guarantee a life without hunger to his children. Fouroulou witnesses all the sufferings of his father and mother and decides to live a different life.

Hence, *Le Fils du Pauvre* is one of those autobiographical novels that deal with the psychological problems generated by complex social settings. It traces the different stages in the life of the individual, in this case Fourolou Menrad anagram Mouloud Feraoun, from childhood to adult life and seeks to answer questions that are germane to the understanding of identity; as whether the educated native can withstand the transformative power of Western education or not. According to Christiane Achour in speaking about the Algerian educated native:

> Dire ce qu'a été sa transformation à partir du récit de son enfance et de son adolescence c'est se définir […] L'écriture est une revanche sur la vie sur la réalité de l'assimilé. Ses frustrations et ses échecs sont sublimés dans cette pratique scripturaire qui lui donne accès à la reconnaissance de l'autre et à la reconnaissance de soi-même (1985: 288).

Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils Du Pauvre* has been the subject of extensive research. His writings have been sidelined from Algerian national literature. The critics' arguments are backed by a cultural nationalist ideology which presided over the production and promotion of Algerian literature since independence. Indeed, it is worth recalling that for many decades, after the country's recovered freedom, Algerian critics considered that the duty of Algerian intellectuals was to carry the struggle for the emancipation of the oppressed, by fostering resistance to imperial forms of domination, such as the neo-colonial one. Mohamed Cherif Sahli, for instance, declares:

> I1 nous importe peu qu'un Algérien, écrivant en français, se taille une place dans la littérature française par les qualités formelles de son œuvre. La théorie de l'art pour l'art est particulièrement odieuse dans ces moments historiques ou les peuples engagent leur existence dans les durs combats de la libération. Une œuvre signée d'un Algérien ne peut nous intéresser que d'un seul point de vue: quelle cause sert-elle? Quelle est sa position dans la lutte qui oppose le mouvement national au colonialisme?(quoted in Arab, 1990: 33).

Followilng a similar course, Benjelid argues:

> Pour l'efficacité de son action en tant qu'intellectuel il faut donc que l'écrivain ou l'artiste ait conscience du champ dans lequel ses efforts doivent s'inscrire, du sens dans lequel ses efforts doivent s'orienter, de l'objectif à atteindre. Tirer de l'oubli, relever de l'humiliation la culture nationale, se dresser de toutes ses forces contre

> l'oppression idéologique, aller de l'avant et créer des valeurs nouvelles, telles sont les taches actuelles qui s'imposent aux intellectuels coloniaux (2012 : 163).

Actually, we owe the inception of this thinking to Fanon who praised those writers who write and address their people rather than the colonizer. According to him, critics and scholars can inscribe a work into the nationalist literature if it is able to call the people for fight and 'combat' as one nation. He states:

> Il ne faut pas se contenter de prolonger dans le passé du people pour y trouver des éléments de cohérence vis-à-vis des entreprises falsificatrices et péjoratives du colonialisme. Il faut travailler, lutter à la même cadence que le peuple […]. La culture nationale n'est pas le folklore ou u populisme abstrait a cru découvrir la vérité du peuple (quoted in Bendjelid,2012 : 63).

Mouloud Feraoun's First novel, *Le Fils du Pauvre* was excluded from this kind of literature despite the fact that it was a real success with numerous copies sold. According to Youcef Nacib the book was appreciated because of two main reasons: it was first presented to the jury as 'un beau roman, simple, touchant et accessible à tous' and second as 'une oeuvre lénifiante, incitant les indigenes à la docilité' (quoted in Belkhis, 2007: 50). In other terms, the book represented no threat to the colonial power. To the contrary, it was seen as a means of 'interpellation', using Althusser's term, and Moloud Feraoun was just 'a mimic man', borrowing the term from Bhabha, who was willing to contribute in controlling and regulating the natives.

So, according to the critics who hold opposing viewpoints against Feraoun, the efforts of the French education culminated in the writing of a novel that celebrates that very education and its corresponding culture. Additionaly, according to the critics, the writer was seen as imitating the colonizer, esentially 'an authorized version' of him and they argue that his ethnographic portrayal of the Kabyle society serves as evidence for their claim. For instance, Debra Kelly states:

> Much of the critical attention the text has received focuses on the content as documentary evidence of a lifestyle and a historical period rather than on the literary

> strategies employed. This approach is common in the consideration given to early North African writing in French, qualifying this type of literature as 'ethnographic' (2005: 54).

Along similar lines, McNair offers a critical assessment of the author's autobiographical work. He criticizes Mouloud Feraoun's style as being 'folkloric realism' indifferent to the cruelty of the French colonizer (Durham, 2002: 224). Moreover, treating the social problems as neutral phenomena that are not directly linked to colonization has created a strong connection between Mouloud Feraoun and the assimilated intellectuals of the period. Christian Achour emphasizes this fact by stating that in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* 'le colonialisme n'est jamais nommé en tant que tel, aucun pouvoir n'est directement responsable de ce qui arrive' (1985: 322).

Opposed to the cultural nationalist critics of Feraoun's work, there are the ones who mobilized postcolonial developments in literary theory in order to re-read his works from a sympathetic perspective. The developments in postcolonial theory involved the sovereignty of new concepts such as mimicry and hybridity. These concepts have thrown new light on the works and education of the subaltern intellectuals. The research of these critics tackled various issues pertaining to the use of imperial languages and personalities of the intellectual, as well as, the process of hybridization of culture included by the colonial encounter. Bonn, for example, suggests that a re-reading of the these novels, such as the one of Mouloud Feraoun, would give them back their lost value as the new reading would classify them not as 'pittoresque' but as anticolonialist fiction repraoching the oppressive social status and the colonial injustices (Bendjelid, 2012: 61).

Other critics' attention has focused on the novel's form. Belkacem's prominent work 'Du Texte Autobiographique au Texte Romanesque dans *le Fils du Pauvre'*, for instance, uncovers the writer's creativity in transgressing the inherited traditional forms and classifications which inscribe a literary work into a fixed genre as an autobiographical work,

or only a novel. She demonstrates that through hybridizing different genres, the author manages to reflect upon his surrounding and portray it in a more subtle way. In another work entitled: '*Le Fils Du Pauvre* de Mouloud Feraoun: Une écriture autobiographique au service de linterculturalité' Belkacem sheds light on the intercultural aspect in Feraoun's autobiographical novel that contributes to its universal appeal. In the same vein, Oniankpo Akindjo, in his P.hd Thesis 'Poétique de la Relation Scolaire dans le Roman Francophone' (2007), tackles the isuue of colonial education in the Maghreb and in the Antilles world. In the essay there is an attempt to unveil Feraoun's feelings and reactions to colonial schools. He sheds light on form and content to determine the extent to which the author was influenced by such institutions.

'Mouloud Feraoun Un écrivain dans la guerre d'Algerie' is the title of Sylvie Thénault's article published in1999. The article attempts to situate Feraoun's position vis-à vis the war and the Algerian revolution and traces Mouloud Feraoun's declarations and comments about the French-Algerian war mainly the ones mentioned in his *Journal*. Thénault concludes that Feraoun was an author who was profoundly impacted by the war and made efforts to make a bridge between the two rival cultures. He emphasizes that despite the fact that Feraoun wanted independence; the war's atrocities did not make of him a radical hater of the French world. One may interpret Thénault's conclusion as a sign of Feraoun's passiveness.

However, Zahia Smail in her P.hd thesis entitled 'Themes in the Francophone Algerian novels' (1991) explains that there is a difference between 'French colonialism' and the French heritage such as language. She declares: 'The Algerian people are not inimical to 'French' as a language, or to the French people, but towards French colonialism' (249). She also highlights that the Algerian authors developed a deep understanding of the realties surroundng them across different historical phases.

Put differently, the characterestics of each period compelled The Algerian writers to adopt a specific writing style. For her, the authors of the twenties and the thirties were different from those of the fifties. Indeed, context and time are important factors in directing the chosen themes of African writers. For that reason, she has attempted to clear Mouloud Feraoun of the charges made against him and which classify him as an assimilated author. According to her, the themes Feraoun addresses in his fiction marked the onset of bold critiques against the dominant power. She argues that despite the fact that Feraoun did not address the colonizer directly in his early writings, he depicted the sufferings of the Algerian people in a manner that helps readers grasp that their hardships resulted from unfair French policies and laws. In the same veine, Debra Kelly states:

> Indeed the texts with FouroulouMenrad as the protagonist set up many of the themes that were to recur in the work of later North African writers writing in French: poverty and the realities of everyday life in colonial and postcolonial systems; education and difference; the separatio+n from the family and community brought about by education; the impact of the French language on the identity of the colonial subject; the relationship to power, to history, to the other; the politics of self-determination in the colonial context (2005: 62).

It is worth stressing that what the above review shows is that, the criticism of Mouloud Feraoun's autobiographical work has always been strongly bound to the different contexts in which it has been produced. The first group includes post-independence cultural nationalist critics who excluded him from the national narratives of heroism, resistance and anti-colonial struggle, and the second group includes the critics who are trying to rehabilitate him within a kind of progressive humanist/universalist paradigm. However, both approaches as applied to Mouloud Feraoun's novel suffer from limitations at the conceptual as well as the methodological levels. A complex subject, such as agency, which involves more issues than of language use and cultural hybridity has never been fully theorized by the critics. For, if some of colonial languages and cultures were the most powerful structures of colonial hegemony, agency was the strategy of the subaltern intellectuals to reclaim aspects of their

original identity and assert their position vis-à-vis the communities of the colonizer and the colonized.

3.3 Le Fils du Pauvre, Ethnography, and Counter Discourse:

The Francophone novel in Algeria has known different phases. The first writings were that of the first conquerors such as the French soldiers who used to record the events of the battles in the field. Their writings were unauthentic and provided distorted descriptions of the natives. Their short acquaintance with the settlers and their wrong perceptions of their traditions resulted in a racist kind of literature called 'Littérature de campagne' (Smail, 1999: 22).

After a short period, the Exotic Movement emerged. During that period a flood of artists went to Algeria for artistic purposes. For them, Algeria was a very beautiful country with a fascinating nature. So it was the right place to inspire their imagination. It is worth stressing that the 1850s was the period during which Romanticism was at its peak in European countries. Thus, the writers who ascribed to themselves the duty to describe Algeria had done that from an exotic picturesque point of view. Their writings reflected the principles of that very movement which sought to celebrate and create feelings of fascination, awe and amusement at the same time (Smail, 1999: 22). Algeria, for many, was the pure refuge that allowed artists to be far from the industrialized corrupt world (Smail, 1999: 22). As a result, the myth of the good savage sprung; and suddenly the human being who remained pure, not corrupted by influence of the mundane life of the industrial metropolitan world became the interest of writers. These features fuelled the myth of 'le bon sauvage' in the writings of the French (Bendjelid, 2012: 31).

Indeed, in the novel written by the French the Arab is not given a name; he is addressed as 'l'indigène',or 'l'arabe'. All men were called 'ho Ahmed' and all women were called 'ho fatmas' (Sivan, 1979: 25). Using adjectives rather than names makes nouns lose

their powerful status and prejudice and stereotypes tend to intensify when people designate ethindividuals with descriptive terms rather than nouns. The word Arab in itself reflected a negative image and some descriptions such as: 'travail Arab' and 'histoire Arab' were used to refer to a convoluted narrative (Sivan, 1979: 25). In addition, the white man employed 'zoological term'occasionally to describe the black people (Fanon, 2004: 07). In accordance with the previous claim, Achour declares :

> L'Algérien, c'est le turco, Kadour, de la tribu du Djendel à la fois 'triste et patient comme un chien malade' et habile comme un singe : 'une frimousse éveillée de jeune singe et toute la sauvagerie de ce petit corps s'agitant sur son cheval dans les voltiges de la fantasia'(animalisé, processus même de la dévalorisation, il est 'armé' de la panoplie du parfait 'indigène' : trop bon musulman pour participer aux orgies communardes, jouant tout le temps de sa derbouka, habillé d'un turban et d'un burnous, mangeant du 'kouskous', (1985 : 157).

Edward Said best illustrates this idea in his book entitled *Orientalism*. Exoticism, otherness, dehumanization and binary opposition were all ideas that fed anthropological research (Dirks, 2004: 49). Despite the fact that Edward Said's ideas were criticized, those ideas have put Western anthropologist approach and conceptualization under increasing attack (Dirks, 2004: 42) because Edward said was not speaking about misrepresentation or any form of an anthropological work resulting from the author's ignorance of the culture studied. Instead, he referred to a well defined plan followed by the Western anthropologists to document certain aspects of cultures for specific purposes that ultimately served the colonial interest.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* provided a new framework by which the writings of the west should be approached. The upshot of Said's book is that the European scholars who have been engaged in the study of the orient and the non European countries in general were all, consciously or unconsciously, contaminated by the very institution that made them educated. In accordance with this argument, David Day, offers a convincing explanation about the way colonial enterprises instill the legitimacy of their occupation in the minds of their people and others by creating what he coines as 'foundation stories'. In other words, the

supplanting societies create a fictionalized story by religious means or pre- existing association with the land they tend to conquer in order to justify their occupation. Moreover, they resort to portraying the other as a savage, barbaric, and backward. This is the case of the African countries.

Unlike Said who does not mention any possible subversive actions the colonized had taken, David day shows that 'Foundation stories are also used by the original inhabitants when seeking to oust the supplanters' (2008: 155). This is the case of Mouloud Feraoun who preferred to speak about his own past to maintain and spread his own original story, and claim the right to the ownership of his land. In a nutshell, up to the early twentieth century the writings about Algeria were done by temporary visitors who were not considered as the true settlers of Algeria.

However, inspired by Louis Bertrand, Robert Rondeau contributed to the emergence of a new movement called the Algerianiste in the early twentieth century. The movement was the hope of the creators to establish a new Rome void of all kinds of decadence. More importantly, they wanted to create a multicultural society that fused all the existing voices in Algeria into 'l'Algerie Française' (Sayeh, 2005: 65). They wanted to create an Algerian literature that was separate from of the metropolitan one by taking upon themselves the responsibility of revitalizing the Latin origin in Algeria. As civilized people, Randau believed that the role of the French was 'convertir à notre mentalité avec tact, mesure et intelligence, des peuples encore à l'état barbare'(Smail, 1991: 32).

But, again, such a movement was based on hatred of other ethnic groups, mainly the Algerian people. Despite the fact that this literature pretended to spread and encourage the idea of 'la mission civilisatrice' through its literary productions, it perpetuated the Latin Myth and glorified the new Algerian population leaving behind the original settlers of Algeria (Bendjelid, 2012: 37). As a result, they failed to portray the real Algeria and in their writings

the native Algerians were almost absent. Actullay, they were not given a voice (Sayeh, 2005: 65).

L. Bertrand argued: 'les conquérants arabes n'ont rien ajouté à l'héritage de Rome, ils se sont même employés à détruire tout ce que ne s'imposait point à eux par la force de l'habitude et du climat. Après avoir tout saccagé, ils n'ont rien su reconstruire' (quotd in Bendjelid, 2012 : 36). It is through this kind of declarations that the Algerianist authors' justified the unjust and erroneous portrayal the the Algerian settlers. Moreover, all kinds of relations that bounded the Algerians with their lands were absent in their writings. (Bendjelid, 2012: 36). He glorified the idea of a new population that was dynamic, hardworking, and productive. In le *Sang des Races* L.Brertrand declare*:*

> Il y avait là des hommes de toutes les nations […], des terrassiers piémontais, les plus bruyants de tous avec leur face rose de Gaulois […], à coté des charpentiers marseillais […], des petits charretiers de la Camargue et de la vallée du Rhône […] tous le patois sonores de la Provence et du Piémont depuis Turin jusqu'à Martigues […], plus pacifiques les hommes du Nord, des Alsaciens immigrant, de Badois de la Foret Noire Quelques anciens zouaves ou chasseurs D'Afrique […], des maçons auvergnat se mêlaient à eux (2016 : 39).

In the late 1930s, the idea of 'a Latin Mediterranean' culminated into 'l'Ecoled'Alger' and later evolved into 'L'Ecole Nord Africaine des Lettres'. The movement included Gabriel Audisio, Claude de Freminville, Jules Roy Albert Camus, and Emanual Roblés to name but a few. Contrary to the calls of the Algerianists who wanted to revive the Latin element in Algeria, the proponent of l'écoled'Alger sought to promote common Mediterranean values that would unite the entire Mediterranean population.

Just like their predecessors, the proponents of this movement portrayed Algeria and the Algerian people from a colonial perspective. In other words, their literature was racist and did not accurately represent Algeria and Algerian people. Jean Pélégri declared: 'Ici on avait toujours accordé trop d'importance au paysage, on l'avait décrit, admiré; on l'avait fertilisé, embelli. Mais qui s'était intéressé aux hommes? On jugeait qu'ils faisaient partie du décor,

comme les cactus, comme les palmiers. (Ne les appelait-on pas souvent avec un mépris, des troncs de figuiers?' (Smail, 1991: 26).

However, Bendjelid stresses the fact that it is thanks to l'Ecoled'Alger that the native intellectuals could publish their own works because they furnished help to this marginalized category and opened the door for them to be part of this school (2012: 75). If we hold this underlying assumption as tentatively true, then we seem utterly oblivious to the fact that these movements were racist and the Algerian writers were helped only because their works served the colonial aspired goals. This is not to retreat from the idea that there have been valuable efforts made by such a category of writers to contrast and stand against the colonizer but to stimulate, instead, the fuller pursuit of enquiries into the relationship between colonial institutions and the colonized elite and to trace agency in the writings of those African authors.

After The WWII two types of literatures emereged: that of 'pre-combat' which includes Mouloud Feraoun, Mammeri, and Malek Ouary and that of combat that includes Mohamed Dib, KatebYacine and Malek Haddad (Bendjelid, 2012: 57). The literature of the pre-combat is perceived as an ethnographic literature. The latter is accused of being regionalist, exotic and is viewed with outmost skepticism. Abdelkébir khatibi, for instance, perceives the ethnographic novel as a continuation to the tradition of the French Algerianist movement. He argues:

> Le roman ethnographique et folklorique au Maghreb n'est pas un fait isolé, il est la continuation d'une tradition Française en Afrique et qui a fourni une littérature fort nombreuse. Ce type de roman correspond sur le plan politique à la période de l'expansion de l'impérialisme, et sur le plan scientifique au développement des sciences sociales en particuliers de l'ethnologie en tant qu'étude des cultures du monde colonisé et des sociétés 'archaïques' (quoted in Bendjelid, 2012 : 59).

As for Mouloud Feraoun's first novel, *Le Fils Du Pauvre,* he thinks: 'Trop de pitié et de bonté écrasent ce livre, c'est l'autobiographie d'un hommede bonne volonté […] Voilà une

différence avec des écrivains comme Kateb, Memmi, Chraïbi qui, quand ils se racontent, ne voient qu'une suite de muti-lations, et des enfances blessées et ratées' (quoted in Kelly, 2005 : 56).

As a matter of fact, despite the present anti-colonialist contestation apparent in the literature of the period between 1945 and 1962, it is impossible for some to classify it as literature of nationalist engagement (Vladimir, 1999: 10). The main reason of their exclusion from the nationalist literature is that their writings are free from open declarations of hatred and opposition to the colonial regime and its corresponding institutions such as the educational institutions.

3.3.1The Importance of Social Roles in Identity Construction:

Mouloud Feraoun's first novel, *Le Fils du Pauvre* is classified as an ethnographic novel. For that reason, it remains outside the purview of -the literature attentive to the political representation. However, his agency and reaction to the colonizer can be supported by ethnographic portrayal of the Kabyle people and the interdependent social roles they play in their communities. Feraoun was an acute observer and commentator on his society. He was concerned with the changes brought forth by the colonizer and sought to portray people's conditions in his texts. He explored various social subjects and openly expressed his doubts and fears he fully shared with his people. He voiced their worries, doubts, and shaken beliefs concerning the new established regime. His texts especially *Le Fils du Pauvre* can stand still as a revolutionary nationalistic proof.

Hence, the aim of the literature of Mouloud Feraoun was to correct the negative images of the Kabyle people given by the French colonizer and to return his gaze that tended to fix the colonized Algerian individual into inferior and exotically other. Lanzini argues:'il [Mouloud Feraoun] racontra la vie de ses ancetres et de ces desandants. Il le fera par écrit.

Comme pour imposer à l'usurpateur l'histoire de cet enfant qui ne sera jamais tout à fait le sien' (2016 :23).

Like many intellectual Algerians of his time, Mouloud Feraoun invaded the world of French literature and adopted its techniques and modes of writings, but after absorbing all that was essential for his maturity as a writer, he moved to attacking that very literature which was the source of the socially ingrained stereotypes. Thus, it is fair to say that Mouloud Feraoun was not a passive receiver of the western education and culture in general, but an agent in his society because as mentioned in the previous chapter, the African writers are agents only because they are able to modify the script of the social position ascribed to them, and to create from the weak ties of the contending contexts imposed on them a workable and at the same time authentic reality that is not in conflict with their own values. Thus, it can be said that the main objective of his works is to modify and correct the erroneous portrayal of the natives. Feraoun expressed his discontent with the established order of things which left the Algerians in a marginalized position to Camus, an author who did not do justice to the Algerian people in his writings, as follows:

> Si je parvenais un jour à m'exprimer sereinement, je le devrais à votre livre– à vos livres qui m'ont appris à me connaître puis à découvrir les autres et à constater qu'ils me ressemblent. Ne puis-je donc me payer ce ridicule: tenter à mon tour d'expliquer les Kabyles et montrer qu'ils ressemblent à tout le monde? A tous les Algériens, par exemple? Ce fossé qui s'élargit, ne faudraitil pas essayer de le combler?(quoted in Kelly, 2005 : 65).

Feraoun's wit lies in the fact that he includes Camus and Roblés when he says'tout le monde' or 'tous les Algériens'. The two expressions are of a significant importance because he used them to defend the status of the true settlers of Algeria. The Algerianists such as Camus and Roblés attributed to the native people an inferior position but Feraoun's expressions make it clear that he sees himself and his people in the same position (Chellahi & Guendouzi, 2019: 635)

In addition, these two expressions are a kind of mimicry. Mouloud Feraoun tries to portray the Algerians and the rest of people, in this case the colonizer, as the same but not quite because he is aware of the uniqueness of his people. For that reason, in another letter issued to Roblés, he declared : 'Je n'avais jamais cru possible de faire véritablement entrer dans un roman un vrai bonhomme kabyle avant d'avoir connu le docteur Rieux et le jeune Smaïl. Vous les premiers vous nous avez dit: voilà ce que nous sommes. Alors nous vous avons répondu: voilà ce que nous sommes de notre côté' (quoted in Kelly, 2005 : 65). Indeed, in explaining mimicry Bhabha quotes Lacan's definition which is the central idea of postcolonial mimicry : 'the effect of mimicry is camouflage … It is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against the mottled background, of becoming mottled-exactly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare' (quoted in Bhabha, 1997: 152).

In other words, the Kabyle or the Algerians in general are not different from the rest of the world in the sense that they are not inferior to them and this is what the expression of 'un vrai bonhomme Kabyle' denotes because the other representations are falsified and are based on racist agenda, but at the same time they are different, unique, and with a distinguishable character that resists to be in harmony with the mottled background of the colonizer's world, whatever this background might be. In the same vein and for the same purpose, Mouloud Feraoun, denounces Camus' negative portrayal of Oran as merely a French prefecture. He declares:

> J'avais regretté que parmi tous ces personnages il n'y eût aucun indigène et qu'Oran ne fût à vos yeux qu'une banale préfecture française. Oh! Ce n'est pas un reproche. J'ai pensé simplement que, s'il n'y avait pas ce fossé entre nous, vous nous auriez mieux connus, vous vous seriez senti capable de parler de nous avec la même générosité dont bénéficient tous les autres. Je regrette toujours, de tout mon cœur, que vous ne nous connaissez pas suffisamment et que nous n'ayons personne pour nous comprendre, nous faire comprendre et nous aider à nous connaître nous-mêmes […] Je suis un bon maître d'école; j'ai beaucoup d'élèves et je rêve à mon aise. J'ai réussi à attirer sur nous l'attention de Audisiau [sic], Camus et Roblès. Le résultat est

> magnifique. Vous êtes algériens tous trois et vous n'avez pas à nous ignorer (quoted in Kelly, 2005 : 89).

So, for the generations of today, the novel of Mouloud Feraoun is a great gift as it answers questions central to history and origin and it is a triumph over the colonial ethnographic writings that are enshrouded by mist. Feraoun states:

> Me voila aujourd'hui couronné. L'honneur est grand et redoutable. Je n'avais fait que raconter mon histoire. Travail facile malgré tout, puisque je n'avais qu'à m'adresser à ma mémoire et à mon cœur. Or, la tache d'un écrivain n'est pas de raconter sa vie, mais bien de dire ce qu'il sent, ce qu'il voit, ce qu'il, ce qu'il pense. Pour tendre vers l'humaine vérité si difficile à atteindre, il lui faut des qualités de cœur et des qualités d'esprit. Il lui faut beaucoup de science et beaucoup d'honnêteté, parce que les honnête gens peuvent lui faire crédit ; ce serait cruel de les tromper et triste de se tromper(quoted in Lenzini, 2016 : 153).

It is worth recalling that the chasm between the two cultures, and that was first created by earlier colonial policies, was widened by the writings of The Algerianiste Writers as they were intentionally blind to the Algerians' right to be portrayed in an appropriate way. The above passage, for instance, demonstrates the uneasiness and the dissatisfaction of Mouloud Feraoun being represented by someone who totally ignores, or tends to ignore him with his people.

In addition, it is noteworthy to mention that among the prejudices that the colonial policies used to highlight the abnormality of the Algerian society was its portrayal as a patriarchal one. The endeavor of many ethnographers, writers, anthropologists was to speak of the tyrannical and oppressive laws and the regulations that governed women's lives. Bourdieu states:

> But the refusal to recognize the affinity relationship ("the women neither unites or separates", *thamattuthurthazeddiurtheferrq*) finds reinforcement, if not a basis, in the mythical representation of woman as the source from which impurity and disonnour threaten to enter the lineage. Nothing entirely good can come from a wickedness only being compensated for by her weakness (" God knew what he was creating in donkey; he didn't give them any horns"). This lesser evil, this good in evil, always aries in women through the corrective and protective action of a man. "shame is maiden"- *A Var thaqchichth*- the proverb says, and the son in law is sometimes called setter layub "the evil cast over shame" (1958: 45).

However, Mouloud Feraoun tackles the issue of women from another perspective. He attempted through his writings to challenge the misconceptions about women's role in their own communities. Feraoun has a deep respect for the Algerian woman despite the fact that he was born in a patriarchal society. His first autobiographical novel, for instance, highlights the challenges and the victories of women and represents them as strong, wise and tender at the same time (sadouni, 2012: 72).

Immensely sympathetic, utterly unselfish the female character in *Le Fils du Pauvre* has to excel in the difficult arts of family life, and sacrifice herself daily. Above all, the woman in Feraoun's work is pure and her purity is supposed to be her chief beauty. She is wise and can be a leader in her own house. Despite the prevailing patriarchal society, it was the responsibility of women to instill discipline and offer mentorship. An excellent example is the grandmother of Menrad's family who is portrayed as an independent strong woman. Fouroulou describes his grandmother as follows:

> Chaque famille se soumet à un responsable. Le responsable dispose des provisions, fixe les rations à son gré, décide de l'utilisation des économies, des achats ou des ventes à effectuer. On l'accuse quelquefois de se servir mieux que les autres, mais c'est toujours par envie. La coutume a consacré les vertus du maitre ou de la maitresse de maison. Des proverbes indiscutables rendent justice à leur mérite. Chez les Menrad, c'était ma grand' mère qui était chargé de la subsistance (Feraoun, 2014 : 30-31).

In this passage Feraoun, with such a degree of accuracy and success, describes the traditions of the Kabyle people and how they entrust the most respectable one of the family to be in charge of the economy of the house. He explains that this honor is given to his grandmother. Furthermore, he proceeds saying that the work ascribed to his grandmother is not an easy one and requires skills and wisdom:

> Certes, voila un travail qui exige de grandes qualités car on sait que les kabyles ne nagent pas dans l'opulence. Néanmoins, comme on en charge toujours le plus vieux ou le plus respectable de la famille, on est généralement tranquille sur le sort des autres et l'on est certain qu'il remplit son devoir avec le souci constant de l'intérêt commun (Feraoun, 2014 : 32).

As this passage alludes to the importance of the female in the Kabyle society, it hints at a very important fact concerning the matriarchal pre-colonial origin of that very society. Indeed, it is with the French colonialism that the ideology of patriarchy became the norm of the colonized African countries in general. The industrial revolution in Europe brought immense changes and among the transformations it introduced was the establishment of the patriarchal ideals. The burden of 'la mission civilatrice' imposed on the white men the duty to transfer the European social structures to the colonial world. Through describing the importance of women, Freaoun does not only reject the negative portrayal of women, but he also places blame on the white man for the negative change brought forth by him. In addition, the transformation of Fouroulou's house from and extended family setup to a nuclear one is due to colonialism. Hayes in her seminal work entitled Queer 'Marginal Sexualities in the Maghreb' explains well this reality:

> The family break up that allegorizes colonial expropriation of land involves a transition from a single household headed by a woman to two households headed by men. Whereas colonial discourses represent pre-colonial cultures as being more patriarchal than the colonizing one, the literal level of Le Fils Du Pauvre reread through the Allegory it projects, associates colonization with an imposition of a specifically European form of patriarchy, the nuclear family headed by men(2000: 276).

Women in the work of Mouloud Feraoun are given a specific importance. Their importance in the upbringing of the individual to make him a man able to live and mingle in his society is no less important than the role of man. For the purpose at hand, Feraoun devotes a lengthy description to each female character to do justice to the Algerian females who have been relegated to an inferior position. In addition, he sought to defend the Algerian culture which was viewed as a patriarchal society.

The mother of Fouroulou , Fatma, is a tender woman who nurtures deep affection for all the members of the family, especially her son Fouroulou. She accomplishes her duties with love and care. She takes care of her children and in the absence of her husband, she plays the role of the father and mother. Despite her responsibilities in her husband's house, she never

forgets her two sisters, khalti and Nana who live alone. The sisters are of a paramount importance in the life of Fouroulou as well. They have played an important role in shaping his character. Their courage, wisdom, and insightful perception of the external world left an indelible mark on his soul. Feraoun describes the three sisters as follows: 'C'était de braves filles avec des idées bien arrêtées. Elles acceptaient que leurs oncles les trompent, les dépouillent pourvu qu'elles gardassent leur droit au nom' (Ferouan, 2014 : 29).

From early childhood, the girls in the kabyle society are introduced to a range of obligations within their households to prepare them to their future roles as resourceful individuals in their communities. These obligations often encompass aiding with domestic chores and taking care of younger siblings. An excellent example is Baya, the older sister of Fouroulou whom Feraoun describes as : 'intelligente courageuse et obstinée'. Baya is a typicall Kabyle girl who helps her mother and looks after her younger brother: Fouroulou. This upbringing nurtures a deep sense of social duty and enhances women's resilience and adaptability. Indeed, Feraoun elucidates this fact through showing that Baya has managed to develop a sense of agency. He states: 'Elle s'imposa sa force, réussit à se faire respecter et a se faire craindre. Baya était chargée spécialement de veiller sur moi et de me distraire' (Feraoun: 2014: 26).

The involvement of men in the upbringing of children is integral as well. In the novel of Feraoun, the two male characters who are pivotal figures in the life of Fouroulou are his father Ramdan and his uncle Lounis. The latter is the elder of the two brothers. He does not have any boys, only girls. For that reason, he considers Fouroulou as his own son. One incident that stresses this fact is when Fouroulou enters his house covered with blood. As soon as Lounis knows the name of the doer, he hurries to avenge his nephew. Mouloud Feraoun states:

> Mon oncle file comme une trombe. Instantanément, il a imaginé la scène : ce Boussad, d'un çof rival, armé d'un couteau, se jette sur son neuveu sans défense. Il veut tuer

> l'enfant, supprimer le dernier des Menrad…Mon oncle court, vole à la djema armé d'un gourdin. Une bouffée de haine lui monte du cœur à la tete. Il va venger son honneur, il va imposer aux gens le respect de sa famille. (Feraoun, 2014: 46).

The father of Fouroulou is a very calm man who works hard to take care of his family. The dire constraints and the aweful circumastances that most families had to endure during that period did not hamper him from working day and night to guarantee his family's dignified livlihood. Feraoun states:

> Le père Ramdane réussissait avec beaucoup de vigilance à assurer à sa maisonnée le maigre couscous quotidien. Lorsque les travaux des champs étaient momentanément arrêté, durant la période qui s'écoule par exemple entre la fenaison et la moisson, ou bien entre la moisson et le battage, il se faisait manœuvre et aidait comme journalier deux maçons qui construisaient pour les riches (Feraoun, 2014 : 11)

It must be noted that the vicious circle of poverty implelled most of the Algerian population to immigrate to the colonizer's country to support their own families. This is the case of Ramdane who finds himself obliged to seek refuge in the colonizer's realm to work. Feraoun states:

> Le soir qui précédé le départ, aucun de ses enfants ne s'en doutait. Mais le hasard voulut que Fouroulou se réveillât pendant la nuit. Son père ne dormait pas. Il priait dans l'obscurité. Il priait à haute voix, demandant à la providence d'avoir pitié de lui, de venir à son aide, d'écarter les obstacles de sa route, et de ne pas l'abandonner, puis, dans un élan désespéré, il l'implorait de veiller sur ses enfants. Dans le silence de la nuit, le ton était grave et profond. Chaque demande était suivie d'une confession émouvante. Ramdane dépeignait son embarras, sa misère (Feraoun, 2014 : 138).

Actually, Mouloud Feraoun speaks overtly in his *Journal* about colonialism as the direct reason behind the Algerians' misery. He directly blames The French for the misfortunes of his people. He states: 'les gens de chez moi que j'ai pu rencontrer à Paris ou dans le nord ont tous conscience de l'immense injustice dont ils souffrent. Ce sont des victimes qui n'ignorent plus leurs états, mais qui en connaissent également la cause et les responsables. Ce Français chez qui ils viennent travailler, gagner leurs pain, c'est lui l'ennui, c'est lui la cause de leur malheur' (Feraoun, 2014 : 30).

All the characters mentioned above contributed directly or indirectly in the upbringing of Fouroulou Menrad. They overwhelmed him with love and compassion. Mouloud Feraoun declares:

> Ma mère, mes sœurs, mes tantes maternelles –mes vraies tantes- m'adoraient ; mon père se pliait à toutes mes volontés ; ma grand'mère, qui était la sage femme du village, me gavait de toutes les bonnes choses qu'on donnait, au grand dépit de Helima ; mon oncle qui savait la valeur d'un homme à la djema et pour lequel je représentais l'avenir des Menrad, m'aimait comme son fils. C'était plus qu'il n'en fallait pour bien élever un enfant' (2014: 34).

Each character has his own role in the maturity of Fouroulou. Mouloud Feraoun wants to transmit to the rest of the world that the individual is important in his own family and society. The Algerian family is a responsible family that knows exactly its designated roles that are prescribed by the community's law. It is, actually, the first place that crafts the individual's identity.

In reading the story of Fouroulou one would develop a surge of compassion towards all the characters. One would respect the grandmother who could raise and protect her two sons despite being a widow and love the mother of Fouroulou for her strength and patience. The reader would also sympathize with the father of Fouroulou who bore the brunt of life's challenges to feed his family. Lounis would evoke feelings of respect for caring and protecting his nephew: Fouroulou. Even Helima, depicted as a wicked woman, one can fathom the motives behind her jealousy.

All these characters are real characters with real names: Fatma, Helima, Lounis, and Ramdane. They are people who deserve love and respect (Chellahi and Guendouzi, 2019:640). Lanzini declares:

> Ce personnage [Fouroulou] de l'ombre doit mettre en plein lumière celles et ceux de son quotidien […] le voila qui se lance dans l'aventure de l'autobiographie déguisée. Pas tant pour dire qui il est mais qui sont ces autres au milieu desquels il vit survit espère ; se lasse. Ces autres que les étrangers à ses montagnes ne voient pas, ne savent pas regarder (2016 : 135)

Despite their unique origin, they are not strange and their traits can be found in all the people of the world. Here lies the agency of Feraoun. He could craft a story that glorifies Algerian people and celebrate their unique character and at the same time he made them indifferent to the rest of the world. He refutes, by so doing, the accusations of the colonizers and the ethnographic writings which sought to portray the Algerian people as backward and strange. In a letter addressed to René Nouelle in 1949 Feraoun declared: 'Oui il est possible de dire que notre genre de vie offre certains aspect singuliers mais nous ne sommes vraiment pas de mœurs austères, pudibondes ou sauvages' (2011 :04) and in another letter sent to Roblès in 1951 he stated : 'Camus a répondu à ma lettre et je suis parvenu à déchiffrer sa réponse. Il s'exprime très clairement mais à mon sens zéro en écriture. Il a été content de ma lettre ou j'ai eu le culot de lui reprocher de n'avoir pas parlé des Arabes d'Oran dans *la Peste'* (2011 : 68).

3.3.2 Symbols of Belonging:

Mouloud Feraoun's agency is evidenced by his use of some symbols of belonging. The latter are used to uphold the author's connection to his people and community. A symbol of belonging is a 'boundary' or 'an element' that connects individuals to their nations and at the same time mark their difference with other nations. Authors resort to speak about and represent their symbols of belonging in their fiction when they feel that these elements face an external danger that risks to blur or attack them (Chellahi& Guendouzi, 2019 : 628). Three symbols are detected in the work of Mouloud Feraoun : the land, kabyle myths, and kabyle traditions.

3.3.2.1 The land :

Mouloud Feraoun does not only reject the negative portrayal or the denial of an Algerian character in colonial books, he also claims the right of the Algerians to the possession of their lands. The introductory pages of the novel make it clear that the writer perceives himself

along with his people in relation to the land. The land in *Le Fils du Pauvre* becomes a symbol of belonging. Actually, before writing back to the colonial discourse which misrepresented the Kabyle people, Feraoun had, first, to assert his presence in the land and his own agency as a writer and a discursive voice.

Christian Achour has made a valuable analysis of Feraoun's description of his village. The analysis has been made in the light of 'le livre de lecture courante de l'écolier indigène' that, also, describes the villages of Tizi Ouzou. The two texts have been confronted in an illuminating way. The upshot of the comparison has shown that the emphasis in le livre de la lecture courante has been on the beauty of the French roads and villages. which are portrayed as 'large et bien bombée dans le milieu. Pas une ornière, pas un caillou. S'il pleut l'eau s'écoule dans les fosses qui la bordent (…). Mais nous voici près de village, la route maintenant bordée d'arbres. C'est une belle avenue qui forme la grande rue. N'est ce pas mes amis, que ceci ne ressemble pas aux ruelles des villages kabyle ?' (quoted in Achour, 1985 : 398). Whereas, the emphasis in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* is on the Kabyle roads and villages as he merely refers to French roads as 'la route carrossable qui conduit aux villes'.

Despite the fact that Achour's analysis of Fraoun's description of kabyle roads is helpful in the sense that it demonstrates how Feraoun adopted the description of the kabyle roads of the French school book to make it appropriate to his own vision, she hints at the fact that the lessons taught by that very school book: 'the superiority of the French roads are not forgotten' because Feraoun seems to be ashamed of his roads as they are portrayed in the same manner like the French school book. She states:

> Mais cette leçon n'est pas oubliée puisque l'aspect des routes kabyles qu'il décrit est conforme à l'ensemble des descriptions du village: vulgarité, insignifiance, pauvreté, laisser-aller. Il y'a sans cesse relativisation, dépréciation, par rapport aux villes et aux villages que connait son lecteur. Le dit, rues, chemin, ou ruelles kabyles est exprimé en fonction d'un non-dit : les rues qui ne sont pas « des tronçons de chemins » mais de « belles avenues, larges, propres sans caillou » (1989 : 399).

Through the description of his country and land, Feraoun has made of mimicry a kind of mockery. The irony is that Feraoun understanding and perception of his country is quite different from the French one, even if at certain points, he seems complicit with colonial description of the Kabyle villages and lands. Using Bhabha as a reference point helps us identify the crack in the colonial's equation of 'the same but not quite' and brings to light, at the same time, Feraoun's agency in disrupting the colonial discourse. Bhabha explains: the *menace* of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority' (1994:88).

Mouloud Feraoun has imitated the colonial discourse in such a way to use it against it. As a result, the vision of the native is always contrasted to the one of the colonizer. Feraoun explains : 'Le touriste qui ose pénétrer au Coeur de la kabylie admire par conviction ou par Devoir, de sites qu'il trouve merveilleux, des paysages qui lui semblent pleins de poésie et éprouve toujours une indulgente sympathie pour les mœurs des habitants' (Feraoun, 2014: 14). However, only the original settlers of Tizi Ouzou are truly attached to the country despite all its vulgarities. He explains: 'nous les kabyles, nous comprenons qu'on loue notre pays. Nous aimons même qu'on cache sa vulgarité sous les qualificatifs flatteurs. Cependant nous imaginons très bien l'impression insignifiante que laisse sur le visiteur le plus complaisant la vue de nos pauvre villages' (Feraoun, 2014 : 14).

Though, it is not stated clearly but these passages can be taken as a fight for the ancestral land as the contrast established between 'nous les Kabyle' and 'Le touriste' who stands for the colonizer clarifies well this idea. What is important, again, in these two passages is that Feraoun refers to the colonizer as the tourist 'le touriste' or the visitor 'le visiteur'. The latter reference is full of astounding irony. As the word tourist suggests that

the colonizer is staying in Algeria just for a short period and he can never stay there permanently.

Moreover, the word 'tourist' is a subtle evocation of the Exotic Literature which had not portrayed the Algerians negatively only, but also portrayed the country as an exotic place. Thus, the work of Mouloud Feraoun is a counter exotic work. Making this exotic place, Algeria, a setting has offered it a familiar nature no longer strange and awful. Feraoun's endeavor in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* is to make 'the exotic familiar'. Indeed, Feraoun's gaze destabilizes any colonial certainty.

3.3.2.2 Kabyle Traditions:

Writing in French has often pushed many to react with a marked antipathy, and has overshadowed the agency of the writer in using the colonial education to answer back the colonizer. It must be noted that colonial education was a reality that was prevasive and unvoidable. Despite the fact that it was one of the most perilous tools used by the colonizer, it is thanks to that very education that this Algerian author provided us with a monumental work that keeps the spirit of the elapsing decades alive. The writer felt the urge to represent his society, his tradition and culture. The aim behind such an appeal to tradition and to the Kabyle background is to bring to light a complex dynamic society that had long been occluded by the west and perceived by them as primitive, simple, and backward. Debra Kelly states:

> The publication of Mouloud Feraoun's Le Fils du pauvre('The Poor Man's Son') in 1950 is generally recognised as a founding moment in the literary, cultural and political context of North African writing in French. A claim can be made for this text as the first real expression of the voice and experiences of an indigenous Algerian writer as opposed to the writing concerning North Africa produced by the French themselves during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These texts are often described as 'Orientalist' (2011: 53).

Mouloud Feraoun extols the esteem associated with the kabyle traditions in his novel, underscoring the fouta as a valuable cultural symbol. In the fight involving Boussad and Menrad's families Feraoun qualifies the fouta as 'a trophy' (Sadouni, 2012 :74). Feraoun

states: ‘baya a pris comme trophée la fouta d’aini, la femme de Boussad’ (2014 : 33). Wearing the fouta is actualy an act of resistance against the French way of wearig and modernization in general. Through glorifying the fouta, an attempt is made to preserve a sense of identity as it is portrayed as a symbol of resiliance and pride.

In addition, Feraoun highlights the importance of engaging in poultry traditions. The latter cultural aspect with its historical and cultural roots is not portrayed as a simple routine but as a symbolic act that defies societal changes.

As a matter of fact, piercing the veils that cover the reality of traditions so to make that very reality reachable to the public is an act of resistance because speaking about the real shape of things helps disentangle the falsified threads that are deeply enmeshed in colonial racist plots. This is the very menace of mimicry because its efficacy relies on it capacity ‘to continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference’ (Bhabha, 1994: 153). In simpler terms, in talking about his traditions, Feraoun seems to adopt western ethnographic perspectives, however his aim diverge from the one of the colonizer. Warren B. Wickliffe states that ‘the essence of Kabyle family life is presented, with enough similarity to that of other peasants elsewhere to give universality to the theme’ (1955:58). In addition, Mouloud Feraoun tells René Nouelle in1949: ‘Oui, il est possible de dire que notre genre de vie offre certains aspects singuliers mais nous ne sommes vraiment pas de mœurs austères, pudibondes ou sauvages’ (Feraoun, 2011: 4).

3.3.2.3 Kabyle Original Names :

Another element that was threatened to be blurred due to french coercive acts was the algerian traditional kabyle names. From 1882 onwards the Algerian population found itself obliged to adopt new ways of naming that were strange to Algerian nation. The French resorted to giving the algerian people new patronymic names to disturb the the link that ties the Algerian people with their origins as the traditional names that include the name of the

father is a constant remindier of an old origin (Chellahi and Guendouzi, 2019 : 638). Sometimes the new names given to the Algerian people were ‘rediculous’ ‘obscene’ and and ‘insulting’.

As a result, in *Le Fils du Pauvre*, Mouloud Feraoun resorts to celebrate The Algerian original names (Chellahi and Guendouzi, 2019 :639) and in the first pages of the novel there is an attempt to shed light on the Algerian original names to evoke the algerian lineage. He stresses the fact that his name is Ait Chabane and that his father, Ramdane, and his uncle Lounis, are called ‘fils de Chabane’. In the same vein, he traces the origin of his neighours according to their names: ‘Le quartier d’en bas, par exemple, est issu de Mezouz. Mezouz avait cinq enfants males qui donnèrent leurs noms à chacune des cinq familles de la karouba. C’est pourquoi la karouba comprend les Ait Rabah, les Ait Slimane, les Ait Moussa, les Ait Larbi, les Ait Kaci.’ (Feraoun, 2014: 18). Stressing kabyle original names is an act of resistance.

3.4 Colonial Education, Interpellation, and Mimicry in *Le Fils du Pauvre*:

Searing essays have been written about Feraoun’s assimilation as a result of his education and the most compelling critique levied against him is his praising of the colonial education that many consider as an oppressive strategy made to negate the natives’ identity. Yet, the greatest contribution of Mouloud Feraoun to our understanding of the colonial situation is his reflection on educational experience. Actually, the axis about which *Le Fils du Pauvre* revolves is that of traditional education and modern one and his maturity and mental development are influenced by these two elements.

Home is the first school for Foroulou. As stated in the previous section, all the characters mentioned in the novel have contributed in a way or another in the upbringing of Fouroulou. Their aim has been to make of him an individual able to live in the outside world. His uncle Lounis, for example, tries to teach him the codes of the Kabyle society to be

respected by the men of his community. Feraoun declares: ‘Il est clair que mon oncle n’avait pas tort de vouloir me donner une éducation virile. Mais il y mettait trop d’enthousiasme et de parti-pris’ (Feraoun, 2014 : 68). In addition, the stories his aunt, so often, narrates have enabled him to cultivate feelings of compassion and sympathy. Mouloud Feraoun declares:Avec khalti c’était différent. Pendant les récits, nous étions elle et moi des êtres à part. Elle savait créer de toute pièce un domaine imaginaire sur lequel nous régnions (Feraoun, 2014 : 68).

When Fouroulou crosses the threshold into the French schools, he starts a new phase in his life. The reader is informed that the education of the author is not planned, and the parents do not want to educate their child to be a good citizen in his society or to have a bright future. His education meant his absence from home and consequently less food to be consumed. One morning, the father arrives home and requests the mother to change the clothes of her son in preparation for school: ‘vite, vite dit-il à ma mere, lave-le entièrement, les mains, la figure, le cou, les pieds. Crois-tu que le cheikh acceptera un singe pareil’ (2014: 72). Feraoun declares: ‘je fus débarbouillé en hate et cinq minutes après, encore abasourdi, je débarquai dans la vaste cour de lécole, toute grouillante d’’élèves’ (Feraoun, 2014: 72). Even Fouroulo in the beginning of his schooling displays a lack of interest in education. He declares : ‘j’allais a l’ecole sans arriere pensée. Simplement parce que tout les enfants y allaient’ (Feraoun, 2014 : 74).

Yet, as time goes on this way of thinking starts to change and Fouroulou quickly becomes attracted to school. Mouloud Feraoun states: ‘il est [l’enfant kabyle de sept ans] attentif par crainte et par amour-propre. Il s’agit d’éviter les coups du maitre et les moqueries du voisin qui sait lire. Plus tard, bien sur, l’intérêt s’éveille et remplace la crainte Alors on commence à comprendre. C’est ce qui m’arriva’ (Feraoun, 2014 : 74). He carries on saying: ‘Des le cours élémentaire, je travaillai donc avec un imperturbable sérieux, a l’insu de mes

parents qui continuaient à manifester pour mes progrès la plus grande indifférence.' (Feraoun, 2014: 78).

The indifference of his parents, mainly his father, starts to lessen gradually especially when the father finds himself obliged to leave his country and immigrate. The father of Fouroulou starts to notice the importance of colonial education and the need to learn the French language. As an illiterate, he, possibly, has had some hard times in speaking and dealing with the French people. Perhaps, he could not integrate in the French world. This idea is well illustrated by Fouroulou when he is asked to write an essay about the natives who work abroad and the difficulties they face as they are ignorant of the French language. Feraoun states:

> Son père étant justement dans ce cas, il put imaginer son embarras quand il faisait son marché, quand il cherché du travail, quand un contremaitre lui donnait un ordre. Il put le supposer s'égarant dans un métro ou une rue. Il lui reconnut l'impossibilité de garder les secrets de famille puisque il devait faire écrire ses lettres par d'autres (2014 : 146).

It is for the above mentioned reason that the father changes his mind concerning the education of his child, and starts to show interest in his learning.

For his part, Fouroulou sacrifices his pleasures for the sake of studying and uplifting the standard of living. Nonetheless, for a moment his dream seems to be beyond reach and an unwanted future starts to conquer his life as the letter offering him the scholarship is not sent on time. Feraoun writes : 'Fouroulou se voyait devenir fellah […] mais il état un peu sceptique. Il avait un autre rêve. Il s'était toujours imaginé étudiant, pauvre mais brillant. Il s'etait habitué à l'image de l'étudiant' (Feraoun, 2014: 157). When his father describes for him a life that is outside educational limits, a grim future looms for him as he has had constantly clung to a virtually different reality: that of an educated man, brilliant despite the possibility of being poor. The speech of the father is only an attempt to soothe his child because when they receive news about the scholarship, they both forget their conversation. This sequence in the life of Fouroulou explains in an ample manner the importance of

education for both of them. Education promises no misery, no poverty, and above all no humiliation. The father tells his son that if he goes to France with his certificates he would not know the misery he has known.

The fact that Feraoun's protagonists pin their hopes on education has pushed critics to classify the author under discussion with the alienated and assimilated authors of the early fities. In addition, they argue that most of the values found in *Le Fils du Puavre* are seen as the reflection of the third republic's educational policies. For instance, Christiane Achour made a valuable analysis of the novel in which she makes a comparison between the novel and 'Le Livre de Lecture Courante' de MM Bernard et Veller. She argues that the values mentioned in the novel such as hard work, the importance of family, the idealization of French history, repulse of the old ways of living and superstitious beliefs are all proofs of an assimilated mind. She confidently concludes:

> Nous avons vu dans l'étude de l'AIE scolaire comment la langue française déjà constitué comme 'français national' dans la métropole, s'était majoritairement imposé dans la colonie par l'école avec toutes les conséquences d'usages dominants et sélectifs de normes, de langues, de morale, de littérature qui aboutissaient à un bien parler / bien écrire/ bien penser qui, transformées par le travail de la fiction, orientaient l'écriture des œuvres : reproduction/ transformation particulièrement visible dans les romans de Feraoun (1985 : 425).

Undoubtedly, Mouloud Feraoun while writing *'Le Fils du Pauvre'* did not put his colonial education into a cold storage. His success in escaping the fate of a shepherd and becoming a successful school teacher through hard work and perseverance must have had a direct link with the moral lessons taught in school. The following song that he probably used to sing at school is an excellent example of the education the learners used to receive in the French classrooms:

> Pour être un homme, il faut savoir écrire
> Et tout petit apprendre à travailler
> Pour la patrie, un enfant doit s'instruire
> Et dans l'école apprendre à travailler
> L'heure a sonné, marchons au pas
> Jeunes enfants, soyons soldats (quoted in Lenzini, 2013 : 51).

Moreover, the pupils in the French classrooms were trained how to be loyal citizens to France through mainly *Le Petit Lavisse* that was first published in 1884. The preface of the book explains well its objective:

> Si l'écolier n'emporte pas avec lui le vivant souvenir de nos gloires nationales, s'il ne sait pas que avec ses ancêtres ont combattu sur mille champs de bataille pour nobles causes ; s'il n'a pas appris ce qu'il a couté de sang et d'efforts pour faire l'unité de notre patrie et dégager ensuite, du chaos de nos institutions vieillies, les lois qui nous ont fait liberes, s'il ne devient pas un citoyen pénétré des ses devoirs et un soldat qui amène un fusil, l'instituteur aura perdu son temps (quoted in Lenzini, 2013 : 49).

Christiane Achour's analysis, again, brings to surface the influence of such an education on the literary writings of Mouloud Feraoun. The latter occasionally refers to the history and heroes of France neglecting the heroes of his own country. Feraoun declares: 'nous avons encore de nombreux poèmes qui chantent des héros communs, des héros aussi rusés qu'Ulysse, aussi fiers que Tartarin, aussi maigres que Don Quichotte' (Feraoun, 2014: 18). She remarks that the emphasis in this passage is on western heroes as the local heroes are not named (Achour, 1985: 55). Indeed, the story of Mokrani was quite famous among the Kabyle villages who proudly celebrated his heroic actions through narrating his victories to their little children, and Mouloud Feraoun must have heard it from one member of his family or friends (Lenzini, 2013: 27).

However, the theme of the colonial education in *le Fils du Pauvre* has other implications. Furoulou is uprooted from his traditional life and introduced to a new one that is totally different from the one he has known. Certainly, the colonial education Mouloud Feraoun received in French schools had a deep impact on him but he was able to coexist in the new world without giving up his own traditions.

In *Le Fils du Pauvre*, he seems able to choose what benefits him leaving behind things that do not accord with his beliefs. This fact is made clear when Fouroulo finds himself obliged to stay in a missionary house for free as his father is poor and cannot afford to pay the fees of the campus. The missionary houses were quite famous back then. Albert Rolland, the

nephew of the Pastor Rolland who established a missionoary house in1908, wrote in a letter : 'c'est pour aider les jeunes Kabyles originaires de la montagne que nous avons bâti et mis gratuitement à leur disposition une dizaine de chambres rustiques mais suffisantes. Ils étaient là une trentaine par année scolaire. Ils se destinaient à l'Ecole normale ou aux emplois dans les chemins de fer, les postes ou les administrations publiques' (quoted in Lenzini, 2013: 68). Actually, the missionary houses were part of the religious colonialism that was committed to convert the natives into Christianity.

Indeed, Fouroulou and the rest of the students are obliged, each evening, to sing some hymns, and read some lines from the bible. Undeniably the plan behind the daily Christian worship is to make students grow up as Disciples of Christ. However, unlike the others, who seek further explanation, and sometimes ask the pastor to pray for them, Fouroulou does only what the pastor asks them. The narrator clearly states:

> Ils adoptèrent la même attitude au cours des réunions du soir, a la sale du culte. Ils y allaient régulièrement, lisaient un verset de la bible comme tout le monde, chantaient des cantiques avec application, écoutaient respectueusement le commentaire du chef et revenaient dans leur chambre reprendre sans hésitation leur travail interrompu. On les voyaient jamais demander un éclaircissement sur un verset quelconque, ni aller au salon se faire expliquer tel ou tel point de religion ou demander au pasteur de prier pour eux (Feraoun, 2014 : 169).

The above passage demonstrates that Mouloud Feraoun is a conscious person. His education did not mean his complete assimilation. This fact is calcified in his *Journal* where he declares with a candid tone:

> Mon orgueil est à la mesure de votre. Ce dont vous pouvez être convaincus, c'est que par ma culture je suis aussi Français que vous. Mais n'espérez pas autre chose. Ce serait irrévérencieux. Je ne peux renier votre culture mais n'attendez pas que je renonce à moi-même, que j'admette votre supériorité, votre racisme, votre colère, votre haine, vos mensonges. Un siècle de mensonge ! (Feraoun, 2014: 122).

Despite Feraoun's education, his pride resides in the fact that he could be an important element in the Tajmaat, the village assembly which is considered as a cornerstone in the life of the Kabyle people. Tajmaat is a local political entity that maintains law and order in each village. It consists of the village elders who meet in a regular manner to address important

matters of the people (Chellahi and Guendouzi, 2019: 635). In fact, his attachment to his Kabyle community is translated in the fact that most of the people of his village trust his opinion in important matters related to their lives (ibid: 635). In the novel he explains this fact:

> demandait son avis ; les oncles et les cousins l'invitaient aux réunions ; des gens venaient le consulter ou se faire écrire des lettres difficiles. On lui donnait de l'importance mais Fouroulou n'en tirait aucune vanité (Feraoun, 2014 : 177).

Even when he denounces the superstitious beliefs it does not mean that he is acculturated. The Association of the Ulama also fought these beliefs and practices that were created by the colonizer. In the novel, feraoun attempts to explain the non utility of some superstitious beliefs. He declares:

> Fouroulou a une sainte terreur des djenouns, il s'en voudrait de les contrarier tant soit peu. Mais il se rappelle fort à propos une petite anecdote racontée par son maitre, lequel, pour faire plaisir à sa veille mère qui lui demandait une amulette, lui apporta, un jour, un petit papier proprement plié contenant tout le texte de 'la Cigale et la Fourmi'. Donc pour montrer à ses sœurs qu'il est un esprit fort et qu'il n'est pas dupe du vieux turban qui vient leur soutirer dix francs, il raconte l'anecdote de l'instituteur en ajoutant que la cigale et la fourmi ont guéri la veille mieux que ne l'aurait fait une véritable amulette (Feraoun, 2014 : 135).

3.5 Feraoun, The Use of Autobiography, and the Birth of Postcolonial Subjectivity:

Mouloud Feraoun's text is an autobiographical one. Reproduction or autobiography was not well received by critics in the previous eras. It was seen as a dangerous genre that can never portray reality and reproduce the original state of things. In addition, it has been accused of 'contaminating' reality through transforming it into a distorted reflection of truth. Thus, all the theories that have been advanced agree: 'literature need not to tell "what really happened," only what might plausibly have happened, or even what *should* have happened' (Miller, 2003: 08) as reflecting reality with fidelity is beyond reach.

Nonetheless, the autobiography as a literary genre has thrived through the years as it has been the choice of so many writers. They have seen in the autobiography a potential to free the self from the burden that enslaves it. They have tried, through that very genre, to

reconstruct the scattered pieces of their broken identities. However, the fact that autobiography has been adopted and put in different molds has sparked vigorous debates. A wide range of critics and theorists have tried to advance their own criteria which can inscribe a literary work into the genre of autobiography.The most reasonable solution to that controversy is that of Elizabeth Bruss.

The above mentioned critic suggests three key criteria for an autobiographical work: 'truth value, act value and identity value'. The truth value requires comparison with other works, and events from the real life that may consolidate the work as an autobiographical one because in most of the time truth is fictionalized and interpreted into themes that are woven and developed through the personalities of the diverse characters. Act value is the ability of the writer to portray himself as an agent free from all the institutions that enslave him. Last but not least, the critic mentions the identity value that refers to the different roles a writer can play or perform: a narrator, a protagonist and the author himself (Kelly, 2005: 10). Mouloud Feraoun's novel is considered as an autobiography because it has the three critieria outlined by the critic.

Autobiography does not necessarily mean engagement with the self but the other who made this self possible. Despite the criticism it has so long received, autobiography has an important element which Karl Weintraub calls 'the value of the individual' (Kelly, 2005 14). In other terms, autobiography gives importance to the individual by giving him the chance to voice his ideas.

It must be noted that autobiography is a western creation. The African or specifically the Islamic nations were not used to such a genre. In other words, while the west favours the idea of individualism, Islam is a religion that speaks and teaches people to speak for the community. Déjeux for example calls the French language, the language of 'I' (Kelly, 2005:16). It is not the focus of this analysis to approve or develop an argument against this

claim, however, we need to bear in mind that the colonial situation did not tolerate a selfish 'I' that speaks for itself and that is separated from the rest of the community. The colonial presence required a unified 'I' that is self-conscious toward the importance of the community. Hence, the African writers who were seduced by this genre were suspected of being acculturated, assimilated, and alienated from their communities.

Mouloud Feraoun makes no exception to this rule. Narrating his own story and writing about the mundane events of his life in a period that required open declarations of hatred and refusal is considered to be a weakness related to the author's acculturation and assimilation. Furthermore, Miller the author of *(Re) Production, Autobiography, Colonialism and Infanticide* (2003) remarks: 'The idea of autobiography as a definitive portrait and, more importantly, as that which reveals the truth of an individual, works in harmony with the apparatus of the state to produce a subject. Therein lies autobiography's reifying and colonizing potential'. In addition, she argues: ' yet at the same time, and this is what more contemporary conceptions of autobiography have made clear, the act of writing resists this call to fixity and transparency, thus providing "the subject" with the means for liberating itself from a single imposed identity.' (35-36) It is the second claim that I am interested in, and that will be my bifocal lens to approach Feraoun's work to shed light on his agency.

The author identifies himself as Fouroulou a name given by his grandmother who had the intention to hide her grandson from bad things. Fouroulou which means (hide) corresponds with the author's true identity as he interchangeably hides and reveals himself in his work. In *Le Fils du Pauvre*, there is a shift from the first person point of view 'I' to the third person point of view 'he'. In the first part of the story Mouloud Feraoun uses 'I' to narrate the events and the story of Fouroulou (Belkacem, 2012: 54).The autobiographical part ends when the anonymous friend takes the lead and starts to play the role of a guide helping the reader to understand more about the life of the protagonist (ibid: 55).

Despite this amalgamation of points of view, and the presence of different narrators in the work, Mouloud Feraoun is the only one who is telling his own story. Neither the protagonist, Fouroulou Menrad, nor the anonymous friend is the narrators of the story. Mouloud Feraoun declares in several occasions that he is Fouroulou Menrad, and that the autobiographical piece of writing narrates his own life. In a letter addressed to Landis-Benos, he asserts : 'Vous savez bien que Fouroulou c'était à peu près moi. Un moi enfant' (Feraoun, 2014 : 65) and in anotherletter addressed to E. Roblès 'je suis prêt à parler de moi en 15 lignes comme je l'ai fait en 200 pages' (quoted in Belkacem, 2012 : 58). Abdelkader Djeghloul argues that the novel is:

> une étonnante aventure que celle des premiers romanciers algériens de langues française. Initier un nouveau genre littéraire dans la langue du conquérant. Parler de soi dans les catégories du discours de l'autre en disant subrepticement autre chose que ce dernier. Reconnaitre et subvertir les valeurs de l'autre pour induire une reconnaissance réciproque sans jamais en poser les termes dans la clarté (quoted in Lenzini, 2016 : 137).

Again, mixing different styles into one genre is meant to interfere with the colonizer's imposed norms. As stated earlier, autobiography is a western heritage and it is clarified as well by the writer that he wants to narrate his own story because he is influenced by great western writers. However, the way Mouloud Feraoun projects his autobiography is quite different and unique as he added his personal touch. Laura Marcus pinpoints:

> Autobiography is itself a major source of concern because of its very instability in terms of postulated opposites between self and world, literature and history, fact and fiction, subject and object. In an intellectual context in which… these are seen as irreconcilably distinct, autobiography will appear either as a dangerous double agent, moving between these oppositions, or as magical instrument of reconciliation (quoted in Popkin, 2005: 13).

Indeed, *Le Fils du Pauvre* is a reconciliation of two traditions. The western tradition that often favours the use of 'I' and the Algerian tradition that prefers to speak in the name of the community. Thus, fusing an Algerian tradition, belief, or language thwarts the colonial policies of assimilation that was meant to uproot the Algerians from their origins. The novel

actually opposes Gabriel Audisio, and others, who in an article published in 1957 said that the Algerian community ceased to exist (Chia- Hua Hsu, 2015: 64).

This act of writing demonstrates that Mouloud Feraoun is a writer rife with agency. Debra Kelly argues that this way of narration has the aim of speaking of the community while forging a story that seems to speak about one individual:

> There is also a question raised about the relationship between the individual life, which is at the same time ordinary and extraordinary, and the other lives that surround him. There is a celebration of the life of the community, but at the same time the protagonist is marked out, made special, made individual. The relationship between collective and individual identities is complex. The individual is a part of a community whose values he upholds and continues, but which he also sometimes criticises […] Feraoun thus constructs a protagonist who forges an identity between the collective and the individual (2005: 74).

Indeed, the life of the individual cannot be viewed and approached as a separate entity. The individual is the product of his community and at the same time he can be an active agent in it.

To consolidate his attachment with his community, Feraoun uses some Berber words to create a new hybridized language that echoes his new version of autobiography. Mouloud Feraoun has learnt the French language of high standards that of great writers as stated in the opening of his novel: 'il a lu Montaigne et Rousseau, il a lu Daudet et Dickens (dans unetraduction). Il voulait tout simplement, comme ces grands hommes raconteur sa propre histoire' (Feraoun, 2014 : 12).

This is actually a kind of mimicry. He wanted to narrate his own story using his own way, his own words and language. Thus, the inclusion of some Kabyle words such as 'tadjemait' 'ikoufen' and 'Tibrari' was made intentionally to hybridize the language of the colonizer to create a new language. Using this new language creates for him 'a third space' from which he can repudiate the colonizer and challenge him in his own language. According to Christian Achour, the French language can be used as a weapon to resist the colonizer. Thus 'although the novel is written in French, it can hardly be described as a French work,

not only because the writer peppers his narrative with Berber words, but also because the writer's imagery and logic differ greatly from those of French writers' (quoted in Kelly, 2005: 62).

Chapter IV: Colonial Education and Agency in Camara Laye's *L'Enfant Noir*

4.1 Introduction:

The main objective of this chapter is to rebut the critiques marshaled against Camara Laye on his supposed celebration of the French colonial legacy. He is, so often, portrayed as an acculturated author who celebrates colonial ideals in his fiction.

To argue in favour of Laye's defense of his native culture, this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section entitled 'From Myth to Nationhood: Rethinking and Reshaping the Guinean Past' tackles the use of the past in the novel, and demonstrates how the recalling of past events is an act of resistance that denounces stereotypical colonial presentations of Guinean traditions and customs. At the same time, it is a tool used by the author to try to fix the cracks in his society through learning from past experiences. The second section entitled 'Fatherhood and African Masculinity' sheds light on Camara Laye's agency in defending African masculinity that has long been attacked, minimized and occluded by false representations of the west. The African man was pictured as degenerate, backward, lustful and above all unwise man who could not use reason and rationality in his daily life. Through this section, I want to stress Laye's attachment to his culture and eagerness to defend every aspect that was attacked by the west even if he does not make open declarations of hatred in his writings.

'The Image of the mother' is the third section. It deals with the character of the mother and it sheds light on the crucial role she plays in the life of Laye. Through this section an attempt is made to show that the author envisions his mother as a symbol of Africa. This

serves to debunk western misconceptions by highlighting the crucial role women play in the African society.

The last section of this chapter, entitled '*L'Enfant Noir* as a Denial of cultural Death', employs Ernest beker's ideas explored in his seminal work *The Denial of Death* to demonstrate that the author of the discussed work rises against the attempts of the colonizer to eradicate the identity of the African people through erasing their cultural heritage. His work therefore, is a storehouse piece of writing that records the entire cultural heritage deemed significant by the author.

4.2 Camara Laye's Life and Criticism:

L'Enfant Noir is an autobiographical novel that tells the story of a little boy called Laye. Laye's life is narrated from his childhood to his departure to France. The novel deals with a variety of themes; but its primary focus revoles around the theme of colonial education. By the end of the novel, the reader will have a thorough understanding of the nature of education received back then. In addition, he will be able to reinscribe Camara Laye into the world of anti-colonial literature. The theme of education actually nurtures all the different themes in this novel. Whenever Laye speaks about an aspect of his culture or an issue that he wants to bring to surface, he draws a connection to colonial education either directly or indirectly.

The book opens with a long poem that celebrates the character of the mother. Indeed the mother has a great and an influential role in the life of the protagonist and in the life of the other family members. The mother is a strong woman held in high esteem within her community by all its members. Likewise, the father, who is a forger, commands great respect from all the members of the community. He is a generous man who likes sharing his food with those in his company. He has, also, some spiritual powers. Laye's family is described as

a stable and a united family where every member is aware of his own responsibilities. It is a typical African house that encompasses different feelings. The house that they live in is a place of love, respect, traditions and compassion.

Laye spends the first years of his life with his family in Kourroussa and in the house of his grandmother at Tindican, a small village in the west of his own village. At home, he spends most of his time watching his father excelling in the work of gold. At an early age, he learns about his father and mother's supernatural powers. At Tincadan, where he is treated as the spoiled grandson by his grandmother and uncles, he learns a lot about the African traditions especially in the harvest season which is considered as a sacred work that has a spiritual dimension. The harvest, we are told, is not a simple act; it is a connection and a reunion with the land that has a deep meaning in the hearts of the Guinean people. The harvest season has a deep impact in the life of Laye as it ingrained in him the love of the land and taught him the value of traditions. His family was the first school Laye knows and we feel through his narration that his perception and understanding of the outer world is fuelled by the values he acquired at home. His family equipped him with the necessary tools that enabled him to live in his own society.

The story of the novel revolves around Laye. Laye is schooled at an early age. He first attends the Quoranic School and then he is enrolled in the French school. At school, Laye faces challenging experiences. The first incident is the death of his friend Fanta, a girl who has been murdered because of witchcraft. The incident has thrown him into a deep sorrow. The second one is the repetitive abuses received by the elder school boys. Despite the hardships he has faced, Laye's desire to go to school did not lesson. He keeps working and studying to achieve his goal.

Laye's entrance to the world of man is marked by his circumcision and the ceremonies that precede it. The experience denotes a spiritual meaning. It is more than a simple physical act. It is, as the author describes it as an event that unites all the people of the tribe and that revives all kinds of traditions. In addition, the ceremony prepares the boys to transition into the world of men by exposing them to new emotions such as fear and awe. The little boys must bravely overcome their fear to be welcomed among the elders of the tribe. Those events of course, are all the time accompanied by the support and advice of the family and the other members of the community.

At the age of fifteen Laye travels to Conakry to study at the technical school. He moves to a whole new city that introduces him to a new life and new responsibilities. At Conakry Laye lives at his uncle's house Mamadou, a Muslim pious man who has two wives. The latter are described as meek and very nice women who love and consider Laye as their own child. The house of his uncle, Laye informs us, is too a house of love and respect. The two wives never quarrel with one another. Education in Conakry has been as challenging as amusing. He makes in that city new friends, learns new skills and learns how to overcome difficulties.

When Laye gets his diploma from the technical school, the advisor calls him to tell him that he has a scholarship to finish his studies in France. Without hesitation and with the support of his uncles Laye accepts the offer. The father too, welcomes the idea of letting his son travel to France. The mother, however, finds it very difficult to accept the idea of her son's departure again. She has always dreamt of his return. The pain that is caused by the absence of her son is always soothed by her hope that one day his education will end and they are going to be united again. At the end, the mother accepts and Laye goes to France with the intention of coming back one day to his homeland.

Camara laye was born on January 1, 1928 in Kouroussa, Guinea. He was the oldest boy in a family of twelve children. His family was a highly respected and a well-known family. His father was respected for he was a talented goldsmith. Likewise, his mother had a special position among the people of her village because of her unique character, her supernatural powers, and her visions that served the people of her local community. During his first years, Camara received his education from his family that injected him with the core values, beliefs and the appropriate behaviors. This special upbringing enabled him to develop a sense of cultural pride.

The family of the author was a Muslim family, for that reason the first school Laye attended was the Koranic school where he learned the necessary values of Islam. After that, he was enrolled in a French school before continuing his education in a vocational school in the capital of Guinea: Conakry. Camara proved to be a very brilliant student and his hard work and commitment enabled him to win a scholarship to study in France. In 1947, Camara was obliged to leave his family and immigrate to France where he joined the Central School of Automobile Engineering in Argenteuil.The certificate of a simple mechanic did not satisfy Camara Laye. Therefore, he decided to sit for the baccalaureate exam and pursue a higher education. That decision obliged him to work at various and odd jobs related to auto-mechanic field in Paris.

Camara spent almost ten years in France before returning to Africa and his first destination was not Guinea. Camara preferred to settle in Dahomey, Ghana before going back to Guinea. When Camara came back to his country, he was hired by the colonial authorities as an engineer. But when his country regained its independence and became governed by Sékou Touré, he was chosen as a director of The National Institute of Research and Documentation. Unfortunately, some of Touré's policies were not accepted by Camara Laye, and he did not hide his uneasiness with the established order of things.

His increasing attacks and opposition to the new regime made it difficult for him to remain in Guinea. Therefore, he was obliged to leave his country and live in the Ivory Coast to settle finally in Senegal. Camara Laye married his friend Marie Larifo and got four children. After staying a long period in exile Marie decided to visit her mother in Guinea. But unfortunately, the Guinean authorities arrested her and decided to put her in prison for several years. During her imprisonment, Camara got a second wife the thing that hurt Marie and pushed her to ask for the divorce. Camara died in 1980 after all kinds of treatments failed to cure his sufferings with kidney disease.

Camara Laye wrote four canonical novels. The first novel is entitled *L'Enfant Noir*. It was written in 1953 when Camara Laye was a student in France. The novel was a huge success. He was awarded the 'Charles Veillon' Prize. The work is an autobiographical novel that revolves around the story of Laye's journey from childhood to adulthood. The isolation that the writer experienced as a student in Paris rendered him nostalgic about his past. The writing of the book was a necessary step for him to rest his troubled consciousness. Camara Laye declared:

> Vivant a paris, loin de ma Guinée natale, loin de mes parents, et y vivant depuis des années dans un isolement rarement interrompu, je me suis transporté mille fois par la pensé dans mon pays, près des miens… Et puis, un jour, j'ai pensé que ces souvenirs, qui a l'époque étaient dans toute leur fraicheur, pourrait avec le temps, sinon s'effacer ? – Du moins s'affaiblir. Et j'ai commencé à les écrire…L'ouvrier que je suis racontait sa vie, c'est tout. Je ne pensais qu'à moi-même et puis, à mesure que j'écrivais, je me suis perçu que je traçais un portrait de Haute Guinée natale. (quoted in Augustave and Almeida, 1977 : 22-23).

Indeed, through his first novel, the reader can feel this strong bondage that ties him to his country. Guinea is a beautiful country that is often called 'le chateau d'eau' as it has numerous rivers. It is also the sight for different types of animals and it shelters rich cultures. Perhaps, he wanted to lessen the difficulties he faced because of the mundane life of Paris through recalling the beautiful images of his country. Guinea is described in the most eloquent

way. In the remainder of this chapter, we shall discuss in greater depth his portrayal and description of his country.

L'Enfant Noir is not the only novel written by Camara Laye. He wrote three other novels. The second one that was written in 1954, one year after *l'Enfant Noir,* is entitled '*Le Regard du Roi*'. Camara waited a bit too long to write his third novel: *Dramous*. The novel was written in 1966 during his exile. The work recounts the hardships he faced in France and it voices some of the author's critical ideas concerning Touré's policies. The last novel is *Le Maitre de la Parole* which was written in 1978.

Laye's writings can make him eligible for canonization, however, a large number of critics saw in his writings a prolongation of colonial ideologies that sought to repress African identities. His declaration that 'we are obliged to follow the advice we got in school'(Miller, C. 1990: 119) ranked him with the assimilated authors of the period. *L'Enfant Noir*, for example, is dismissed from the national narratives that denounce colonialism because the fifties was a period of a heightened political tension that required explicit indictment of colonialism. Mongo Beti declares: 'La réalitéactuelle de L'Afrique Noir, saseuleréalité profonde, c'estavant tout la colonisation et sesméfaits'(Mongo Beti,1955: 137). Therefore, the abiding concern of writers should have been, for them, the political scene of their countries that were far from being satisfactory. Laye instead preferred to portray an African world that is outside the locus of colonial control.

L'Enfant Noir projects Guinea as a country of dreams and fantasy. He proudly and amply portrays to the reader the mysteries of his family and village, the supernatural powers they possess, and their ability to connect with other creatures like animals and genies. The novel is larded with examples of the myths that constitute the core beliefs of the Malinké culture. Despite the fact that the novel was well acclaimed in France, it was not cordially received by

postcolonial critics who questioned its authenticity. Their skepticism stems from the fact that Laye seemed to be blind to the atrocious cruelties of colonialism. Christopher Miller argues: *'L'Enfant Noir* cannot be called *authentic* because it ignores the reality of colonialism and seems to hide its head in the sand(Miller, C. 1990: 123)'.

In the same vein, James Olney reckons that *L'Enfant Noir* is 'a little too classic, a little too nostalgic, a little too good to be true.' (Quoted in Sow, A. 2010: 498-517). Critics went further and accused Laye of not only being blind to colonial cruelty but they accused him of accepting colonialism. For example Roger Berger states: 'in his autobiography Laye offers virtually no critical comments about the colonial system that has traumatically affected his life and thus seems to tactically accept the colonizer's perspective' (Quoted in Sow, A. 2010:498-517). Snow Alioune confirms this idea stating:'L'enfant noir has often been read as a naïve text that borrows from a French aesthetics and tells us nothing about the oppressive nature of the colonial regime' (Sow, 2010:498-517).

Mongo Beti, one of the ardent critics of Camara Laye, states: '*L'Enfant Noir'* voulait nous faire croire à une Afrique idyllique, mais qui n'était qu'invraisemblable, parce que le blanc n'y figurait point'(Beti, 1955: 144). The critic believes that his tendency in ignoring the socio-political realities of the country is the result of the irresponsible and apolitical character of the writer as he obeyed the demands of the colonizer to project a falsified image of Africa. He argues: 'si l'écrivain manqué de responsabilité, il fera ce que lui demande le public. Si il a de la personnalité, il fera de la littérature selon son gout et ses propres conceptions' (Beti, 1955: 144).

Nevertheless, there are those critics who have tried to do justice to Camara Laye and defend his works especially his first autobiographical novel *L'Enfant Noir*. Abiola Irele for example in a lengthy article entitled 'In Search of Camara Laye' (2006) defends Laye as being the author of his four canonical novels. A detailed analysis of his real life, way of living

and how they are reflected in his writings is his proof against the accusations made against the author under discussion. Abiola's article is important because it frees Laye from the guilt of being a liar. Denying Laye's the authorship of his works would deprive the African literature from four canonical masterpieces that enrich, celebrate, and defend the African culture and world.

L'Enfant Noir is often seen as a too simple a too linear work that lacks complexity the fact that minimizes his importance as a work worth reading. Sometimes, the simplicity of the work is linked to the naivety of the author himself. However, Jacques Bourgeacq tries to stress the opposite truth through tracing the strategic use of the verb in the novel and its functions. In his article entitled 'Camara Laye: *L'Enfant Noir* and the mythical verb', he argues that the verb in the work under discussion connects the human being with the cosmic and constructs the world also.

The verb is very important in the Malinké culture and its use is never done randomaly. This act brings to surface Camara Laye's connectedness to his culture. In the same vein, '*L'Enfant Noir* by Camara Laye: Strategies in Teaching an African Text' written by Eloise A. Brière in 1982 explains that the autobiographical work has been the choice of the academics to be taught in 'advanced High School French or College French on the intermediate level because encourages the readers to be influenced by and to like African Literature written in French.

The above brief review shows that some postcolonial critics could not handle the fact that Camara Laye was a politically engaged author because he did not condemn The Western colonizer directly and in an open manner. Others have tried to stress Camara Laye's strategies of writing and his inscription in his African culture. Despite the fact that the second group qualifies Laye as a worth reading author, none of them tackled the issue of agency in his works.

4.3 From Myth to Nationhood: Rethinking and Reshaping the Guinean past:

Lay's *L'enfant Noir* most criticism stems from the fact that the novel deals with a Guinean world void of all evil. The world the characters live in is a pure one. Its utopian vision has made it an unauthentic work since colonialism had no mention in the novel. Critics believe that being blind to the realities of the country is considered unacceptable in time of upheaval. However, I believe that this utopian tendency in presenting the events of the novel is intentional and is not merely a result of acculturation. The perfect image of the past holds the seeds of Laye's agency.

Camara Laye felt the urge of recapturing his African past to keep the spirit of some of his memories that were fast disappearing alive. While a student in Paris, he was afraid of losing the image of his beloved country. Perhaps the mundane and stultifying life of Paris revived every single memory in his withered soul. However, Laye's utopian vision stems from the fact that he felt the need to reshape his past. Past events and memories have a great effect upon the human personality. They control his present and guide his steps towards the future. The memories that we get from past experiences are fundamental in the identity formation of the human being. Trying to change and reshape the present for more a bright future one has to reframe and reshape the past. Put differently, the past can be reframed through the stories we choose to tell about the past. If the past I present to the world is miserable, the present that we have to deal with is full of scars. This indicates, by no means, that we need to distort reality, rather we need to perceive past events with a vision oriented toward the future.

Laye was quite aware of the importance of the past in shaping the present and the future of his people. For the purpose at hand, he sought to present his version of his past that is detached from colonial violence.

African literature came as a reaction to the stereotypical writings of the west that projected the Africans as barbarians and attributed to them all different kinds of humiliating traits and descriptions. The purpose and the abiding duty of most African writers in the past and now, therefore, was to free that past from all its impurities. Indeed Chenua Achebe declares:

> Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of that word… I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past- with all its imperfections- was not one long night of savagery (quoted in Ogundele, 2002: 125).

To reach that end it is of crucial importance to portray the African life before the coming of the white man with his pseudo civilizing mission to contradict the falsified accusations made against the African people. But sometimes recapturing the pre-colonial past from an African perspective is beyond reach. This problem is the main concern of Wole Ogundele's article entitled 'devices of evasion: the mythic versus the historical Imagination in the postcolonial African novel'. The author in his work discusses the relation between myth history and African literature and stresses the impossibility and the difficulty of recapturing the pre- colonial African past by the African authors for so many reasons. Some of these reasons are the 'the predisposition of the post colonial elite to that past' and their preoccupation with the present.

For that purpose, the African novels deal more with myth and not with history. The author hints at the fact that the majority of postcolonial novels are mythical more than historical in the sense that they use myth as history. The author is not against myth but he wants to hint at the fact that myth and history are two different elements that should be used adequately. The author of the article declares:

> The argument here, then, is not that religious beliefs, the supernatural, magic and myth have no place in the historical novel. Belief in them may be a locomotive for history or an explanation for deeds done by men. To the extent that they open a window to the

> inner life of a people and their world view, supernatural beliefs and myths are grist to the mill of the historical imagination. But they belong in the realm of the eternal, whereas history belongs in the ever-changing world of human society (Ogundele, 2002: 130).

However, the African situation needs the historical novel more than the mythical one as it is the former which can deal with 'issues of basic reality' because he believes that 'a mediation on the actual past through historical fiction is also a mediation on the present and anticipation of the future' (Ogundele, 2002: 130). Dealing with myth alone in the African writings can do nothing but embellishing the story told and arousing the reader's curiosity about a given culture. the author; however, hints at the possibility of making a bridge between the two: myth and historical imagination, and the possibility of blending them in one story can create a piece of writing that is both artistic, in the sense amusing, and purposeful. This bridge is found in Laye's novel because we see that he has been able to blend the element of eternity found in myths with the everyday stories that deal with basic issues of reality. It is this element that makes Laye's novel purposeful.

Laye's utopian representation of the past is not done merely by beautifying the past and painting beautiful images of past experiences. He went further by turning his past into a myth. Charles Nnolim in his book *Approaches to the African Novel: Essays in Analysis* has made a lengthy analysis in which he explains in an ample way the way Camara Laye turns his autobiography into a mythical story. He starts by stressing the fact that Laye's story is just a fairytale story. Nnolim convincingly traces the elements that make of *L'enfant Noir* a fairytale' including the representation of characters who are either too good like the family of Laye or too villain without redeeming features like the boys who used to bully Laye at school and the headmaster.

Casting light on the fairytale elements in *L'enfant Noir* is done to demonstrate that Laye's world is an enchanted world. After that, he makes a smooth move to discuss the most

important mythical patterns that are palpable in the narrative. The first mythical pattern that has been referred to is the strange link between man and nature that equips him with supernatural powers. Nnolim explains: 'The fairytale passes into myth when the vital link between the individual and his society is extended to include a more intimate and stranger link between man and nature. Often, this extends beyond nature to involve cosmic forces' (Nnolim, 2010: 24). In Laye's story the link between man and nature is discernible in the narrative since parents have links with animals that enable them to be distinguishable from the rest of the people of the village: the mother's totem is the crocodile and the father's totem is the snake.

Nnolim explains that another important mythical pattern in Camara Laye's *L'enfant Noir* is the ' night journey' or what is termed as 'rites de passages' or ceremonies of transition and the latter is incarnated in the circumcision ceremony during which the protagonist passes from childhood to adulthood. Laye's describes in details how those ceremonies are important in the life of his community for they are considered a turning point in the life of the individuals.

All in all, Nnolim proves in a logical way that Camara laye has turned his autobiography into a mythical masterpiece. He concludes:

> Laye does not merely nostalgically recreate his past, he patterns nostalgia into something larger than himself: he catapults romanticism and idealization into myth, therein lies his method of distancing, what if mundanely recreated, would have been no more than an autobiography, a confession […] transfiguring nostalgia into myth and archetype lies the rhetorical crux of the dark child; it is very effective, consistent and artistically coherent devices (Nnolim, 2010: 27).

Myth is a powerful tool that societies and nations have long used to reclaim and assert their belonging and identities. In postcolonial world, myth has no less value. It has been used by authors as a means of philosophy to discuss matters related to their existence and reality. Myth has also the virtue of controlling and playing with the reader's emotions and response.

Authors along history used myth to reach specific ends. This idea is best explained by Aparna Halpé in his Ph.d thesis. He states:

> by drawing on an ancient myth, an author can invoke a prefabricated frame of meaning which the reader will recognize. However, by making "myth" the point of entry into a historical moment, the author also suggests a particular reading of history that is, to a large extent, determined by the reader's emotional response to "the truth" of the myth. This emotional response always holds the key to the ideological core of the myth, and by extension, it also demonstrates the author's own manipulation of ideology and response to history using Myth to narrate history supposes a sense of myth as alternative history (Halpé, 2010: 10).

Indeed, Laye's agency lies in his ability to project his memories and his past experiences from a new angle that of myth. Unlike some African authors who sought to include and revive old African myths, Laye's contribution lies in the mythification of his own past. The aim behind is to suggest a new reading of the past of those who have been silenced and marginalized by unjust colonial system of ruling and to suggest an alternative history that could benefit the Guinean people in their lives.

The alternative history Laye is trying to create through the mythification of his past experiences has the aim of reorienting the reader's response to African past and history. The African reader by reading a story about beautiful moments in the past during which people were living according to African values and traditions can create a feeling of pride in his heart and thus he can live his present and visualize his future according to the same values. Laye's innovation suggests that the reader can have faith in the African character that could not be influenced by colonial ideologies. The latter sought to erase the African identity which is immersed in myth. The revival and the mythefication of the past does not mean that Laye was against change.

One exponing figure who dealt with the issue of myth in depth is Roland Barthes. He defines myth as 'type of speech'. He further explains that myth is 'a system of communication'. However, for him this system is by no means innocent. The system is

purposeful and holds a message and it is full of intentions. What differentiates myth from the ordinary speech is its motivation. In general, myth is a type of speech that holds a message and the authenticity and efficiency of myth depends on a large extent on the reader's response and his capacity to decipher the meaning that is not altogether hidden but rather naturalized and eternalized. He argues:

> The reader lives the myth as a story at once true and unreal. If one wishes to connect a mythical schema to a general history, to explain how it corresponds to the interests of definite society,in short […] it is the reader himself who must reveal their essential function. How does he receive this particular myth today?(Barthes, 1991: 127)

In other words, myth for Roland Barthes is also a depoliticized speech in the sense that it covers the political intention of the speech. The political character rather is turned into ideology that hails the reader to accept the message naturally: 'Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them, simply it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them natural and eternal justification. It gives them a clarity which is not that of explanation but that of statement of fact'(Barthes, 1991: 143). Myth creates ideologies for purposes serving those who create that very myth. Unlike reasonable explanations of things, myth has the power to convince the audience through deviating reality and suggesting an alternative one. Myth permits the alternative reality to be inculcated and adjusted in the smoothest way as these mythical stories are introduced to the reader as 'natural'. As a result, people start adopting these mythologies as natural phenomena that do not need further explanations.

This method is most of the time adopted by the colonial authorities to perpetuate stories and beliefs about the colonial powers and the colonized people as well and the world of literature offers a plenty of examples that support this claim. Edward said discusses this idea in *Orientalism* and explains the way colonial authorities imposes their versions of reality over the colonized people and how they legitimize their occupation of other lands through

different strategies among which is myth. Said stresses: ‘a myth does not analyze or solve problems. It represents them as already analyzed and solved, that is, it represents them as already assembled images’(Said, 2003: 312)

Likewise, Laye tended to present his life and all that it includes from beliefs to traditions as natural phenomena that do not need explanation. They are facts that need to be accepted as they are. His culture, past experiences, and past are mythified to be eternalized. He suggests an alternative history that is eternal. In the sense that it makes the past legendary to clean the present from the scars of colonialism and inferiority complex and that tends to reshape the future. Here resides the agency of Laye because he wanted to imitate the colonizer in creating stories about the colonized people. The mythologies that he tends to create through his story are constructive and fruitful. They construct the colonized’s identity and cement the nation altogether through creating a common origin that all the people of the country can recognize. Bhabha explains: ‘One of the most durable myths has certainly been the “the nation” […] nations, then, are imaginary constructs that depend for their existence on an apparatus of cultural fictions in which imaginative literature plays a decisive role.’(Bhabha, H. 1994:48-49).

It is true that Roland Barthes defines myth as a depoliticized speech, but introducing his life in the guise of myth inscribes Laye in the most political speech that tends to write back to the colonizer. Through this act, Laye calcifies the idea of the nation that the colonizer had tried to erase and here lies the essence of agency.

Imitating the colonizer in mythifiying stories does not only permit Laye to embellish the African past but to resolve the dichotomy of the colonizer and colonized. This resolution lies in the fact that the protagonist of the mythical story is an educated person. It is true that the story undoubtedly revives old traditions and memories and excludes colonial violence but

it does not deny The British intrusion and the change it brought forth. The change is not introduced as something fatal that must be uprooted. It is not tradition versus modernity rather it is traditions and the positive side of modernity mixed together. Thus, Laye's discourse is precisely what Bhabha terms as a 'double narrative movement'. That places the character of the novel in 'double-time'. Put differently:

> the people are the historical 'objects' of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin in the past; the people are also the 'subjects' of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the people as contemporaneity: as that sign of the present through which national life is redeemed and iterated as a reproductive process (Bhabha,1994: 145).

Each time Laye speaks about his past life that is full of magical moments full of mythical stories and full of utopian landscape, he intentionally includes some aspects of modern life. Put differently, Laye in the representation of his past overwhelms the readers with the mythical aspects of his past but at the same time he reminds him that the African past is not purely African. for instance, when his father tells him about the black snake and how he is the genie of his ancestors, he immediately cuts his speech to voice his fear that one day his son will leave him and will probably never visit him again because of education: '-j'aipeur, j'ai bien peur, petit, que tumêmefréquentes jamais assez. Tu vas à l'école et, un jour, tu quitteras cette école pour une plus grande. Tu me quitteras, petit…'(Laye, 1957:20) but at the end of the novel it is the father who helps his son to go abroad to finish his studies despite the refusal of the mother.In another passage, when Laye describes the harvest season in Tincadan, he mentions the idea of school and education. The image of school is always present and never escapes his mind:

> Mais je n'aimais pas qu'il m'écartât ainsi du travail des champs. « plus tard… » Pourquoi « plus tars… » ? Il me semblait que, moi aussi, j'aurais pu etre un moissonneur comme les autres, un paysan comme les autres. Est- ce que…
>
> -Eh bien, tu rêve ? disait mon oncle. […]
>
> Et c'était vrai que je rêvais : ma vie n'était pas ici… et elle n'était pas non plus dans la forge paternelle. Mais ou était ma vie ? Et je tremblais devant cette vie inconnue.

> N'eut-il pas été plus simple de prendre la suite de mon père ? « l'école…l'école…, pensais- je ; est ce que j'aime tant l'école ? » Maispeutêtre la préférais-je.(Laye, 1957: 61).

Paul R Bernard in his insightful essay 'Individuality and Collectivity: A Duality in Camara Laye's*L'Enfant noir'*where he speaks about the existence of two contending realities in the life of the protagonist argues that even the city where Laye grew is described in the novel as a place that encompasses both traditional values and customs and it is remarkably westernized. He states:

> On the one hand, Kouroussa is the scene of some forms of traditional, communal activity; for example, the goldsmith scene which shows the ancient practices involved in the production of jewelry, the observance of indigenous religious practices represented in the protagonist's father, and the perpetuation of the rites of passage. On the other hand, Kouroussa, which the narrator describes as "déjauneville" (p. 36), also approaches modern Western standards. Kouroussa enjoys a colonial school (which at the time of Laye's childhood, circa 1930, was found only in larger towns and cities in Africa), and the Conakry-Niger railroad passes through it. The railroad and the school this far inland function as symbols of the encroachment of Western civilization (Bernard, 1978:315).

This selection and the inclusionof only the colonial education is geared toward future intention. Perhaps Laye wanted to direct the attention of the African reader towards a reality that is eclipsed by so many African writers which holds that the African history can never be purely African and despite the fact that change is inevitable the mythification of the African past is not beyond reach. These realities are what frame the Guinean nation and this is what constitutes the main message in the novel of Camara Laye.

Those who feel lost because of the occurring change can be comforted by the story of *L'Enfant Noir* because the hybrid world presented in the story resolves the dichotomy of the west versus the rest and unburdens the Guinean people from the guilt of adopting the change that was imposed on them. Laye offers a new understanding of the nation: it is not the adoption of the pure past at the expense of modernity but it is rather the harmonious existence of both of them. So Laye has been able to provide his people with a new understanding of the

nation and at the same time answer back the colonial powers through resolving the dichotomy of colonizer and colonized.

4.4 Fatherhood and African Masculinity:

There is no single definition of masculinity as it is perceived differently. Most people tend to associate masculinity with maleness. They see that masculinity and maleness are naturally correlated. If you are born a male it is natural to claim masculinity. However, this biological definition is contested as some scholars see masculinity not a term merely associated with maleness but as a concept that can be attributed to both genders and in different situations. Freud for instance sees that masculinity 'never exists in a pure state. Layers

of emotions coexist and contradict each other. Each personality is a shade filled structure, not a transparent unit'(Connell, 1995: 10). In other words, in each person there are two contending emotions.

Moreover, masculinity is seen as a concept that is constructed culturally. Put differently, each ethnic group has its own way of perceiving and constructing masculinity. It is the surrounding that sketches the acceptable traits that should be adopted by the males of the same very group. This idea leads us to Connell's concept of 'hegemonic masculinity'. The latter 'can be defined as configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and subordination of women' (Connell, 1995: 10). The culturally prescribed models of masculinity are not only harmful to the opposite gender, but also to the same very gender as mentioned earlier because it leaves numerous males with the burden of imitating the perfect model of their society. If the model is not followed, they

will be classified as the other in their own cultures. This definition is unjust and has negative consequences on the individual in his own community.

Moreover, Connell explains that the hegemony of masculinity can discriminate also among people of different races and classes. The masculinity of the dominant class or race marginalizes the other masculinities. This can happen only if masculinity is considered as an ideology. Todd W Reeser states: '…to consider masculinity as an ideology makes sense since it often is, or is often perceived of as, a subjectivity linked to power.' (2011: 23).

This is the case of the colonizer, who perpetuated the idea of the superiority of white masculinity over the black one. The colonized is always the other whose traits are far from being masculine and noble. The white man is the gentleman the civilized one whose main interest is development and the well being of the other contrary to the colonized man who is the inferior other. The books taught in colonial schools are larded with examples that portray the sharp contrast between the white masculinity and black or colonized masculinity. The other is Savage like Caliban, violent like Othello and is attributed so many other negative traits that degenerate his masculinity.

The African authors were well aware of the west's plans. As a result, the African authors took the responsibility to defend and claim African masculinity and to oppose this binary opposition. Laye is one of these authors whose main objective was to deny, to question, and to disturb the prescribed western models of masculinity. Bhabha states: 'it must be our aim not to disavow masculinity, but to disturb its manifest destiny-to draw attention to it as prosthetic reality'(2012: 57). And this is exactly what Laye does in his first autobiographical novel.

An important character in Camara Laye's novel is the father. The father exerts a great influence over Laye's personality. The father, we are informed is a blacksmith. He is well

known in his village and over the surrounding villages. Just like the mother, the father has supernatural powers incarnated in his ability to talk with the genies. The father's totem is the black snake that visits him regularly. Right from the beginning, the reader is introduced to this reality when the mother starts telling her little boy about his fatrher's totem.

The father is the epitome of a black African man whose life is rooted in the Malinké culture. His values and all his traits are the result of his submersion in the Malinké culture. The fatherisdescribed as a generous man. He declares: 'j'ai moins que les autres puisque je donne tout, puisque je donnerais jusqu'à ma dernière chemise. Well-respected, the father states, also: 'pourtant je suis plus connu que les autres, et mon nom est dans toutes les bouches, et c'est moi qui règne sur tous les forgerons des cinq cantons du cercle'(Laye, 1957 : 19).

He is also a rational person. After his son's incident with the snake, he decides to tell him about his totem. However, his rationality made him reluctant to do so. The father has taken into account his son's age and he has been afraid that he is not old enough to understand what he is going to tell him. Laye declares: 'Il me regarda un long moment. Il paraissait hésiter à me répondre. Sans doute se demandait-il s'il n'était pas un peu tôt pour confier ce secret à un enfant de douze ans'(1957 : 17).

Another trait that Laye learns through his father is hard work. The lengthy description of the gold work is not merely to show a face of Guinean tradition but also to portray the African man as someone who is loyal to his work and who would not rest until he achieves his objective. It is this spirit that encourages Laye to work hard to succeed in his studies. Laye declares:

> Je voulais absolument passer mon certificate. J'avais buché ferme durant trois ans ; je n'avais jamais perdu de vue la promesse que j'avais faite à mon père, et pas davantage celle que je m'étais maintenu parmi les trois premiers, et javais quelque raison d'espérer qu'il n'en irait pas autrement à l'examen (1957:194).

The construction of Laye's personality as a man was done through two crucial things. The first one, laye starts to know the traits of a true man through watching his father and the men surrounding him,and through instructions and some piece of advice directly communicated. Through the whole novel we come to understand that the father's main concern is to teach his son the values that every man should adopt to deal with the outer world. Actually the father is seen accompanying his son in the most important stages of his life and we can easily notice that without the help of the father and his guidance Laye would not probably pass the tests of life thrown before him. Those pieces of advice are the proof of the African's rationality and responsibility as parents.

The most important value that the father wants to transmit to his son is how one can control and overcome his fear to become a real man. Indeed, fear is a strong feeling that can hamper one from entering the world of manhood. If one can control his fear he can control all other feelings. In communities where manhood is valued masculinity can never be equated with people who are not courageous for that reason a strong man should hide his fear and face the world with faith and strength. Laye states:

> -Et alors? Fit mon père.
> It avait traversé l'atelier sans que je l'entendisse.
> -tu as peur ?
> -un peu, dis je.
> Il posa sa main sur mon épaule.
> -Allons ! détends-toi[…]
> -tu ne dois pas avoir peur […] tu dois mater ta peur, tu dois mater toi-même ! […]
> -Même si tu avais peur, ne le montre pas (1957 : 105).

The initiation ceremonies are presented by Laye not as mere African traditions that the people of the village or the whole country are attached to. They are rather a vital station that every boy in the village must go through to be considered as a real man. Laye states: 'mais ce n'était pas le tout d'être un grand, il fallait l'être encore dans toute l'acception du mot, et pour cela naitre à la vie d'homme! Or j'étais toujours un enfant : j'étais réputé n'avoir pas l'âge de

raison! Parmi mes condisciples, qui pour la plupart étaient circoncis' (Laye, 1957 :8). And to be considered as a real man one must know how to control and surpass his fear.

The test of Kondera that precedes the circumcision is made to teach the little boys that if one can be able to control his fear, he can overcome all other tests in life even if the test requires blood like circumcision. Laye declares: 'ce prix, nos ainés l'avaient payé avant nous; ceux qui naitraient après nous, le paieraient à leur tour; pourquoi l'eussions-nous esquivé ? la vie jaillissait du sang versé ! (Laye, 1957: 125). This passage, also hints at an important reality. Laye wants to stress the fact that his traditions would survive ignoring by so doing the change occurring around him that is brought forth by the colonizer. His way of stating the fact that the generations that will come after him will undergo the same experience is an act of resistance against the calls of the west who tried by all means erasing the tradition of circumcision considering it a violent act that has no relation with humanity.

Laye would not have passed the test of Kondera without the help and his father and his advice. When Laye finds himself overwhelmed by fear he reminds himself of his father's advice. He states: 'tu ne dois pas avoir peur! Me dis-je. Tu dois mater ta peur ! Ton père t'a dit de surmonter ta peur' (Laye, 1957 : 111).

Another value taught through the ceremonies of circumcision is the collective spirit. One cannot be a man if he does not know the importance of the other in one's life. The collective spirit is the one thing that can weld the people of the village all together. For that purpose, the circumcision ceremonies require the presence of the whole village: men, women, boys and girls. The boys who are concerned with circumcision wear traditional clothes and dance with the whole village. They must be different from the rest of the other boys. It is their day and they must be unique. They are not allowed to wear but traditional clothes to remind them and inculcate in their minds the importance of that event. It is what constitutes their culture and identity no interference of strange or western clothes or values are allowed. The

traditional clothes are a reminder of their origin that they share with the rest of the people of their community. The people who are present that day to support and witness their entrance to the world of man and here resides the importance of wearing traditional clothes.Laye declares:

> Nous dansions, je l'ai dit, à perdre soufflé, mais nous n'étions pas seuls à danser: la ville entière dansait ! On venait nous regarder, on venait en foule, toute la ville en vérité venait, car l'épreuve n'avait pas que pour nous une importance capitale, elle avait quasiment la même importance pour chacun puisqu'il n'était indifférent à personne que la ville, par une deuxième naissance qui était notre vraie naissance (Laye, 1957 : 127).

Their entrance to the manhood world is considered as their true and real birth because they do not become men when they reach a certain age but when they fully realize that a true man is the one who understands the importance of the collective spirit. The circumcision is an opportunity to teach this value through explaining how the families stand for each other and this is not done through the presence of the numerous families only. The boys listen during the ceremony into real stories of help among the people.Laye explains that in the midst of the celebration a man steps forward and declares:

> Toi, disait-il, écoute! Ta famille a toujours été amie de la mienne; ton grand-père est l'ami de mon père, ton père est mon ami, et toi, tu es l'ami de mon fils. Aujourd'hui, je viens publiquement en porter témoignage. Que tous ici sachent que nous sommes amis et que nous le demeurerons ! et en signe de cette durable amitié, et afin de montrer ma reconnaissance pour les bons procédés dont toujours ton père et ton grand-père ont usé a mon égard et à l'égard des miens, je te fais don d'un bœuf à l'occasion de ta circoncision ! (Laye, 1957: 129).

The idea that manhood and masculinity are all about values is calcified when the boys are obliged to sit in a house far from their families just after their circumcision. There, they are taught some other values that contribute to the formation of a complete and true man on his own community:

> L'enseignement que nous recevions en brousse, loin des oreilles indiscrètes, n'avait rien de très mystérieux ; rien, je pense, que d'autres oreilles que les nôtres n'auraient pu entendre. Ces leçons, les mêmes que celles qui furent données à tous ceux qui nous ont précédés, se résumaient à la ligne de conduite qu'un homme doit tenir dans la vie : être franc absolument, acquérir les vertus qui en toutes circonstances font l'honnête

> homme, remplir nos devoirs envers dieu, envers nos parents, envers les notables, envers le prochain (Laye, 1957 : 145).

All that is mentioned above is important because it reveals Laye's agency in defying western notion of masculinity an manhood. Laye the man is the product of his father's upbringing, community and all his surroundings. He did not learn how to be a man from western schools.

Even his uncle, Mamadou, has had a great influence over his personality. Despite the fact that Mamadou is an educated man but the advice he gives to his nephew stem from Islamic creeds. Mamadou is a verywise man. Laye states: 'Travaille ferme à présent, me dit-il, et Dieu te protégera' (1957 : 175).

For that purpose, Camara Laye devotes a lengthy description of his uncle. He is described as pious and his attachment to Islam is what fuels his thinking and reason. Just like the father who is portrayed as unique because of his super natural powers and his ability to talk with the genies, Mamadou is made unique because of his piety. He is just like an angel and he is admired by his nephew for he does seem for him flawless. Laye describeshisuncle as follows :

> Il était musulman, et je pourrais dire: comme nous le sommes tous; mais il l'était de fait beaucoup plus que nous ne le sommes généralement: son observance du Coran était sans défaillance. Il ne fumait pas, ne buvait pas, et son honnêteté était scrupuleuse. Il ne portait de vêtement européens que pour se rendre à son travail ; sitôt rentré, il se déshabillait, passait un boubou qu'il exigeait immaculé, et disait ses prières. A sa sortie de l'Ecole normale, il avait entrepris l'étude de l'arabe […]. Le Coran dirigeait sa vie ! Jamais je n'ai vu mon oncle en colère, jamais je ne l'ai vu entrer en discussion avec ses femmes ; je l'ai toujours calme, maitre de lui et infiniment patient. A Conakry, on avait grande considération pour lui, et il suffisait que je me réclamasse de ma parenté, pour qu'une part de son prestige rejaillit sur moi. A mesyeux, il faisait figure de saint (157: 173-174).

Mamadou's advice is remembered when he wanted to write a letter for his mother so she can ask the 'marabout' of his village to help him by supplicating God for his success: Laye declares:

> Dois-je en déduire que j'étais spécialement superstitieux à l'époque? Je ne le pense pas. J'étais très simplement, j'étais tout simplement un croyant; et je croyais que rien ne s'obtient sans l'aide de Dieu, et que si la volonté de Dieu est depuis toujours déterminée, elle ne l'est point en dehors de nous-mêmes ; je veux dire : sans que nos démarches, bien que moins prévues, n'aient, en une certaine manière, pesé sur cette volonté (1957 : 194).

Even the last pages of the book where Camara Laye closes his story, he keeps the father's words stored in his mind to start a new life outside his country. The last advice of the father is: 'Garde-toi de jamais tromper personne, dit-il; sois droit dans ta pensée et dans tes actes; et Dieu demeurera avec toi' (1957 : 214). As if Camara Laye informs his reader that his culture and his traditional upbringing uploaded him with everything he needs to face the outer world. It is his father's advice that is remembered at the end and not the information he has received in school and this can be considered as an act of resistance and agency because Camara Laye rationally could choose the information he should keep in mind and colonial schools could not shape his thinking to the extent that he can forget the words of his illiterate father. The world of the white man did not amuse him and change him. The world of the white man was a change imposed on the Guinean people and wisely Camara Laye could cope with that reality.

His masculinity and perception of the outer world are based on and seen through African lenses. Those lenses we are told are at the same time, typically Africans, and that can the whole world identify. The values taught by the father and by his uncle Mamadou could be interpreted universally. This is a kind of mimicry that undermines the stable image of the colonizer that no one could be like him. There is no absolute truth related to specific race. Everyone can be like the white and every one can identify with the African man in his values. but Laye wanted to make them purely African so he can highlight African's masculinity and manhood that is different from the stereotypical images of the west that project African men as barbarian, savage and irrational and most importantly to weaken the claims of the civilizing

mission that tended to make the world believe that there were no values and reason before the coming of the white men.

4.5 The Image of The Mother as a Symbol of Africa:

The parents of the narrator are of significant importance. The whole story of *L'Enfant Noir* is related in a way or another to his father and mother. They both contribute to his maturity as a man. They are the ones who educate him about everything he needs to survive in his community. This section is concerned with the image of the mother and the way she is portrayed is used as an evidence of Laye's agency.

The novel opens with a poem in which the author praises the sacrifices of his mother. The numerous passages that talk about the mother calcify this fact. As the poem indicates, she is portrayed as the caring mother who is always worried about her son. The care of the mother is interpreted in the simplest gesture of saving food for her son when the father invites some men to share his meals. Laye states: 'Et comme je ne mangeais guère aussi vite que ces invités, j'eusse risqué de demuereréternellement sur ma faim, si ma mere n'eut pris la précaution de réserver ma part(Laye, 1957:13). Right from the first pages, the reader can notice that the mother is overprotective.

When Laye is caught palying with the snake, the mother becomes terrified. Laye declares: 'Autour de moi, on menait grand bruit; ma mere surtout criait fort et elle me donna quelque claques. […] un peu plus tard, quand je me fus un peu calmé et qu'autour de moi les cris eurent cessé, j'entendis ma mère m'avertir sévèrement de ne plus jamais recommencer un tel jeu.'(Laye, 1957 : 10).

Even when Camara Laye gets older, she does not cease from endorsing her protective authority over him. Camara Laye informs the reader that she even chooses his friends. Without hesitation, she sends the girls whose companion, according to her, is harmful to her son from the house: 'toi disait- elle, que fais-tu ici? Ta place n'est pas chez mon fils. Rentre

chez toi ! Si je t'aperçois encore, j'en toucherai un mot à ta mère. Te voilà avertie!' (Laye, 1957: 199).

In addition, the mother is portrayed as someone who is conscious and who cares about the whole members of the family. When her son informs her that the father is dancing 'la douga', a dance he usually dances after accomplishing a work of gold, she becomes very angry and replies:

> 'la "douga"! Ce n'est pas la "douga" qui l'empechera de s'abimer les yeux! Et toi tu ferais mieux de jouer dans la cour plutôt que d'aller respirer la poussière et la fumée dans l'atelier !' Ma mere n'aimaint pas que mon père travaillat l'or. Elle savait combien la soudure de l'or est nuisible : un bijoutier épuise ses poumons à souffler au chalumeau, et ses yeux ont fort à souffrir de la proximité du foyer(Laye, 1957 : 38).

She even seems to reject some traditions that she judges unnecessary. The lion's party that must precede each act of circumcision is not accepted by the mother and she considers it as a dangerous act that can harm the children. The narrator explains: 'elle trouvait stupide de courir des risques gratuits'(Laye, 1957 : 118). It is the mother's protective nature that pushes her to be selective concerning some aspects of her traditions.

All the above facts concerning the mother are traits that can be described as universal traits. However, Laye's mother is different. Laye's wit lies in his capacity of crafting characters with universal traits but at the same time they can be seen as uniquely Africans. This duality of patterns has the aim of normalizing what was considered abnormal by the west and at the same time tends to stress the African character. The mother is different because she has mysterious and supernatural powers. Laye writes:

> J'hésite un peu à dire quels étaient ces pouvoirs et je ne veux même pas les décrire tous : je sais qu'on en accueillera le récit avec scepticisme. Moi- même, quand il m'arrive aujourd'hui de me les remémorer, je ne sais plus trop comment je les dois accueillir : ils me paraissent incroyables ; ils sont incroyables ! Pourtant il suffit de me rappeler ce que j'ai vu, ce que mes yeux ont vu. Puis- je récuser le témoignage de mes yeux ? Ces choses incroyables, je les ai vues ; je les revois comme je les voyais. N'y a-t-il pas partout des choses qu'on n'explique pas ? Chez nous, il y a une infinité de choses qu'on n'explique pas, et ma mère vivait dans leur familiarité.(Laye, 1957 : 74).

The mother has these powers because she was born after twins and this feature endowed her with some supernatural gifts: ‘d’où venaient ce spouvoirs ? Eh bien ! ma mère était née immédiatement après mes oncles jumeaux de tindican… l’enfant qui les suit et qui reçoit le nom de « sayon », c’est-à-dire de « puiné des jumeaux », il est, lui aussi, doué du don de sorcellerie’ (Laye, 1957 : 75).

The powers of the mother are various. First, we are informed that she can make a horse stand again. The help of the mother was supplicated by some people to deal with a horse that refused to stand up again. The mother in the presence of all the people could make the horse follow his master. Laye declares:‘Et tous nous vîmes le cheval se dresser aussitôt et suivre docilement son maitre. Je dis très simplement, je dis fidèlement ce que j’ai vu, ce que mes yeux ont vu, et je pense en vérité que c’est incroyable, mais la chose est bien telle que je l’ai dite : le cheval se leva incontinent et suivit son maitre’(Laye, 1957 : 75). Second, she even inherited her father’s totem which is the crocodile. The latter permits her to cross the river without being hurt by the crocodiles. In addition, she frequently sees some revelations during her sleep. Those revelations make of her by no means a witch to be feared but a highly esteemed woman. Those revelations are used to guide the people of her village to make the right decisions in their lives.

Most of the west-African countries used to value women like the mother of Laye – those who most people go to to seek advice. They were called ‘mothers of the town’. Actually this task was considered as an act of ruling and the system was known in pre-colonial time as: ‘dual-sex system’. This system is likened to the ‘excusive, the judiciary and the legislature in the modern European system of government. The dual-sex system was not even known in western countries (Nkuzi, 2007: 41). Camara Laye wanted to revive this tradition. He wanted to cast light on the position of women in the African tradition. He describes his mother as a woman who is respected by her husband and he stresses the fact that

man and women are equal and no one can humiliate a woman unless she accepts to be humilated. He declares:

> Je sais que cette autorité dont ma mère témoignait, paraitra surprenante ; le plus souvent on imagine dérisoire le rôle de la femme africaine, et il est des contrées en vérité ou il est insignifiant, mais l'Afrique est grande, aussi diverse que grande. Chez nous la coutume ressortit à une foncière indépendance, à une fierté innée ; on ne brime que celui qui veut bien se laisser brimer, et les femmes se laissent très peu brimer. Mon père, lui, ne songeait à brimer personne, ma mère moins que personne ; il avait grands respect pour elle, nos voisins aussi, nos amis aussi. Cela tenait, je crois bien, à la personne même de ma mère, qui imposait ; cela tenait encore aux pouvoirs qu'elle détenait (Laye, 1957 :73).

All these powers make the mother a unique woman and perhaps her uniqueness lies in the fact that she is a black African woman. The poem dedicated to her describes her as 'femme noire, femme Africaine (Laye, 1957). The mother represents all the African women but she is also a Symbol of Africa.

The mother as a symbol of the African continent has different implications. It is used as a symbol to speak of the continent from the point of view of a native settler. During colonial times the colonizer made this mixture of African female and the African land and the conquest of African countries was resembled to the description to the female body. So both Africa and African females were belittled and downgraded to the status of objects that needs the exploration of the white man. Ania Loomba in her book *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism* refers to john Donne's peom 'Love's progress' to clarify how the female body is described in terms of the new geography:

> 'twixt an East and West, but 'twixt two suns:
> It leaves a Cheek, a rosie Hemisphere
> On either side, and then directs us where Upon islands fortunate we fall,
> Not faynte Canaries, but Ambrosiall, Her swelling lips …
> and the streight Hellespont between The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts …
> And Sailing towards her India, in that way Shall at her fair AtlantickNavell stay

As an answer, Laye makes the reader, through his description of the mother, believe that the mother is just like the African continent. In other words, The mother is portrayed as a person that should be loved and respected for her sacred character. Speaking of the mother as

a symbol of Africa has roots in Laye's belonging to the Negritude Movement which sought to celebrate African feminine beauty in poetry and prose.

Deborah Weagel in his essay: 'The Power, Symbolism, and the extension of the mother in "L'Enfant Noir": a Feminine Portrait by a Masculine Author.' (2001) speaks about the important role of the mother in Camara Laye's life. More importantly, he stresses the fact that Laye casts light on some symbols such as the earth and water to speak about his mother as he sees them as the extension to her generous character. In other words, these symbols are used to remind the reader of the special traits of the mother as they represent life and generosity. Deborah's analysis is quite reasonable and one can easily agree with his arguments. However, a detailed scrutiny of his ideas may bring to surface a crack in his arguments. Deborah argues:

> The male author, writing from the perspective of a young boy, does not really write about this female character, his mother, with comprehension. He does not describe her interior life […]. Although he has a mother, Laye does not really have the necessary qualifications to write with authority of his mother and her inner sentiments. Forthe most part, he describes her exterior life (Deborah Weagel, 2001: 58)

It can be argued that the relation that binds Laye to his mother is the same that attaches him to his country and continent in general. He feels indebted to both of them. Despite the fact that colonial education had a strong hold over him, it could not separate him from his mother. His love, devotion and loyalty are for his mother. Likewise, colonial education could not decrease his love for his continent.

Laye expresses his unhappiness when he finds himself obliged to move far from his home to pursue his education. His unhappiness is stemmed from the fact that his absence tortures his mother. Laye's separation from his mother is seen by him as something that cannot be accepted. The first time he has been separated from her is because of his circumcision. He has been obliged to stay away from his house until his recovery: 'trois semaines! jamais encore nous n'étionsrestésséparés un si long espace de temps. Quand je

partais en vacances pour Tindican, je demeurais rarement plus de dix ou quinze jours absent, et ce n'était pas une absence qu'on aurait pu comparer à celle qui nous séparait présentement.'(Laye, 1957 : 147). After that Laye finds himself obliged to enter school. He declares: 'J'ai fréquenté très tôtl'école. Je commençai par aller à l'école coranique, puis, un peu plus tard, j'entrai à l'école française. J'ignorais alors tout à fait que j'allais y demeurer des années, et surement ma mère l'ignorait autant que moi, car l'eut-elle deviné, elle m'eut gardé près d'elle'(Laye, 1957 : 107).

But little by little, he becomes used to living far from his mother and he becomes able to stay away for longer periods. At the age of 15 he joins Georges Poiret school in Conakry: 600 km away from his hometown and at the end Laye finds himself obliged to immigrate: Berger explains: 'As he moves from school to school Laye experiences a growing sense of alienation from his family and community' (Berger, R, 2010: 32-54)

At the end of the novel the reader may confirm that the fear of separation that has haunted the mother is an inevitable. However, the end has an opposite significance. When Marie, his friend, asks him if he would come back one day, Laye answers:

> -Tu reviendras?
>
> Elle avait le visage baigné de larmes.
>
> -Oui, dis-je ; oui…
>
> Et je fis encore de ma tête, quand je me renfonçai dans mon fauteuil, tout au fond du fauteuil, parce que je ne voulais pas qu'on vit mes larmes. « Surement, je reviendrai ! » (Laye, 1957: 221).

It is not mentioned in the novel whether Camara Laye comes back to his country to live with his mother or not. However, at the end of the story one understands that Laye's autobiographical novel is his real return to his country that enabled him to be attached with his mother, traditions, and community. The coming section explains in an ample way this idea.

4.6 L'enfant Noir as a Denial of Cultural Death:

One of the books that has enriched the field of psychology is Ernest Becker's the *Denial of Death*. In this work the author brings a whole new understanding of life through questioning the idea of death and what it represents to the human mind. In other words, Ernest Becker argues that the biggest anxiety of the human being is death. He declares: 'Here we introduce directly one of the great rediscoveries of modern thought: that of all things that move man, one of the principal ones is his terror of death' (Becker, 1973: 11). What troubles the human psychic is not the exigencies of life rather his awareness of his mortality. The terror of death shakes his world and makes all that surrounds him mere objects or moments that are doomed to decay. Surrendering to such feelings of anxiety and disturbances leads to the end of the humanity.

However, the human mind since the beginning of life has tried to figure out solutions to coexist with the idea of death. Three solutions have been created by the human mind to overcome the idea of his death. The first one is called the religious solution. The human being found refuge in the idea of life after death. His belief that there is another life waiting for him tranquilized his troubled consciousness and has helped him overpass the difficulties of life. Death represents no threat because he will be 'rewarded with eternal life in the invisible dimension. Little did it matter that the earth was a vale of tears, of horrid sufferings, of incommensurateness, of torturous and humiliating daily pettiness, of sickness and death, a place where man felt he did not belong, "the wrong place,"(Becker, 1973: 17). The second solution is the romantic solution. A lover or a partner becomes: 'The divine ideal within which to fulfill one's life. All spiritual and moral needs now become focused in one individual'. In other words, despite glorifying life the individual's life becomes important because he is in love. His lover becomes his reason d'etre and thus he forgets the terror of death (Becker, 1973: 37).

The third solution which is going to be our main interest is the artistic solution. When the two first solutions become no longer convincing, Becker explains, the human being resorted to create his own solution and this solution is going to be embodied in the work of art that assures his immortality. The individual can remain alive as long as his name, life stories, ideas are perpetuated in a work of art read by different generations.

The artistic solution is central to our analysis because it can be applied to the author under discussion as it does justice to his work which has long been considered as a work that is not in conflict with colonial aspirations. In other words, the death that Ernest Becker brings to light is the physical death. However, there is another kind of death which is more terrifying than the actual death. It is the cultural death that can lead to the death of identity.

Actually, the artistic solution is a kind of heroism. Standing and facing death be it physical or cultural is an act of resistance and heroism. Trying to figure out solutions to overcome the terrors of mortality is heroic and the urge to heroism Becker explains is natural. Human beings tend to create things 'of lasting worth and meaning, that they outlive or outshine death and decay , that man and his products count.' (Becker,1973: 05). As a result, Laye is a hero because in time of fear and misleading truths he came with a masterpiece that immortalizes African sacred beliefs and traditions. In the novel, he speaks about the idea that his beloved past and traditions are disappearing because of change. Laye explains:

> Ce passé pourtant est tout proche : il date d'hier. Mais le monde bouge, le monde change, et le mien plus rapidement peut-être que tout autre, et si bien qu'il semble que nous cessons d'etre ce que nous étions, qu'au vrai nous ne sommes plus ce que nous étions, et déjà nous n'étions plus exactement nous-mêmes dans le moment ou ces prodiges s'accomplissaient sous nos yeux (Laye, 1957 : 80).

. Camara Laye is torn between two antagonistic cultures. It is true that he wants to be educated but at the same time he dreams of maintaining his cultural aspects that attach him to his community. Traditions are considered as the cornerstone of each culture. No culture can

survive without them. The role of each generation is to preserve and perpetuate the lifestyle and the beliefs of their ancestors. The author seems worried because unlike his family he will not be able to do the same. His education means that he is going to live a different life, a life void of so many traditions. Laye declares:

> Ma vie n'était pas ici… et elle n'était pas non plus dans la forge paternelle. Mais ou était ma vie ? Et je tremblais devant cette vie inconnue. N'eut-il pas été plus simple de prendre la suite de mon père ? « L'école…l'école…, pensais-je ; est-ce que j'aime tant l'école ? » Mais peut-être la préférais-je (Laye, 1957: 61).

And in another passage Laye wonders whether he will be able to reintegrate in his society after being educated. In other terms, whether education will strip him of the privilege of understanding the spiritual mysteries of the other world becomes his biggest anxiety. He declares:

> Oui, c'était comme une conversation. Est-ce que moi aussi, un jour, je converserais de cette sorte ? mais non : je continuais d'aller à l'école ! pourtant j'aurais voulu, j'aurais tant voulu poser à mon tour ma main sur le serpent, comprendre, écouter à mon tour ce frémissement, mais j'ignorais comment le serpent eut accueilli ma main et je ne pensais pas qu'il eut maintenant rien à me confier jamais…(Laye, 1957 : 23)

In addition, Laye was not only afraid of forgetting his traditions, but the fear of being forgotten by his community also disturbed him. The author seems to be worried of being or becoming outside the realms of his community. He is aware that colonial education is tracing for him a different type of life that is not similar to that of the members of his community. However he is so fond of the traditions and the lifestyle of his community that he feels afraid of losing them. The reader feels that the author feels guilty because he is educated. The novel is a perfect answer to the worries of the author. He returns to his traditions that were fast disappearing in his memory and in the real life through the writing of his novel. The novel celebrates all kinds of cultural traditions as it rekindles the forgotten customs and old-age rituals. Ernest Becker declares:

> The work of art is, then, the ideal answer of the creative type to the problem of existence as he takes it in—not only the existence of the external world, but especially his own: who he is as a painfully separate person with nothing shared

> to lean on. He has to answer to the burden of his extreme individuation, his so painful isolation. He wants to know how to earn immortality as a result of his own unique gifts. His creative work is at the same time the expression of his heroism and the justification of it (1973: 87).

It can be concluded that *L'enfant Noir* is also a solution to the author's own fears and terrors. It must be noted that the novel was written when Camara Laye was an immigrant in France. During that period, he was a lonely person dreaming of his pure life in his country. The novel glorifies many traditions and inscribes them in the realm of immortality. One tradition that is glorified in the novel is circumcision. The latter, has long been used by the colonizer as a proof of the African's backwardness. To justify their occupation, the white men claimed that their intention was to free the African people from the burden of this barbarian act.

Despite being educated, Laye writes a lengthy description of the act of circumcision and the ceremonies preceding and following it. It is true that the event has been a challenge to the protagonist of the novel but the whole ceremony is presented as a happy event that brings about joy to all the members of the community. Proudly, he makes it the righteous beginning that all the children must pass through to step the threshold of men's world. The latter is con0sidered as a world of pride. This tradition is of a paramount importance because it casts light on the virtues of a community that has long been accused of barbarism. As explained earlier, through the circumcision the reader is introduced to the collective spirit of the Guinean people and their ability to hold secrets, to educate teir children and to overcome hardships.

Another element that Laye strives to revive is the spirituality of the African people and their connectedness with the world of genies, ancestors, and deities. This mysterious world that no one can understand is presented in the most simplified way to both the African reader and the western one. The African reader would feel proud to belong to such a rich community

and the western reader would sympathize with some rituals that seem strange to him. The connectedness with the world of the genies is made through two characters: the father and the mother.

As shown earlier, both characters are unique with special traits. They are strong, wise, loving, caring, hard working, respectful, and devoted people in their community. As a result, they both perform supernatural powers. As if the author wants to explain that having supernatural powers is a privilege endowed only to special people with special traits. People with supernatural power render regular activities, such as gold making, magical. They have the ability of beautifying ordinary actions of daily life. Ada Uzoamaka Azodo in his seminal article entitled: 'The Work in Gold as Spiritual Journey in Camara Laye's "The African Child"' declares:

> Not only was it a highly skilled, noble and creative work, it was also a feast. More than any other kind of work done by the father, the narrator of The African Child states that it was one that drew a large part of the community together as witness to social event. Yet, the social manifestations of the occasion are merely visible evidences of the fundamental belief of Malinke in the closeness of the world of deities and spirits to the world of humans (1994: 52).

Besides, the tradition of circumcision and the work of gold, there is another element that is made palpable in the story of Camara Laye: the beauty of Africa. The white man brought with him industrialization and his coming signed the end of so many charming and beautiful places. As a result, Laye wants to revive the beauty of pre-colonial Africa as many villages became large cities like kourroussa. Laye declares:

> Si bien qu'au lieu de mettre deux heures pour atteindre Tindican, nous en mettions facilement a quatre, mais je ne m'apercevais guère de la longueur du parcours, car toutes sortes de merveilles la coupaient : 'Je dis des « merveilles », parce que Kouroussa est déjà une ville et qu'on n'y a pas le spectacle qu'on voit aux champs et, qui, pour enfant des villes est toujours merveilleux.' (Laye, 1957: 39)

While reading about Guinea in the novel of Camara Laye, the reader would feel enchanted by the beauty of this sacred country. During his tours with his friends chasing birds

and monkeys he portrays the beauty of his country in the most eloquent way. Camara Laye states:

> A mesure que nous avancions sur la route, nous délogions ici un lièvre, là un sanglier, et des oiseaux partaient dans un grand bruit d'ailes; parfois aussi nous rencontrions une troupe de singes ; e chaque fois je sentais un petit pincement au cœur, comme plus surpris que le gibier même que notre approche alertait brusquement. Voyons mon plaisir, mon oncle ramassait des cailloux, les jetait loin devant lui, ou battait les hautes herbes avec une branche morte pour mieux déloger le gibier. Je l'imitais, mais jamais très longtemps : le soleil, dans l'après midi, lui férocement sur la savane ; et je revenais glisser ma main dans celle de mon oncle. De nouveau nous marchionspaisiblement (1957 :40).

In the novel there is an attempt to demonstrate that there is a special relationship that ties the Guinean people with their ancestral land interpreted in the 'la moisson du riz'. The latter, the author informs us, is a joyful ceremony that the Guinean people celebrate every year. It needs the approval of god and the genies of the earth. Camara Laye declares: 'DECEMBRE me trouvait toujours à Tindican Décembre, c'est la saison sèche, la belle saison, et c'est la moisson du riz chaque année j'étais invite à cette moisson, qui est une grande et joyeuse fête et j'attendais impatiemment que mon jeune oncle vint me chercher (1957, 57). This event holds immense significance because it showcases the Guineans' profound appreciations and gratitude harbored in their hearts towards their ancestral lands. Camara Laye states:

> Cet usage, comme tous nos usages, devait avoir sa 4raison, raison qu'on eut facilement découverte chez les anciens du village, au profond du Cœur et de la mémoire des anciens; mais je n'avais pas l'âge alors ni la curiosité d'interroger les vieillards, et quand enfin j'ai atteint cet âge, je n'étais plus en Afrique (Laye, 1957 : 56).

Despite the fact that Laye could not know the real reason of that ceremony, he remains loyal and grateful to his land. Sometimes perpetuating one tradition does not need clear explanations or easily understandable descriptions. One has only to imitate his ancestors for he trusted their reason and here lies the agency of Camara Laye. Despite being educated, he has faith in the reasoning of those who did not attend colonial schools. He is an author with

great agency because he attributes the African traditional ways of learning a higher status than that of western ways of learning.

Part Three: Colonial Education and Agency in Anglophone Literature

For comparison and especially for contrast this part deals with the African authors who received English colonial education. Its main objective is to highlight Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's and Francis Selormey's agency through analyzing their fictional works: *Weep Not, Child and The Narrow Path*. It is an attempt to bring to light Ngugi's and Selormey's wit in repudiating colonial racist ideologies which sought to deprive the Africans from their identities so they could serve colonial aspired goals. It seeks to portray Ngugi and Selormey as discursive voices dealing with a variety of topics that are germane to the reinscription of their people to the world's cultural map as it aims to sketch the authors' position regarding the political situation of their newly independent countries.

Ngugi's *Weep Not, Child* and Francis Selormey's *The Narrow Path* have been eliminated from their countries' national narratives that resist colonial ideologies because they are not overtly committed and militant works. As these fictional books are the embodiment of the authors' own experiences, the vested interest of this part is to trace their thoughts, reflections, general remarks and indirect expressions and speeches by dramatic characters that speak for the authors to highlight their agency which is so often occluded by postcolonial critics and scholars. My objective behind such an undertaking is to portray the authors under discussion as militant writers negotiating with fidelity their position in a world full of contending points of view. Moreover, I will try to show why the two authors look skeptical about some aspects of their traditions and how this skepticism which sometimes ushers into rejection is not in conflict with their reputation, that we seek to stress, as authors rife with agency.

Furthermore, I seek to draw parallels between the way the two authors react to the experience of colonial education as they both were educated in colonial schools, acquired the English language and lived during a turbulent political and decisive economical situation.

The similarities of their reactions will be examined in the light of the British policies of colonial education implemented in their colonies.

Chapter V: Colonial Education and Agency in Ngugi WaThiong'o's*Weep Not, Child*

5.1 Introduction:

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is a prolific Kenyan writer born on January the fifth 1938. He belongs to a peasant family deeply attached to the land. He had many siblings as his father had four wives. He received his first education at the Church of Scotland mission primary school. Ngugi, attended different schools such as the Maanguu Village School and Karinga Association School. In 1955 he attended the Alliance high school.

Ngugi speaks so often of the Mau Mau rebellions in his writings. The Mau Mau was a reality that no Kenyan could escape as all the families, in a way or another, were concerned with this organization. Like in *Weep Not, Child*, his elder brother and many other members of his family joined the Mau Mau rebellion. He witnessed how his relatives were jailed and tortured by the British. As a result, he wanted, through his writings, to portray this reality to the whole world. Actually, Ngugi's fame stems from the fact that he wrote so many novels that depict and criticize the reality of the Kenyan people not only during colonialism but even after that critical period.

One prominent novel is *The River Between* published in 1965. It is a novel that tells the story of two rival villages: Makuyu and Kameno. The two villages are separated by a river that they both use in their daily lives. The two villages are enemies because they embraced different perspectives. With the coming of the white man, life changed and radical changes have affected the Kenyan society and Africa in general. One village decides to adopt the western values and the other refuses to abandon traditional ways of living. The novel's main themes are tradition versus modernity and Christianity. Like *Weep Not, Child*, the novel is accused of being too simple to be considered as a piece of writing that denounces colonialism. The two early novels of Ngugi are considered to be different from his late works in which he

seems courageous enough to state directly and in a rude manner his uneasiness with the established order of things.

Another Ngugi's novel that has gained a widespread fame is *A Grain of Wheat* that was published in 1967. It tells the Story of Mugo a man who spent time in detention and whose community's people think that he is a national hero who deserves respect. Actually, Mugo is the one who betrays their highly esteemed Freedom fighter: Kihika. For that reason, he refuses to give a speech on the Uhuru day. The secret he hides tortures him and troubles his consciousness. It is around this topic that the themes of the novel are built such as the individual and community, violence, guilt and redemption and so on.

Weep Not, Child, the *River Between*, and *A grain of Wheat* are approximately the same. Put differently, what is common between the three novels is that they all deal with violence in the history of Kenya and this is what Viviane Azarian states in her book entitled *Tracks and Traces of Violence: Representation and Memorialization of Violence: Views from Art, Literature and Anthropology*.

In the same vein, Kenneth Harrow sees a connection between the three novels mentioned above. In other words, he maintains that the first two novels were a preparation for the new writer who emerged through the writing of *A Grain of Wheat*. In his essay entitled 'Ngugi Wa Thiong 'o's A Grain of Wheat: Season of Irony', he argues that the two first novels 'established' Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's understanding and critical attitude to the cruelty of colonial rules that had a deep impact on the Kenyan people even in the aftermath of independence. This understanding encouraged him to be a discursive voice defending the rights of his people. He even tried to deal with the problem of neocolonial regimes in his country (1985: 243).

Some critics claim that in the novels that were written later such as *Petals of Blood, The Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* we see a new Ngugi with a different ideology. Thus, the task of so many critics and scholars has been tracing the change in the ideological writings of Ngugi. They have tried to highlight the differences between Ngugi the naïve writer and the bold, open Marxist author in his late works. Nyongesa, Andrew in his book entitled *Tintinnabulation of Literary theory: Traversing Genres to contemporary experience* speaks of The Marxist elements in the writings of Ngugi and argues that Ngugi's uniqueness lies in the fact that he has been able to use Marxist ideas to unveil the cruel reality of the leaders who suck the bloods of the workers and those who had sacrificed to fight the colonial regimes (2018, 06).

Despite the fact that the majority of critics believe that Ngugi's Marxist ideals are better seen in the works published after *A Grain of Wheat*, the same author stated above claims that even *A Grain of Wheat* contains some Marxist ideas that the author fully develops in his later works. For him, Mugo represents the corrupt leaders who governed Kenya after independence.

The concern of this chapter is with *Weep Not, Child*. The novel tells the story of young Njoroge and his family during the emergency period. They all live in a village called Gikuyu village. The novel opens with Nyokabi's words who calls her son to ask him whether he likes to go to school to receive Western education. The opening of the novel is full of happiness as it promises a bright future for the protagonist. Njoroge is the first person who attends school in the family. As a result, he is a source of pride to the other members of the family; especially his father.

The father of Njoroge, Ngoto, is a farmer who works for a British man named Mr. Howland. His hope that one day the land will be taken back by the African people pushes him

to work devotedly for the land owner. Ngoto loves the land of Mr Howland because it belonged to his ancestors. For that reason, he has never felt separated from it. Mr Howland on his turn, despite being a white exploiter, adores the way Ngotho works in the lands. Kamau is the half brother of Njoroge and he is approximately his age. He is a little bit bigger than him. Unlike, Njoroge who dreams of being an educated man, Kamau hopes to succeed in his life as a carpenter. Boro is the other brother of Njoroge who despises the British because he lost his brother in the big War when they were fighting for them .He all the time blames his father for working in Mr. Howland's Land.

So often, Njoroge goes to Kipanga, a large town, where the famous barber works and tells strange stories about the white man. His participation in the Second World War equipped him with experiences in dealing and telling stories about the strange white man. The town, Kipanga, we are told, is different from other Kenyan villages because it is a site of different races like the Indians.

One Monday, Njoroge goes to school like the other children of his age. Because he does not know where the school is situated, Mwihaki accompanies him to show him the way. Mwihaki is the daughter of Jacobo, a *Muhoi* who owns the land on which the family of Ngotho lives. The first days of school are not a happy experience for Njoroge. The latter is so often teased by older boys. But along the days Njoroge and Mwihaki develops a strong friendship.

Njoroge proves to be a good student. He learns so fast and likes reading and writing. He even develops a special relationship with the bible. When the father recounts for his children the old stories of African history, he tries all the time to find similarities between the stories told in the bible and his father's stories. Njoroge goes to high school but Mwihaki is sent to Teachers' training school.

One incident that changes the life of Njoroge's family is the strike. The people of the town decide to go on strike to ask for their stolen rights and to ask for equality. Despite the fact that Ngotho knows that his participation in the strike will cost him his job, he decides to be part of it. When Jacobo comes to ask the people of the twon to return home, Ngotho, without, hesitation, attacks him. As a result, Ngotho, is not only fired by Mr Howland, he is also evicted by Jacobo from his land. This incident has thrown the family of Njoroge into an endless despair. Fortunately, Nganga the master of Kamau gives a land for the family to live in.

The misery of the Njoroge's family does not stop at this level. The death of Jacobo, who is actually killed by Boro who wants to avenge his murdered brother, has thrown the family into a dark abyss. Njoroge is dragged from his school to be interrogated by the police and he is tortured without a mercy so he can give information that would help the police identify the killer. Ngotho, to save his other son Kamau who is detained, declares that he is the killer. Njoroge is released but he goes out from prison a different person. His life becomes dark and he is nothing but a hopeless person because he lost the opportunity of being an educated person. The poverty of the family pushes him to work in a shop. Even his friendship with Mwihaki is cut. Njoroge becomes a desperate person because all the things he has dreamt of disappeared. He decides to commit suicide, but his mother comes to rescue him from killing himself.

Weep Not, Child has been the concern of so many postcolonial critics and scholars. They all have tried to decipher the hidden messages of the text and read between the lines to detect some indirect messages the author wants to transmit. Some of them were not convinced of the simplicity and the naivety that have been attributed to the novel. They have been convinced that the text is more than a simple recounting of Njoroge's life from childhood to adulthood.

Nicholas Kamau-Goro in his article entitled 'African culture and the language of nationalist imagination: the reconfiguration of Christianity in Ngugi Wa thiong'o's *The River Between* and *Weep Not, Child*' deals with the issue of Christianity in the novel. He examines the way Ngugi Wa Thiong'o fuses Christianity with the traditional religion of the Gikuyu people. He traces the way Christianity is reconfigured and appropriated by the author 'through the idiom of Gikuyu traditional gnosis.' For him, the fusion of Christianity and the Gikuyu's traditional religion is meant to free the African culture in general from the homogenous image attributed to it by the colonial powers and has the aim of ascribing a universal character to it (2010: 10).

Contrary to those critics and scholars who explore the issue of Christianity and colonialism in the early works of Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and argue that the author has deployed strategies to weld both traditions in his novels, Mark discusses the author's use of 'discourses of religion in Africa' such as prophecy which is considered as a pre-colonial element of African religion.

5.2 The Myth of the Land As a Medium of Redemption:

The main interest of the African colonized people was to regain their stolen lands that were occupied violently by the western countries. The majority of the postcolonial themes of African writings revolve around such an acute topic. The land does not represent a material possession only, through the so many literary productions we come to understand that the land represents the history, culture, and traditions of the colonized people in Africa. In other words, the land is an identity marker. It is so important in the African culture because it represents a sign of wealth and a sign of manhood as well. Only the people who owned lands were considered rich and they would never be counted as such even if they owned other material possessions.

Right from the beginning the reader in *Weep Not, Child* is introduced to the facts stated above. The land in the novel under discussion is a sign of wealth. Ngugi states: 'If a man had plenty of money, many motor cars, but no land, he could never be counted as rich. A man who went with tattered clothes but had at least an acre of red earth was better off than the man with money (1964: 22).

It is for that reason why Ngotho, the protagonist's father is so fond of the land. The latter has a big importance in his heart. His strong belief that one day the land shall return to the righteous owner has encouraged him to work devotedly as a Shambaboy for Mr Howlands. The latter is a white man who owns African lands and made the original settlers work for him. The narrator declares that Mr Howland: 'just loved to see Ngotho working in the farm; the way the old man touched the soil, almost fondling, and the way he tended the young tea plants as if they were his own .... Ngotho was too much of a part of the farm to be separated from it..'(Ngugi, 1964: 33). The land holds such an important position in the hearts of the African people because, actually, it denotes a spiritual uniqueness as it is related to God.

The myth of creation of the Kikuyu land is a confirmatory evidence of this belief. Gikuyu and Mumbi, the first African man and woman who are considered as the ancestors of all the African people, were given the African lands and were asked to rule them. In *Weep Not, Child* this story of origin is narrated by Ngotho to his children in one of their evening meetings. Ngotho states: 'God showed Gikuyu and Mumbi all the land and told them, "This land I hand over to you. O Man and woman It's yours to rule and till in serenity sacrificing Only to me, your God, under my sacred tree ...' (Ngugi, 1964:27-28). The oral transmission of stories that is central to the African tradition contributed in fostering the African self-esteem and their commitment to their ancestral lands. Actually, this passage is of paramount importance because it is a direct and a clear reclaiming of the land. It proves that Ngugi's

education did not make him forget his ancestral stories. Proudly and without fear he restates them in his fiction to stress this fact.

Indeed, the realization of Njoroge that all the lands belonged to the people of his country pushes him to ask reasonable question about the loss of these lands. 'Where did the land go?' is the first reaction of Njoroge and it is the question asked by the writer himself. Ngugi wants, indirectly, to make some facts clear to the African and the western readers. Indeed, and in relation to Njoroge's question, Kori asks his father another valuable question about the possibility of prophecy to be fulfilled and whether there will come a day when the African people will take back what had once belonged to them. The answer was, as a matter of fact, not satisfactory, but it is direct and straightforward enough to reveal a bitter reality about the passiveness of the African people. As if Ngugi Wa Thiong'o does not only blame the Europeans for the deprivation of the African lands but the African people, also, must be blamed.

We are told that Ngotho like his father did nothing to repossess the land of his ancestors. Instead of acting and trying to find solutions to restore the stolen lands, he remains inactive waiting for the prophecy to be fulfilled by itself. Ngugi states: 'Ngotho was puzzled. Would these people never go? But had not the old Gikuyu seer said that they would eventually return the way they had come?' (Ngugi, 1964: 36). Nevertheless, the answer of Ngotho to his children is satirical as it discloses an ironic critique to the generation of Ngotho who did nothing to regain the stolen lands. The following passage clarifies Ngugi's point of view:

> I don't know. Once in the country of the ridges where the hills and ridges lie together like lions, a man rose. People thought that he was the man who had been sent to drive away the white man. But he was killed by wicked people because he said people should stand together. I've waited for the prophecy. It may not be fulfilled in my life time ... but O, Murungu, I wish it could' (Ngugi, 1964: 30).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o hints at the fact that sticking together is what the African people need to survive. But, the reality, unfortunately, is the opposite case. The wicked people who

killed the man who called for the unity of the African people still exist in the present time. The reader is reminded of this fact in different occasions. Jacobo is one prominent example. Jacobo is a black man but he despises other African people. He is a meek servant of the white people and they use him for their own benefits. All the people of his country hate him because of his unjustified cruelty towards them. Jacobo believes that his cruelty and wrong doings over the people of his country makes of him a valuable man among the white people and they may, consequently consider him different from the other colonized people. Actually, the white man despises Jacobo and he is not considered as a different person from the rest of the settlers.

The cruelty of Jacobo towards his fellow men is actually a realization of the colonizer's policy of divide and rule. Ngugi, through his novels, warns the Africans of this reality. Ngugi states: 'Mr Howlands despised Jacobo because he was a savage. But he would use him. The very ability to set these people fighting amongst themselves instead of fighting with the white men gave him an amused satisfaction.' (1964: 88). More importantly, the people who are loyal to their lands and traditions are passive and stick to prophecy rather than action. As a result, Boro who becomes later on a freedom fighter denounces prophecy. Ngugi writes:

> As he [Boro] listened to this story, all these things came into his mind with a growing anger. How could these people have let the white man occupy the land without acting? And what was all this superstitious belief in a prophecy? In a whisper that sounded like a shout, he said, 'To hell with the prophecy (Ngugi, 1964:30).

Prophecy is a central theme in *Weep Not, Child*. As it alludes to a future that bounds the whole Africans up together, it is a constant reminder of the cultural heritage of the Kenyan people because it is closely related to mythology. All the prophecies mentioned in the novel stem from the old beliefs of the Kenyan people transmitted from one generation to another. Ngugi makes the spirit of these beliefs alive through explaining them asserting by so doing his African identity that is akin to his group of people. At the same time, he questions the validity

of myth and prophecy in a time of crisis and he wonders whether they are enough to regain the stolen lands.

Indeed, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's bewilderment can be interpreted by the different reactions the characters adopt with regard to prophecy. As the father sticks and believes in the redemptive effect of African Mythology and prophecy, Boro abandons, completely, old mythical beliefs that encourage the African people to be passive and meek. He, instead, finds refuge in violent actions. As a result, he becomes a Mau Mau fighter. Njoroge's reaction is related to Christianity. As the story about creation and the prophecy about regaining the African lands could not quench his thirst concerning the overarching question – where did the land go? He quickly resorts to the bible to link the Kikuyu story of origin with the story of Adam and Eve.

Simon Gikandi asserts: 'Njoroge comes to embrace the Christian story of revelation and salvation as an appropriate replacement for the dying prophetic narrative' (2000: 92). However, Njoroge's combination of Christianity and tradition is sterile and brings about no positive changes to his society. The failure of Njoroge to help his people is an indirect message of the writer who wants, through the character of Njoroge, to warn the African people against the unquestionable belief in the bible. No doubt, Njoroge is portrayed as a strong Christian believer. Ngugi states:

> The Bible was his favourite book. He liked the stories in the Old Testament. He loved and admired David, often identifying himself with this hero. The book of Job attracted him though it often gave rise to a painful stirring in his heart. In the New Testament, he liked the story of the young Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount (Ngugi: 1964:55).

As the novel is about the maturity of the protagonist, the reader can see that Njoroge at the end of the novel abandons the total belief in the bible. As a result, and for the first time after things have fallen apart, he refuses to pray. For prayer has done nothing for him and his family as well. Indeed, Ngugi stresses this fact right from the beginning; the prayers of Njoroge during the night that precedes the strike are not answered. However, he could not

grasp this fact for his faith in the bible and the righteousness of god is so deep. This belief is gradually relinquished especially after the death of Isaka: Njoroge's teacher. His execution has made Njoroge aware that Christianity and Christ cannot rescue the African people from their bitter reality. Ngugi states:

> Isaka squatted and calmly watched the scene. He had no documents. When the white soldier shouted at him, Isaka answered in a calm, almost resigned tone. Where had he left the documents? Satan had made him forget them at home. But the white soldier knew better. Isaka was a Mau Mau. Again Isaka replied that Jesus had saved him and he could not exchange Jesus with Mau Mau. The officer looked at him with reddening eyes. Yet he did not touch him. Njoroge wondered if he was afraid of Isaka. There was something strange in the teacher's calm. When the others were allowed to go Isaka was made to remain. He did not protest. 'Come this way and we'll see what Jesus will do for you.'(1964: 80).

The ironic answer of the soldier is so significant for it reveals a reality about the teaching of Christianity and colonial education in general. The African people were taught to love god so they could be loved and rescued by him. Being a good obedient Christian is the thing that guarantees their safety in this life and in the afterlife. The irony is that the white man, the one who thrived to inculcate in the Africans' minds the importance of Christian spiritual beliefs believes only in material and concrete proofs. Only the documents can stand as a proof for the teacher's innocence and their absence means the opposite case is utterly true.

With the development of the story, it seems that Ngugi takes side with Boro for the reader is informed that prophecy is not the solution that the Africans need. During the night that precedes the strike, the rain overwhelms the whole region and it is taken as a good omen by the people:

> Much rain fell at Kipanga and the country around on the eve of the judgment day. People were happy in all the land. The rain was a good omen. Black folk were on trial. The spirit of black folk from Demi na Mathathi was on trial. Would it be victorious? It was the growing uncertainty of the answer that made people be afraid and assert more and more aggressively that a victory would surely follow (Ngugi, 1964: 81).

However, the strike is a failure and Ngotho who is an ardent believer in prophecies has much to do with this failure. His impulsive attack on Jacobo has turned the strike into a total mess. Actually, Ngugi too alludes to the emptiness of those prophecies and instead of celebrating them he attempts to find a bridge between the prophetic stories of old African beliefs and the Christian stories:

> Njoroge came to place faith in the Bible and with his vision of an educated life in the future was blended a belief in the righteousness of God. Equity and justice were there in the world. If you did well and remained faithful to your God, the Kingdom of Heaven would be yours. A good man would get a reward from God; a bad man would harvest bad fruits. The tribal stories told him by his mother had strengthened this belief in the virtue of toil and perseverance.(Ngugi, 1964: 55)

It must be noted, however, that African tradition for Njoroge was just a means to cement his belief in the bible, Christianity and the stories taught by colonial institutions that were meant to muzzle the African people. As a result, the connection of the two, myth and Christianity, blossoms in in his brother Boro and his friend Kiarie's ideas. Because contrary to Ngotho who is passive and lives in the past and Njoroge who is a dreamer and sticks to a virtual sterile future, Boro and his friend Kiari are active agents whose actions are guided by present circumstances. Kiarie, for instance, is clever enough to see the destructive effect of the bible. He explains to the people of his town how it was used by the western colonizer as a means to dig roads towards the violation of the African lands and the Africans' rights: Ngugi states: 'He [Kiarie] told them how the land had been taken away, through the Bible and the sword. 'Yes, that's how your land was taken away. The bible paved the way for the sword' (Ngugi, 1964: 65). But almost immediately, the speaker uses biblical notions to motivate his people. He says in a compelling way: 'There was a man sent from God whose name was Jomo. He was the Black Moses empowered by God to tell the white Pharoah 'Let my people go!' (ibid: 65).

The message that the passage above hints at is central to Bhabha's interpretation of mimicry as it is filled with situational irony. The passage mocks and undermines the

Europeans in their attempt to convert the Africans to Christianity and turn them into Disciples of Christ only to make of them submissive people. Ngugi, through this passage, demonstrates how the bible is being used against the white man and how it is re-appropriated to be conducive to Africans' plans of liberation. He links Jomo to Moses, but this Moses is different for he is black. This is a real mimicry for the mimicry that is created by the white man contains its own seeds of destruction. Moreover, it is a kind of hybridity that tends to defy the binary opposition the colonizer created to fix the African people into an inferior other. Jane Wikilson in her essay entitled 'Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the struggle with the angel' confirms this fact. She argues that the 'reconfiguration' of some biblical stances by the author invites critics in general and the European in specific to revise their own position while criticizing (1998: 49).

Moreover, despite the pessimistic ending of the novel, one can grasp a glimpse of hope incarnated not only in Ngugi's ability to portray to the world the negative effect of colonization, but in how one can benefit from the misfortunes of all the characters to come up with a more workable identity. So, the challenge of the reader is to understand how Ngugi, through this novel is trying to weave a postcolonial identity that is neither purely African nor completely detached from African roots.

Perhaps Ngugi's self writing can be found in the characters altogether. Despite the fact that Ngugi in his early work, *Weep Not, Child*, seems unable to situate himself in an entangled world of contending realities, it is the combination of the three characters that gives us a complete image of how one can perceive himself as a postcolonial subject. In other terms, though the novel in its essence is believed to revolve around the journey of the protagonist, Njoroge, in his attempt to integrate himself into the colonizer's world through education for a better quality of life, one cannot really understand Ngugi's narratives without putting all the characters of the novel in juxtaposition. Simon Gikandi believes: 'one of the reasons Ngugi's

emergency stories seem so pessimistic is because while the long awaited moment of decolonization has arrived, promising a radical rupture with the past, the new imagined community of nation is caught between the threat of the repressed traditions and the truncated identities created by colonial modernity' (2000: 75).

So to start a new life and to build a new nation that is healthy and sane one must understand his problems, and this is what *Weep Not, Child* seems to be doing. Through the theme of prophecy and Christianity that both are akin to postcolonial identity Ngugi highlights the unfavorable tendencies one must avoid to live in post- colonial Kenya. One cannot remain untouched by colonialism even if he is educated or not educated. Colonial education cannot protect Njoroge from violence and African tradition does not prevent Ngotho from using Western way of thinking. The following passage illustrates how the western thinking reversed the old way of thinking and obliged the African people to embrace it:

> The Gikuyus said, 'We shall not give the hyena twice.' Now since the white man had reversed the tribal law and cried, 'A tooth for a tooth', it was better for Ngotho to offer his old tooth that had failed to bite deep into anything. But Ngotho could never tell where he had found courage to walk into the D.O.'s office and admit that he had killed Jacobo. It was a confession that had shocked the whole village (Ngugi, 1964:134)

So instead of defending the tradition of prophecy and denouncing everything that is western Ngugi hybridizes the two to empower his culture. In other words, the African myth is being re appropriated to breathe in it a new spirit that is in line with the contemporary changes. Ngugi abandons Christianity that leads only to disillusion like the case of Njoroge, who has always dreamt of being messiah that will save his people from their misery through education, and at the same time he refuses prophecy and myth that created passive people. He instead chooses a third space from which he repudiates the oppressor's attempt to mesmerize the people. This fruitful hybridization is in fact Ngugi's agency because he was successful to empower his culture by means of negotiation.

5.3 The Irony of Education as a Liberating Force:

One prominent theme in *Weep Not, child* is the one of education. No doubt, the whole story is about the journey of Njoroge and his attempt to escape the misfortunes that surround him through colonial education. The reader can understand that the novel is about the maturity of the protagonist and how his experiences especially his schooling and colonial education have contributed markedly in constructing his identity. As a consequence, Weep *Not, Child* is classified as a Bildungsroman novel. A novel is classified as a Bildungsroman if it traces the maturity of the main character who by the end of the story is portrayed as a person who is at ease with the outer world and his inner self as he achieves his goals (Kern, 2001: 4).

The irony is that, though the novel is about the growth of the central character and the characters surrounding him as well, Njoroge does not achieve what he desires and by no means seems in accord with the world. Gikandi argues that the novel takes a divergent path from the classical Bildungsroman because it portrays the educational experience that is supposed to be the journey that leads the protagonists to his desired end as a negative experience that causes his own downfall (2000: 89). This departure is significant to the whole understanding of the novel because through this technique the author questions the efficacy of colonial education (Morton, 2013: 134).

Indeed, *Weep Not, Child* is a novel that is purposeful. It questions the validity of western education. It seeks to help the African reader judge whether the western education contributes in the formation of the individual and the development of the self or it only leads to his alienation.

In the introductory pages of the novel, education is portrayed as the liberating force that will save the protagonist and his family from their misery. Approximately, all the characters believe in the saving grace of education. For instance, it is the mother, Nyokabi

that encourages her son to be enrolled at school. In the same vein, the mere idea of having an educated son thrilled Ngotho: 'Ngotho was proud that his son would start learning. Then anybody now asked him whether he had taken any of his sons to school, he would proudly say, *'Yes!'* It made him feel almost equal to Jacobo.' (Ngugi, 1964: 13-14). Education would provide the father with some sort of equality with people whom he considers superior to him like Jacobo. The latter, unlike the majority of the characters, is a rich African man because he owns a land and he is an educated person. Njoroge reckons: ''Yes,' Njoroge said thoughtfully. 'That's what I want. And you know, I think Jacobo is as rich as Mr Howlands because he got education. And that's why each takes his children to school because of course they have learnt the value of it.' (Ngugi, 1964: 1).

In the beginning of the novel, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o tries to portray the image the African people had about Western education and how the colonizer, to some extent, could inculcate in their minds the idea that his education was the only way to salvation. Education, in other words, was thought to make people rich and respectable in their society. Education had one function in the mind of the African people: saving them from the vicious circle of poverty.

Through this connection of being a rich and the possibility of becoming equal to rich people only through learning we come to unravel the riddle of Ngugi in connecting the question of the land to education. Despite the luxurious life that education would guarantee, according to, Nyokabi, it is the land that has made education of great value. 'Education is everything,' Ngotho said. 'Yet he doubted this because he knew deep inside his heart that land was everything. Education was good only because it would lead to the recovery of the lost lands.'(Ngugi, 1964: 43).

Njoroge, like the rest of the characters has a deep faith in education. He considers himself the savior of his community. He believes that education will shield him from poverty, misery,

and all the social problems that plague his family. He idealizes education and he, even, identifies himself with David, the prophet he so often reads about in the Old Testament. But implicitly Njoroge's fancies about education are portrayed as childish. His dream about the lavish life he would live with his family after the strike demonstrates that there is nothing great about Njoroge and he is just a child like the other children of his age. Ngugi says: 'When Njoroge went to bed, he prayed that the strike be a success. He hoped it would come soon. If his father had much money, he could buy a lorry like that one of Jacobo. He slept and dreamed of the happy moment of wealth and pleasure after the strike.'(Ngugi, 1964: 59)

Perhaps, the real aim of the writer is to make the reader aware of the sterility of colonial education as only the naïve characters believe in the redemptive effect of education. The first character is the little boy Njoroge who logically has no a wide perception of the world surrounding him and the second character is the father who is portrayed as explained in the previous section as a passive and submissive person. Here lies the agency of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o.

Even Jacobo places strong faith in education and when he meets Njoroge accidently in his house he tells him: 'It is such as you who must work hard and rebuild the country.' (Ngugi, 1964: 104). For sure, Jacobo's aspirations about education are different from the other characters for Jacobo is a traitor working for the white man. Jacobo encourages Njoroge to be well instructed because he wants him to become like him not like his brother Boro: who is a freedom fighter.

Another character who adds significant meaning to the theme of education is Boro. The latter is portrayed in the novel as a man of great awareness and a person who cultivates features of strength and courage. Implicitly, his manhood is not a sign of his age but a sign of his maturity. For that reason Ngugi declares: 'When the war came to an end, Boro had come home, no longer a boy but a man with experience and ideas, only to find that for him there

was to be no employment. There was no land on which he could settle, even if he had been able to do so.' (Ngugi, 1964: 30). Boro has become mature because of the experiences and the ideas he gained from the big war.

Indeed, the First World War as well as the second one contributed greatly in the awareness and full growth of the African mind. The image of the white man as being invincible disappeared with the encounter that revealed the most vulnerable features of the white man. The black people fought in the front lines and could easily defeat and kill other white men in the battle field. They walked in their streets, went out with their women and most importantly they came back home larded with ideas about liberty and the right to decide in matters related to their destiny. The stories the barber tells to the clients in his shop explains well these fruitful experiences. In a confident way the barber concludes: 'we carried guns and we shot white men. […]' Y-e-e-e-s. They are not the gods we had thought them to be'(Ngugi, 1964: 10-11).

They understand the reality of the colonial education and the harm it can engender in the African societies. As a result, their reactions were violent and seen by the naïve characters as satanic deeds. Isaac, the teacher who is killed by the white man believes that he is saved by God to the extent that he can never join the Mau Mau guerrillas in their struggle. It is true that most of the freedom fighters were educated in colonial schools and Jomo, the hope of the nation, is the best example, but Ngugi wants to stress that there were some people who believed blindly in colonial education.

Through the novel we can understand that the Mau Mau made efforts to close those schools which were a threat to the kenyan society. The Mau Mau fighters were aware that the rooms where the African children were taught were not a place of pure learning, they were dangerous places that produce acculturated citizens who work devotedly for the western authorities. This fact is made clear in the novel. Unlike those Mau Mau fighters, Boro, in a

contradicting manner, supports the education of Njoroge. Amoko believes: 'by helping to send his brother to colonial school, Boro devalues his own values and sacrifices. His contradictory actions reveal the dangers of the education fetish that pervades the novel' (2015: 58). This ironic weaving is meant to undermine the high value of education. . Ngugi wants to make a point that in time of war education is not needed. He states: '*In Weep Not, Child* I just wanted to capture as much as possible the atmosphere of the situation, what it felt like to live in a civil war' (quoted in Amoko, 2015: 48).

The above fact is calcified when the two schooled characters Mwihaki and Njoroge are disappointed and not received cordially after their success at school. Their happiness is cut by the sad events in their town. The strike is more important for the people than their success. Because in time of upheaval action is the only solution that might improve their living conditions not education that was first and foremost a tool used by the colonizer to tame people.

However, Njoroge deep faith in education does not disappear. He continues to cling into a virtual future deeply attached to education. Even when the school is threatened to be attacked Njoroge refuses to drop school. He becomes fully mature only after his expulsion from school. Despite being a brilliant student, the colonial administration refuses to treat him as a different person from the other uneducated African people. He is tortured to death and sent home with a broken heart. Njoroge, finally, realizes that his deep faith in education and all his beliefs are mistaken:

> Njoroge had always been a dreamer, a visionary who consoled himself faced by the difficulties of the moment by a look at a better day to come. Before he started school, he had once been lent to his distant uncle to help him in looking after cattle. The cattle had troubled him much. But instead of crying like other children, he had sat on a tree and wished he had been at school. For that would end such troubles. And for an hour he had seen himself grown up and at school. Meanwhile the cattle had eaten a good portion of a shamba and his uncle had to send him home immediately. But all these experiences now came to Njoroge as shocks that showed him a different world from that he had believed himself living in. For these troubles seemed to have no end, to have no cure. At first these had a numbing effect so that he did not seem to feel. All he knew was that his father and his now only brother were in trouble and he himself was not at school. But even when his

> mind became clear, the old fear came back and haunted him. His family was about to break and he was powerless to arrest the fall (Ngugi, 1964: 98).

The above passage shows the stark contrast between the young dreamer Njoroge who has a romanticized vision about education and the adult one who has just come to realize that his dreams are just the figment of his imagination. His fate is just like the fate of all the poor Africans who work in Indian shops. Njoroge has felt enough despair to the extent that he decides to commit suicide. Despite the fact that he is rescued by his mother, this tragic ending is significant to the whole development of the novel. Gikandi reckons that the whole conduct of the novel suggests 'that the most useful and lasting form of education is negative-the destruction of the hero illusions about his own sense of integrity and the possibilities of his integration into the world' (2000:88).

I think that the dichotomy of the most useful form of education as negative has much to do with the tragic ending that is central to the novel as a whole. Actually, the unhappy ending of the novel is not a surprise to the reader who from the first pages of the novel is introduced to an atmosphere of awe, despair, hopelessness, and melancholy. The latter in case of *Weep Not, Child* has a collective appeal for it is presented 'not as the site of a personal unconscious, harboring individual 'anger', but as the 'place' where 'political' unconscious becomes readable, in and as the tension of the self and the self constituting others' (Gikandi, 2000: 96).

Indeed, the narrative of the novel is plotted by a desire to purge the feelings of the writer as well as the reader. And here we come to the usefulness of literature when seen from the expressive point of view. Falck contends:

> Art […] could be seen from this point of view as a range of activities in which the expressive dimension is either the only 'present' or else is – in some sense- the only one which is immediately relevant or significant. In the case of poetry or literature, the art is made out of words; and because words make reference to, and have a descriptive dimension within, the world of human life, what a piece of literature (on this view) is 'made out of' is in a certain sense the very stuff of human life or human history itself (1991: 63).

So the agency of Ngugi can be translated in his ability to make the reader identify himself with the writer and create in him unpleasant feelings to feel the atrocity of the situation during the Kenyan war against the British. As a matter of fact, the catharsis Ngugi wants to create in his prose is not the one which evokes fear and repulse but additionally the one which makes the reader cultivate a more compassionate concern for the characters. This is actually what Aristotle refers to as the catharsis of fear and pity. And Lopes and Gaut in their work *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics (2013*) explain well how the characters in a work should be neither too 'splendid' to be undeservedly destructed nor too villain to merit their tragic ending. For that reason one may feel pity towards the African characters whose end is tragic because they are decent enough to engage the reader's emotions and at the same time they suffer from tragic flaws that make their ill fated ending a deserved one. For instance, Ngotho's fondness of prophecy is a thing that makes him lose his manhood and his respect among his family. After being the center of the family he is portrayed at the end as follows:

> Was he a *man* any longer, he who had watched his wife and son taken away because of breaking The curfew without a word of protest? Was this cowardice? It was cowardice, cowardice of the worst sort. He stood lip and rushed to the door like a madman. It was too late. He came back to his seat, a defeated man, a man who cursed himself for being a man with a lost manhood. He now Iif1 -wthat even that waiting had been a form of cowardice, I plltting off of action.(Ngugi, 1964: 91).

In the same vein, the tragic flaw of the central character, Njoroge, is his romantic vision of education as the liberating force. To make this tragic flaw visible to the reader, the author keeps stressing this fact.

The way Ngugi deals with the theme of education in his novel has the aim of giving a picture of the bleeding Kenyan society back then and persuades the reader, furthermore, to perceive the educational institutions as dangerous sanctuaries rather than a shelter protecting the individual from the fate of all the Africans during the emergency period. Actually it is meant to illustrate Ngugi's agency in violating the ideals of colonial education already well

established in early colonial years. He wanted through *Weep Not, Child* to show that education is not the asylum of the African people.

To achieve the above stated goals and as part of transgressing the Bildungsroman *Clichés*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o associates to the realistic narrative style, that is a high literary mode generally connected to the Bildungsroman, some gothic elements of darkness, madness, and violence. This mixture of realism with Gothicism, though not a new creation as it has its origin in the Victorian period when writers such as Bronté sought to critique the ills of their society using this method, is used by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to produce a certain effect of horror and to offer a terrifying perception of the school through transforming the educational experience of the protagonist into a horrific one. The feeling as a whole is the uncanny and unhomely.

It is true that Bhabha uses the term to refer to the home but here we can borrow the term to apply it on school. Like the home, the school is a shelter and a place of hope for the protagonist. But instead of finding what he has hoped, the school becomes the most terrible place that has thrown the protagonist into despair. As such the school evokes the 'uncanny' and the unhomely sense which offer an unhomely reading of the political future of Kenya. For Njoroge's experience of education 'the un-spoken, unrepresented pasts that haunt the historical present' (Bhabha, 1992: 147).

Ngugi wants the reader to feel the darkness of the atmosphere. He wants to create in him a feeling of awe whenever he comes across the idea of school and education. The novel is suffused with examples that represent the dark atmosphere of the school and how educational experience is a trapping one. He describes:

> The school looked a strange place. But fascinating. The church huge and hollow, attracted him. It looked haunted. He knew it was the House of God. But some boys shouted while they were in there. This too shocked him. He had been brought up to respect all holy places, like graveyards and the bush around fig trees. (Ngugi, 1964; 116)

In order to degenerate the holiness of the school, Ngugi describes it as an unsecure place. When the school receives the letter threatening them, the majority of the pupils decide not to go to school. However, Njoroge decides to go to school because his brother advises him to carry on his studies because danger is everywhere. Boro advises him: 'You'll be foolish to leave school. The letter may not be genuine. Besides do you really think you'll be safer at home? I tell you there's no safety anywhere. There's no hiding in the naked land' (Ngugi, 1964: 15). The advice shows that the walls of the western schools cannot protect the African people from the danger and the horror they face everyday. There is nothing magical about schools. They are places where people can be hurt and harmed just like the rest of the African lands.

Moreover, to stress this idea the police officer have taken Njoroge from school to be tortured to death not from the woods or his house:

> Njoroge was in the middle of answering a question when the headmaster came to the door. The teacher went out to see what the headmaster wanted. When he came back, he looked at Njoroge and told him that he was wanted outside. His heart beat hard. He did not know what the headmaster could have to say to him. A black car stood outside the office. But it was only when Njoroge entered the office and saw two police officers that he knew that the car outside had something to do with him (Ngugi, 1964: 116).

Njoroje is taken to a post called house of pain where he is mercilessly tormented. From that incident onward things for Njoroge has become darker and unlike the epiphany of the protagonist in a classical Bildungsroman that helps him reconstruct the scattered pieces of his world to rebuild a new identity that is congruent with the world, the epiphany of Njoroge pushes him to commit suicide. Njoroge at the end of the novel seems a mad person who 'laughs hysterically to himself' and who is haunted by a voice which continually accuses him of being a coward:

> But as they came near home and what had happened to him came to mind, the voice again came and spoke, accusing him: You are a coward. You have always been a coward. Why didn't you do it? And loudly he said, 'Why didn't I do it?' The voice said: Because you are a coward. 'Yes,' he whispered to himself, 'I am a coward.' (Ngugi, 1964: 116).

It is true that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o does not commit himself to any dogmatic explanation to specify the nature of the voice whether it is the echo of his troubled consciousness, or the reflection of his dark thoughts, the voice for sure is mentioned in the novel to add a supernatural flavor that is germane to any Gothic novel. In so doing, the protagonist is made alienated and unable to be a source of help to his family. Gikandi, again, believes: 'For Njoroge, the education that was supposed to secure the alienated land rights comes to function as a source of disenchantment and further alienation. Thus, *Weep Not, Child* ends up being a novel about disenchantment rather than the consolation promised by its title' (Gikandi, 2000: 61) So, Ngugi's reflections on colonial education are shocking enough to uncover its sterility.

From the outside, the novel seems to tell the story of an unfortunate child who cannot achieve his dreams as an educated person. But going deeper, one realizes that the novel is just like a history lesson that uncovers the true intentions of the colonizer and his destructive policies. Indeed, the selective policy of colonial institutions that gives permission only to few chosen pupils to carry on their studies is clearly presented here. Njoroge 'was to learn later that he had been the only boy in all that area who would go to High School. Mwihaki too had passed. But because she had not done very well, she would only be going to a teacher training school (Ngugi, 1964: 118). This is to contradict the kernel idea of the civilizing mission which purported that colonization was most and foremost for the enlightenment of the Africans.

Moreover, throughout the novel, the reader can notice how the African society is torn and divided from the inside. Despite the marked contrast between the black and the white there exist other cracks that split the Africans into labeled groups. For example, the Indians are another ethnic group that harms the Africans and treats them badly. Ngugi openly discusses this problem in his novel and with straightforward tone he says: 'The Indian traders

were said to be very rich. They too employed some black boys whom they treated as nothing. (Ngugi, 1964: 8). Unlike the Africans who were approximately poor and of low income the Indians had many privileges in Africa despite being, too, the enemies of the British. Their struggle is not different from that of the Africans. They suffer from the same problems of poverty and subjugation. Their misery pushed them to rise against their oppressor to restore their stolen liberty and sovereignty. In the novel Ngugi speaks of these facts in an ample manner:

> You did not know what to call the Indian. Was he also a white man? Did he too come from England? Some people who had been to Burma said that Indians were poor in their country and were too ruled by white men. There was a man in India called Gandhi. This man was a strange prophet. He always fought for the Indians freedom. He was a thin man and was always dressed poorly in calico stretched over his bony body. Walking along the shops, you could see his photograph in every Indian building. The Indians called him Babu, and it was said the Babu was actually their god. He had told them not to go to war so that while black people had been conscripted into the army the Indians had utterly refused and had been left alone (Ngugi, 1964: 8).

The intrigue is that despite being in the same mud, ngugi Wa Thiongo from an infant perception finds it hard to classify the Indians or to make them equal to the Kenyan people. He even resorts to consider them like the white man because of their cruelty to his people. This cruelty and the ideology of lobby resulted from the racially segregated system of the colonial education which separated the Europeans, the Asians and the Africans. Amoko declares:

> Ngugi demonstrates how the school system reflects and produces the racialized logic of economy of the kenya colony. Weep Not, Chil depicts a racially segregated society with separate and unequal schools for whites, Indians, and blacks. With the exception of the self consciosly elitist Sirianz, designed to produce a black elite in colonial Kenya (Amoko, 2015: 57).

Actually the pursued policy of divide and rule did not concern only groups of different races, but among the African themselves there were efforts to separate the black man from his brother. Divide and rule is a policy that the British found very fruitful to mobilize one group againt the other. A good example is Ngotho and Jacobo who are both black but they belong to

two different social classes. In different passages the writer brings this reality to surface. Kamau declares:

> 'Blackness is not all that makes a man,' Kamau said bitterly. 'There are some people, be they black or white, who don't want others to rise above them. They want to be the source of all knowledge and share its piecemeal to others less endowed. That is what's wrong with all these carpenters and men who have a certain knowledge. It is the same with rich people. A rich man does not want others to get rich because he wants to be the only man with wealth (Ngugi, 1964: 10)

Many scholars and postcolonial critics tend to make a stark contrast between the early works of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and his latest works that are of great Marxist ideology. Gikandi, for instance, declares: 'it seems easy to differentiate the early Ngugi (the student of English literature, the admirer of D.H Lawrence and the great tradition) from the later Ngugi (the disciple of Marx and Fanon and the advocate of socialist realism' (2000:02). However, the reading of this passage helped me identify the evident Marxist orientation as it maps the struggle among the different classes and races in the Kenyan society. Gikandi states: 'as is well known, Ngugi's conversion to Marxism occurred at the University of Leeds after his first two novels had been written' (Gikandi, 2000: 14).

However, in a foreword to Homecming, Ime Ikkideh mentions: '[Marxism] provided an ideological framework for opinions [Ngugi] already vaguely held' (Gikandi, 2000: 14) Perhaps, this is just not merely to portray this reality but to warn the Kenyan people about the future that will haunt them. As if Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is anticipating what would Kenya be like in the years following decolonization. As a result, illustrating the ills that led to the destruction or the deterioration within the African society is just to encourage the people to avoid them.

Among the problems that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o wants his community to avoid is the pursuit of individual profit at the expense of the community's interest. Zida argues that Ngugi's commitment lies in the fact that he wrote a story that warns the African people of the danger of individualism in time of upheavals. She explains that Njoroge 'was committed to his selfish goals' and has a strong faith that his fate would be different from the people of his

community because of his education. As a result Njoroge has the tendency to separate himself from his community. However, he cannot escape the circumstances surrounding him and his life turns upside down due to the state of emergency declared in the country. She states: 'Njoroge's predicament brings out the conflict between social commitment and the pursuit of individualism in the African context with the hopelessness of the latter emphasized'(Zida, 1991: 61). In other terms, the individual cannot pursue a life outside the realms of his community.

Indeed, Ngugi's agency resides in the fact that he attributed to colonial education negative aspects. One negative aspect that is apparent in the novel is the spirit of individualism that creates selfish people. Ngugi wants to hint at the importance of the traditional beliefs that hail the spirit of the collectivity and the importance of the group in the formation of the nation. One must not live in separation of the rest of the people for their fate is not different. Collective spirit which is part of African tradition is the principle that The Kenyan people must learn to help their country.

His aim was not to stress the existence of class difference between the rich and the poor in Kenya but to resolve the lines separating the different classes in Kenya. Zida stresses'the more honest transcription is arguably that Ngugi's interest in collapsing the class differences between an intellectual elite and a largely illiterate peasant constituency is indexed by Boro's interest in Njoroge's progress' (1991: 61). It is a call from the part of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to return to the old traditions. Doing so, makes Ngugi an author rife with agency in his community. Despite his education he prefers old ways of living. Chidi Amuta argues:

> Community...is the prime absolute from which individual experience derives and within which it acquires meaning and significance in the African novel. This testifies to the faithfulness of the African novel to the reality of contemporary African experience. In spite of the advent of Western education and urbanization, the primal levels of social interaction are still the village, the extended family; the clan etc, all of

> which presuppose the primacy of community over individual whims (quoted in Zida, 1991:61-62).

Indeed, in Weep Not Child, and in other works written by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o the reader can perceive this tendency in favouring the community's interst over individual profit. The community comes first as this newly imposed system brought nothing but cataclysmic changes

5.4 Women's Agency:

The women in *Weep Not, Child* are accorded a great role. They are considered as the heart of whole story. As an astute commentator on his society, Ngugi sought to explore the role women play in the Gikuyu society and present it as an indispensible one to the whole development of the story.

Before exploring in depth the representation of the female character in the work, it is of crucial importance to mention here the remark Gikandi makes about 'learning' and 'understanding'. Gikandi hints at the fact that in the novel 'learning is different from 'understaning' and this fact is stated by Kamau who tells Njoroge the one who is receiving learning that 'you cannot understand a white man' (Ngugi, 1964: 24). To put it differently, unlike learning, understanding requires deep comprehension and active commitment andt is more general than learning. One can be instructed in colonial schools however, he cannot understand the truths and realities surrounding him. Through this expression Ngugi hints at the fact that the Kenyan people need to comprehend the circumstances encompassing them to solve them.

Indeed, after that, Kamau never hints at the fact that there might be a possibility to come to terms with the white man's world after becoming an educated person for education cannot equip a person with the necessary knowledge to reach that end. It seems that the female characters in the novel are the ones who have a wide perception of the world surrounding them and are reasonable enough to make logical decisions that help the male

characters to walk the line. Actually, the women in *Weep Not, Child* function as foil characters as their reasonable perception of the outer world brings to light the cracks in the males' personalities. Ngugi deploys the female rational to refute the irrational thinking of the male characters that has led them to their own destruction.

As mentioned earlier, it is thanks to the mother that Njoroge is enrolled at school. It is true that Nyokabi believes that education might be the means that will make family socially mobile, but she never attaches to education a romanticized goal. Amoko believes that 'the vision of Nyokabi is different. She attaches to school no magical powers for communal redemption, but rather, sees it for what it can be, that is a means for social uplift for those able to take advantage' (2015:55). Indeed, when Njoroge reports to his mother the content of the letter threatening the school, she answers him saying: 'My son, you'll not go to that school anymore. Education is not life.' (Ngugi, 1964: 17). So contrary to the male characters in the novel, who are naïve and suffer from tragic flaws that lead to their tragic endings, the mother seems to be the one who really understands the real status that should be accorded to education.

Moreover, despite being uneducated, the mother of Njoroge comprehends fairly well the miserable situation of her family. When Ngotho decides to participate in the strike, she performs a totally opposite reaction. Unlike Ngotho, she knows that the strike is not the solution for their misery or for the problems of the Kenyan people. One must be aware not to engage himself in things that might lead to the destruction of the family. The following conversation or dispute between Ngotho and Nyokabi illustrates well how Nyokabi is crafted as a strong rationalist, a better strategist and thinker who is unwilling to risk the life of her family. Ngugi states:

> 'I must be a man in my own house.'
> 'Yes – be a man and lose a job.'
> 'I shall do whatever I like. I have never taken ordeers from a woman.'
> 'We shall starve…'
> 'You starve! This strike is important for the black people.

> We shall get bigger salaries.'
> 'What's black people to us when we starve?'
> 'Shut that mouth. How long do you think I can endure this drudgery for the sake of a white man and his children?'
> 'But he's paying you money. What if the strike fails?'
> 'Don't woman me!' he shouted hysterically. This possibility was what he feared most. She sensed this note of uncertainty and fear and seized upon it. (Ngugi, 1964: 14).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o seems to agree with Nyokabi because in another passage ironically he hints at the fact that the strike is just for passive people. Kamau states: 'I don't know. I think strikes are for people like my father.' (Ngugi, 1964: 14). The mother is the one who consulates the men in the novel and she is strong enough to endure all the hardships imposed on her: the loss of a son, the imprisonment of another, and even when Njoroge decides to kill himself it is the mother who rescues him. The mother at the end does not question her son about his action; she just saves him and protects him from the harm he was going to do to himself.

Another strong female character is Mwihaki. The reader's initial encounter with Mwihaki occurs when she starts taking Njoroge to school. She belongs to the upper class as her father Jacobo, as previously mentioned, is a rich man who owns a land. She is educated as her father believes in the grace of education. Right from the beginning, the reader is introduced to the strong character of this girl as she is powerful enough to rescue Njoroge from the boys who tease him.

She is portrayed in the novel, furthermore, as a practical, wise, and rationalist girl. She understands in an ample way the suffocating situation surrounding her and when she informs Njoroge that people are so desperate because of socio-political circumstances that life becomes the thing they fear instead of death, Njoroge is portrayed as an immature person who still maintains a dose of shallowness, weakness and naivety to stick to education. Ngugi declares:

> Njoroge wondered what changes he would find at home when the end of the year came. Did he really want to go home? If he went, misery would gnaw at his peace of mind. He did not want to go back. He thought it would be a more worthwhile

> homecoming if he stayed here till he had equipped himself with learning (Ngugi, 1964: 44).

Actually, the analysis of the most effeminate characters in this novel discredits the men surrounding them. In presenting the strong character of the female, Ngugi succeeds only in emphasizing the inability of the male, especially the protagonist, to act without the guidance and control of the mother or his friend Mwihaki. Njoroge, for instance, is unequivocally rendered believably irrational, incompetent and foolish enough to be definitely unable to make altruistic or moral judgments when he decides to leave his country and live in Uganda to flee the unbearable situation of his society. But Mwihaki as a more rational person refuses his suggestion for they are no longer children and they have now a duty towards the people of the town.

> 'Yes, we can go to Uganda and live–'
> 'No, no.' She struggled again. 'But why?' he asked, not understanding what she meant.
> 'Don't you see that what you suggest is too easy a way out? We are no longer children,' she said between her sobs.
> 'That's why we must go away. Kenya is no place for us. Is it not childish to remain in a hole when you can take yourself out?' […]
> 'All that was a dream. We can only live today.'
> 'Yes. But we have a duty. Our duty to other people is our biggest responsibility as grown men and women.' (Ngugi, 1964: 88).

It is true that the portrayal of women helps in the overall aim of the novel. However this nature of depiction uncovers another facet of Ngugi's agency. In a world where women were supposed to be subordinate to men and by no means free and independent creatures, the female protagonists in *Weep Not, Child* seems to be daring enough to break the conventional ideology about women's subordination. The latter for sure had socio historical reasons rooted in colonial patriarchal ideologies. Spivak believes that colonization had made women the most subjugated category of all the colonized people. They are the victims not only of the colonial powers but of the men of their own societies. Thus, women became gradually marginalized in various aspects in life and were denied the right to be an effective force in their own societies.

In an attempt to refute the unjustly established rules and the coercive acts that governed women's life and which relegated them to the most inferior position in the societal pyramid, Ngugi attributes to the female character the most reasonable traits and makes of her presence a creative force. Brenden believes:'these women produce a politics of everyday within which a version of agency resides'(2010: 30). For instance, Mwihaki Losambe believes that she plays a drastic role in the life of Njoroge. She argues that through Ngugi's novel one comes to understand that the future of Kenya is in the hands of people like Mwihaki and Njeri, and the development of the country has nothing to do with people like Njoroge (2004: 35).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o places deep faith in the innate powerful status of African women. For that reason, he is swayed by a desire to recuperate their voice that has long been silenced by the socio-political realities of the period. He is a vigorous exponent of women's question as he seeks, through *Weep Not, Child*, to challenge repressive structure of the patriarchal society. In embarking on such a challenge, he resorts to create a sense of agency in the female character.

This agency makes women stand against all kinds of forces that try to silence them. Morton asserts this fact and believes that Njeri and Nyokabi's disobedience of the curfew in time of emergency is a sign of their agency and their willingness to challenge the colonial powers (2013: 124). This portrayal of the Kenyan women is meant to create a new socio-political environment within which the Kenyan citizens are treated equally. Actually, the desire to establish this new way of thinking in the Kenyan society is fostered by a need to create a post-colonial Kenya that is based on equal treatment of both genders. It is for that purpose that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o crafted strong African women with clear visions in life in his novel.

In addition, the power and the voice given to Kenyan women by Ngugi Wa Thiongo in this *Weep Not, Child* is not innocent. It has the aim of defying and answering back the western colonizer who had long accused the African society of being a patriarchal one that did not do justice to the rights of women. Actually, the western colonial powers perpetuated the idea that their mission stems from the conviction that they have the duty to save African women from African men; from what they judged as oppressive conditions but in fact, and as it is previously mentioned, it is the colonial regime which introduced this order in the African societies. Before the coming of the white men the African woemen had the ability to participate in the socio-political affairs.

Chapter VI: Colonial Education and Agency in Francis Selormey's *The Narrow Path*

6.1 Introduction:

In the previous chapter an attempt has been made to re-inscribe Ngugi' Wa Thiong'o's first novel *Weep Not Child* into the postcolonial narratives that denounce colonialism and resist its subjugating ideology. Its main thrust is that colonial education, despite having a strong hold over Ngugi's mind, did not alter his loyalty to his culture and country. Actually, colonial education enabled Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to debunk the colonial claims and to discredit its presumably philanthropic mission.

Likewise, this chapter attempts to cast light on Selormey's Agency that has been overlooked for so long by critics. Like the other compared authors, Selormey has been excluded from the Ghanaian narrative of resistance because he refrained from attacking the colonial authorities openly. This chapter concerns itself with the strategies Selormey uses to denounce both colonialism and oppression that continues to affect the Ghanaian people in the aftermath of Ghana's independence. For the purpose at hand, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first section entitled 'Selormey's Life: Colonial Birth and Post-colonial hopes'

concerns itself with the life of the author and the social and political circumstances that contributed in the formation of his personality and thinking. Selormey lived during two historical periods of extreme turmoil: colonialism and post-independence under the rule of Sekou Touré.

Delving back to these two historical periods helps us situate the novel in its historical context. The aim of this section is, therefore, to offer a better understanding of Selormey's reactions to, and opinions about colonialism and post-colonial Ghanaian politics. The second section entitled 'Negotiating a Third Space: Modernity and Tradition' highlights the way Selormey deals with the change that affected the Ghanaian society and how he, wittingly, negotiates his third space that is resistant at heart. The third section is entitled 'Narrative Resistance and the Use of Autobiography'. It seeks to demonstrate that the personal narrative of Selormey's life offers practical lessons for the Ghanaian people to deal with their political and historical problems.

6.2 Selormey'sLife: Colonial Birth and Postcolonial Hopes:

The Narrow Path is an autobiographical novel that describes the life of Kofi from his birth to adulthood. Kofi belongs to a family that unites both traditional and modern ways of upbringing. His grandfather is a wealthy fisherman who has four wives and twenty-five children. His father is a school teacher who ardently sticks to Christian ways of education. When the idea of marriage cropped up into the mind of Nani, the father of the protagonist, he chooses an educated woman named Edzi. The latter has been a teacher at the Protestant School but she resigns from her position after her marriage. The families of the two lovers refuse vehemently the idea of their marriage. They took into consideration differences in traditions, religion and methods of upbringing. After the insistence of Nani and Edzi, the two families accept the idea of their union.

Kofi, the protagonist, is the first child of Nani and Edzi. Kofi causes his mother much suffering. She faces many difficulties during her pregnancy and even after his birth, Kofi, has been seriously ill. The couple makes every effort to protect their child from his repetitive sicknesses. All their care is lavished upon him. They both carve to upbring him in a safe atmosphere. However, the ideal way to raise their child has been a point of conflict between Edzi and Nani. The latter opposes the idea of traditional upbringing which relies on superstition and witchcraft and Edzi, despite being educated, resorts to traditional ways of treatments and healing.

The financial situation of Nani's family has been so satisfactory. In addition to his income as a headmaster, his wife starts cooking meals for school children which has become a very successful trade. However, things start to fall apart when Nani is transferred to HO as a headmaster of the Catholic school. Ho is a very far town where superstition and witchcraft are widespread.

In Ho, the reader can notice that Kofi has so many unpleasant memories. The first one is when he falls very sick. No one could name his illness and he becomes so weak that his parents start to pray for him a peaceful death. The illness made of him a very weak child with no flesh covering his apparent bones. All the family expected his death. But little by little he begins to regain his health.

Kofi is introduced to school at an early age. However, his schooling does not hamper him from being a turbulent boy. As his father believes in punishment as a thriving way of upbringing, Kofi's bad manners cause him a lot of suffering. Nani punishes his son in the most severe and humiliating ways. He never forgives his son's mistakes. When Nani becomes the teacher of his own son, he turns the experience of education of kofi into a hellish one. Kofi is struck the first day by his father and this is one instance of the discipline he endures.

During the school year he keeps being beaten so hard and humiliated in front of all his classmates.

One incident that is considered the height of all the increased shame, punishments, and humiliation is when Kofi cuts his mother's leg by a sharp stone. As soon as the father learns about the incident, he beats his son mercilessly that he cannot get up from bed for a whole week. That experience ends Kofi's turbulent manners as he understands that no one else can save him from his father's anger and it is him only who can bear the consequences of his wrong actions. In a way, Kofi declares that the punishment of his father has been successful in putting him in the narrow path.

At the age of twelve, Kofi leaves his house and goes to live with a master in Keta, a big town in the south and his father is transferred again to another school. The success of the father as a headmaster is what pushes the authorities to transfer him each time to schools in need of assistance. The moving, this time, causes the family a very serious financial trouble. They find no proper house for them as a result they spend all their savings to build a new one. In addition the town in which the school is found is very traditional. There is no latrine and water is scarce the thing that makes life even harder. Kofi finds life in Keta very calm and organized especially with the routine his master sets for him and that he must adhere to. However, Kofi keeps falling in troubles and this time he falls a victim of gambling and loses all his money.

At last Kofi gets his School Leaving certificates and he decides to be a teacher. His father hesitates first and does not welcome the idea for Kofi must promise to teach five years after the end of his training and in case he does not keep the agreement the father must pay a large sum of money. At the end the father accepts and Kofi goes to the Teacher's school. Nani

dies before Kofi turns twenty-four years old and the son finds himself responsible of his brothers' education.

Francis Selormey is a Ghanaian writer. He was born on April 15, 1927 in Dzelukofe. He spent most of his childhood years in Keta. He attended the Roman Catholic schools and Saint Augustine's College. He studied Physical education at the University of Ghana and in Germany. He became a teacher of physical education in saint Francis Teacher Training College. Francis Selormey was a very active and productive person as he was a Senior Sports organizer in the period between 1960 and 1694. In 1965 Francis Selormey changed his profession to become a scriptwriter for The Ghana Film Industry. He got married and had six children. Francis Selormey died in 1983.

He lived during the colonial period and in the aftermath of Ghana's independence; two critical periods that witnessed political social and economical problems. During the colonial period, colonial authorities made considerable efforts to erase the Ghanean identity and create subaltern people. The religious training and the colonial education some of the Ghanaian people received, as previously indicated, is a good example of the subjugating policy employed by Britain. In addition, he lived during the post-independence period which knew some conflicting and disappointing events. Selormey's novel is the result of these two critical periods.

After The Second World War most of the African countries gained their independence. Ghana makes no exception to this rule. The Ghanaian people pinned their hopes on their independence. For them, the miserable and the gloomy years they had to face during colonialism would soon vanish after independence. They were all dreaming to live in a free country ruled by a true African man who would strive to provide equal opportunities for all. Ngugi in *Moving the Center* described the fifties as a period of hope during which Ghana was considered as the Mecca of Africa:

> It was a decade of hope, the people looking forward to a bright morrow in a new Africa finally freed from colonialism. Kwame Nkrumah was the single most important theoretician and spokesman of this decade. Towards Colonial Freedom: that was in fact the title of the book Kwame Nkrumah had published at the beginning of the fifties. How sweet it must have sounded in the ears of all those who dreamt about a new tomorrow! His Ghana became the revolutionary Mecca of the entire anti-colonial movement in Africa (Ngugi, 1993: 61).

Indeed, in the eyes of the Ghanaian people Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, was the hope of the nation and the black Moses who would lead up his country to the summit of success and development.

Nkrumah was the son of a poor, illiterate and yet a much respected family. The father of Nkrumah was a good man whose wisdom compelled the people of his community to respect him. However, Nkrumah was determined to have a different destiny and a different life from that of his father. He worked so hard to achieve his dreams. His seriousness enabled him to travel to USA to study.

In USA Nkrumah was so poor and was obliged to work in different positions. He sold fish and worked as a waiter. Sometimes he did not even find a place to sleep. He was most of the time obliged to sleep on ‘benches’ or in ‘the subway’ (Asamoah, 2013:1-2). The hardship Nkrumah had to face and the miserable situations he endured pushed people to think that he was a humble man who knew, by heart, the sufferings of the poor people. The latter were eager to be governed by someone who endured the same hardship and who built himself from the bottom.

From an early age, Nkrumah was interested in the liberation of Africa. When he was a student he started defending the rights of the Africans who were subjugated by colonialism. Nkrumah, was courageous enough to put his ‘thoughts on papers’ and make ‘open-air lectures’ to denounce colonialism and report the misery of the African people (Asamoah, 2013:1-2).

The people's ultimate dream was the revival of the African, specifically, the Ghanaian identity through a process of purification that necessitated a delving back to the pure and true Ghanaian character. Indeed, the first president of independent Ghana stressed the importance of traditions and worked for the restoration of the African heritage for a better future. In 1957, Nkrumah encouraged and invited all the African leaders to stress and to be proud of their sense of belonging and to maneuver their identities according to African traditions and cultures. (Asamoah, 2013:10). Stressing the African character was an important principle for Nkrumah. He made numerous declarations celebrating the African origin that is separate from the European colonialism. In a speech in the legislative assembly in 1956 a year before the independence of Ghana, Nkrumah declared:

> The name 'Ghana' is deeply rooted in ancient African history, especially in the history of the western portion of Africa known as the western Sudan. It kindles in the imagination of modern African youth the grandeur and the achievement of great medieval civilization which our ancestors developed many centuries before European penetration and subsequent domination of Africa began (Nkrumah, 1967: 69).

For the purpose at hand, Kwame Nkrumah wished to separate himself from the west for he believed that colonialism was replaced by neo colonial and imperial strategies to control the newly independent African countries. He declared: 'Neo colonialism is the most form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility, and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress' (Nkrumah, 1967: 91). He even published a book entitled *Neo- Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* which was first published in 1965. The book is important because it interprets his political thoughts.

In theory Nkrumah was a great political leader who led a successful revolution, worked for the African unity and invested all his efforts to improve the international image of Africa. He, even, tried to develop Ghana economically (Asante&Abarry. 1996: 575). Therefore, Nkrumah was quite famous among the Ghanaian people. However, in practice he was a dictator with a thirst for power. Ngugi remarks:

> To the majority of African people in the new states, independence did not bring about fundamental changes. It was independence with the ruler holding a begging bowl and the ruled holding a shrinking belly. It was independence with a question mark. The age of independence had produced a new class and a new leadership that often was not very different from the old on (Ngugi, 1993: 65).

Indeed, the situation of Ghana did not change after independence. Poverty, hunger, financial problems continued to exist on a colossal scale.

The situation of Ghana did not escape the watchful eyes of some leaders during that period. One person who contented the way Nkruma governed his country was Afrifa, a leading figure who had a major contribution in the military coup of 1967. He argued: '[Nkruma] 'built a cult of personality around himself, and ruthlessly used the powers invested in him by his own constitution. He developed a strong love for absolute power '(Quoted in Brophy, G). He even called himself 'the mighty savior' and he kept repeating that 'Nkrumah never dies' (Bonful, J. 2004: 89).

In sum, the situation of Ghana under Nkrumah's rule was very disappointing to the Ghanaian people for many reasons. First, during his period, nepotism, bribery and other types of corruption became widespread. Second, his absolute and total power made freedom of speech impossible. Third, The Convention Political Party was the only legitimate party in the country and actually it was the one that supported Nkrumah. In addition, Parliament had no power of its own to interfere in the country's affairs. It is true that Nkrumah tried to protect his country and Africa in general from the traps of imperialism and neo colonialism but he was by no means a righteous leader for he led his country to degeneracy as a result of his dictatorship. Nkruma had the absolute power and no one could interfere or disagree with his decisions. Molefi Kate Asante and Abu ShardowAbarry stress:

> [the] dual degeneration of the party and parliament of the parliament and the party had one terrible result. The ablest, the most qualified and the intellectuals of the finest character turned their back on Nkrumah. Some of them[…] went abroad and took jobs elsewhere. Those who stayed at home either devoted themselves to their professions,

> […] or did their work in the government drew their pay and Let Nkrumah govern or misgovern as he pleased (Asante&Abarry: 1996: 579).

Despite the fact that many intellectuals and political figures left the country because they did not like the way the president Kwami Nkrumah ruled his country, some of them remained in the country and started to look for solutions to free Ghana from their president's dictatorship. In 1966, Kwami Nkrumah was ousted by the military coup and Ghana became under the rule of the Army through 'a National Liberation Council'(Austin and Luckhan, 2014: 1).

In the same year Francis Selormey published his first autobiographical novel: *The Narrow Path*. The latter was published nine years after Ghana's official independence. Despite the absence of colonial restrictions, the author preffered to speak about the colonial period. In other words, Selormey was oblivious of the country's critical situation. Moreover, the novel does not attack the colonial regime openly. This dual estrangement from reality has pushed critics to believe and argue that Selormey is an acculturated author who has no loyalty to his country and culture. Most critics believe that Selormey's allegiance is to the western authorities.

However, it must be noted that Nkrumah's absolute rule had profound consequences on the freedom of speech and mass media. In 1959 he enacted The Preventive Detention Act which restricted the freedom of speech and forbade the freedom of assembly. Four years later, in 1963, he passed another act, the Newspaper Licencing Act which limited the freedom of the press (McCarthy,1997:5). As a consequence, afraid of being jailed, journalists, politicians, and writers of the era preferred to remain silent and neutral. Selormey, definitely, is not an exception to the rule. The restriction of freedom of speech hindered Selormey from expressing his opinions or discontent openly.

Actually, the plight of Selormey was much bigger. He was stuck in the middle of so many uncertain realities that existed at the same time: the situation of post-independent Ghana

which was completely different from the expectations of the people, the unjust ruling regime which constantly warned people from the threat of neo-colonialism, and Neo-colonialism that was a real menace to the newly independent Ghana and African countries in general. Actually, this disillusionment was the case of all African countries during the sixties. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o argues that the writer during the concerned era was incapable of having a thorough understanding of the situation:

> Thus […] what the writer often reacted to was the visible lack of moral fibre of the new leadership and not necessarily the structural basis of that lack of a national moral fibre. Sometimes the writer blamed the people -the recipients of crimes - as well as the perpetrators of the crimes against the people. At times the moral horror was couched in terms perilously close to blaming it all on the biological character of the people. Thus although the literature produced was incisive in its observation, it was nevertheless characterised by a sense of despair. The writer in this period often retreated into individualism, cynicism, or into empty moral appeals for a change of heart (Ngugi, 1993: 68).

6.3 Selormey's Third Space: Tradition and Modernity:

In their attempt to stand against the colonizer's plans of erasing the culture of the natives, many authors have resorted to celebrate that very culture in their writings. Writers tend to write about their traditions, beliefs, and culture to bring to surface elements of their personalities that were meant to be repressed, and shuttered. However, criticizing the beliefs and traditions of one's people, during the colonial period, can be considered as act of betrayal. That is why, Francis Selormey has been considered as an assimilated writer and his autobiographical novel *The Narrow Path* is considered by many critics as a realization of the colonizer's project. For them, the reader can easily identify passages in which the author is openly condemning one aspect of his culture or another such as superstitious beliefs. Thus, *The Narrow Path* has been used to reveal the subordination of Francis Selormey to colonial schools.

One incident that is considered by many as a clear evidence of the author's acculturation is his direct condemnation of superstition that underpinned his society. The baby recurring

illnesses compelled his mother to take him to a priest. The latter is described as a manipulating liar who deceives people only for money. Selormey informs the reader that the priest is aware that the baby is alive but he makes the mother believe that he is dead. Selormey states: 'the child was certainly alive' but the priest tells the mother 'your child is dead. But I will try my best to bring him back to life, only, I warn you, you will have a lot to pay if I succeed'(1966: 12).

The priest orders the mother to 'sleep in a room with the windows open, and before each window, put a dish of palm oil. And then all witches and wizards travelling about at night, who might wish to take the life of the child, will drink the oil and be satisfied and so will not enter the room to drink the child's blood'(ibid: 14). The author shortly comments 'poor people! There were two dogs and a cat in that house and each evening, they happily fed themselves on three bottles of expensive palm-oil' (ibid: 14). This comment demonstrates that Selormey is against superstitios as they are used by malicious people to deceive the naïve people.

However, despite the fact that the author seems to be against superstitious beliefs he seems unable to, completely, abandon them for he proudly reports how superstition can be beneficial for people. When Kofi's sickness recurs, edzi 'took an old kerosene tin and a stick and beat the tin through the town. In a loud voice she cried, 'you witches and wizards of this place, leave my child, give him back his life. Cease drinking his blood and I will give you good palm oil to drink' (ibid: 15). It may seem unbelievable but the child's sickness is gone as soon as his mother returns home.

In an anothert passage, the author appears to be proud to speak about his traditions: 'The hut where the family's ancestor is buried and who is thought to be the protector of the family is called 'Torgbui Zu'. The latter means 'Grandfather Anvil'. Selormey informs the reader that the spirit of his grandfather 'is still revered and consulted, petitioned and thanked'

(Selormey, 1969: 35). The members of the family thank the spirit by putting money and other gifts in the house. Selormey seems to have the firm belief that the spirit of this ancestor has the power to heal and help those who evoke it and at the same time it has the power to curse those who dare and break the laws of the ancestor's house.

Indeed, Selormey declares: 'The bolder ones among the children sometimes crept into the little house, collected the money and bought sweets with it. We were told that children who picked up spirit's good money would undoubtedly grow up to be thieves. Indeed, we had a cousin […] who regularly stole the spirit's presents and did grow up to be a thief' (Selormey, 1969: 36) The author's comments about superstition seem to be not satisfactory as they do not satiate the reader's curiosity about the exact position of the author. The author in some passages refuses and seems to attack some aspects of traditions, and in different passages he seems defending his customs and proudly celebrates them.

Stereotyping the African people was one of the crucial strategies used by the colonizer to perpetuate its power and to remain permenetly in the African colonies. In other terms, portraying the colonized people as backward, savage, immoral and pagan was meant to guarantee the superiority of the colonizer as those traits were all the time contrasted to the morality, intelligence, and development of the white man. Bhabha argues: 'The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and establish systems of administration and instruction'(Bhabha: 1999: 70). The field of literature offers a plenty of examples that demonstrate this fact.

In *The Narrow Path*, Selormey tackles the issue of stereotype from a different angle. The novel is an attempt to stand against the accusations made against the African people. The father of Kofi, we are told, is transferred to a new school as a headmaster to help the colonial

authorities in their fight against superstition. The western authorities inform the headmaster that 'the school is in a town where superstition and witchcraft abound. We may lose many young souls, my dear headmaster, if you let us down' (Selormey: 1969: 50). In order to assure the non equivalence of the two groups the colonizer needed to repeat those stereotypes abundantly. According to Bhabha: 'the the same old stories of the Negro's animality, the Coolie's inscrutability or the stupidity of the Irish must be told (compulsively) again and afresh, and are differently gratifying and terrifying each time'(Bhabha, 1999: 77). Repetition would make such accusations and false representations seem like facts.

Francis Selormey's emphasis on stereotype is stemmed from his desire to stand against the colonial aspired goals by making those stereotypes less terrifying. He wanted to offer his version of truth, reclaiming, by so doing, the African voice that the white men have long tried to oppress. For that purpose, many superstitious beliefs in the novel appear to be harmless, and most of the time they seem beneficial. The house of 'Torgbui Zu' and the incident of Edzi when she tries to push the spirits far away from her son are excellent examples. To make the stereotypes concerning the superstitious beliefs less terrifying Selormey envisaged to make them appear real despite being true. In other words, Francis Selormey's description of some superstitious beliefs of the African people may seem to confirm the white men's claim about the African people degeneracy, but Selormey imitates the colonizer's narrative only to attack it.

Most of the superstitions are linked with incidents that engage the readers' emotions, which may trigger the reader's sympathy. The sickness of Kofi, for instance, as a baby is a painful event and the reader may sympathize with the mother who tries to save the life of her son. At the end, the reader may feel happy to know that the baby's sickness is gone. Unlike the colonizer's narrative that is void of reality, Selormey's description is an attempt to justify, to a certain extent, the beliefs of a community that had long been marginalized by colonial

powers. This actually is an act of resistance and a proof that selormey is a free agent and not merely a passive receiver of colonial education.

In addition, the author hints at the fact that those stereotypes are the result of the white men's arrogance and ignorance as suspicions tend to arise when societies ignore each other. This can happen even among the people of the same community. Selormey remarks: 'the Hausa people, being not only of a different tribe but also of a different religion, do not mix very much with my people'(Selormey, 1969: 147). As a result, the mimicry of Selormey is placed against certain prejudices of the colonizer. Imitating the colonizer in casting light on African stereotypes is an act of resistance that is meant to disturb the colonial narrative and disavow its authority.

The colonizer's 'desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite'(Bhabha, 1999: 126) is met with Selormey's mimicry that is resistant at heart. Almost the same but not quite equation is used by the author as a means of camouflage that is not in harmony with the background of the colonizer but against the mottled background of the colonizer.

Even when he seems suspicious and he condemns specific superstitious beliefs, he is not doing so out of assimilation, rather because he is mature enough to evaluate, select and judge certain aspects of his culture. In other words, when he attacks some aspects of his culture, he offers a logical explanation that may convince the reader to sympathize with his choice. For instance, the death of Tona, the girl who is killed by witchcraft, seems to be a convincing justification why Selormey is against witchcraft. He wanted to stress the fact that some cultural aspects are dangerous. As a result, they need to be erased because they can lead to death.

Being skeptic about some beliefs and practices does not include his culture only. Selormey is uncertain about western values as he openly makes condemning declarations concerning western religion and beliefs. Despite the fact that Kofi was born into a Christian family, he occasionally refers to god as the God of the missionaries. And one cannot qualify Kofi as a loyal Christian believer. Referring to God as God of missionaries must have a significant meaning. As it seems that it is a description of an innocent child who feels alienated from the African world, it is actually a rejection of western religion from a mature author.

Those condemnation are, certainly, not naïve, they are meant to destroy the colonizer's pride by looking at the colonizer with the same critical eye. Now the gaze is reversed and the 'observer becomes the observed'. Here lies the efficacy and the menace of mimicry which tends to disrupt the colonial authority. The colonized seems doubtful and willing to abandon that religion. This fact is confirmed during Edzi's delivery of her girl. Kofi thinks that his mother's pain can be relieved as soon as he puts the towel on her. When he plunges the towel in the bucket and finds it too cold, with no hesitation declares: My faith in the missionary priests and their God was shaken' (Selormey, 1969: 32).

His shaken beliefs are confirmed, again, when his mother starts to feel better after the supplication of the ancestor's spirit. Selormey declares: 'for some time all was quiet and I silently prayed my great ancestor who had taken the pain away my mother's pain, when the God of the missionary priests had failed to help me'(Selormey, 1969: 35). Selormey does not reject western religion only; he also stresses the fact that his ancestor's god is better than the missionaries'god. Rejection or the minimization of the western religion means that colonial education did not have a strong hold over Selormey because religious beliefs are at the heart of the educational program. As a result, Selormey has the ability to accept or refuse the values he was taught in school.

Actually, returning the gaze by means of mimicry has much to do with hybridity. As previously indicated, the colonizer envisaged to maintain the binary opposition between the west and the rest obscuring the fact that contact between cultures results in cultural transformation. Francis Selormey was conscious of this fact. As a result, he sought to portray the African world as a hybrid world. His agency lies in the fact that he attempted to challenge the unquestionable superiority and homogeneity of the colonial world. The homogeneity of the western world means its eternal superiority and the eternal inferiority of the colonized countries. Francis Selormey sought to challenge this mistaken understanding through demonstrating that hybridity is at the heart of cultures. In explaining the concept of hybridity Bhabha points:

> Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power (Bhabha, 1999: 112).

Selormey being the product of two antagonistic cultures could create his own space, in Bhabha's terms 'third space' from which he could turn the gaze, disclose, and repudiate 'colonial demands' and his agency is reflected in the way he crafts the characters of the *Narrow Path*. Simply put, *The Narrow Path,* casts light on the effect of cultural transformation caused by cultural contact on the colonized individuals.

The story of the novel is set in colonial Ghana and change during that period was inevitable. Almost all the characters in the novel are affected by the change. The grandparents of the protagonist are Christians and unlike other families, they have sent their child to colonial schools. At the same time they have been against the will of their son who has chosen an educated woman as a wife. Choosing an educated woman as a wife has been considered as a threat to the old traditional ways of marriage in which the elderly people of

the family are the ones who decide on such matters. In the beginning of the story Selomey tells the reader about Nani's marriage. He writes:

> It was not long before Agbefia and Yukuvi got to hear of their son's interest in the lady teacher, and they did not approve. This was not the way to go about things. Marriage was too serious a thing to be entered into on whim of young people […] Agbefia felt uneasily that, by sending his son to school and college, he had already opened the way to new and startling ideas. Aided and abetted by an educated wife, would not Nani become too bold in breaking away from the old traditions?(Selormey, 1969: 04).

Despite the fact that the grandparents have become Christians, they have not abandoned their traditions completely. In most of the time they seem reluctant concerning the change that affects their society. Sticking to their African traditions is considered as sacred thing. Polygamy, for example, is still the basic principle of Nani's family. His father, we are told, is married to four women and he has numerous children. Francis Selormey states: 'during my childhood, my grandfather had four wives and between them they had twenty-five children'(ibid: 02)

The same is true for the wife of Nani, Edzi. The latter is not a typical African woman for, unlike the women of that period, she is educated. Selormey writes: 'She is a literate and spoke English'(ibid: 03). Before her marriage, she has been a teacher at the Protestant School. Unlike the girls of her age she stands against the will of her mother and decides to get married with the one she chooses. Edzi, despite being an educated woman, has never relinquished her traditions. On the contrary, we see that her decisions are most of the time based on traditional values. It is true, that her education has empowered her to be an independent woman, earning her own money through her own business, but Edzi is loyal to traditional values. Numerous incidents mentioned in the novel prove that Edzi is an ardent believer in African beliefs and customs.

Kofi, the protagonist, is brought up in this family which is a mixture of tradition and modernity, a family that goes to the church each Sunday with traditional clothes. As a result,

Kofi is the product of two cultures: the traditional culture and the modern one. He is flexible and is capable of selecting and choosing the right values and principles to lead a reasonable life. Unlike his father who accepts some western values without questioning them, Kofi is mature enough to question some aspects of the western culture as he questions some aspects of his own culture. Kofi declares: 'I became aware that there were other ways and customs than our own, and this discovery started me thinking, and wondering and asking questions'(Selormey 1969: 43). Kofi meets change and the rival culture not with fear or complete submission but with curiosity and it is this curiosity which enables him to build his cultural identity that is hybrid. When his friend tells him that he will resort to witchcraft to win back the heart of his girl friend Selormey declares:

> He told me that he was resorting to magic to win Mary back. This really upset me. My father's training and my close association with the Catholic Church had not made me disbelieve in magic. That was impossible, for it was woven closely into the lives of my people. But I had become afraid of taking part in it. The priest told us that all magic was of the devil, and a terrible punishment waited these Catholic children who had anything to do with it (Selormey, 1969: 152-153).

The essence of the protagonist Kofi's character hints at the fact that the African people, mainly the educated ones in colonial schools are not passive receivers of the western culture and they are capable of constructing their identity amidst the change affecting their African culture. This strategic use of hybridity enabled Francis Selormey to cope with the changes imposed on his community and preserve the good aspects of his tradition. In so doing, Francis Selormey repudiates the colonial's claims about the Africans' inferiority. Homi Bhabha argues:

> Colonial hybridity is not a problem of genealogy or identity between two different cultures which can then be resolved as an issue of cultural relativism. Hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rules of recognition(Bhabha, 1994: 112).

Odamtten remarks that there has been an undeniable conflict among the Ghanaian writers and critiques over modernity and tradition. The chasm is between those who favour tradition at the expense of modernity and those who welcome change. He believes, however, that to reach a reconciliation between the two and to be in harmony with 'national consciousness' one must ask and answer the question 'what manner of man am I'(Odamtten, 1969: 25-26).

Indeed, through strategic use of hybridity, Selormey seems to answer the question of the critic mentioned above. The writing of his novel is prompted by a desire to celebrate his identity as hybrid rather than fix. For him, accommodation, adjustment and flexibility are the qualities that all the Ghanaian people need to cope with the inevitable change affecting their country.

As a result, there is an attempt to place African traditions not in opposition with modernity but in harmony with modernity. In numerous passages Francis Selormey seeks to merge these two cultures to create a new culture that is neither purely African nor blindly western but a culture that is hybrid. There are many passages that explain this idea. In describing his family, the protagonist states:

> Our family, in the European sense, was now five in number. But in the African sense our family was much bigger. It is our custom to put into the care of a married couple young boys and girls to be trained. These boys and girls are not exactly servants, for they do not receive wages, and the whole household lives together as a family, but they do much of the work of the house(Selormey, 1969: 45).

Putting young boys and girls under the supervision of some married couples to be trained is a fundamental tradition of the Ghanaian society. But there is a slight change in this tradition, for 'most of the boys, and some of the girls, are sent to school by their masters. They return to their parents when their education is finished' (ibid, 45). The boys and the girls are not only required to do the work of the house and learn domestic skills but they can go to school to be educated.

Another example of the hybridity of the Ghanaian society is stressed when Ami the sister of Kofi is born. A long description is presented to explain the way the African people receive their newly born babies and the customs accompanied with birth. In an ample way the narrator explains how his little sister is bathed and made clean. He also describes the customs of the Ghanaian people in the eighth day after the birth of a baby. Through the description the reader can understand that birth of a new baby is a very important event that requires the engagement of the whole family. Selormey states:

> On the eighth day after her birth, the baby, like every baby of her tribe, was 'outdoored'. At five o'clock in the morning, just before dawn on that day, my grandparents, my uncles and other relatives assembled before our ancestor's hut. Liberation was poured by my grandfather and prayers were offered for his continued protection of the child and her family. The corn-flour solution was poured on the ground to feed the friendly spirits. The a glass full of locally and illicitly-brewed gin […] was poured out, that the unfriendly spirits might drink it and become drunk and so forget any evil designs they might have had on the child (1969: 38).

This ceremony was completed with the baptism of the baby. This means that the preservation of culture does not hinder the Ghanaian from adopting the change that is considered beneficial for them and vice versa.

6.4 Writing The Self as an Act of Narrative Resistance:

Another evidence of Francis Selormey's agency is his use of narrative as an act of resistance. First of all, it must be noted that narrative and narratology have been the study of extensive research by critics and scholars. Many scholars have tried to conceptualize these terms. For many, as Abbott explains in *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (2008), narrative is not only linked to literature, it is part of human activity. Human beings engage in narrative practices in their everyday lives often sharing others stories and anecdotes about themselves which constitutes the heart of the narrative activity embedded in the daily routine of human being.

However, when narrative is seen as a term highly embedded in literature and in the act of writing, many critics have taken the initiative to define what makes specific texts narrative. Abott, again, explains that narrative 'is the representation of events, consisting of story and narrative discourse'Abott, 2008: 19). He explains further that the word event is of a central importance in deciding over the narratology of texts. The word event suggests that there is 'coherence' which is another important element in narrative. Anna de Fina and John Benjamins (2003) believe that 'sequentiality' or 'temporal ordering' is what distinguishes a text as narrative.

The study of narrative has not been limited to the elements that define it, rather the term has been equated with other concepts such as freedom, resistance, and agency. The scholars who found fruitful equation between narrative and those terms have understood that narrative is not used for the sake of telling events. People do not tell stories for the sake of narrating but their recounting is always purposeful. Indeed, Anna de Fina and John Benjamins argue that each narrative pushes the listener to answer the question 'so what?' They say: 'prototypical narratives, or stories, are narratives that tell past events, revolve around unexpected episodes, ruptures or disturbances of normal states of affairs or social rules, and convey a specific message and interpretation about those events and or the characters involved in them' (2003: 14). Along similar lines, Brockmerier and Carbaugh point (2001) out:

> But a narrative must also answer the question "Why", "Why is this worth telling, what is interesting about it?"… The "why tell" function imposes something of great (and hidden) significance on narrative. Not only must a narrative be about a sequence of events over time, structured comprehensibly in terms of cultural canonicality, it must also contain something that endows it with exceptionality (29).

Sometimes the message those narratives convey is clear and needs the least effort to be interpreted. But sometimes, it is the role of the reader to read between the lines to understand the author's aim behind his recounting. This is the case of *The Narrow Path*, a work often

excluded from the national narrative of heroism because it does not clearly denounce colonialism.

For postcolonial activists people must state overtly their uneasiness with the established order of things. Likewise, African writers as explained in the previous chapters must overtly denounce colonialism. For them, writing is an activity that must free the self from the chains that restrict it. Indeed, Robert Zussman speaks of an important dimension in narrative which is narrative freedom. For him, narrative freedom is the capacity to tell personal stories without restriction. In other terms, narrative freedom is to craft one's story according to one's own perspective. Narrative freedom is not the ability to, merely, put the events of our lives into a chronological order rather it is the capacity to pepper our stories with meaning. It is, moreover, the ability to find the moral in our life stories.

According to him, what to include and what to exclude from the process of life narrating, and the way an author selects, connects, imagines and constructs the scattered elements of his life is the essence of each act of narrative. He explains: 'narrative freedom involves selecting among the categories and actions we identify with but also selecting and transforming the meanings we ascribe to those identities and actions.'(Zussman, 2012: 808).

The above idea might be a good departure point for the investigation of the author's agency. Francis Selormey's agency is evidenced by the act of narrative which can be translated as an act of resistance. Indeed, Hanna Meretoja argues: 'only a life narrated can be a life examined and hence worth living'(2017: 01). Consequently, it is the narrative virtue that makes *The Narrow Path* a work that refutes colonial aspirations. As such, the work can be classified as an anti colonial work.

Brockmerier and Carbaugh, again, believe: 'the study of life narratives' opens new spaces and prospects for people to craft their identities (2001: 08). They further believe that

Critics from different disciplines are interested in the importance of narratives that lies in its 'expressive embodiment of our experience, as a mode of communication, and as a form for understanding the world and ultimately ourselves' (ibid: 08).

If we see *The Narrow Path* from the vantage point of the above quotation we may conclude that, the autobiographical novel of Francis Selormey is truly an embodiment of his experience. However, there is no attempt from Francis Selormey to reconstruct the self and to understand the world surrounding him. The reader does not perceive a radical or a gradual change in the personality of the author through his protagonist. The author does not seem to be interested in discovering his true and authentic identity. To the contrary, the protagonist, Kofi, seems to carry the same traits from the beginning of the story to the end. He is portrayed as a turbulent person whose carelessness and disobedience are the cause of his misery and pain. Even when he seems to become a mature person, his maturity has much to do with the natural growth that any child may know. Nonetheless, his narrative is purposeful and it has a message to convey.

Brockmerier and Carbaugh states: 'In autobiography, we set forth a view of what we call our Self and its doings, reflections, thoughts, and place in the world'(2001). This is exactly what the reader can see in the work of Francis Selormy and the reflections he generally makes are meant to justify his self and its doings. Moreover, this self justification is a means of resistance as it can be equated with self assertion. He defends himself against the prejudices of the West and at the same time his fiction tends to correct the wrong thinking of his people inherited from colonialism.

In other terms, despite the fact that Selormey is against some aspects of his culture, he does not wish to separate himself from his culture. Actually, he wants to separate himself from the people who adopt western values blindly and who have deep faith in colonial

authorities like his father. Stewat states: 'this book is successful precisely because it is given unity by a general theme: the author's stormy relationship with a demanding, even a cruel father' (ibid: 75).

Indeed, the character of the father has a significant importance in the development of the story and it is the vehicle by which selormey conveys his opinions and reflections concerning colonial education and western values. The father functions as the wound that made the story of *The Narrow Path* possible. In *Perceiving Pain in African Literature* Zoe Norridge explains how pain, through making reference to Arthur, W Frank's *The Wounded Storyteller*, pushes the author to tell his story and how pain makes the story worth telling. Norridge argues that pain makes stories logical as it combines the events through a relationship of cause and effect (Norridge, 2013: 187).

At the same time, the wounded storyteller seeks through telling his story to cure that wound that causes him pain. The agency of the author, then, lies in 'the therapeutic nature of telling stories about pain' because the act of telling stories about pain and trying to find cures for that very pain makes the story teller an active person as his story can be useful for his wounded community. In other words, the story does not only cure the author but it also suggests solutions to other people who may face in their lives similar situations of pain (ibid: 182).

Regardless of the numerous definitions of pain, the latter as defined by the International Association for the study of pain is 'an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage… Pain is always subjective…Pain is always a psychological state' (Quoted in Robbins, 2009: 176). This definition suggests that pain is both physical and psychological and it is the person who is in pain who can feel and define its nature. In accordance with this

definition, British Pain Society holds that pain 'is what the person feeling it says it is'(Quoted in Norridge, 2013: 01). In *The Narrow Path*, the reader can easily perceive that the central character Kofi is in pain. He witnessed many traumatic childhood experiences that have rendered his life unbearable. The reader can easily understand that much of his pain comes from his father for the father as explained earlier is the wound that the narrator is trying to heal.

Nani is a typical educated man who is deeply influenced by colonial education and western values. His decisions in life are based purely on western logic and not on African ways of learning. He has the firm conviction that his family should be brought up according to the new western ways. He is a 'devoted and energetic' teacher 'but a firm believer in the use of cane' (Selormey, 1969: 3). For him, violence is the only solution to put things in order. However, his violence and harshness make the life of the people surrounding him miserable. Kofi, as any child of his age is portrayed as a turbulent kid. He admits this fact in so many occasions. He declares: 'at this time I grew more and more troublesome and began to be impertinent' (ibid: 19).

However, the punishment of his father exceeds the mistakes or the misbehavior of the kid. The numerous strokes Kofi receives are a good example of the physical abuse that so often happens to him. As a result, the father is so often called 'a child beater' by his wife. The novel is larded with incidents that highlight the father's cruelty. One incident that describes the harm and the cruelty of the father inflicted upon his son is when Kofi hurts his mother because he has wanted to eat rice and stew. The father punishes him cruelly. Francis Selormey states:

> Bring out your hand,' he said. Helplessly I did so, and my wrists were tied together. For a moment he stood and looked at me gravely again. Then he led me to his bedroom door, lifted me up, and so secured the rope that I was left hanging by my hands. Then he took a loose end of the rope and whipped me. I cried out for help […] as if he could no longer

> bear what he was doing, he suddenly stopped, and left me hanging by my hands. The pain in my wrists and shoulders grew unbearable […] my father came again and whipped my bare legs with the rope. This time I screamed so loudly that a neighbour knocked at the door and asked what was happening (ibid: 79).

The punishment does not stop at this level, at school the father beats his child so hard that he is taken home by a teacher:

> I was made to stand up where all could see me […] I was stretched on the front desk, my arms and legs tightly held by eight of the boys, two to each limb. My father gave me twenty-five strokes on y buttock bringing each stroke down with all his force. The deathly stillness of the room was broken only by my screams, the whistle of the cane as it came down, and a terrified or two from some of the other children. As he brought the cane down for the last time my father said, 'And one for the Kaiser.' Was it our German rulers who taught our people such cruelty?(ibid: 79).

The last sentence hints at the fact that violence is not inherent in The African culture in general. It is something that the African people started to acquire with the western intrusion. Francis Selormey through the character of Nani wishes to repudiate the presumably civilizing mission that justified colonial expansionism. Through his novel, his tried to show that colonial education had rendered African people violent and cruel. Nani is harsh because he is educated and he ardently sticks to western values. Indeed, the mother of Nani is against her husband's unemotional behavior. She reproaches him so many times for his cruelty and harshness with his son:

> 'Nani!' she called, dragging the name. 'Stop that! What are you doing to this child? He is a good boy, not half as troublesome as you were at his age. But you will turn him into a criminal by this treatment. He will become a miserable failure if you break his spirit like this. And one day, when you are angry like this, you will do him some lasting damage. Suppose your father had treated you like this, what would you think of him? Stop, Nani, and think. This is no way for a teacher to behave. Let this end!' (Selormey, 1969: 29).

The last remark again explains, to a certain extent, the cruelty of the father with his family. Nani, being an educated man in colonial schools is put under an unbearable pressure and pain. The reason is that he is not considered as an ordinary person like the other people of his community but as a teacher who is not supposed to do something wrong. When he has fallen from the bicycle and hit the little girl he has been teased by all the people of the village:

‘look at that! A teacher, an educated man, who thinks he is better than us! But he cannot look where he is going’ (Selormey, 1969: 06).

His brothers, at home, are as scornful as the people of the village, and Nani is blamed because he is an educated man. They all start to condemn him because he is not supposed to commit such a mistake. Francis Selormey states: ‘clerk’, they grumbled. ‘that is what he is. And all these clerks can do is read and write. They have no common sense.’ […] ‘it is a waste of money to send children to school, ‘ they all agreed’(Selormey, 1969: 08). Nani knows that the people surrounding him expect too much from him for that reason he is determined to make his marriage work to avoid people’s harsh comments. He declares: ‘This marriage has brought me nothing but trouble. But now it is done and somehow it must be a success. I cannot give them all the chance to say, “I told so.” ’(Selormey, 1969: 10).

Unfortunately, despite Nani’s efforts to make things better for his family, colonial carelessness and cruelty hinders him, all the time, from reaching his aim. It, even, destroys his plans for the future. Kofi, the narrator, speaks about their moving from one place to another because the western authorities transfer his father to other colonial schools that need his service and efforts, and it is made clear that the mutation of the father is a curse for the family as a whole. Their moving from one place to another place causes them much trouble and has thrown them into misery and poverty. Actually each time the family of Kofi tries to cope with the new circumstances they face when they move to a new place; the colonial authorities transfer the father Nani to another place leading the whole family to an inevitable poverty. They could never reach the aspired social status they have dreamed of. Francis Selormey declares:

> My parents had to spend their savings in building one [a house] and there was no opportunity for my mother to re-open her trading. The people here farmed and fished for their own food, and there was little money for buying imported luxuries, like tinned food or pretty clothes. It seemed that the family would be poor again.

> Missionaries in those days did not seem to take such things into account when posting their employees to their different stations. They considered only the use they could make of a teacher, expecting devoted and sacrificial service from him and his family, but giving them no consideration in return (Selormey, 1969: 116).

Despite all the efforts made by the father who has been a devoted teacher and a headmaster who works tirelessly to improve the situations of the students and the schools he is in charge of, he ends up a poor African man living in a house made of coconut mat. Kofi believes:

> This house-this shelter- was not fit for a teacher and his family. This was the kind of house that poor and illiterate men lived in. like my father, I blamed the Mission authorities for the way in which they had transferred him here and there to suit their own convenience, without giving any thought to his. Seeds of bitterness against the church were sown then, although they did not grow for many years (Selormey, 1969: 179-180).

Nani's tragedy stems from the fact that he ardently believes in western values and western education. He has the firm conviction that being attached to the western world would lead him to his absolute happiness. But the contrary, Selormey wants to stress, is utterly true. Nani's inscription in the western world has done nothing but throwing his family into the vicious circle of poverty. Because of the father, the family's members have experienced much pain.

The home of Nani thus, as the reader can perceive, is not a cosy place. The home of Nani is a place that evokes feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, and pain. It is the epitome of the uncanny. This fact evokes Bhabha's ideas of the 'the unhomely'. 'To be unhomed' Bhabha explains is not to be 'homeless' (1994: 02) rather, the word implies that the home becomes an uncomfortable place as a result of some disturbing circumstances that underpin the outside world. Bhabha points out: 'the intimate recesses of the domestic space become sites for history's most intricate invasions. In that displacement, the border between home and world becomes confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other,

forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting the family compound' (1994: 09).

This is the case of *The Narrow Path* where the 'domestic space' becomes a site for 'history's most intricate invasion'. Indeed, the invasion that Selormey refers to is the western values and education which attempted to sweep the Ghanaian culture. The blind adaptation of the western values by the father has rendered the family house an infernal place where all the characters, directly or indirectly, are suffering. They are all in an unbearable pain Owusu declares

> Missionaries and Christianity are seen as agents of change that impact negatively on families. With admirable psychological insight and a touch of irony, Selormey shows how Nani breaks up his own family in his attempt to keep members of the family together. In the course of the narrative, the narrow path of obedience that Nani demands from his wife and children gets narrower and narrower until "all the pent-up feelings…burst out." The cathartic moment does not lead to healing: Nani subsequently dies and the father-son relationship his son, the narrator, has been craving is "never achieved." Selormey uses education and Christianity as flash-points for cultural conflict; he does better than other novelists in suggesting that the human cost of such conflicts is incalculable (2003: 679).

Colonial education of the father is actually the 'uncanny element' that haunts the family of Nani. It is in Bhabha's words 'the unspoken, unrepresented pasts that haunt the historical present' (Bhabha, 1992: 141). Nani burdens his family with rules and instructions to overcome his anxieties and fears. In other words, he wishes he would be seen as a successful educated man so the members of his community who remained loyal to their traditions would respect him and not tease him. As such, the 'home does not remain the domain of domestic life', it is blurred by the colonial education of the father which represents 'the unrepresented past'(Bhabha, 1992: 141).

Thus, the inside life is tamed by outside arduous circumstances and situations and here where the division between the home and the outside world is blurred and the image of the outside world comes to be seen inside the home of Nani. This is exactly what the word

unhomely evokes: a sensation of 'the world-in-the-home, the home-in-the-world' (Bhabha, 1992: 141).

Moreover, the political situation of Ghana in the aftermath of independence which was miserable and characterized by the oppression of the president as a result of his absolute power evoked the image of the home which created similar feelings of awe, oppression uneasiness, fear and so on. The reappearance of those repressed feelings are what Homi Bhabha calls: 'the traumatic ambivalences of a personal, psychic history to the wider disjunctions of political existence' (Bhabha, 1994: 11). In other words, the outside world of the author became just another version of his home and this is what Homi Bhabha refers to as 'the home-in-the-world. The home of Francis Selormy is as furious as the outside chaotic world.

Purging those feelings through the act of writing has a therapeutic function. Put differently, understanding the source of wound that causes pain, may enable the Ghanaian people to deal with it and dig for possible solutions for the problem of identity recunstruction in post- colonial world. Colonialism had profound consequences on the life of the colonized people and the situation of post-colonial Ghana had rendered the life of the inhabitants even worse.

Reading a story about pain, violence, and oppression may push the Ghanian readers to identify with the wounded story teller for their pain is quite similar to the one exhibited in the story. Back then, the Ghanaians too were suffering from oppression, violence and the restriction of freedom which caused them unbearable pain for the oppressor was their president who had an African blood just like Kofi who is being oppressed by his father. Francis Selormey could wisely manipulate the feelings of the Ghanaian readers so they can sympathize with him.

In conclusion, Francis Selormey is an author who exudes a strong sense of agency and who displays an intense awareness of self-assuredness through his story which While it seems meticulously structured linear plot, it defies colonial racisit policies which sought to usurp the Ghanaian identity. Despite the fact that some critics consider the plot straightforward Selormey's agency lies in the fact that he could weave a story that brings to surface two critical periods in the history of Ghana.

General Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to show that agency cannot be attributed only to the authors who stand against colonialism in their writings and the engaged writers are not only those who express openly their uneasiness with colonial education and policies. Agency is a vast concept that includes the authors who criticize dominant forces through literary strategies that are not necessarily overt. To reach that end, I have discussed the fixed definition of agency in postcolonial context that tends to inscribe a very limited number of authors into the literature of commitment and anti-colonial struggle. I have presented a new understanding of agency that can do justice to the excluded authors from the literature of commitment.

Agency, I have argued, is conditioned by various contextual considerations. To give flesh and subastance to this argument, I have undertaken a study of two Francophone authors: Mouloud Feraoun and Camara Laye and two Anglophone authors: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Francis Selormey. The aim of my research has been to show the various strategic manifestations and negotiation of, agency in a selection of their works with regard to the colonial education. In so doing, I have stressed the danger of generalization that has been the norm of so many critics in the works of African Anglophone and Francophone postcolonial literatures.

The thesis has been divided into three parts. Each part is composed of two chapters. The way the thesis has been constructed has helped me in reaching the objective of the study. The first part which is an introductory one, encompasses two chapters that set the framework for the entire study. It has presented a new understanding of agency and a historical view of the foundation and the implementation of the French and English colonial education in Africa. This part is of a paramount importance because it lays the ground for the discussion of issues related to agency and colonial education in the works of the selected authors. It has been able

to generate new possibilities in the negotiation and discussion of agency that were overlooked by postcolonial critics. It reveals agency as a vast term that incorporates reflexive skills, temporal orientations and contextual considerations. The latter definition is of great significance because it has enabled me to bring to sight the agency of Mouould Feraoun, Camara Laye, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Francis Selormey through shedding light on their narrative forms, literary strategies and thematic orientations as elicited in their autobiographical novels.

To elaborate more on the literary strategies that stand for the four novelists' agency, I have included Bhabha's theories of mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity. Bhabha's theories and ideas offer valuable explanations of both the strategies of the colonizer in imposing his norms and the reactions of the colonized elite in defying the same very norms. A rereading of *Le Fils Du Pauvre*, *L'Enfant Noir*, *Weep Not, Child* and *The Narrow Path* in the light of the new definition suggested in the theoretical discussion and historical explorations of the first two chapters has brought evidence of the authors' agency represented in their ability to debunk and discredit colonial strategies and ideologies shored in colonial ideology they received.

My theoretical discussion of colonial discourse and hegemony has demonstrated that agency is a term that is embedded in colonial education itself. I have reached this paradoxical idea by relying on Louis Althusser's theory of 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses and Gayatri Spivak's concept of subalternity explored in her essay: 'Can The subaltern Speak?' In other terms, this thesis warrants that without the Western colonial education that tried to subjugate the African people, there would have been no discussions and negotiation of agency. Despite the fact that Althusser and Spivak's theories leave little room for agency, they explain in an explicit manner the way colonial policies and ideologies hail and subjugate the colonized people. However, the two theories are of fundamental importance because the

agency of the four Francophone and Anglophone authors under discussion is a reaction to colonial education.

For the purpose at hand, part one has sketched in the history of French and English colonial educations in Africa in general and traced at the same time the development and the implementation of Western colonial institutions and strategies in Algeria, Guinea, Kenya and Ghana: the respective countries of the authors under discussion. In other words, the reactions of the four authors have been, all the time, juxtaposed to the aims and strategies of the colonizers that were implemented in their colonial schools. One would not comprehend, in an ample way, some strategic writings, comments, reactions, and selective answers of the authors without having a thorough understanding of the sociopolitical conditions of their corresponding periods.

Moreover, my analysis demonstrates that the French policy of assimilation is different from the British Policy of Indirect Rule in methods, strategies and application. The French seemed more committed to the policy of Assimilation than the British. The French pinned their hopes on the colonial education to guarantee their settlement in the colonies permenantly. However, the British used education for utilitarian purposes so as to facilitate the economic exploitation of the colonies. As a result, the French sought to inculcate their language and norms in the minds of the colonized people to make them relinquish their own African languages and cultural symbols which are considered as important identity markers. However, the British did not outlaw the use of African languages because, for them, the language was just a means of communication their main interest was the economic exploitation of the colonies.

The applicability of the theories and the new understanding of agency are pursued in the two subsequent parts of this thesis. ‘Colonial education and Agency in Francophone

literature' is the first part that takes the burden of tracing the agency of two prominent Francophone authors: Mouloud Feraoun and Camara Laye in their autobiographical novels *Le Fils Du Pauvre* and *L'Enfant Noir* respectively. The second part is entitled 'Colonial Education and agency in Anglophone Literature'; it consists of two chapters that trace agency in two anglohone autobiographical works: *Weep Not, Child* by Ngugi and the *Narrow Path* by Francis Selormey.

The two parts discuss the four authors' strategic writings, comments, selected themes, and the traits of their chosen characters to stress the agency of the African authors writing in European languages. An attempt is made to demonstrate that resistance to colonial regimes and institutions can be made through different ways not only by open declarations of hatred and condemnation.

The analysis of *Le Fils Du Pauvre* demonstrates that Mouloud Feraoun is an author with great agency because he succeeded through his novel to assert his Algerian identity and defend his cultural structures thereby defying the stereotypes made by the colonizer against the Algerian population. Bhabha argues that stereotypes are a very powerful strategy used by the colonizer to justify his encroachment in African lands. However, stereotypical discourse contains the seeds of its own destruction as it is characterized by a kind of anxiety or ambivalence that paves the way for the possibility of agency. It is within this idea that the reading of Mouloud Feraoun's autobiographical novel occurs. The novel resists the French stereotypical portrayal of the Algerian population in the writings of the French colonial authors such as Emanuel Roblès and Albert Camus.

Mouloud Feraoun managed through the description representation of his Kabyle community and all that is related to it, such as the land, the Kabyle original names and traditions to answer back the colonizer who sought to frame the Algerain people as backward

and exotically different and to erase their identities through attacking the elements that attach them to the Algerian community. In the discussion, I have tried to demonstrate that the ethnographic portrayal of the Kabyle community that so many consider as an extension of colonial tradition in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* is a form of mimicry that mocks the institutions it imitates. In imitating the western ethnographic mode of writing, Mouloud Feraoun brings to surface the sterility of the western stereotypes through showing that the opposite case is utterly true. As a result, this thesis demonstrates that Mouloud Feraoun's writing in the language of the colonizer and his colonial education are not concomitant to his complete acculturation.

Another critical concern regarding the analysis of Feraoun's text involves the issue of autobiography. I have tried to show that Feraoun's agency resides in his attempt to show that autobiography is not a western privilege rather it is the inherent right of every individual. In addition, to escape the accusations of being a mere imitator of the western traditions of writing, he innovates in autobiography through injecting the various narrative voices in his text. This narrative strategy challenges the orthodoxy of the novel genre and empowers Feraoun to play as cultural broker and a political agent in literary landscape of France's Algerian colony

The study of Agency in Camara Laye's *L'enfant Noir* has elicited that the novel is larded with resistance elements that make of Laye an author rife with agency. A telling example is his strategic use of the past. I have tried to stress the fact that the novel's recalling of past events is not done from a nostalgic point of view only; it has the aim of reconstructing present cracks and visualizing a creative future to post- colonial Guinea. In addition, Camara Laye's agency is evidenced by the fact that he takes the burden of rehabilitating African masculinity that the colonial discourse sought to effeminate. *L'enfant Noir* presents to the world the real meaning of African manhood and the values that make that masculinity and

manhood apparent. He even assings a higher position to Guinean masculinity compared to that of the colonizer.

I have demonstrated that Camara Laye does not only defend some elements that he judged threatened or attacked by the west, but he also denies the cultural death of his community through his discourse. The advent of the white men in Africa brought forth cataclysmic changes that altered the face of the social dimension in African life. As a result, maintaining some aspects of African traditional lifestyle is deemed necessary in the process of identity assertion and reconstruction. Camara Laye steeped his novel into the authentic Guinean context. The traditions of Guinean life are recorded in this work in a way that guarantees their survival and continuity. In addition, the act of remembrance provides a creative outlet for identity reconstruction and renegotiation within the entangled world created by colonization.

The fifth chapter of the thesis deals *with Weep Not, Child* written by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. Through the analysis of the novel, I have been able to demonstrate that Ngugi uses a narrative voice that poses challenge to the Western dominant powers. I have shown that the author under discussion could find solutions to the problems of his society from two cultural systems: the traditional and the modern ways of learning. Standing at the middle of these two systems, a third space in Bhabha's terminology, Ngugi managed to embrace both the tradition of his people and the modernity of the British.

In other words, this twofold orientation underscores the hybridity of the postcolonial identity that Ngugi advertises for. Standing on this third space is prompted by a desire to create a better future informed by both systems: traditional and modern. As a result, Ngugi's agency is evidenced by the temporal orientations that he cunningly managed to deploy. His condemnations of some myths, prophecies and biblical elements makes of him an author with

great agency in his society who is able to select among the choices offered to him. Moreover, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o does not claim that his education in colonial schools facilitated his life; on the contrary his education is described as an arduous task and as a very negative experience that could not assuage the problems and the sufferings of his life. His refusal of colonial education is interpreted in the way he reflects on the educational experience which is most often portrayed in negative terms. By so doing, he proves that the colonizer's claims concerning colonial education and its enlightening mission are just pretences that justify their occupation of African lands and the cruelty towards the natives. As a result, *Weep Not, Child* reads more than an unsophisticated piece of writing that recounts the story of a little boy. It is a narrative of cultural resistance that challenges the most pernicious aspects of colonial discourse.

The narrative of the self offered by Francis Selormey in *The Narrow Path*, too, defies the accusations made against him as an author assimilated into western cultural life. A rereading of his autobiographical novel has unveiled his strategic wrting of life in post-independence Ghana, whereby colonial aspirations are evacuated and President Nkrumah's policies are chastized. Selormey linked the colonial education with his father who, ultimately, failed to reach his cherished aspirations because of the racist colonial policies. The father's failure has detrimental consequences on the whole family. The feeling of despair that the reader can feel at the end has the aim of creating emotions of repulse and hatred towards colonial education.

Part of my research into agency in the colonial and post-colonial contexts is the study of the way the investigated authors portray women in their fiction. The examination of the autobiographical novels has disclosed that all the authors have presented African women as strong, independent women who play a decisive role in the life of the other characters. As such, their portrayal of the female characters discredits many then colonial stereotypical

representations of African women. The latter were described in the western discourse as subaltern, voiceless and weak creatures that inspire pity and compassion. They were seen as mere victims excluded from the social settings and their existence was identified, only, in relation to their male counterparts. However, my analysis of the female characters in the autobiographical novels under scrutiny reveals that the way they are portrayed by the authors challenges the colonial mindset which relegated African women to the position of the inferior other.

The four novelists seem committed to give voice to these marginalized subjects through bringing to light their autonomous experiences so they can emerge as equal individuals who deserve respect. Njoroge in *Weep Not, Child* is saved by his mother who turns to be the most reasonable character in the whole story. Fouroulou's grandmother is portrayed as a wise, strong, and independent woman who along with his aunt enables him to enter into the world of imagination. Laye's mother, too, is a strong woman who overwhelms her son with love and protection. Kofi's mother is the character who holds the family together. Her wisdom, hard work and sacrifices correct all the the wrong actions of her husband and maintain the stability of the household. The thrust behind such positive representations of women characters is to stand against the colonizer who accused the African countries as being patriarchal. The important position the women play is an act of resistance against such an accusation.

Nearly to the same degree all the authors under study could contrive their agency through the issues they tried to stress in their writings. Each writer chose the elements that he thought to be threatened or attacked to defend them. Despite the fact that they did not make explicit statements of hatred and refusal, they could certainly influence, in a significant way, the feelings of the reader to accept, love, feel proud of some elements in their culture and at the same time refuse, repulse and be aware of the colonizer's oppressive policies. Their

writings in the colonizer's language did not herald into their assimilation. Their works on the surface are all simple and linear but reading between lines has proved that their autobiographies are more complex and hold non innocent meaning. They are larded with meaningful conclusions that can be relevant today.

As such, the analysis of the four works has showen how the authors maneuvered their agency and brought to the fore their critical attitudes to reveal their position concerning colonialism and their own history. As a result, agency cannot be attributed, only, to the authors of overtly committed and militant texts such as Kateb Yacine, Chinua Achebe and the like. Those whose works are intertwined with hidden messages and crafted with strategies and indirect declarations of refusal should be also considered as agents and their works must be inscribed in the nationalist literature.

Putting Francophone authors discussed in this work in juxtaposition with the Anglophone ones reveals that there are some differences due to different colonial histories. In the first chapter we have stressed the fact that French colonial education was to some extent more ordered and organized than the Indirect Rule of Britain. France policies were based on the idea that it was going to stay forever in colonial lands. As a result, the educated elite in French colonies were given importance because the French hope was pinned on those categories of people. On the contrary, Britain used the educated elite for instant benefits. Their education was for economical gains. This difference is reflected in the writings of the four novelists.

The way Mouloud Feraoun and Camara Laye tackle the issue education is to a large extent similar. In their autobiographical novels, education is represented as a means to salvage the characters from social misery and poverty. Fouroulou's success in teachers' school and Laye's departure to benefit from the scholarship are the happy endings of the two

autobiographical novels. Despite being against some creeds taught in colonial schools, both authors do not seem against that education and they do not feel victims to that educational system.

In contrast to Mouloud Feraoun and Camara Laye, Ngugi Wa Thiongo and Francis Selormey blame British colonial education for their misery. The tragic ending of the characters who stick ardently and blindly to education is the evidence that both authors see colonial education as a source of all evil. Despite being educated, they refused vehemently this kind of education because they feel deceived and betrayed by it. For both authors, no benefit can be generated from the fact of being educated in British colonial schools. To make the African readers capture this sense of disorientation experienced by the two disillusioned protagonists, they fused their bleak autobiographical novels with unhappy events, violence, pain and awe.

Weep Not, Child and *The Narrow Path* are the stories of two protagonists who underwent all kinds of torture: physical and psychological due to unjust colonial policies. Their life is a difficult life. But in Le *Fils Du Pauvre* and *L'Enfant Noir* we see that the two protagonists, Fouroulou and Laye, are surrounded by love, compassion, and care. There is no violence in the two stories.

The reason behind such a difference is that the Francophone authors believed that colonial education could, to some extent, lesson the misery of colonialism. Being educated they were offered a life a little bit better than the other uneducated people of their communities. In other terms, education offered them the assurance of a superior quality of existence. The British policies of education made the elite see no benefit from their schooling. This would seem to imply that French policies of education were more successful than the British ones. This success does not mean that French colonial education could reshape the

thinking of the educated elite. It was successful in the sense that education had its importance in the colonial world. But in the Anglophone colonies, the importance of education and the educated elite was a mere lie that could not save the educated people from their fate and misery and this is what the two novels of Ngugi and Selormey try to transmit to the readers in their autobiographical novels.

Moreover, in *Le Fils Du Pauvre* and *L'Enfant Noir* there is no mention of the French colonizer and awareness of his presence in the worlds of the two novels is scarce. At some level, the reader forgets that the protagonists live in occupied countries. The world of the two protagonists seems a separate one. However, in *Weep Not Child* and *The Narrow Path*, Ngugi and Selormey state it clearly that they are colonized and speak about some aspects of colonial practices in their countries. They make it clear that they are not free and that their lives are linked, shaped and reshaped by colonial rules and regulations.

Another important difference between the francophone and anglophone discourse is Religion. French colonial education favoured a secular education whereas the British wanted Christianity to be at the heart of the educational experience. As a result, we see that the two Francophone authors maintaining their own religion. In their novels, the protagonists are both Muslims who do not change their religion. In *Le Fils Du Pauvre*, Fouroulou is not influenced by the lessons taught by the priests, and in *L'Enfant Noir* Camara Laye states it clearly that he is a Muslim. However, in *Weep Not, Child* and in *The Narrow Path* we see Christian creeds and beliefs have a great share in the thought and behaviour of all the characters including the protagonists.

Relying on what has been explained before, I can say that this study has been able to answer the questions raised in the introduction and could confirm the advanced hypothesis. The analytical approach demonstrates that the differences in the French and British

educational policies have their importance in shaping the reactions of the African postcolonial authors under discussion. It is true that they were, nearly to the same degree, against colonial unjust policies and false representations of their African communities but their reactions to colonial education were not the same. This work has detected some important differences between the Francophone novels and the Anglophone novels. Stressing the differences is of paramount importance because it brings to surface the importance of context in making literary analysis. Some differences in policies generated different reactions amongst postcolonial authors.

To better understand the implications of this study's results, future studies could take into account the socio-historical background in their analysis and pay more attention to context in a more detailed way to avoid generalizations. Doing so, would enrich the world of literature and criticism and would do justice to some minorities in the world of postcolonial literature who have been eclipsed and estranged by generalization. Critics and scholars must take into account that the experience of one country cannot be applied on another. Each has its own experience according to its corresponding history. Consequently, the literary productions of these countries are different.

Furtheremore, future studies could even address the issue of colonial education and agency of postcolonial authors in previous French or British colonies separately because even dthe same colonial country did not apply colonial education in the same way in its colonies. France, for example, paid less attention to the other African colonies in comparison with Algeria.

While this study does not show the differences among the African authors whose countries have been colonized by the same country, it opened the door for critics and researchers for the possibility of such an analysis. As such, postcolonial studies would include

and give value to those minorities who have been excluded from the field of analysis due to generalization.

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