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Dedications

To my beloved parents who supported me during all my studies

My brothers: Mohammed and Gaya

My future husband and family in law

All those who encouraged me

All along this research

Sonia

Je

My beloved parents: Chabane and Djamilia

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Abstract:

This dissertation, we covers the matters of patriarchy and women resistance in the Algerian and Nigerian societies through the works of Maissa Bey's Hizya (2015), Malika Mokeddem's L'interdite (1993) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus (2003). Our intention is to demonstrate how male domination, patriarchal oppressions and violence can affect women physically and psychologically. With the use of Bell Hooks' Theory Feminism Is for Everybody (2000), we want to show how the victimized women struggle for their rights and freedom. This work is divided into three chapters; each dealing with the female characters of the three books. In the first chapter, entitled 'Male Domination and Gender Consciousness', we have analyzed the way women are subordinated by men and the fact that these women are conscious about their inferiority, which is shown through the different female characters. The second chapter with the title 'Violence and Women Victimization', we have attempted to show the difficulties and the hard living conditions of women who endure pain either from their husbands, families or societies. In the last chapter 'Patriarchal Oppression versus Women Resistance', we have tried to show how women use resistance to escape from the patriarchal oppressions. Finally, it can be noticed that, the three writers Maissa Bey, Malika Mokeddem and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie have given voice to their female characters in order to denounce the injustices and discrimination that women face in the Algerian and Nigerian societies.

Key words: Patriarchy, Gender Consciousness, Violence, Victimization, Resistance.

Introduction:

Throughout history, women, around the world, have been subjected and treated as inferior to men based solely on their gender. Every day, millions of women are victimized because of the unfair patriarchal system that puts men in a dominating position. This leads them to rise and fight against patriarchy in order to gain their rights and be equal to men. Patriarchy is a belief and a way of thinking that reinforces male power. It has been socialized in cultures where women's dignity is marginalized and damaged. In such cultures, women are taught that they are born to live under the control and authority of men. However, it is important to notice that women have significant contributions in diverse domains over history.

After the birth of Feminism in the late nineteenth century, many thinkers and philosophers, from different areas of the world developed theories to deal with the issues of gender inequality, patriarchy, and women's resistance. In her feminist theory *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), the African American theorist Gloria Jean Watkins known as bell hooks calls for an end of male domination and for women's liberation: "Feminist politics aims to end domination to free us to be who we are – to live lives where we love justice, where we can live in peace."¹

This dissertation examines the issues of patriarchy and women's resistance in the Algeria and Nigeria during the postcolonial era. In fact, even after the independence of many African countries, the system of patriarchy remains intact. Therefore, our work is interested in discussing the realities of African women's sufferings from patriarchal oppression and violence, and their initiation to resistance mainly in the Algerian and the Nigerian patriarchal societies.

Review of the Literature:

Academics and writers have criticized the injustices of patriarchy through different works and writings. To begin with the representation of the real life of Algerian women in the postcolonial era, Zahia Smail Salhi in her article: *The Algerian Feminist Movement between Nationalism, Patriarchy and Islamism*, tries to demonstrate the struggles that women face in the contemporary Algerian patriarchal society: “despite great resistance from patriarchy, Algerian women have played major roles in effecting change in their society.”² According to her, the revolution made women more confident so that they can resist and oppose the forces of patriarchy. Salhi claims that women’s rebellion against the restrictive attitudes of the traditional society challenged the wider power of patriarchy. Moreover, Caroline Rohloff in her essay: *Reality and Representation of Algerian Woman, Between Tradition and Progress: Depiction of Advancement and Suppression of Women in the Algerian Society*, argues that women continued to gain power and influence in the Algerian society. She states that fundamentalist groups were against the emancipation of women fearing the loss of the traditional Algerian identity. Therefore, they issued religious rules which forced women to remain in their traditional, silent and submissive roles of mothers and wives:

The liberation and independence that women were gaining was seen as a threat to the status quo, particularly by Islamic religious leaders, and the only way to preserve their position of power was through the control of women’s sexuality.³

Women’s organizations have emerged in order to help them become increasingly educated and successful in the workforce. Consequently, she finishes by claiming that despite the considerable progress that women have made, Algeria remains a patriarchal society. By the same token, Nigerian women’s portrayal has been relatively broad across disciplines. In fact, in her dissertation: *Change in Status of Women in Nigeria: a Dialectical Framework for Understanding*, Aluko YentundeAdebunmi examines the interface between the status of women in the traditional past and the modern day Nigeria. She believes that in Contemporary

Nigeria “the gender-based ideology and male-dominated social structures is still intact, and perhaps, even reinforced”.⁴ In Nigeria today, there seems to be a status crisis for women as inferiors due to the fact that they live within a dominant male culture that devalues and oppresses them.

Consequently, through the present research paper, we will discuss the matter of African women’s conditions under patriarchal unfairness stated in the two Algerian works; Maïssa Bey’s *Hizya* (2015), Malika Mokeddem’s *L’interdite* (1993), and through the Nigerian work of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). We will attempt to study the gender status of mostly female characters in the three books, and also examine the strategies of their fighting to resist the oppressive control of man and the patriarchal dominance.

Moreover, Maïssa Bey’s *Hizya* (2015), Malika Mokeddem’s *L’interdite* (1993) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), have been the center of interest to many critics. First, in her article entitled: *Community and Communion through Writing: Unheard Voices in Maïssa Bey’s Cette Fille-là (2010) and Hizya (2015)*, Rosenberg Rebecca explores Maïssa Bey’s representation of Algerian women. She argues that the protagonist Hizya is a silenced woman because of the societal exploitations of modesty and tradition that make women’s voices totally unheard. According to her, the character of Hizya and the other women in the novel are subjected to traditional values by their families and oppressive society. Rosenberg Rebecca thinks that the legendary heroine inspires Hizya to seek for not only love, but also freedom and transcendence “Hizya also searches for her sense of self, which she attempts to assert through the adoption of a poetic heroine, Hizya, as her namesake”⁵

Furthermore, Mustapha Hamil in his dissertation: *Exile and its Discontents: Malika Mokeddem’s The Forbidden Woman*, exposes the obstacles of the condition of exile. He

relates his article with the idea of Homi Bhabha's 'Third Space' which allows the writers and readers of postcolonial literature to look at exile as an experience of emancipation. Moreover, Hamil focuses on the main character of the novel *Sultana*, and argues that *Sultana's* story illustrates ambiguity in the contemporary Algerian discourse on identity and difference. He claims: "Mokeddem associates here the plight of her heroine with that of her people, women and men. In a certain way, *Sultana* is predestined to become an exile, a stranger, a wonderer."⁶

By the same token, Jamiella Brooks, in her dissertation entitled: *Voix- ci la fille: The Becoming, Presence and Voice of an Algerian Girl in Malika Mokeddem's L'interdite*, claims that the novel shows the conditions of women in post-independent Algeria, and thinks that adult characters in the novel suffer from unstable identities, absence of rights, and from the fact of living an uncertain future, she says:

In particular, the novel examines the conditions of women in post-independence Algeria, highlighting the impossibility of the existence of women's rights and political Islam in a way that will allow men and women, young and old, to thrive.⁷

Brooks also states that the little girl Dalila is an important character who evokes hope and dreams of a world where girls and women enjoy freedom without fear of punishment. For her, Dalila can increase the understanding of the connection between childhood and identity's reconstruction.

For her part, Tiffany Astrick in her work entitled: *Patriarchal Oppression and Women Empowerment in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus*, argues that Adichie focuses on the image of the Nigerian women living under patriarchal oppressions, and also on the ways that lead to their empowerment. According to her, Adichie considers domestic violence, religion, and family life as the first causes of women's oppression; she encourages women to raise their voice and struggle against their oppressor. Astrick speaks about women's

sufferings and says: “In her novel *Purple Hibiscus*, Adichie reworks on the images of women projected by patriarchal oppressions which marginalized women and cause them to suffer both physically and mentally.”⁸ Moreover, Astrick notices that women are joining together to reach freedom and create women empowerment. She also adds that despite pain, struggle and many troubles in a world of patriarchy, women must affirm themselves through education and sisterhood.

From the point of view of Sareena Suba in her piece of work about Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* entitled: *Journey from Resistance to Freedom in Ngozi Adichie’s Purple Hibiscus*, she shows that *Purple Hibiscus* is mainly concerned with women who are constantly marginalized and brutalized in the postcolonial Nigerian society either from the socio-political domain or the familial one. For Subba, Adichie supports the voice of women who defy the patriarchal authority when they ask for their proper rights. She further comments that resistance is highlighted in different ways by the victimized characters of the novel who are silent spectators of their own exploitation. In this sense, she argues:

Purple Hibiscus depicts the contrasting ideas of silence and resistance overlapping and intertwined in the lives of Kambili, Jaja and their mother, Beatrice. Though they begin their journey as voiceless individuals, but all of them, gradually, find their voice through resistance in their own different ways.⁹

According to her, the desire for liberation is what motivates women’s combat against the forces of power.

Issues and Working Hypothesis:

It is apparent from this review of the literature that Maissa Bey’s *Hizya* (2015), Malika Mokeddem’s *L’interdite* (1993), and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) received a great deal of criticism. As far as we are informed, no work gathering the three works has been conducted. In this dissertation, we aim at studying women’s hard living

conditions in the African patriarchal societies and how these women try to resist in order to reach their freedom. In fact, our work aims at showing the difficulties that women face in a male dominated society, by showing how they are conscious about their victimization in both the Algerian and Nigerian societies. The three authors give voice to women to show their struggle and perseverance to free them from the patriarchal oppressions.

Methodological Outline

In order to explore the theme of patriarchy and women resistance, we will divide our dissertation into four sections. The first is devoted to the introduction, where we have introduced patriarchy and women resistance in the African countries mainly the Algerian and Nigerian ones, and highlighting the literature review of three literary works. The second part is devoted to method and materials. In the method section we are going to introduce the feminist theory of bell hooks *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), whereas in materials we made the summaries of the three books: *Hizya* (2015), *L'interdite* (1993), and *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). Moreover, we are going to make a brief historical background of the Algerian and Nigerian societies. The third part will contain the results. In which, we will make an overview of the three chapters. The last part is the discussion section which contains three chapters. In the first chapter we will analyze the female characters of the three books in relation to male domination and gender consciousness; we will try to explain how women are affected by male domination and how these women are conscious about their gender inferiority. The second chapter deals with violence and women victimization; here, we are going to highlight men's use of domestic violence in order to subordinate women. Finally, the third chapter deals with the patriarchal oppressions on women who use many forms of resistance to be independent. We have ended our work with a conclusion where we have summarized the main points tackled in the discussion.

Endnotes:

1. bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), 118.
2. Zahia Smail Salhi, "The Algerian Feminist Movement between Nationalism, Patriarchy and Islamism" *Women's Studies International Forum* 33, No. 2 (March 2010): 113.
3. Caroline Rohloff, *Reality and Representation of Algerian Women: The Complex Dynamic of Heroines and Repressed Women* (Illinois: Illinois Wesleyan University, 2012), 15.
4. Aluko Yetunde, "Change in Status of Women in Nigeria: A Dialectical Framework for Understanding" *Sokoto Journal of the Social Sciences* 6, No. 2 (December 2016): 217.
5. Rebecca Rosenberg, "Community and Communion Writing: Unherad Voices in Maissa Bey's *Cette Fille-là* (2010) and *Hizya* (2015)" *Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies* 7, No. 2 (Autumn 2016): 15.
6. Mustapha Hamil, "Exile and Its Discontents: Malika Mokaddem's Forbidden Woman" *Research in African Literature* 35, No. 1 (Spring 2004): 54-55.
7. Jameilla Brooks, "Voix-ci La Fille: The Becoming, Presence, and Voice of an Algerian Girl in Malika Moledde's *L'interdite*" *The French Review* 90, No. 4 (May 2017): 51.
8. Tifanny Astrick, "Patriarchal Oppression and Women Empowerment in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*" *Vivid Journal of Language and Literature* 7, No. 2 (July 2019): 46.
9. Sareena Subba, "Journey from Resistance to Freedom in Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*" *Research Journal of English Language and Literature* 2, No. 3 (2014): 186.

Method and Materials:

1-Methods

Summary of bell hooks' Theory: Feminism Is for Everybody (2000)

In order to discuss the issue of woman resistance and patriarchy in Maissa Bey's *Hizya* (2015), Malika Mokeddem's *L'interdite* (1993) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), we will try to apply the feminist theory *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000) written by the African American theorist Gloria Jean Watkins known as bell hooks. The theory is composed of nineteen chapters, in which hooks examines the nature of feminism as a movement to end sexism, oppression, and male domination. In her introduction hooks describes her pride in her work as 'a writer, a feminist theorist, a cultural critic', she encourages readers to see that feminism is for everybody.

In the first chapter entitled *Feminist Politics: Where We Stand* Hooks highlights the fact that reformist feminist thinking weakened the original foundations of contemporary feminism which called for reconstructing an anti-sexist society, and focused primarily on equality with men in the workforce.

Consciousness Raising: A Constant Change of Heart is a significant chapter for our dissertation in which hooks explains the way awareness is created inside women. She affirms that male domination and oppression that are practiced in women's everyday lives have developed revolutionary feminist consciousness-raising focused on learning about patriarchy as a system of domination. She argues that the strongest move of women consciousness is to reject patriarchal thinking and action.

The third chapter named *Sisterhood is Still Powerful* is another important chapter where hooks refers to the fact that changing female sexist thinking is the basic step for creating the powerful sisterhood. She adds that female union was not possible within patriarchal culture in which the strong should rule over the weak, so renewed feminism must proclaim to build a new powerful sisterhood to make the feminist political solidarity between women a continuing reality.

Moreover, education is another crucial topic which hooks deals with in the forth chapter entitled: *Feminist Education for Critical Consciousness*. In fact, she thinks that it is necessary to teach the feminist thought and knowledge because of its significance in the lives of everyone, and to know the positive contributions of the feminist movement.

In the fifth and sixth chapters, hooks explores the issues of love and beauty. For her, it is essential for women to know how to love their bodies as themselves; she also talks about women reproductive rights and mentions that abortion was the most important reproductive concern for masses and for women.

Feminist Class Struggle is also an interesting chapter, where hooks speaks about women's struggle to achieve equal access to class power. She asserts that, instead of helping to keep in place patriarchal system, women's fight to end sexist oppression have to be taught in order to improve the lives of women irrespective of class. In the eighth chapter *Global Feminism*, Hooks explores the idea that gender oppression and sexism is portrayed as brutal and more dangerous in the uncivilized countries than in the United States. Therefore, she ends this chapter by mentioning the goal of the global feminist work, which is to empower solidarity between women beyond the boundaries of race and nationality in order to eliminate sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.

Another essential idea which hooks discusses in the ninth chapter *Women at Work* is that everyone knows that work does not liberate women from dependence and male domination; in fact, they have to take the step to think about the type of work which liberates. According to her, self-sufficiency is needed when all women are free to challenge gender discrimination.

In her tenth chapter named: *Race and Gender*, hooks speaks about white women who are more privileged than black ones, and how black activists made efforts to a reconsideration of race.

Another distinguishing chapter that plays an important role in the advancement of our work is the eleventh one entitled: *Ending Violence*, here hooks mentions different types of violence like male violence against women, and children as victims of adult patriarchal violence, in this sense she says: “I am among those rare feminist theorists who believe that it is crucial for feminist movement to have as an overriding agenda ending all forms of violence”.¹

In the following chapter entitled: *Feminist Masculinity*, hooks notes that men must understand that patriarchy is not the only solution to maintain their sense of self and identity.

Many other points are discussed in the following chapters: raising boys in an anti-sexist manner in *Feminist Parenting*, lack of men’s concern with female pleasure and the need for a mutual satisfaction, equality and respect between couples in *Liberating Marriage and Partnership*, and the fact of challenging sexist stereotypes and the coming of feminist sexual revolution.

Furthermore, bell hooks deals with many other topics in the next chapters, as lesbianism and homosexuality in the chapter entitled: *Total Bliss: Lesbianism and Feminism*,

women's freedom and men's subordination of women through love in the seventeenth chapter *To Love Again*, she also tells about the reason of her conversion to feminist thinking, saying that her father's domination of everyone in her family and her witnessing of her mother's pain led her to rebellion. To end this chapter, she adds that in a patriarchal culture love was linked to notions of possession.

Hooks concluded her book by speaking about women who challenged patriarchal religion, and how these women reached a liberating spirituality in her eighteenth chapter named *Feminist Spirituality*. Then, in the last chapter named: *Visionary Feminism* she highlights the importance of gender equality, mutuality and interdependency. She ends up with a positive notion and says: "Feminist politics aims to end domination to free us to be who we are, to live lives where we love justice, where we can live in peace. Feminism is for everybody".²

Materials

a- Summaries of the novels

1-Hizya (2015)

Hizya (2015), tells the story of an Algerian young woman who dreams of drawing an independent life and live an unconditional and sensational love story. Hizya is a graduate woman who obtains a translation diploma from the University of Algiers. At the same time, she is passionate about poetry. She is influenced by the poem of "*Hizya*", which is written by the Algerian poet Mohammed Ben Guittoun. It inspires her because of the name she shares with the heroine of the legend, and the desire to live the same romance as her. Hizya resides in the Casbah of Algiers and comes from a patriarchal and conservative family, living under the authority of her father, two brothers and a conformist mother's daily warnings and

supervision over her and her sister. She is obliged to look for a job in a hairdressing salon where she meets women with whom she experiences her new daily life, realizing that they all reject male dominance, guidance, and being victims. On the other hand, the inner side of Hizya always manifests and pushes her to interrogate herself about her fears and doubts. It also guides her to think about the reality. Despite her family's oppression, Hizya tries to begin a relationship with her pretender Riyad who makes her discover a new way of thinking and feeling. Therefore, she notices that the legend of "*Hizya*" was just a pretext for her to go beyond the boundaries trying to be unique and different. At the end of the novel, Hizya resigns and decides to be an ordinary woman in the Algerian society.

2-L'interdite (1993)

L'interdite is a novel written in 1993 by the Algerian post-colonialist writer Malika Mokeddem who contributes throughout her works to improve the status of the Algerian women after independence. Sultana, the main character in the novel, is a woman who flees to France, Montpellier, where she becomes a doctor. When Sultana learns about the death of her friend Yacine, she decides to return to Algeria, her native country. She stays in Ain Nakhla, the village where she was born and grew up. There, she violates the religious norms and attends the funeral of her friend. As Yacine is a doctor in the clinic of the village, Sultana decides to replace him. Alternating between her job and encounters, she faces different insults and misunderstandings from the natives, especially the fundamentalists; thus, she becomes a victim of violence and atrocities. Soon, Sultana meets Vincent, the "roumi", with whom she shares the most of her time discussing about the desert young girl, Dalila; who is special and strange. Dalila is a reader who wants to be free and liberate herself from the authority of her brothers and society. At the end, the native women rebel against the fundamentalists of the village and the men who devalue their status. These women wanted Sultana as the president

of their union but she refuses. At the end, she chooses to exile and encourages them to continue their fight and combat for the liberty of the Algerian women.

3-Purple Hibiscus (2003)

Purple Hibiscus is a novel written by the Nigerian author *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*, published in 2003. The story of the book is set during the postcolonial time in Nigeria. It tells about the Achikes, a privileged family living in Enugu, Nigeria. The latter is composed of Kambili, Jaja, their calm mother Beatrice and their devoted Catholic father Eugene. From the beginning, she states that things started to fall apart in her family after the Palm Sunday's brutal event, when her brother Jaja refuses to go to the church communion; his father throws his missal at him and breaks Beatrice's beloved figurines. From this violent act, Kambili tells the events leading up to Palm Sunday.

The head of the family, Eugene, owns several factories in Enugu, and his newspapers publish critical articles about the government corruption. Every day, Kambili and Jaja, follow a schedule which organizes their time to study, eat, sleep, and pray in a way they could satisfy their father. Being motivated with fear, both are incapable to create their own identities. At Christmas, Eugene is praised in Abba by his editor Ade Coker and the Priest Father Benedict for his nobility. However, at each Christmas, he does not allow Jaja and Kambili to visit their grandfather Papa-Nnukwu for more than fifteen minutes, because he considers him as a "heathen". Ifeoma, Eugene's sister invites the children to go to Nsukka., Kambili and Jaja discover a different world full of love, interaction and attention. Unlike Eugene, Ifeoma, who is a poor woman with less conditions raises her children Amaka, Obiora and Chima with faith and intellectual curiosity. During their visit to Nsukka, Kambili remains silent and isolated, whereas Jaja tries to follow his aunt's house movement with his cousins. Few days later,

Kambili meets Father Amadi, who encourages her to speak her mind and think about herself. Later on, Ifeoma brings Papa-Nnukwu to her house, where he dies few days later. When Eugene learns that his children have spent time with the heathen, he punishes them by pouring hot water on their feet. After soldiers murdered Eugene's editor Ade Coker, pressure is put on him. As he discovers the painting of his father in Kambili's room, he becomes violent again and beats her so aggressively that she ends up in the hospital. When she gets well, she returns to Nsukka with Jaja where she learns to enjoy life. She even declares her love to Father Amadi. After Ifeoma retired from the University of Nsukka, she decides to go to America.

After her husband's beating, Beatrice has had another miscarriage and goes to Nsukka to take her children back home. After a week, when Palm Sunday arrives, Jaja refuses to go to the communion and grows defiant. He takes his sister and returns to Nsukka again, but few days later their father dies by a poison which Beatrice put in his tea. Jaja takes the responsibility for the crime and goes to prison. At the end, Jaja is released three years later, Beatrice and her children feel free and dream to go to America to visit Ifeoma, plant orange trees in Abba, and that purple hibiscuses will flourish again.

b-Historical backgrounds:

1-Postcolonial Algeria:

After Algeria achieved its independence in 1962, women occupied an important place in society through their participation in the struggle for national liberation. In fact, the independence had significant impact on shaping Algerian women's role in society. Unluckily for them, during the black decade the conservatives called for the revival of Islamic cultural values; thus, the roles of women had to be restored to their places. As a result, some illiterate females decided to return to their homes, some others; mainly the educated ones searched for jobs, the minority of them tried to create organizations but no attention was given to them.

Moreover, Algerian men did not consider women's liberation as a priority, thus, women were deceived and were gradually transformed from active women to passive and silent victims. Also, many post-colonialist feminist writers like: Maissa Bey, Malika Mokeddem, and Assia Djébar appeared and write in order to express their rejection of patriarchy in Algeria and defend women's rights. In her article: *The Algerian feminist movement between nationalism, patriarchy and Islamism*, Zahia Smail Salhi says:

Women felt a deep sense of betrayal and bewilderment, as if the years of the revolution were a short lived dream of an ideal world where women were valued for the roles they were able to play, and a world where men and women worked side by side for a common noble goal. Many women wondered why such camaraderie could not continue in the post-colonial period when the country needed both its men and women to build itself as a modern state whose revolutionary past could have served as a platform for development and societal cohesion.³

Algerian women remain marginalized in the new independent Algerian society despite their participation in the liberation struggle.

2-Postcolonial Nigeria:

The coming of the British colonizers to the African countries changed many areas such as religion, culture, and the social system, and this affected the new outlook of many countries. After the independence of Nigeria from the United Kingdom on 1 October 1960, the country's structure has always been occupied by the masculine authority. This system did not ensure women any economic, social, or cultural rights. "Nigerian women's place as citizens and as a valid social group must begin with recognizing the historical passage which has placed them in a subordinate position to men."⁴ The patterns of gender inequality in Nigeria are interpreted by the current social patriarchal system as 'tradition'. Essentially, the traditional images of women represent only their domestic and sexual roles. However this fact has given birth to awareness and women movements that seek to combat these cultural stereotypes.

As independence was dawning in Nigeria, mainly during the late 1980s, theorists and feminist scholars began to re-think women's socio-cultural contexts that produced female subordination. Consequently, by the early 1990s, the focus had shifted to a social relations analysis of the gender roles both for women and men and the nature of power relationships between them. As a result, Nigerian postcolonial female identity became an issue that has been developed by many writers and novelists, among them the modern Nigerian feminist writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, whose major works depict the critical situation of the African women during the contemporary period. Her first novel *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) is a feminist work in which she portrays the hard conditions of women in the Nigerian postcolonial patriarchal society.

Endnotes:

1. bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), 62.
2. Ibid, 118.
3. Zahia Smail Salhi, "The Algerian Feminist Movement between Nationalism, Patriarchy and Islamism" *Women's Studies International Forum* 33, No. 2 (March 2010): 117.
4. Phil E. Okeke, "Reconfiguring Tradition: Women's Rights and Social Status in Contemporary Nigeria" *Africa Today* 47, No. 1 (Winter 2000): 50.

III- Results:

While treating the three works, Malika Mokeddem's *L'interdite* (1993), Maissa Bey's *Hizya* (2015), and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), we have reached significant findings regarding to the three authors, issues and works. We notice that in the three novels, the authors portray an image of an oppressed and victimized woman who struggles in the patriarchal society. Through female characters, the authors create strong voices in order to resist male-domination.

In the first chapter of discussion, we have shown the effects of male domination on women and how these women raised their consciousness about their gender position in both the Algerian and Nigerian patriarchal societies. The female characters of the three books share the same status; they are all conscious about the fact of being marginalized and subordinated by the masculine power.

In the second chapter, we have come to deduce that African women are victimized and subjected through different ways. With the help of hooks theorizing concepts, we have found that one of the major results of male domination is violence against women. While living in a male dominating community, the majority of women are exposed to several states of violence. Within the novels, the female characters in *Hizya* and *L'interdite* are facing traditional and social abuses, whereas in *Purple Hibiscus* they are confronting violence within their family.

Finally, within the third chapter of our dissertation, our focus was mainly on showing the social and cultural oppressions that women bear from the system of patriarchy, and the way these women created the spirit of solidarity and sisterhood between them in order to resist and combat for the end of patriarchy and its exploitations. The female figures adopt different forms of resistance like reading, education, consciousness, silence and sisterhood in order to liberate themselves from the patriarchal injustices.

All in all, this dissertation examined the status of African women in the contemporary Algerian and Nigerian patriarchal societies. The three works explored the harsh reality of the unfair system that exploits women and victimizes them. As a result, these women seek for gender justice and for liberation through various means of resistance.

Discussion

Chapter One: Male Domination and Gender Consciousness

In this chapter, we are going to study the depiction of the female characters affected by male domination and their consciousness about their gender inferiority. We will deal with the three books: *Hizya* (2015), *L'interdite* (1993), and *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). We are going to illustrate that African women are subordinated and considered as inferior to men through the use of bell hooks' theory *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000).

a- In Hizya

1- Hizya

Hizya, the main character of the book, is a modern and educated woman of the postcolonial period. She always dreams to live in a perfect way, to be independent, and most importantly, to live a sensational love story. Unluckily for her, she lives with a very conservative family; a patriarchal father and a conformist mother who is very strict with her daughters, especially herself Hizya, the oldest one, reminding her constantly that a woman occupies a lowered position in the Algerian society. For Hizya's mother, a woman will never succeed in trying to change her status; she says:

Nous/ femmes/ sommes venues au monde/ pour consacrer notre vie toutes entière aux autres/
Obéir/ Servir/ Subir/ Accepter d'être/ et de faire/ ce que les autres/ en premier lieu/ les parents/
décident pour nous/ Et puis/ une fois mariées/ donner la vie/ c'est notre fonction/ c'est notre
seule raison d'être/ c'est notre mission sur terre.¹

Hizya's mother is very mindful of the way women are considered in her society, and is conscious of the functions that are given to a woman. In the sense of gender inferiority, Hooks explains why a woman knows that she is inferior to man. She says: "We all knew firsthand that we had been socialized as females by patriarchal thinking to see ourselves as inferior to

men”². According to Hooks, Hizya’s mother is a subordinate and a submissive woman who is socialized to think that she will remain inferior and accept her subordination.

Unlike her mother who is a housewife, Hizya works in a hairdressing salon where she shares different affinities with her colleagues; she even discovers many realities that were told by the salon customers about the way Algerian man treats his wife and how he lowers her. Thus, she realizes that her consciousness revives, and even her behavior with Riyadh has changed. She could no longer enjoy any time spent with him; she is not able to be natural and spontaneous. She states:

Méfiance des femmes. Malgré moi, je n’arrive pas à avoir avec lui la spontanéité et l’insouciance qui pourrait apporter à nos conversations la légèreté, la liberté de ton qui leur manquent tant. Ces mises en garde résonnent à mes oreilles chaque fois que je veux lui raconter des moments de ma vie, des anecdotes, même les plus insignifiantes, sur le comportement de mes frères, les obsessions de mon père.³

From this quotation, we can understand that women are very vigilant about male domination, since they are always told all the atrocities that married women endure. In this sense bell hooks states: “Understanding the way male domination and sexism is expressed in everyday life created awareness in women of the ways we were victimized, exploited and in worse case scenarios, oppressed.”⁴

For hooks, women must be careful in order not to be exploited or oppressed. It is a precaution that a woman must use against men. It is the case of Hizya, who is always awake about how a man can offend a woman.

Therefore, we can say that the main character Hizya is a woman who dreams a lot, but her destiny does not differ from others. Even if she wants to be different, at the end she does not fall in love as she plans; she does not live her love story as she has wished because of the patriarchal society and the different oppressions that she endures from her conservative family.

2- Sonia

Another female character in *Hizya* is Sonia. Sonia is a beautiful woman, who works with Hizya in the hairdressing salon. Her only occupation is to leave the country and reach a freedom which is not accessible in the Algerian society. Sonia is exhausted by the aggressions which she faces everyday and the members of her family who make her feel that she is just a marionette which they can manipulate as they want. She complains,

Je ne sais pas si tu peux le comprendre mais moi, ici, je ne respire pas, je ne vis pas: je survis. Mes parents, mes frères, mes cousins, les hommes dans la rue, tous, tous me donnent le sentiment que je ne m'appartiens pas. Que mon corps ne m'appartient pas ! C'est comme si chaque regard me volait une partie de moi-même. J'en ai assez d'être entourée de barbelés, ou que j'aïlle ! Je n'en peux plus de ces regards, de ces remarques, de ces rappels à l'ordre, de ces agressions quotidiennes⁵.

From this quotation, one may notice that Sonia suffers a lot from her society. She considers men as the major cause of her misery and pain. Even if she is a woman who tries to free herself from the patriarchal oppressions, the reality is that she suffers as much as all other women do. She is conscious that the problem comes from her society that obliges men to maintain their domination on women. In this sense Hooks argues:

It became evident that even if individual men divested of patriarchal privilege the system of patriarchy, sexism and male domination would still remain intact, and women would still be exploited and/ or oppressed⁶

Here hooks states that even if a number of men do not have the patriarchal privilege, domination will remain intact. It is the case of Sonia who is informed by her brother that she will get married in few weeks. Despite her struggle and her opinions about freedom, her brother decides to marry her without asking for her opinion as if she was an object. She has been obliged to accept because no choice is given to her. It is the only solution for her to avoid suicide and get rid of this painful life. Shesays:

Je sais bien que beaucoup, oui, beaucoup de filles donneraient cher pour être à ma place, me dit-elle après m'avoir réclamé un mouchoir ..., Mais comment te dire ? Je suis malheureuse.

Plus exactement, j'ai la rage ! Une fois de plus, je n'ai pas le choix ... Tu comprends ca ? Tu comprends pourquoi j'ai si male ? Parce que, malgré mes grands discours sur la liberté, malgré mes comportements et mes déclarations, je ne fais que mettre mes pas dans les leurs ... Comment ne pas se mettre à hurler de dégoût quand tu les vois te supplier presque de ne pas les oublier au cas où cette chance se présentait la ou tu vas vivre ?⁷

Sonia is the victim who is trapped by her brother; she will live a new life with a stranger who chooses her to continue the rest of life with him. She is furious about the way her family exchanged her for dollars; she is shocked by the way her family wants to get rid of her.

One may understand that male domination is regulating life and this is illustrated in the novel through the characters of Hizya and Sonia. Measures of protection and equality are to be taken in order to end women subordination.

b- In *L'interdite*

1- Sultana

Like Hizya, Sultana Medjahed symbolizes the Algerian modern educated woman. She is a nephrologist who returns from exile to Algeria in order to attend the funeral of her friend Yacine. The title of the book *L'interdite* portrays Sultana's status in her village, Ain Nakhla, where she becomes a forbidden woman because of her refusal to submit to the Algerian Patriarchal norms. In fact, Mokeddem represents women living under the male dominating society which affects and menaces their rights and liberty. Sultana and the other females in Ain Nakhla are conscious about the oppression that the religious fundamentalists practice over them under the pretext of extremist religious beliefs.

When Sultana is in the village, she notes that everything has remained as it was, especially men's behavior and mind states. When she arrives to the hospital, she says:

Je suis face à l'hôpital. Le muret qui le ceint est, par endroits, Presque totalement ensablé. Des hommes sont accroupis ou debout, le long du bâtiment. Ils me dévisagent. Là le présent ne me semble que le passé décrépit, mes souvenirs cassés et empoussiérés. Il doit être midi. Je ne

peux pas le vérifier. Ma montre est dans mon sac et je suis comme hypnotisée. J'ai le cœur dans la tête qui pioche à grand coups⁸

Sultana knows why those men look at her that way and realizes that they judge her and consider her as a whore. Sultana is aware about this kind of domination from her childhood experience in the village. Indeed, Sultana's awareness of the position that she occupies in the Algerian society corresponds to bell hooks' explanation of consciousness-raising, when she says: "Revolutionary feminist consciousness-raising emphasized on the importance of learning about patriarchy as a system of domination, how it became institutionalized and how it is perpetuated and maintained."⁹

According to hooks' theory *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), feminism insists on making women more informed about male exercising power and authority over them in their everyday life. Hooks thinks that men's dominance creates a kind of wakefulness in women, which means that they have to understand what they really are and what position they occupy in the male dominated society. To illustrate this idea, Sultana's statement is a good example when she says: "Je suis une femme docteur, une femme avant tout, m'entends-tu? Et je n'ai que faire des fanfaronnades des uns, de la décrépitude et boursouflée ou de la lâcheté des autres!"¹⁰ From this statement, we can understand that Sultana is conscious about the fact that even though she is a doctor, she is first a woman. She learns how the Algerian Islamist society treats women and weakens their status. In this sense, Hooks affirms: "Argumentative discussion was common in Consciousness-raising groups as it was the way we sought to clarify our collective understanding of the nature of male domination."¹¹

As a result, the character of Sultana reflects the image of a woman who tries to oppose male domination. Therefore, Sultana corresponds to bell hooks description of a woman who recognizes that male domination is the result of the patriarchal system.

2- Dalila

Hooks develops the issue of house holding. She explains that, in a society where man is the powerful, he uses his different forces to dominate the woman and treats her as a slave because he believes that he owns her. In fact, mostly, men assert their power over women who stay at home and oppress them. hooks argues:

No matter her class the woman who stayed at home working as a housewife was often isolated, lonely, and depressed ... When women spend all their time attending the needs of others, home is workplace for her, not a site of relaxation, comfort, and pleasure.¹²

To illustrate the statement above in Malika Mokeddem's *L'interdite*, the characters of Dalila and her mother may be the best examples. Dalila is a young Algerian girl who lives under the authority of seven brothers. She suffers from male guidance which is imposed on her and her mother. Moreover, in Algeria, women are socialized to accept their subordination, simply because they are not allowed to oppose male authority. In this sense, Dalila says:

Oui, j'ai trop de frères. Ils font trop de bruit. Ils se disputent tous le temps. Ils me disputent et ils disputent même ma mère. Ils me disent toujours : « Tu sors pas ! Travaille avec ta mère ! Apporte moi boire ! Donne-moi mes chaussures ! Repasse mon pantalon ! Baisse les yeux quand je te parle ! » et encore et encore et tu multiplies par sept. Ils crient et me donnent que des ordres. Parfois, ils me frappent.¹³

Furthermore, the mother of Dalila has the features of a traditional Algerian woman. She is dominated, thinking that her existence is limited to householding. Thus, she believes that patriarchy is an absolute, indisputable reality, given that man belongs to the upper status. This is shown when her daughter Dalila says: "Ma mère, je lui dis rien. Des fois elle aussi elle a la colère de mes frères. Mais si moi je dis des choses contre eux, elle me tape. Elle dit que je dois leur obéir."¹⁴

She is a submissive and helpless mother who is incapable to save her daughter from the traditional way of living which makes the relation between brother and sister a relation of

submission and hatred. Consequently, Dalila portrays the miserable girl who experiences the various cultural and religious injustices of the patriarchal society.

3- The Native Women

In the novel, Mokeddem portrays the Algerian women stories. Through female characters, she examines the patriarchal interpretations which deprive women of their right to choose the life they inspire. In the village Ain Nakhla, women are not satisfied, they are forbidden to walk freely outside the home. They experience all kinds of pain and abuse. However, these women are conscious and notice that the system of patriarchy and the Islamist fundamentalists; are the cause of their pain. One of the old women in the village claims:

Quelle tristesse de réaliser que sa vie n'était qu'esclavage et humiliations , dans l'impuissance continue ! Alors comment transmettre une tradition que plus personne ne respecte ? Comment perpétuer un mode de vie qui ne nous reconnaît plus aucune considération, à aucun moment de la vie ?¹⁵

From this quotation, we may notice that Algerian women are convinced by the fact that they are oppressed. In this meaning, Hooks asserts that women are seen as inferior to men who believe in their capacity to control women, she notes:

But when it comes to the issue of gender they were as sexist as their conservative cohorts. Individual women come from these relationships angry. And that anger as a catalyst for women's liberation. As the movement progressed, as feminist thinking advanced, enlightened activists saw that men were not the problem, that the problem was patriarchy, sexism, and male domination.¹⁶

Indeed, all the problems that Algerian women face, notably those relating to the devaluation of their status, are due to the injustice which favors men by granting them more rights, and makes the fate of women highly dependent on the decisions of men, who have an authority recognized by society as well as by tradition. Woman therefore, remains under the influence of men.

C- In Purple Hibiscus:

In *Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie examines different issues in order to portray women's status in contemporary Nigeria. Through female characters, Adichie presents the conditions of women living in the postcolonial society in terms of gender consciousness and male domination. In fact, domination and oppression are depicted through the characters of Kambili and Ifeoma.

1- Kambili

Kambili Achike lives under the strict control of her father Eugene. Despite her young age, Kambili is intelligent and aware that she is attentive to all what is happening inside her family and conscious about her father's control. Eugene uses the catholic religion to justify his strict conduct; he raises his children with catholic background.

From the beginning, we can notice that Eugene has power over his wife and his children and wants to control their lives with his own decisions, Kambili narrates:

Papa liked order. It showed even in the schedules themselves, the way his meticulously drawn lines, cut across each day, separating study from siesta, siesta from family time, family time from eating, eating from prayer, prayer from sleep. He revised them often.¹⁷

In *Purple Hibiscus*, Kambili's life is limited in a way she could satisfy her father. According to Adichie's depiction of the Nigerian patriarchal society, woman status remains always under man's conduction. In this context Adichie's illustration corresponds with Bell Hooks' explanation of the way men believe in their ability to dominate women. She argues:

Cultures of domination attack self-esteem, replacing it with a notion that we derive our sense of being from dominion over another. Patriarchal masculinity teaches men that their sense of self and identity resides on the capacity to dominate other.¹⁸

So, according to bell hooks male domination is related to their beliefs, which is the case of Kambili's father who tries to shape all the members of his family into what he believes.

2- Ifeoma

Ifeoma is another female character in *Purple Hibiscus*; she is an educated woman who works at the University of Nsukka. She is a modern woman who lives alone with her children. Ifeoma is the sister of Eugene, the extremist religious and violent man. In the novel, Ifeoma is illustrated as a rebellious woman who enjoys freedom since the father of her children died. She has seen hard times but she stands against oppression and defies her society that disturbs her because of the fact that she has no husband to protect her and the children. In this sense her father, Papa-Nnukwu says:” My spirit will intercede for you, so that Chukwu will send a good man to take care of you and the children.”¹⁹ Here Papa-Nnukwu worries a lot about his daughter Ifeoma, he tells her that even after his death, he wishes that God will send her a man to protect her. In fact, in the African societies a woman without a husband is considered to be in danger and not secured.

Despite Ifeoma’s studies and her different contributions to the development of her country, her father considers her as inferior to her brother Eugene. bell hooks explains: “In all spheres of literary writing and academic scholarship works by women had historically received little or no attention as a consequence of gender discrimination.”²⁰ Even if Ifeoma contributes to the development of her society, she will remain lowered to her brother because she is a woman.

As a conclusion, this chapter shows the way the female characters are subordinated in the three novels. We can see how African women suffer from a sexist and patriarchal society. Each female character struggles in a different way against male domination searching for liberation and freedom.

Endnotes:

1. Maissa Bey, *Hizya* (Algiers: barzakh, 2015), 50.
2. bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*(Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), 14.
3. Bey, *Hizya*, 239-240.
4. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 7.
5. Bey, *Hizya*, 95.
6. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 67.
7. Bey, *Hizya*, 281-282.
8. Malika Mokeddem, *L'interdite* (Paris : France Loisirs, 1994), 25.
9. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 7.
10. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 246.
11. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 8.
12. Ibid, 50.
13. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 51-52.
14. Ibid, 139.
15. Ibid, 245.
16. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 64.
17. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2003), 23-24.
18. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 70.
19. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, 83.
20. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 20.

Chapter Two: Violence and Women Victimization

This chapter is devoted to the way African women are victimized, and illustrate men's subordination of women through violence in the three books, *Hizya*(2015), *L'interdite* (1993) and *Purple Hibiscus*(2003).

a-In Hizya:

In *Hizya*, Maissa Bey identifies tradition, family life, and social values of women in the Algerian society. The characters of Hizya and her mother personify the stereotyped image of oppressed, voiceless, and victimized women.

1- Hizya

To begin with, Hizya, a central character in the novel, can be considered as one of the most silent female characters who encounter many difficulties because of the existing patriarchal system. Moreover, sexual harassment has been and still is very present in contemporary Algerian society; this is maybe the consequence of the fundamentalist thoughts which deprive both men and women to choose their way of living. Evidently, Hizya narrates one of the scenes in which she finds herself subjected and faces a sexual harassment when she was young,

Me revient à l'instant le souvenir odieux et pénible, si pénible, de cet homme qui, dans un bus surchargé, s'est collé contre moi le corps agité de mouvements saccadés dont je n'ai pris tout de suite conscience dans la cohue. Ce n'est que lorsque j'ai senti une main se glisser sur ma taille et remonter jusque sous les aisselles, jusqu'à mes seins, que je me suis vivement arrachée à cette ignoble étreinte. J'avais treize ans.¹

Her situation is the result of the oppressive environment of violence and traditional conception of masculinity, in this sense; men view women as sexual objects and think that they can manipulate them as they want because of their silent reactions. In order to understand this analysis, we may explain it in relation to hooks' clarification of the matter of violence in

her introduction of the theory stating: “In return for all the goodies men receive from patriarchy, they are required to dominate women, to exploit and oppress us, using violence if they must to keep patriarchy intact”² That means, even though men are the only benefitters from patriarchy, they also allow themselves to victimize women. Therefore, in the novel, Maïssa Bey is giving insights of the reality in Algeria and exposing the problematic of gender in the country through female characters.

In addition, Hizya’s mother is a repressed and fragile woman who lives under the patriarchal commandment of her family in law, especially her mother in law; an authoritative and matriarchal woman, who becomes the head of the house after the death of her husband. She raised many children in very bad conditions, and supported her ancestors’ conduction. Hizya’s grandmother likes giving orders, imposing her authority on the family members and mostly; exercising her power on Hizya’s mother. Hizya says:

Ce faisant, elle ne manquait pas de houspiller sa belle-fille, ma mère, qui baissait la tête et souvent ravalait ses larmes. C’est ainsi que, de génération en génération, pour maintenir la tradition, des mères exercent leur pouvoir- le seul qui leur soit permis- sur d’autres femmes, d’autres mères dans l’espace domestique- le seul qui leurs soit réservé.³

As mentioned above, Hizya, the protagonist of the novel explains how the Algerian old women devalue and weaken their daughters in law because of the fact that they must endure them what they used to endure in the past. Here, Hizya’s mother is illustrated as a victim who suffers and accepts the hatred caused by her mother-in law. In this view, bell hooks says: “Even in households where no adult male parental caregiver was present, women taught and teach children sexist thinking. Ironically, many people assume that any female-headed household is automatically matriarchal.”⁴ Hooks considers that, a woman who is the head of the house is a matriarchal one, since this woman prefers to dominate the other women present in the house and insist to make them digest her authority. It is the case with Hizya’s mother who receives nuisance from her mother-in-law.

Moreover, Hizya witnesses all the steps that her mother followed before getting married. She talks about how her mother was prepared to be a good householder, which is, according to Hizya's grandfather, the main function for a woman. Hizya adds:

Ma mère a quitté l'école à l'âge de douze ans. Elle savait à peu près lire, écrire et compter. « Pour une fille, c'est bien suffisant », a décrété son père. Alors a commencé l'autre volet de son éducation. Apprentissage assuré par sa mère. Objectif : la préparer à son rôle futur. Femme d'intérieur. Sa fonction essentielle.⁵

Furthermore, Hizya, explains how her mother was victimized since she was a child by her father who weakened her by not letting her continue her studies because of the fact that she is a female. Finally, Hizya's mother is an illustration of a traditional woman who submits to patriarchal values and prefers to withstand and survive because women are not given any consideration. It was what she was taught since she was a child.

b- In *L'interdite* :

Bell hooks emphasizes on the issue of violence. For her, in a patriarchal culture, violence is the result of unfair treatment to women. In this regard, she claims: "In a culture of domination everyone is socialized to see violence as an acceptable means of social control"⁶. Accordingly, the issues that Hooks addresses are those of injustice and violence. In the novel *L'interdite*, Malika Mokeddem's heroine, Sultana, is a portrayal of the victimized woman who defies the barbaric conduct of the Islamic extremists who mistreat the Algerian women.

1- Sultana

Violence against women can take very subtle forms, the cold stare expressing shame clearly means to a woman that her presence in the public sphere is provocative. In this way, from Sultana's experience in the village, we deduce that Algerian women do not feel at ease in the streets, they can not walk without drawing attention. It is that climate of fear that

Sultana lives in the village. During her working days in the hospital, Sultana receives many insults from the villagers; they use the violence which makes her the center of accusations, and also consider her as a threat which may awake the other women of the village. That is the reason why they use violent expressions when they address her, this is shown when, Bekkar, the mayor of the village told her,

On veut plus que tu restes chez nous! Ain Nekhla, c'est pas un bordel ! Toi, tu couches même avec les étrangers ! Deux hommes en même temps ! On te connaît ! tu es toujours un danger pour les filles, un péché dans le village, braille-t-il, perdant sa chique en postillons fétides, dès qu'il m'aperçoit.⁷

In fact, over the past, Bekkar was in love with Sultana's mother who did not accept his love, this is why he hates Sultana. Not only Bekkar, but also the men of the village utter offensive words to her face, they became aggressive and even throw rocks on her window. These violent acts make of Sultana a victim of the prejudiced norms against women of the Algerian society. In this context, hooks thinks that men must learn that they have not the property to injure women, she states:

Until they unlearn the sexist thinking that tells them that they have a right to rule over women by any means, male violence against women will continue to be a norm.⁸

Through the character of Sultana, Mokeddem represents the pain of being a woman in the patriarchal society. Salah, a friend of Sultana notices that her behavior is somehow a result of her troubled childhood experience, asserting,

Sultana a du vivre un drame dans l'enfance, j'ignore lequel, Khaled est muet sur ce sujet et je lui en sais gré. Cependant, il m'a dit que, par le passé, elle a souffert de la mentalité des gens du village. Il en est toujours ainsi lorsqu'une fille sans décence est livrée en pâture à la hantise de la Faute dans des lieux où les archaïsmes semblent immuables.⁹

Accordingly, the victimization of Sultana started since she was a child. At a very young age, she witnessed her mother's death, murdered by her own husband, this had happened because of the villagers' accusations towards her. The frequent indignities and prejudices that Sultana suffers from, reflects the plight of a woman marked by patriarchy and religious fundamentalism. This is revealed when she claims: "Mais l'actualité du pays et le sort des

femmes, ici, me replongent sans cesse dans mes drames passés, m'enchainent à toutes celle qu'on tyrannise.”¹⁰

To explain what have been said above, Mokeddem created an image that depicts the situation of Algerian women and the deadly control of extremists who generate great fear and threats of violence which infantilize women and suggest that they should be neither seen nor heard, or more clearly, they are not in their place.

It is in this condition that we are examining the issue of violence, the objective is to focus on the various forms and reasons for violence, oppression, and social injustice which Algerian women are subjected to. As presented in the novel, we see how such violence is denounced. The character of Sultana is a model of an injured woman, that is to say, her opposition to the traditional values is viewed as subversive and dangerous for the society, this is why the villagers use brutality against her, and even burn the house of doctor Yacine where she resides, we can perceive this in Salah's statement: “Ne restez pas ici, c'est dangereux! Marbah et sa clique ont incendié la maison du medecin.”¹¹ It is more severe when a woman endures social abuses from her own society. That is the case of Sultana Medjahed who stands the constraints and social violence which put pressure on women. From this background, bell hooks argues: “Sexist thinking continues to support male domination and violence that is a consequence.”¹²

In view of this, hooks argues that violence against women is definitely linked to all acts of abuse that occur between the powerful and the powerless, the dominant and the dominated. She makes the point that most women are socialized to accept oppression and the use of force because of the fact of being a woman.

2- The Native Women

Throughout the novel, Mokeddem uses other female characters who are native Algerian women, in order to picture the pain that women bear from the Muslim fundamentalists, who, in the name of religion, are attempting to hurt them in the way they want. Thus, in Algeria, it is the man who holds the power of tradition; he transforms the heritage of the absolute authority of men and the right to hurt women. Additionally, from Sultana's conversations with the native women, we deduce that, even poverty, bad housing, and isolation could be the reasons that lead to violent reactions, this is demonstrated when one of the women in the hospital approves:

La jeune fille a été engrossée par son frère. Problème de promiscuité, entre autres. Ils sont treize frères et sœurs à vivre avec leur mère dans un deux-pièces. Leur père est mort il y a quelques années. Lorsque la mère s'est rendue compte de la grossesse de sa fille, elle l'a emmenée dans le nord du pays. Elles sont revenues après l'accouchement, seules. On murmure que la mère aurait tué le bébé de sa fille. Depuis, la jeune fille est devenue muette et la mère est raide, tremble et bégaye. Un malheur sans remède !¹³

True dramas took place in the village as result of the Algerian sexist thinking that supports male violent domination in which women are regarded as quiet creatures only intended to live under the oppression of the other half of human race.

Indeed, in *L'interdite*, Sultana and the other female figures are exposed to dominance as well as violence. It is significant to mention that, in postcolonial Algeria, women are so degraded by the false norms that men fabricated in the name of tradition and religion, and the consequence is the contempt and the victimization of women. Therefore, Mokeddem's characterization of women subjugation confirms Bell Hooks' interpretation of the issue of violence, that there are many ways in which violence could occur, purely because it is accepted as a means of enforcing patriarchal rules.

c- In Purple Hibiscus:

In Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, gender-based violence manifests in a kind of domestic violence. The story definitely revolves different issues that concern women's subjugation in the Nigerian society. This is basically because of the influences of the patriarchal culture which encourages violence against women, or more clearly, domestic violence. Throughout the novel, Eugene Achike is revered as a model of extremely abusive man in his house; he dominates and injures his wife and children. Therefore, the revelation of violence in the novel validates bell hooks' explanation in the chapter of *Ending Violence* of her theory *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), it is in this context that we are going to show the impact of violence through the female characters; Kambili and her mother Beatrice.

1- Kambili

It is very significant to observe that the character of Kambili has been portrayed as suffering from violence. bell hooks thinks that exerting control over women is due to their dependency on men, she affirms that violence against women has to be the major goal of the feminist focus, she says:

Significantly, I am among those feminist theorists who believe that it is crucial for feminist movement to have an overriding agenda ending all forms of violence. Feminist focus on patriarchal violence against women should remain a primary concern.¹⁴

Properly, from the character of the young girl Kambili, we notice that she shows a victim young female who bears both physical and psychological violence. Kambili is very submissive and obedient to her father and follows his orders. In fact, Eugene uses violence to force Kambili and her brother Jaja to follow the catholic religion, he victimizes his children in order to pursuit his objectives. As a father, Eugene violently punishes Kambili when she did not obey him. As a result, Kambili always observes suffering at the hands of her father.

While telling the story, Kambili provides the scenes in which she witnesses and suffers from the inhuman acts of her father. Accordingly, when Eugene learns that his children had stayed in the same house with Papa-Nnukwu, the grand-father of Kambili, he is angry and goes to Nsukka to pick his children back home. Thus, Eugene becomes violent and tortures Kambili by scalding her feet, Kambili narrates:

He lowered the kittle into the tub, tilted it toward my feet. He poured the hot water on my feet, slowly, as if he were conducting an experiment and wanted to see what would happen.¹⁵

According to the statement above, we realize that Eugene misleads the members of his family by using violence against them. This situation may support what Bell Hooks thinks about domestic violence in the family asserting,

Patriarchal violence in the home is based on the belief that it is acceptable for the more powerful individual to control others through various forms of coercive force. This expanded definition of domestic violence includes male violence against women, same-sex violence, and adult violence against children.¹⁶

From hooks' definition, we can say that Eugene is labeled as abuser and Kambili as victim, that means, not only adult women face violence, but also the young ones. Hence, Eugene uses abuse in order to maintain control in his household. However, the result of his mistreatment is fear, which is created in Kambili's mind, she describes it when she narrates: "Fear. I was familiar with fear, yet each time I felt it, it was never the same as the other times, as though it came in different flavors and colors."¹⁷ Indeed, whenever Kambili experiences violence, it is more painful than before. Thus, Kambili's description of fear shows her victimization.

Throughout the novel, we can confirm that Kambili is a symbol of suffering since she encounters Eugene's fury each time. During Kambili and Jaja's journey in Nsukka, Amaka, Kambili's cousin gives her the painting of Papa-Nnukwu to keep it as a memory. Back at home, Eugene becomes furious when he discovers the painting, he brutally beats Kambili,

particularly, when she, passionately, clings the painting. This action angers Eugene and leads him to act violently; it is referred to that in Kambili's narration,

The stinging was raw now, even more like bites, because of the mental landed on open skin on my side, my back, my legs. Kicking. Kicking. Kicking. Perhaps it was a belt now because the metal buckle seemed too heavy. Because I could hear swoosh in the air. A low voice was saying, "please, biko, please". More stings. More slaps. A salty wetness, warmed my mouth. I closed my eyes and slept away into quiet. When I opened my eyes, I knew at once that I was not in my bed. The mattress was firmer than mine. I made to get up, but pain shot through my whole body in exquisite little packets.¹⁸

While Kambili recounts the moment when she finds herself in the hospital, she describes her feeling of hurt and her mother's worry, so that, we can comprehend about her experience of torture. Consequently, on the side of psychological violence, Kambili's mental position is distressed by the heavy duty of studying hard, thus her classmates call her a bookworm, however, she constantly, ignores them since she is already troubled by violence at home. At any time Kambili is studying, she remembers the violence that is committed on her and her mother; as a result, horror and fear become parts of her character. In addition, witnessing her mother's suffering, Kambili is disturbed psychologically, in this sense hooks contends:

Also most people tend to see domestic violence between adults as separate and distinct from violence against children when it is not. Often children suffer abuse as they attempt to protect a mother who is being attacked by male companion or husband, or they are emotionally damaged by witnessing violence and abuse.¹⁹

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie uses the character of Kambili in *Purple Hibiscus* in order to introduce the issue of violence as a natural reaction of patriarchal domination. Women are naturally and physically weaker than men, they can not confront the physical power of their oppressor, and this is the situation of Kambili in the novel. Therefore, her construction as a character is that of a girl who knows and accepts her father's abusing which leads to her victimization.

2- Beatrice

Another important female character in the novel is Beatrice, the wife of the abusive husband Eugene, and mother of two children; Jaja and Kambili. Beatrice is a courageous woman who receives various maltreatments from her husband. She is subjugated and abused for futile reasons. She is a Nigerian woman who suffers a lot from the issue of gender violence, either physically or psychologically, like her daughter Kambili. Despite all the atrocities that her husband Eugene practices on her, she remains silent and obedient, fearing the loss of her house, family, and the financial security and the stability of her children. Beatrice is manipulated in a way she could not even try to disobey her husband. Kambili narrates:

We always dropped in to visit Father Benidict after Mass. "Let me stay in the car and wait, biko," Mama said, leaning against the Mercedes. "I feel vomit in my throat." Papa turned to stare at her. I held my breath. It seemed a long moment, but it might have been only seconds. "Are you sure you want to stay in the car?" Papa asked. Mama was looking down; her hands were placed on her belly, to hold the wrapper from untying itself or to keep her bread and tea breakfast down. "My body does not feel right," she mumbled. "I asked if you were sure you wanted to stay in the car." Mama looked up. "I'll come with you. It's really not that bad."²⁰

From the passage above, we may understand that Beatrice does not feel well, but Eugene forces her to come with him, he does not want to allow his wife to stay in the car. Even after she begged him, he refuses and insists on her to come; it was disobedience and a kind of refusal for him. Eugene does not care for the situation of Beatrice, and the most important thing for him, is to maintain his authority and remain the only ruler of the house. Despite of the fact that Beatrice does not feel well, she must obey and come out of the car. Beatrice's act was so disturbing to Eugene that he decides to punish her. He beats her to a state of miscarriage. Kambili reveals:

We stood at the landing and watched Papa descend. Mama was slung over his shoulder like the jute sacks of rice his factory workers bought... We cleaned up the trickle of blood, which trailed away as if someone had carried a leaking jar of red watercolor all the way downstairs. Jaja scrubbed while I wiped.²¹

From the passage, we can understand that Beatrice was beaten and maltreated by her abusive husband. She is living a very painful life, which she prefers to endure rather than asking for divorce and live in danger without any man to protect her children and provide them with stability and guidance. In fact, Beatrice prefers to follow the traditional values and laws of the Nigerian society.

Beatrice is damaged and harmed because of the patriarchal society that obliges men to show their superiority over women. Moreover, one can notice that, almost, all the violent incidents take place within the Achike family's house. Beatrice says:

I got back from the hospital today. The doctor told me to rest, but I took Eugene's money and asked Kevin to take me to the park. I hired a taxi and came here... you know that small table where we keep the family Bible, nne? Your father broke it on my belly...My blood finished on that floor even before he took me to ST. Agnes. My doctor said there was nothing he could do to save it.²²

As mentioned above, Beatrice was so harmed that she lost her baby and her blood. Her body suffers each time she was beaten, and even her health condition is deteriorating. She is telling her daughter how her father broke a small table on her belly. With such brutality, even a doctor can not save her pregnancy.

In this context, bell hooks says: "Initially feminist focus on domestic violence highlighted male violence against women."²³ It is the case of Beatrice who endures domestic violence from her husband. Hooks asserts also that, the term "domestic violence" can have dangerous impacts on women, since they are the only victims who suffer from this perilous issue, Bell hooks adds:

For too long the term domestic violence has been used as a "soft" term which suggests it emerges in an intimate context that is private and somehow less threatening, less brutal, than the violence that takes place outside the home. This is not so, since more women are beaten and murdered in the home than on the outside.²⁴

For hooks, the word "domestic violence" must be given more importance, in contrast to the majority of people who think that it emerges only in an intimate context, because more

men are exercising their powerfulness at home and more women are victimized. In this sense, Hooks states: “Some men feel that the use of violence is the only way they can establish and maintain power and dominance within the sexist sex role hierarchy.”²⁵ hooks refers to those men who prefer to use violence to maintain their dominance, and Beatrice’s husband is the ideal example. In addition, Beatrice also greatly suffers psychologically when she attends Eugene’s violence on Kambili. As a mother, she is emotionally and psychologically victimized.

Eventually, Adichie also portrays Beatrice as the victimized woman who prefers to endure pain and terror in order to save her children, and defy the Nigerian patriarchal society. To conclude this chapter, in the three works, we examine the problem of violence on women and how it is stated by bell hooks. This chapter shows how violence is represented through different characters that are affected by male domination in Algeria and Nigeria. It establishes how the novels portray patriarchal culture as an ideology that men exploit in order to enforce violence on women. Generally, violence on female characters is manifested with suffering which affects them both in and outside the home.

Endnotes :

1. Maissa Bey, *Hizya* (Algiers: barzakh, 2015), 259.
2. bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), 1.
3. Bey, *Hizya*, 62.
4. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 72.
5. Bey, *Hizya*, 250.
6. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 64.
7. Malika Mokeddem, *L’interdite* (Paris: France Loisirs, 1994), 235-236.
8. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 64.
9. Mokeddem, *L’interdite*, 216-217.

10. Ibid, 228.
11. Ibid, 263.
12. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 64.
13. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 182-183.
14. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 62.
15. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2003), 194.
16. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 62.
17. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, 196.
18. Ibid, 211.
19. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 62.
20. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, 29.
21. Ibid, 32-33.
22. Ibid, 248.
23. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 61.
24. Ibid, 62.
25. Ibid, 65.

Chapter Three: Patriarchal Oppression versus Women's Resistance

In this third chapter, we are going to give attention to the female figures who are the most affected by the patriarchal oppressions caused by the African societies. In fact, women subordination is not a modern matter; thus, our concern aims also at shedding light on the different forms of resistance that the female characters of the three books apply to escape from the harsh reality which they are confronting.

a- In Hizya

1- Hizya

Hizya, the main female character of the novel, is depicted as a modern woman who is trying to confront her patriarchal society; which do not let her live freedom as she wishes to enjoy. Hizya wants to follow a destiny which is different from that of the other girls in her district and to discover the feeling of an exceptional love. She says:

Je ne connais dans mon entourage proche aucune femme, pas une seule, qui ait tenté de prendre d'autres chemins. Ou alors cela ne s'est pas su. Dans notre milieu, règnent en maître deux devises : la loi du silence et le culte du caché. Pourtant, je m'obstine à croire que je pourrais être de celles qui veulent forcer le destin. Folie ? Pourquoi pas. Vouloir rencontrer un homme- ou ? quand ? qui ? comment ?-, vouloir vivre une histoire d'amour, un amour qui serait exceptionnel, n'est-ce pas déjà là de la déraison, ou du moins le commencement de quelque chose qui ressemblerait à de la folie ? Le vouloir seulement. Pourquoi pas ? Je voudrais simplement savoir. Savoir ce qu'est précisément cette forme de folie. Celle qui jaillit d'on ne sait où, qui déferle, qui vous emporte et qui fait que vous vous laissez emporter sans la moindre résistance.¹

Hizya explains that aspiring to live something different is considered to be a crime, because in the Algerian patriarchal society, women must be submissive, silent and respectful of gender role; if not, these women will pay a heavy price for their disobedience by enduring different oppressions, either from their families or the society.

Hizya, the protagonist does not want to submit to the traditional rules. Instead of being married, raising children and being a good householder as her mother wishes, she prefers to resist and follow her studies. She utters:

J'allais à l'université chaque matin, même les jours où je n'avais pas cours. Je repense sans cesse à cette période privilégiée de ma vie. Sans doute la plus lumineuse, la plus exaltante. Nous étions de nombreuses filles- statistiquement plus nombreuses que les garçons-à passer des journées entières dans cette enceinte. Entre les cours, nous étions souvent à la bibliothèque mais aussi à trainer dans les allées, dans les espaces verts, à lézarder au soleil. Plaisir qui nous est interdit ailleurs.²

From this passage, we may notice that Hizya is speaking about the period she spent at the University and tells that it was the only space where she could enjoy moments of freedom without any oppression. It was a period that helped her to get in touch with literature, especially poetry. Despite her status of a graduate student, she lives in a sexist circle that always devalues her and obliges her to follow the traditional sexist thinking. In this context bell hooks explains:

I had come to feminist thinking by challenging male domination in our patriarchal household. But simply being the victim of an exploitative or oppressive system and even resisting it does not mean we understand why it's in place or how to change it.³

hooks states that women do not know how to change the oppressive regime since they do not understand why it is structured. According to her, resistance is not enough to change an exploitative system in their patriarchal household. Here, Hizya tries to emancipate but can not change the reality that her society is patriarchal.

Moreover, Hizya suffers a lot from her prejudiced society when she gets closer with her beloved, Riyadh. She is anxious about people who may accuse her of doing a wrong thing. She is scared about the fact that everybody will judge her if they see her with him. Hizya becomes obsessed and measures every gesture she commits when she is with him. She says:

Dois-je vraiment préciser qu'il s'agit d'une relation amicale et saine ? Ni intime, ni sexuelle, ni même amoureuse. Pas encore. Et alors ? Et alors, comment rendre cela audible auprès de ceux qui, au seul énoncé de ce mot, tendraient vers nous un doigt accusateur ? Auprès de ceux qui, lorsque nous sommes ensemble, nous regardent avec une telle insistance que nous nous sentons

forcément coupables...Ceux qui nous jugent, nous condamnent, et d'un simple regard nous faxent la sentence.⁴

From the passage, one may understand that Hizya is aware about people's accusations because of the fact that a single woman is hanging out with a stranger. In the Algerian society, a woman must be seen only with her husband; otherwise, she will be criticized and pointed out. Hizya adds:

Chaque fois que je dois sortir avec lui, il me revient en mémoire les récits lus dans les journaux sur « la chasse aux couples ». J'ai peur du regard des gardiens, des policiers et de tous ceux qui portent un uniforme.⁵

Hizya speaks about what is considered as taboos in her society. The feeling of guilt is always following her. She is so traumatized that each time she shares a moment with Riyad, she thinks about all the probabilities that may happen. Hizya is psychologically more affected by these patriarchal injustices. In this perspective, Hooks incites for an end of patriarchy and sexism. She states:

Revolutionary thinkers did not want simply to alter the existing system so that women would have more rights. We wanted to transform that system, to bring an end to patriarchy and sexism.⁶

From the passage, we understand that Bell Hooks not only wants women to have more rights, but also advocates for the end of women subjugation, so that women can enjoy their human rights and get rid of male oppressions. Hizya tries to fight by using many forms of resistance in order not to be trapped by her conformist mother. She begins to apply what her colleagues Leila and Sonia advices her to do. Hizya reveals:

Mensonges. Un jour, pendant un repas, je parle du jardin d'Essai. Je décris les animaux encagés et neurasthéniques qui se morfondent dans le parc zoologique du jardin. La mère dresse L'oreille. En alerte. « Le jardin d'Essai ? Tu connais le jardin d'Essai ? Tu ... » Je bredouille...Ouf ! Sauvée. Silence et mensonges. J'affute mon sens de l'observation. Je teste mes réflexes à des fins sécuritaires, suivant les conseils avisés de Sonia et les recommandations de Leila.⁷

Hizya faces many difficulties and is always obliged to lie and find pretexts to avoid problems with her family. She tries to struggle as she can, because without any initiation to resistance, women can neither live their lives, nor liberate themselves.

2- Leila

Another female character in the novel is Leila; Hizya's colleague in the hairdressing salon. Leila is forty years old, divorced and mother of two children. She lives in her mother's house with her brothers and sisters. In return to her family's acceptance to live with them, Leila holds on all the responsibilities related to the family. Hizya narrates:

Quarante ans. Divorcée. Elle n'est pas à la charge de ses parents, puisqu'elle gagne sa vie. Elle n'a arrêté de travailler, sur la demande de son époux, que pendant les quatre ou cinq ans qu'a durés son mariage. Puis elle est revenue au salon. C'est elle qui s'occupe de tout dans la maison familiale. Les courses, le ménage, les factures, les soins médicaux de sa mère presque grabataire depuis son AVC. Et tout le monde trouve cela normal. C'est le prix à payer pour se faire accepter avec ses deux enfants. Le prix à payer pour l'échec de son mariage. Et son renvoi du domicile conjugal par l'époux.⁸

From the passage, one may notice that Leila is illustrated as a victim who suffers from being a divorced woman in the Algerian patriarchal society. For her family members, Leila is obliged to take responsibility and pay for everything in the house. For them, it is the price to pay for her disobedience and the failure of her marriage, because in her male dominating society, women must be obedient to their husbands, assume every difficulty, and be quiet and submissive. Leila chooses to break these rules and asks for divorce. She prefers to accept her family's maltreatment rather than her husband's oppression. Leila speaks to Hizya:

Ce que tu ne sais pas, c'est qu'il m'a fallu beaucoup de courage pour divorcer. J'avais contre moi toutes ma famille ou presque. Mais je n'ai pas eu le choix. C'était ça ou bien la folie. Ou...le suicide. Mon mari était un pervers. De la pire espèce.⁹

Leila explains to Hizya that, in such patriarchal society, women must not demand divorce; otherwise, she will be accused by her own family for destroying the traditional values. Leila is a courageous woman who defies her family in order not to be exploited. She prefers to adopt resistance rather than to submit.

Even if Leila confronts many troubles, she defies everything and keeps working in the hairdressing salon; as it is the only place where she could share her madness with her colleagues and tries to forget by giving attention to the customers who are more affected than her. In this context, Bell Hooks gives her point of view about women who face difficulties when they work outside the home. She says: “ Occasionally, a few of these women defied convention and worked outside the home performing tasks way below their educational skills and facing resistance from husbands and family.”¹⁰ One of these women is Leila; she works outside the home and faces many problems in her daily life.

Indeed, Leila prefers to be optimistic to start a new life that may allow her to live a pleasant life with her two children. She even applies for housing to go far away from her family.

Finally, Maissa Bey’s depiction of resistance to patriarchal oppression is well illustrated through the two characters Hizya and Leila, showing how the Algerian society impose oppression over women, and how these women adopt resistance as the only way of struggle for their liberation.

b- In *L’interdite* :

L’interdite is a work which exposes the different situations that the Algerian women face in a society where they are totally ignored. In the novel, the quest for resistance is portrayed through the struggles that Sultana, Dalila, and the native women overcame. Malika Mokeddem represents the image of women as the symbolic center of the patriarchal society. Thus, she seems to suggest that women in Algeria can be empowered and developed like Sultana, who may appear as a liberated one.

Patriarchy and religion can be the major causes of the sexist oppression of women. Oppressed women who live under patriarchy develop approaches to resist it. Therefore, their first path to resistance is consciousness-raising through education and reading. In fact, through examining the values of the patriarchal Algerian culture, Mokeddem attempts to resist it by the conscious female characters, especially Sultana, the protagonist of the novel who opposes the traditional norms with her defiance, the young girl Dalila who got her inspiration by reading, and other women of all ages who are aspiring for freedom. Indeed, Sultana symbolizes the personal life of the author who, in *L'interdite*, got her inspiration from her own experiences in Algeria. This may be the reason why, as readers, we can easily understand that the expressions of anger in the voice of the female characters in the novel are reactions to patriarchal oppression.

1- Sultana

Since her arrival, Sultana Medjahed challenges the social norms in Ain Nakhla and dares to deny the authority of men with her first decision to attend the funeral of her friend Yacine. This is shown in her conversation with Khaled,

Khaled: Ils vous laisseront pas assister à son enterrement, vous le savez que les femmes ne sont pas admises aux enterrements.

Sultana : On verra bien qui va m'en empêcher ! ¹¹

She is the perfect example of a courageous woman who uses her awareness in order to resist the patriarchal rules. It is in this context that Bell Hooks asserts: "Before women could change patriarchy we had to change ourselves; we had to raise our consciousness."¹² Moreover, Hooks thinks that the most empowered women are those who try to change their position in a society which does not show them any consideration.

Additionally, patriarchy teaches women that they are powerless and worthless beings. Algerian culture deprives women and oppresses them by all kinds of injustices and exploitations. Women also suffer from gender discrimination in all life areas. We can gather that through the old native woman discourse saying:

On a toujours appris aux femmes que la rue n'était pas leur territoire, qu'elles n'avaient à s'occuper que de leur intérieur et voilà qu'un nombre, chaque jour grandissant, d'entre elles doivent, la serpillière à la main, asservies à des arrogances démultipliées, affronter les ordures de toutes les administrations, de toutes les institutions et les lois qui les injurient.¹³

This condition of women exposes them as eternal objects of the patriarchal society which encloses them in a vice of prohibitions and constraints, entirely dependent on male will. They are locked up in the moral and material limits of the house, and belong to the world of men. Their lives are only slavery and humiliation, and even their identities are rooted to in traditions and religion.

As a result, through the character of Sultana, Mokeddem draws an image of an independent woman who confronts this harmed condition of the Algerian woman. Unlike the native women of the village, Sultana supports herself alone by studying and immigrating to France where she became a doctor. She refuses to remain as an eternal object like the other women in Ain Nakhla, and thus the male inhabitants reject her presence fearing that she may affect their authority. During her visit in the village, Sultana's resistance is apparent in her way of behaving with the male characters like Ali Merbah, when she tells him:

Vous n'êtes que des frustrés, dans vos têtes et dans vos slips ! Vous n'avez jamais eu de cerveaux. Vous n'êtes que des sexes en érection ! Une érection insatisfaite. Vos yeux ne sont que vermines. Une vermine constamment à souiller, à ronger, à dévorer les femmes !¹⁴

In the novel, Sultana is depicted as a rebellious woman who acts against the extremist beliefs of the masculine figures and defies them. In addition to Sultana's resistance; working in the hospital and fighting everyday's aggressions, she also emancipates in a way of opposing the religious norms. In other words, she resides in the same house with two men to

whom she is not married. This case is not allowed in Islam, and that is what creates men's fury.

Moreover, the Algerian author Malika Mokeddem criticizes the Algerian social structure through handling the issues of patriarchy, religion and traditions, and women subordination. The novel shows that women in Ain Nakhla are prisoners in an oppressed state. As a result, Mokeddem manifests the figure of Sultana in order to introduce the issue of woman's resistance. In different situations, Sultana insists on women's need of freedom, for example when she is discussing with the native women, she reports: "La rébellion contre les injustices est une chose, le vrai désir de liberté est une autre qui exige un pas beaucoup plus grand, parfois quelques ruptures."¹⁵

In fact, Sultana fights for women emancipation by making them more purposive, and for the serious awakening of the second sex. Therefore, she exemplifies what Hooks says: "Through consciousness-raising women gained the strength to challenge patriarchal forces at work and at home."¹⁶

2- Dalila

In *L'interdite*, the young girl Dalila is another figure of resistance. As it is already mentioned in the first and second chapter of our dissertation, Dalila is a character who deals with the patriarchal oppressions in her daily life. She is currently aware of the unfairness of her society. However, Dalila wants to be independent and wishes to have a beautiful life full of hope and freedom, this is portrayed through her conversations with Sultana and with Vincent (the romi). Dalila narrates the sufferings that she bears from her brothers and society. Nevertheless, she creates an image from her inspiration, the image of Samia, an independent woman to be her big sister. She portrays her as a model of rebellion, similar to Sultana, rejects

to submit to the Algerian masculine authority and exiles to France in order to accomplish her studies. From her imagination, we can guess that Dalila hopes to escape from the patriarchal control and oppression. She says:

La lecture de l'école, c'est toujours l'histoire d'une fille sage et qui aide bien sa maman alors que son frère, lui, il joue dehors. C'est tout ce que je veux pas être, tout ce que je veux pas faire.¹⁷

She is an intelligent young girl who studies hard with the hope of realizing her dreams of independence and gender justice. Consequently, Hooks argues that the feminist thought basically, insists on the importance for women to think about gender fairness, saying: "The focus shifted on an all-out effort to create gender justice"¹⁸ Then, Dalila is an example that Mokeddem uses to clarify the reality of Algerian woman status. Despite the difficulties that she encounters, she encourages herself with inspiration and resistance.

3- The Native Women

At the end of the novel, we notice that the native women in Ain Nakhla create a group under the principle of combat. After a long period of male oppression and domination, they decide to confront the fundamentalist social boundaries. This is illustrated in their discussions with Sultana, and the way they defend her. The solidarity between them is shown in their conversations,

Lorsqu'on est acculé, on est obligé de riposter. C'est peut-être là que nous viendra la force. Une par une, ils peuvent nous asservir ou nous casser. Ils réfléchiront à deux fois si nous nous unissons.¹⁹

This resistance to patriarchy is explained in hooks' *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000) with the issue of the powerful sisterhood. Hooks thinks that by supporting one another, women gain the power to end patriarchal oppressions. In this sense, she says:

We continue to put in place anti-sexist thinking and practice which affirms the reality that females can achieve self-actualization and success without dominating one another. And we

have the good fortune to know everyday of our lives that sisterhood is concretely possible, that sisterhood is still powerful.²⁰

Finally, the struggle to free women from patriarchal oppressions in the village is pictured through the rebelliousness of Sultana and the native women. Women in Ain Nakhla burn the mayor's office in response to burning Sultana's home, and Sultana decides to go back to her exile leaving part of her inner self among them as she says: "Khaled, je repars demain. Dit aux femmes que même de loin, je suis avec elles."²¹ Consequently, Malika Mokeddem explores in *L'interdite* a portraying of Sultana's story and, indeed, of all women's stories in order to examine the reality of patriarchal interpretations in Algeria, interpretations which make women more resistant; and thus, trying to find the way to their independence.

C- In Purple Hibiscus:

In the novel, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie seizes the impact of patriarchy on the Nigerian women during the postcolonial period. As it is shown in the previous chapters of our dissertation, we exposed male domination and violence through different female characters. The story depicts the transformation from victimized characters to strong voices of resistance. Apparently, the quest for freedom is a common factor among the females in the novel; Kambili and Beatrice challenge patriarchy within the familial space, Ifeoma challenges it in the professional domain.

1- Kambili

Kambili's characterization is mainly a representation of the patriarchal abuses and fears that the Nigerian women and children suffer from. Throughout her narration, Kambili manages to show the injustices in which she lives under her father's controls. However, when she visited her aunt Ifeoma in Nsukka, she discovers a new daily life. There, Kambili meets

Father Amadi with whom she finds herself expressing her inner side. She feels free from her father's limitations, and becomes confident and more assertive to the point of declaring her love to Father Amadi, saying:

It was one of those songs Abumonyen'uwa, onye ka m bun'uwa that eased the dryness in my throat as we got in his car I said I love you.²²

Correspondingly, Kambili's new experience can be established as an initiation to resistance.

In her aunt's home, she witnesses a joy she has never seen before,

Laughter floated over my head. Words spurted from everyone, often not seeking and not getting any response. We always spoke with a purpose back home, especially at the table, but my cousins seemed to simply speak(...) I had felt that as if we were not there, that I had just observing a table where you could say anything at anytime to anyone, where the air was free for you to beneath as you wished.²³

From this statement, we can notice that Kambili compares two different environments.

In her aunt's house, she starts to think differently by being more conscious about the fact that she and her mother are in some way responsible of their oppression because of their silent reactions and their obedience to Eugene. Therefore, Adichie's examination of this change that is born in Kambili's character could be related to what bell hooks' thinks about resisting patriarchy, claiming:

To end patriarchy (another way of naming the institutionalized sexism) we need to be clear that we are all participants in perpetuating sexism until we change our minds and hearts, until we let go of sexist thought and action and replace it with feminist thought and action.²⁴

2- Beatrice

Like Kambili, her mother Beatrice is another symbol of familial resistance who, as response to her victimization, tries to struggle against the Nigerian patriarchal oppressive norms. As it is previously stated, she is a limping and silent woman who endures many outrages from her abusive husband Eugene. Beatrice is an obedient but very courageous woman who decides to rebel after being abused several times. She avows:

“They did an autopsy,” she said. “They have found the poison in your father’s body...” “I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka. Sisi got it for me; her uncle is a powerful witch doctor”.²⁵

From this excerpt, we can understand that Beatrice killed Eugene in order to free herself from years of physical torture and psychological abuse. Hooks also encourages women to struggle for their liberation, she states: “the will to create the context for struggle and liberation, remains stronger than the need to hold on to wrong beliefs and assumptions.”²⁶ bell hooks incites women to fight rather than submitting to religious values, she is referring to women like Beatrice who chooses to liberate herself by killing her abusive husband in order to no longer bear his brutality, and to secure the financial stability for her children, by avoiding a divorce.

Besides, Beatrice decides to end her sufferings after being damaged many times either physically or psychologically. Throughout the novel, Adichie tries to convey a message that women should resist any harsh or cultural norms that obstacle them and their progress. Thus, in *Purple Hibiscus*, she criticizes the impact of establishing a hatred culture towards women.

3- Ifeoma

On the other hand, by introducing the character of Ifeoma, Adichie presents an image of an emancipated contemporary Nigerian woman. Ifeoma, Eugene’s younger sister represents the total opposite of Beatrice in a way she resists in the Nigerian patriarchal society with her courage and independence.

Ifeoma plays a great role of responsibility in taking care of her three children Amaka, Ibeora, and Chima after the death of her husband. Properly, the item of woman’s resistance is connected to Ifeoma’s powerfulness in the sense she is voiced, makes decisions, is always proud of her children, and strongly resists and claims to be heard. With her education, as a lecturer, she is even deconstructing patriarchy in the University of Nsukka where she

demands changes regarding to salaries and promotions, and fighting for lecturers' rights. From this context, Ifeoma's reactions correspond with the feminist concern of bell hook, who thinks that women's struggles to be strong independent individuals and to gain their rights can be a form of rebellion asserting: "Participating in these radical freedom struggles awakened the spirit of rebellion and resistance in progressive females and led them towards contemporary women's liberation."²⁷ Subsequently, aunt Ifeoma is a symbol of resistance and self-assertiveness, this is mainly apparent in her statement: "When a house is on fire, you run out before the roof collapses on your head."²⁸ From this view, she applies for visas in order to go with her children to America and leave the humiliation and the oppressive life of Nigeria.

To conclude, this chapter is expected to contribute to the existing knowledge on female representation in the two different Algerian and Nigerian patriarchal African societies. Our aim is to facilitate the understanding of the way African women are affected by male oppressions and, thus, trying to free themselves with resistance. With the help of bell hooks' *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), we tried to provide female empowerment and their contribution to social change in several ways.

Endnotes:

1. Maissa Bey, *Hizya*, (Algiers: barzakh, 2015), 50-51
2. Ibid, 133-134.
3. bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*(Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), 21.
4. Bey, *Hizya*, 172.
5. Ibid, 173.
6. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 4.
7. Bey, *Hizya*, 144-145.

8. Ibid, 139.
9. Ibid, 142.
10. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 38.
11. Malika Mokeddem, *L'interdite* (Paris: France Loisirs, 1994), 27.
12. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 8.
13. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 244.
14. Ibid, 237.
15. Ibid, 249.
16. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 8.
17. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 131.
18. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 3.
19. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 251.
20. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 18.
21. Mokeddem, *L'interdite*, 246.
22. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (North Carolina: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2003), 171.
23. Ibid, 120.
24. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 1.
25. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, (Cambridge, MA: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2003), 290.
26. hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody*, 58.
27. Ibid, 3.
28. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, 213.

Conclusion:

This piece of research has dealt with the issues of patriarchy and women's resistance in Maissa Bey's *Hizya* (2015), Malika Mokeddem's *L'interdite* (1993) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). Our study examined women's position in the male dominating Algeria and Nigeria. Within these three literary works, the female characters share the same status of being oppressed and victimized by men. Thus; relying on bell hooks' *Feminism Is for Everybody* (2000), we have discussed the issues of patriarchal domination and violence, and the reactions of women against this unfairness.

The first and the second chapters have been devoted to the themes of male domination, gender consciousness, violence and women victimization. It has been shown that each female character in the novels is aware about the dominating sexist thinking of the Algerian and Nigerian communities. Women are silenced due to the exploitative and abusive control of men which they used in the name of tradition and religion. Maissa Bey and Malika Mokeddem display in their novels women's consciousness of their position and the way they are harassed in the Algerian society. In *Purple Hibiscus*, Adichie highlights the several experiences of brutality that Nigerian women encounter mainly inside their home.

In the third chapter, we have examined how patriarchy uses religion and family in order to oppress women. This led us to the conclusion that the sexist oppressions are the results of the patriarchal social system. Following bell hooks' theory *Feminism Is for Everybody*, we have concluded that the main steps of women's resistance to patriarchy are education and the creation of powerful sisterhood. Thus, the three authors have given voice to women in order to follow these steps to finally achieve freedom.

In short, this dissertation has tackled the matters of patriarchy and women's resistance and fight for emancipation in the African world by treating the three literary works:

Hizya(2015), *L'intedite* (1993), and *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). We believe that this topic is still an important question that needs further studies; thus, we invite other researchers to lead other investigations about Algerian and Nigerian women representation in the post colonial era using different literary works and approaches.

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