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Literary Affinities Between Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008).

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Abstract

The present dissertation is a comparative study between Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* and Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. The aim is to investigate the ways in which the authors employ texts as a means to explore the impact of colonialism on individual and collective identities and memories. Moreover, it examines how these narratives engage with themes of betrayal, resistance, and reconciliation since both novels deal with the colonial and the post colonial era of both Algeria and Kenya. To achieve our objective, we borrow some theoretical concepts from Frantz Fanon's seminal work, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), mainly the ideas developed in his first chapter, *Concerning Violence* and the third one, *Pitfalls of National Consciousness*. The relevance of the postcolonial approach to our comparison can be justified by the fact that both novels depict the legacy of colonialism and the quest for identity in the postcolonial period. In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o delves into the lives of his characters, juxtaposing personal histories with the broader history of Kenya's struggle for independence. The novel provides a deep exploration of the details of personal and collective guilt, loyalty, and redemption in the face of a changing socio-political Kenya. Similarly, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, revolves around a poignant tale of colonial Algeria and its aftermath, illuminating the complex relationships between French settlers and the local population. The novel explores the concept of multiple cultural and linguistic identities, cultural clashes, as individuals seek to reconcile their pasts with their present circumstances. These two novels stand as prominent texts which contribute significantly to a deeper understanding of how literature can serve as a powerful medium for addressing complex issues revolving around historical consciousness and cultural identity in postcolonial societies. The findings of this comparative study can be of interest to scholars, students, and anyone intrigued by the intricate connections between literature, history, and cultural identity in the postcolonial context.

Key Words: Literary affinities- *A Grain of Wheat*- *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*- Colonialism- Representations of violence- Guilt- Betrayal

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Introduction

The true literature of African peoples, from the Americas and West Indies to Continent of Africa, is written with the sweat and the blood of the people as the ink and their back flesh as the parchment, their love of freedom their inspiration. It is the literature of struggle ; the struggle of ordinary people , who against great odds have nevertheless changed and are continuing to change oppressive social systems and hence the power mop of the twentieth century. (Ngugi, 1981, p.118)

African literature, as underscored by Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o and numerous postcolonial scholars, is inherently a literature of struggle, documenting the collective journey through written expressions of resilience that traverse pages imbued with the sweat and blood of those who contribute to its composition. It possesses a profound capacity to encapsulate the intrinsic aspects of diverse cultures and histories. Within this expansive narrative tapestry, the literary works of African peoples emerge as poignant testaments to resilience, sacrificial endeavors, and an enduring commitment to the pursuit of freedom. Writers hailing from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds within the African continent have demonstrated a discernible interest in themes encompassing colonialism, struggle, freedom, and identity. Noteworthy among these literary figures are Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o and Yasmina Khadra. The focus of the present research lies in a comparative study of two African literary works namely Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (2008) . Although the two novels were crafted in distinct languages, temporal periods, and disparate countries. However, both works offer profound insights into the African experience of colonialism and its enduring impact on individual and collective dimensions during the postcolonial era.

As many other African writers, Ngugi and Khadra incorporate historical elements into their literary works. *A Grain of Wheat* revolves around the complexities of colonial and post-Kenyan society, addressing themes of colonialism, identity, love, among many others. Through character's development and narrative structure, Ngugi conveys a profound insights into the African experience and the challenges faced by individuals and communities in the midst of

political transformation. Similarly, Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit*, (*What the Day Owes to the Night*) explores various aspects of Algerian society, with focus on the country's struggle for independence, the complexities of identity, and the impact of colonialism.

The main objective of comparing Ngugi's and Khadra's works is to examine how both authors delve into the social, historical and personal aspects of African life and the broader human experience. Despite the considerable geographical distance that separate these two writers, they can be studied together due to the commonality of the colonial experience. However, before beginning our comparison, it is important to start by comparing the ways in which two novels had been examined by critics.

Review of the Literature

As all literary creations, the two selected novels, namely *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit* generated a substantial amount of critical analysis from various perspectives and points of view. Ngugi's third novel, for instance, has been examined from various angles including the exploration of gender, colonial aspects, identity and a focus on its literal elements. As Williams (1999) asserts that *A Grain of Wheat* stands out for its precise geographical and historical setting. The novel showcases a heightened awareness of historical processes, illustrating the intricate intersections between individual life stories and the constitutive elements of communal histories. While it avoids simplifying the complex tapestry of a nation, the novel is commended for possessing a significant representative breadth. In essence, it captures a nuanced understanding of historical dynamics, emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal and collective narratives within a specific location, contributing to a broader representation of experiences. He asserts that the novel's strength lies in its ability to delve into historical intricacies without reducing the narrative to a mere cross-section of the nation. In this regard Williams claims :

A Grain of wheat is the most precisely located of Ngugi's novels ; it demonstrates a much greater awareness of historical process and the ways in which individual histories both intersect with, and form constitutive elements, communal histories, and while it is not -and is not meant be-

simple cross section of nation, it does nevertheless possess an important representative breadth (Williams, 1999, p.59).

Alternatively, The theme of identity holds significant prominence within the novel. In his book *Ngugi's Novels and African history :Narrating the Nation*, Ogude (1999) highlights Ngugi's significant role as a prominent figure in Kenyan nationalism and underscores Ngugi's response to the challenges associated with utilizing history for the reconstruction of national identity. Ngugi's approach is characterized by a nuanced exploration of the tensions between the constructions of tradition and the implicit modernity embedded in the emerging Kenyan nation. Also he grapples with the complexities inherent in shaping a national identity, recognizing the intricate interplay between historical narratives, traditional values, and the modern elements that define the evolving character of Kenya as a nation. In this line of thought Ogude (1999) argued :

As one of the more influential thinkers of Kenyan nationalism, Ngugi responds to the problems of using history in the reconstruction of national identity through modes that highlight the tensions between the constructions of tradition and the implicit modernity of the nascent Kenyan nation. (p.50)

As far as the criticism devoted to *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* is concerned, The novel is commended by reviewers for its profound exploration of various cultural groups in Algeria against the backdrop of colonialism. It is acknowledged as a work that symbolizes the ongoing dialogue within Algerian literature concerning the lasting impact of French colonialism. The novel is seen as a nuanced representation of the intricate relationships and dynamics between different cultural communities in Algeria, illustrating how their identities and interactions are shaped by the historical context of colonial rule. The praise suggests that the author skillfully uses the narrative to delve into the complexities of cultural diversity and its intersection with the enduring legacy of French colonial influence, making the novel a significant contribution to the ongoing discourse on the cultural and historical dimensions of Algeria. In this vein, Bourahla and Benzid (2022) point out that :

Yasmina Khadra a eu recours à l'écriture de l'Histoire comme un arrière-plan et une toile de fond pour montrer que le multicultural existait depuis longtemps et on pouvait le vivre

harmonieusement, mais la révolution algérienne a eu lieu à cause des inégalités entre les différents habitants du même territoire (P.06).

The quotation reveals Khadra's using of historical context in his narrative to emphasize the coexistence of multiculturalism and harmonious living in the region before the revolution. However, it depicts the deep-seated inequalities among the inhabitants, which played a pivotal role in driving the Algerian to revolution. Khadra's work engages with these historical complexities to shed light on the context of the revolution and the challenges faced by Algerians under the French regime.

Moreover, other critics such as Idrissi Azami, Touzani and Sabil (2023) point out to the importance of the theme of identity in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. Khadra explores the complex and multifaceted nature of identity within the context of colonial Algeria, shedding light on the challenges faced by individuals in navigating their sense of self amidst cultural, social and historical forces. In this context, they maintain:

Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* (2008, 2011) offers multiple readings of space which intertwine with identity formation. That is why, analysis in this section focuses on the interplay between space and identity (P.06).

To conclude this review of the prior criticism devoted to Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, we may deduce that both novels delve into the profound effects of colonialism and the struggles for independence in part of Kenya and Algeria, respectively. They offer readers a glimpse into the lives and minds of individuals caught in the turmoil of history, and they do so with distinct narrative styles and cultural contexts. Both are important works that can provide valuable insights into the complexities of these historical periods.

Issue and Working Hypothesis

From the above review of literature, it is evident that both novels were examined substantially by literary critics from various perspectives including structure, setting, themes and characters. However, to our best knowledge, no comparative study has been undertaken so far on the two novels. Therefore, to bridge the gap in research, we intend to conduct a thorough

comparison of the two novels by drawing parallels between Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. It is important to point out that similarities that might exist between the two stories cannot be resulted from a literary influence. There is no indication that Khadra has been influenced by Ngugi. Therefore, we shall base our comparison on "literary affinities" due to a shared colonial experience, which inspired both authors to produce comparable fictions, which engage with the significant history.

In addition to the comparative approach, we shall refer to Franz Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), which special focus on its first and third chapters as they help to understand the discourse on post-colonial identity and the legacy of colonialism in Algeria and beyond. In his work, Fanon scrutinises the issues face by the post-colonial nations stressing the long-lasting impact of colonialism on the colonized societies. He also addresses the outcomes of the colonial violence and its lasting repercussions on the colonized population.

The relevance of Fanon's perspective is accentuated by the profound impact of his ideas, elucidated in *The Wretched of the Earth*, particularly those pertaining to colonial violence and its impact. These conceptual frameworks find diverse applications within the narratives of works such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* and Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. This influence is discernible given that both literary works delve into the thematic realms of colonialism, identity, and liberation, as previously expounded. In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o explores the legacy of British colonialism in Kenya and the impact it had on the characters' lives. The novel delves into the psychological and social consequences of colonial oppression, which is in line with Fanon's analysis of colonialism's impact on the colonized psych. In nearly a similar way, Yasmina Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* reflects the tensions and conflicts between the Algerian people and the French colonizer. The novel deals with themes of identity, cultural clash, and the struggle for independence, all of which can be connected to Fanon's thought on the anticolonial struggle.

Methodological Outline

Our comparative study will be limited to exploring the literary affinities that might exist in the two novels by focusing on both similarities and differences. In the Introduction section, we set our research motivations for comparing the two novels and provide a review of the previous literature on Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. Then, we establish the focus of our research, along issues and working hypothesis. In the Method and Material section, we provide a concise summary of the postcolonial theory as developed in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and its relevance to our comparison of the two texts. Additionally, we will offer the historical context of both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, the authors' biographies and summaries of both novels. The Results section presents the findings of our comparative study. In the Discussion section, we analyze the two novels by drawing parallels between the two novels structures, settings, narrative techniques, characters, and themes. Finally, the Conclusion summarises the compared aspects of the study and ends with suggestions for future research on the selected works of Khadra and Ngugi.

Method and Materials:

I. Method

As previously mentioned, this comparative literature study is devoted to an exploration of the literary affinities between Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. To accomplish this aim, we draw upon the theoretical notions developed by Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*. The focus will be put on his first chapter entitled *Concerning Violence* and the third one, *The Pitfalls of National Consciousness*. Fanon's work is useful for our comparison because it provides valuable insights into colonialism and post-colonialism, which can be applied to analyze and compare these two literary works. In the two selected chapters, Fanon has examined the dynamics of colonial liberation movements and the emergence of national identities in newly independent nations. Each chapter has focused on distinct aspects of the colonial and post-colonial experience. In *Concerning Violence*, Fanon underlines the necessity of counter violence as a means for decolonization. The following passage is an illustration:

National liberation, national renaissance, the restoration of nationhood to the people, commonwealth: whatever may be the headings used or the new formulas introduced, decolonization is always a violent phenomenon (Fanon, 1963, p.35).

It can be understood that Fanon argues that violence serves as a tool through which the colonized people can reassert their humanity and directly confront their oppressors. Decolonization as a process by which a colony attains independence and becomes its own sovereign nation is always violent because colonization is violent. For this postcolonial theorist “The naked truth of decolonization evokes for us the searing bullets and bloodstained knives which emanate from it”(p. 37).

Moreover, according to Fanon, the colonized world is divided in two opposing parts: The “white”, which was characterized by pristine conditions, tranquility and affluence. In contrast, the “black” or “Arab” sector, marked by destitution, famine, and unsanitary conditions. The two sides, following Fanon’s thought, were inherently incompatible and adhere

to a Manichean paradigm, wherein their existence was predicated upon their mutual opposition to one another, he states that: "The zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers. The two zones are opposed, but not in the service of a higher unity (P.38).

In *The Pitfalls of National Consciousness*, Fanon critically examines the challenges of forming a national consciousness in the post-colonial period, warning against the dangers of replicating the oppressive structures of the colonial regime fighting neocolonial order, he wrote:

The economic channels of the young state sink back inevitably into neo-colonialist lines. The national economy, formerly protected, is today literally controlled. The budget is balanced through loans and gifts, while every three or four months the chief ministers themselves or else their governmental delegations come to the erstwhile mother countries or elsewhere, fishing for capital (P.167).

In this essay, Fanon points out that independence and decolonization often fails to reflect the aspirations of the entire nation because: "The national front which has forced colonialism to withdraw cracks up, and wastes the victory it has gained" (P.160). Instead, a privileged middle class assumed the power once held by the colonizers and continued to exert dominance over the working-class.

Furthermore, Fanon reveals that the nation remained underdeveloped due to a lack of sufficient resources, resulting in limited financial means and technological capabilities compared to the former colonizers. Consequently, the national bourgeoisie found themselves dependent on immediate economic activities, thereby perpetuating the existing system established by the colonizers. To sustain this, they often seek assistance from their former colonizers, he affirmed that;

The national economy of the period of independence is not set on a new footing. It is still concerned with the groundnut harvest, with the cocoa crop and the olive yield. In the same way there is no change in the marketing of basic products, and not a single industry is set up in the country. We go on sending out raw materials; we go on being Europe's small farmers, who specialize in unfinished products (Pp.151, 152).

Lastly, Fanon mentions the proper approach for a new government to govern effectively. He observes that for a nation to thrive, it must transition rapidly from national consciousness to

political and social consciousness. This shift is essential to safeguard the nation from the pitfalls of capitalism and racial ideologies. He writes:

The national government, if it wants to be national, ought to govern by the people and for the people, for the outcasts and by the outcasts. No leader, however valuable he may be, can substitute himself for the popular will; and the national government, before concerning itself about international prestige, ought first to give back their dignity to all citizens, fill their minds and feast their eyes with human things, and create a prospect that is human because conscious and sovereign men dwell therein (P.205)

The quotation reveals that Fanon favors a national government that operates democratically, serves all of its citizens, and prioritizes their well-being, dignity, and empowerment . He has underscored the importance of democratic principles and the welfare of the people as the foundation of a truly national government.

To conclude, the use of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* as a method for research in a comparative study of Ngũgĩ's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, we have provided a theoretical framework that allowed us to examine how the characters, narratives and themes in both novels resonated with or depart from Fanon's insights on the psychological, social and political dimensions of colonialism and decolonization.

II. Materials

a. Historical Context of *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*

A Grain of Wheat and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* are two literary works that provide powerful insights into the historical contexts of their respective settings ; Kenya and Algeria. These novels have offered readers an opportunity to explore the profound impact of colonialism, the struggles for independence and the subsequent transformations of the Algerian and Kenyan societies after independence.

A Grain of Wheat unfolds against the backdrop of Kenya during the crucial four days preceding its independence from British colonial rule in December 1963. This period represents a watershed moment in Kenyan history, symbolizing the culmination of a protracted struggle for self-determination. The narrative, however, intricately weaves back to the Emergency

period of the 1950s, particularly the declaration of a state of emergency in 1952 to quell the Mau Mau rebellion—an intense and violent resistance against British colonial oppression (Gurnah, 2002). Ngugi's work skillfully delves into the complexities of this historical juncture, vividly capturing the multifaceted struggle for freedom and its profound impact on individual lives and communities.

The storyline portrays characters grappling with intricate questions of loyalty, betrayal, and sacrifice, which mirror the broader political and social upheavals of the time. The legacy of colonialism casts a long shadow over the lives of these characters, and Ngugi illuminates the intricate dynamics of their personal struggles within the larger context of a nation on the cusp of independence. The Emergency period, characterized by brutal counterinsurgency measures, mass detentions, and the suppression of the Mau Mau, serves as a critical backdrop against which the characters' stories unfold. Ngugi's narrative poignantly captures the resilience of the Kenyan people as they navigate the complexities of post-colonial transition, embodying the spirit of a nation poised for a new chapter in its history. The novel not only serves as a compelling literary work but also as a historical testimony, shedding light on the profound human experiences entwined with the broader socio-political landscape of Kenya during a transformative period in its history.

Correspondingly, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* unfolds within the intricate tapestry of Algeria's complex history, spanning from the 1930s to 1962. This period encapsulates the formidable challenges endured by Algerians living under the weight of French colonial rule, culminating in the eruption of the Algerian War of Independence, a transformative struggle that unfolded from 1954 to 1962. This third decade in Algeria's colonial history witnessed a profound surge in nationalism, marking a crucial phase leading up to the country's eventual liberation from French dominion. The 1930s exposed Algerians to continued economic exploitation orchestrated by the French colonial administration, particularly focusing on agricultural and resource extraction activities. The resulting economic disparities fueled

growing social tensions between European settlers (colons) and the indigenous Algerian population.

World War II, spanning from 1939 to 1945, brought Algeria to the forefront as the Allies landed in North Africa in 1942. This significant event exposed Algerians to broader anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments, as Algerian soldiers fought alongside the French army, contributing to a sense of shared sacrifice and heightening expectations for political recognition and rights. The post-war period witnessed the emergence and consolidation of nationalist movements, with the establishment of the National Liberation Front (FLN) in 1954. This organization became a pivotal force advocating for the end of French colonial rule and the establishment of an independent Algeria. The Sétif Massacre in 1945, triggered by a nationalist demonstration, marked a turning point, leading to a brutal crackdown by French authorities. This event galvanized Algerian nationalists, propelling some toward the idea of armed resistance as a means of achieving independence.

The outbreak of the Algerian War of Independence in 1954 marked a protracted and brutal conflict between the FLN and other nationalist groups against the formidable French colonial forces. The war involved guerrilla warfare, urban terrorism, and significant social upheaval, gaining international attention and drawing focus to the Algerian cause. Negotiations between the FLN and French authorities resulted in the signing of the Evian Accords in 1962, paving the way for Algerian independence. On July 3, 1962, Algeria officially gained its independence from France, marking the end of over a century of colonial rule. This historical event stands as a defining chapter in Algeria's quest for autonomy.

Yasmina Khadra's novel masterfully weaves together the personal and social intricacies of Algerian society during this tumultuous era. Through vivid storytelling, Khadra captures the multifaceted struggles of individuals and communities as they navigate the complexities of colonial oppression, cultural identity, and the arduous journey towards liberation. The narrative delves into the profound tensions and violence characterizing the Algerian War of

Independence, offering a poignant reflection of the societal upheavals that marked Algeria's path to independence. "Ce que le jour doit à la nuit" thus becomes a literary testament, providing readers with a profound understanding of the historical intricacies, personal sacrifices, and societal transformations that defined Algeria's journey from colonial subjugation to the dawn of independence. Through Khadra's lens, the novel serves as a powerful narrative capturing the resilience and spirit of a nation striving for self-determination amid the tumultuous currents of history.

Our comparison of the two novels' historical contexts reveals that, despite the geographical and cultural differences between Kenya and Algeria, *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* share common historical contexts and colonial experience. Both novels provide a deep exploration of the human experience in the face of profound societal changes and the challenges of forging new identities in the post-colonial era. Moreover, these novels emphasize the enduring legacies of colonialism. In *A Grain of Wheat* the characters grapple with the consequences of colonialism even after Kenya's independence. The wounds inflicted during the Mau Mau Uprising and the trauma of the state of emergency has continued to shape the characters' lives. In *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* the impact of French colonialism and the violence of the Algerian War have left a lasting imprint on the characters' lives.

b. Summaries of the Two Novels

A Grain of Wheat unfolds in the small village of Thabai in Kenya, delving into the lives of a diverse set of characters deeply affected by the 1952-1960 Emergency, a period of significant political and social turmoil in Kenya. The narrative revolves around the profound communal loss, especially the death of Kihika, revered as a symbol of resistance and likened to a "grain of wheat" for his pivotal role in the Mau Mau movements against British rule during the Emergency. Despite Kihika's execution several years prior, his legacy remains a central theme in the story. At the core of the novel is Mugo, a respected figure in the village burdened by a haunting secret: his betrayal of Kihika. Mugo's revelation as the traitor unfolds towards

the end of the narrative, adding a layer of complexity to the characters and the overall plot. Additionally, the novel chronicles the intricate dynamics within various relationships, such as that between Gikonyo and Mumbi, a couple torn apart by a blend of personal and political conflicts, and Karanja, an individual who collaborated with the colonial authorities. Throughout the narrative, the novel adeptly explores themes of betrayal, sacrifice and the enduring repercussions of colonialism.

As far as *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* is concerned, the novel's action turns around Algeria from the 1930s to 1962. The story follows the life of Younes, a young Algerian poor boy who is adopted by a wealthy French family and raised as a Frenchman. As Younes matures, he grapples with the conflicting pulls of his Algerian roots and his French upbringing, exploring themes of identity, cultural clash, and the intricate dynamics between French settlers and the Algerian population, portraying the challenging coexistence. The novel delves into the turbulent historical canvas of mid-20th century Algeria, navigating the struggle for independence. Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* is a moving and beautifully written story that reflects the challenges faced by individuals caught between two different worlds. Younes is the central character as well as the narrator of the story tells about his poverty-stricken childhood. Younes's destiny changes when he goes to live with his uncle, a pharmacist who is fully integrated into the European community. Younes' striking blue eyes and angelic appearance helps him to be accepted within this prosperous provincial community. Renamed Younes-Jonas, he grew up among young colonists who become his inseparable companions. He discovers the joys of life with them sharing their adolescent dreams. Everything has changed when Emilie ; a stunning young woman, returned to the village. A profound love story begins testing the fraternal bond of these four young men. Younes and Emilie's story used by Khadra as an exemplary protagonist to illustrate the thousands of Algerians facing the same destiny during colonialism .

Upon comparing the novels' summaries, it is deduced that both narratives contemplate the ramifications of colonialism on the principal characters' lives and the quest for independence. However, this examination is conducted within the distinct parameters of their respective historical and cultural settings, thereby imparting to each narrative a unique flavor and perspective. On the one hand, *A Grain of Wheat* delves into themes of nationalism, identity, and betrayal, scrutinizing the intricate relationships among villagers who participated in the Mau Mau rebellion against British colonial rule. On the other hand, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* explores themes of identity, cultural conflict, and the repercussions of French colonization on Algerian society, delving into the struggles of the Algerian people for independence. Beyond the contextual and summary comparisons of the novels, certain parallels can be discerned between the two selected authors.

c. Comparison of Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and Yasmina Khadra's Biographies

Ngugi wa thiong'o was born in January 5th, 1938 in Limuru Kenya, grew up in the rural areas of heaviest European occupation. He is a prominent Kenyan novelist and playwright. Ngugi's academic journey led him to acquire Bachelor's degrees from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, in 1963, and from Leeds University in Yorkshire, England, in 1964. Following his postgraduate studies at Leeds, he assumed the role of an English lecturer at University College in Nairobi, Kenya. During the period from 1972 to 1977, he held the esteemed positions of Senior lecturer and chairman of the Department of Literature at the University of Nairobi (Britannica, n.d.). Ngugi wrote *A Grain of Wheat* at Leeds University in England, in the years 1964-1966, when he was a post graduate student on British Council scholarship. In the event, He did not obtain the research MA that he was working on (on the work of the Barbadian novelist George Lamming), because instead of completing revisions to his thesis , he read widely and wrote *A Grain of Wheat*. He was twenty-eight and already the author of two novels, *Weep Not, Child*(1964) and *The River Between*(1965) both published while he was at Leeds. Several events transpired his life between 1967 and 1987. He legally

changed his name from James Ngugi to more correct Gikuyu form of Ngugi wa Thiong'o in 1977 . He was detained by the government in December 1977 after the publication of his play *Ngaahika Ndeenda I Will Marry When I Want* since it was written in Gikuyu and comprehensible to ordinary people. Only a few months before his detention he had also published *Petals of Blood* (1977) , which was sharply critical of the governing culture of Kenya. The government dismissed him from academic job, and finally harassed him out of the country in 1982 (Gurnah,2002).

Regarding Yasmina Khadra, who is a renowned Algerian writer, was born on January 10, 1955, in Kenadsa, located in the Algerian Sahara. He hails from a family of poets, the Moulessehouls, who have governed the Saoura region for nearly eight centuries, a family deeply rooted in religious traditions. Behind the feminine double first name "Yasmina Khadra" lies a man named Mohammed Moulessehoul, a pseudonym crafted in homage to Algerian women and comprising the two first names of his wife. Mohammed Moulessehoul, a former senior officer in the Algerian army, made the decision to dedicate himself entirely to writing, prompting his departure from the military. Born to a father who was an active lieutenant in the National Liberation Army (ALN) and a nomadic mother, Mohammed's early years were marked by an attempt to mold him into a soldier. From the age of nine, he was sent to a military school, where he pursued his education before serving as an officer in the Algerian army for 36 years. In 1997, with his novel "Morituri," Mohammed Moulessehoul chose to write under the pseudonym Yasmina Khadra for various reasons, with clandestinity being a primary consideration. In 1962, the Moulessehoul family moved to Oran when Algeria gained its independence, presenting limited employment opportunities. To secure a better future for Mohammed, his father enrolled him in the El Mechouar cadet school. At the age of nine, Mohammed was entrusted to this military school with the aim of becoming an officer. While he embarked on writing books in the early 1980s, it was not until fifteen years later that he gained fame through his crime novels published under the adopted pseudonym Yasmina

Khadra. In 1975, at the age of twenty-seven, having obtained his baccalaureate, he enrolled in the Cherchell military school. In 1987, he traveled to Spain with his wife, invited by a religious association, where he shared his perspective on the style of the Gospels. After thirty-six years of military life, Mohammed Moulessehouel decided to leave the army in September 2000 with the rank of commander to fully dedicate himself to writing. After a brief stint in Mexico with his wife and three children, he settled in France in Aix-en-Provence in 2001, where he still resides today. He revealed his male identity in 2001 with the publication of his novel "L'écrivain" and his full identity in "L'imposture des mots," where he justified his decision. In 2005, Yasmina Khadra embarked on a literary evolution by deterritorializing his settings, a strategic move to internationalize his literary fiction. This marked a departure from his previous focus on detective fiction to delve into the realm of transitional fiction. During this period, he shifted his narrative gaze towards the exploration of Algerian terrorist novels, broadening the scope of his thematic explorations. However, in 2008, Yasmina Khadra returned to his Algerian roots, redirecting his narrative lens to explore the rich and complex history of Algerian colonialism. This shift in focus reflected a reconnection with his cultural heritage and a renewed commitment to unraveling the intricacies of Algeria's colonial past. By weaving tales that delved into the historical tapestry of Algeria, Khadra continued to demonstrate his versatility as a writer. Drawing inspiration from his military past, Yasmina Khadra addresses numerous conflicts in the Middle East. The disparities between Eastern and Western societies are recurring themes in his works, particularly in "Les Hirondelles de Kaboul" (2002), "L'Attentat" (2005), and "Les Sirènes de Bagdad" (2006). Khadra also denounces the radicalism in certain Arab countries and is a fervent advocate for women's rights, prominently featuring female characters in his works. While using straightforward language in his dialogues and vividly describing situations in his books, Yasmina Khadra also appreciates using colorful expressions. A great admirer of Saint-Exupéry, he employs metaphors to narrate his stories, infusing a poetic element into his works that tackle harsh themes. Yasmina Khadra's lyrical

sensibility adds a poetic touch to his often gritty narratives. Recognized by the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture of UNESCO in 1993, Yasmina Khadra has received numerous awards throughout his career, especially since 2000. In 2001, he was awarded the French Academy Prize for "L'écrivain." In 2005, "Les Hirondelles de Kaboul" was named the best book of the year in the United States, and "La part du mort" won the French Crime Fiction Prize. In 2008, "Ce que le jour doit à la nuit" was voted the best book of the year in France and received the France Télévision Novel Prize. The same year, he was appointed a Knight of the Legion of Honor and an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters. In 2011, the French Academy awarded him the Grand Prize for Literature Henri Gal for his entire body of work. Yasmina Khadra was finally included in *Le Petit Robert des Noms Propres* in 2014. His recent works include "La Dernière Nuit du Raïs" (2015), "Dieu n'habite pas La Havane" (2016), "Ce que le mirage doit à l'oasis, illustré par Lassaâd Metoui" (2017), "Khalil" (2018), "L'outrage fait à Sarah Ikker" (2019) and *les vertueux* (2022).

Many parallels can be drawn between Yasmina Khadra's and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's lives and careers. First, both are influential intellectuals and prominent authors, they are known for their innovative style, their emotional depth and insight into the human condition during times of conflicts. Though they come from different cultural backgrounds and have distinct writing styles and thematic concerns, Yasmina Khadra and Ngugi share a passion for storytelling and an exploration of conflict and the human psyche. While Ngugi wa Thiong'o is recognized for his commitment to African languages and post-colonial themes, Khadra's international acclaim is to be found in his themes of love, conflict, and identity.

Results

Throughout our dissertation, we compared African novels, Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* in terms of structure, temporal and spatial settings, themes and character. To accomplish this, we drew upon the theoretical framework presented in Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. Our comparison reveals that both Khadra and Ngugi share a common motivation: Both authors are driven by a profound desire to reclaim and represent the true essence of their respective nations during the colonial era. This motivation stems from a recognition of the multifaceted and intricate nature of their countries' histories. In their writings, Khadra and Ngugi employ their literary skills to delve into the complexities of the past, going beyond a mere recounting of historical events. They seek to illuminate the nuanced aspects of their nations' experiences under colonial rule, shedding light on the various dimensions of the colonial impact. Furthermore, the use of their pens to depict the facts of colonialism implies a commitment to historical accuracy and truth-telling. Both authors recognize the significance of narrating these fundamental points of colonialism in their respective countries. Through their novels, they serve as witnesses and chroniclers, ensuring that the historical realities, often complex and challenging, are faithfully recorded and brought to the forefront of the literary discourse. Both novels address historical and cultural themes, they do so within distinct settings, employing different narrative styles to convey the impact of colonialism and the struggle for independence on individual and collective identities.

One of our primary findings concerns our exploration of the novels' structure and setting. Both authors have meticulously employed structural elements that most effectively complement their respective narratives, resulting in nuanced differences between the two novels in terms of plot and the method of narration. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the plot unfolds in a non-linear fashion, narrated by a third-person omniscient perspective. Conversely, in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, the plot follows a linear chronological structure, narrated by the protagonist Younes. Despite these distinctions, both novels incorporate various symbols and

methodologies, integral components that contribute to the richness of their storytelling. Examining the realm of setting, notable disparities emerge also between the two novels. *A Grain of Wheat* is set in Kenya during 1963, with events occurring during the period of Emergency in 1955 ; while , *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* unfolds in Algeria from 1930 to 1962, capturing the colonial period, and includes a jump to the present in 2008. However, both novels are anchored in the common backdrop of the colonial era in their respective countries. Through their discerning choices of temporel setting, both authors engage in a profound exploration of their nations' histories, delving notably into the profound impact of colonialism on individuals and society.

The second noteworthy finding in our comparison of the two novels, revolves around the recurring themes and characters in the two literary works. Both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* intricately interweave several common themes including colonialism, identity, alienation, love, betrayal, and the role of women. The theme of colonialism, a pervasive force in both novels, serves as a lens through which the characters navigate their lives and relationships, highlighting the complex dynamics between the colonizers and the colonized. Identity, another central theme, is explored in both works as characters grapple with questions of cultural heritage, self-discovery. Alienation, Love and betrayal add emotional depth to the narratives, portraying the complexities of human relationships in the face of colonialism. The role of women, offers insights into the multifaceted roles women play within the contexts of colonialism and societal transformations. Moreover, the characters themselves become vessels for the exploration and development of these themes ; for instance, Mugo and Jonas embody the theme of alienation in parallel ways. This parallelism in character experiences serves to emphasize shared human struggles across different cultural and historical contexts. In essence, the convergence of themes and character traits in both novels serves to strengthen the affinities between the two works. It suggests that, despite the distinct cultural and historical settings, Khadra and Ngugi share a commonality in their exploration of universal human experiences

and challenges, creating a rich and interconnected narrative tapestry that resonates with readers across diverse backgrounds.

Discussion

Chapter One: Comparative Analysis of Structural and Setting Affinities in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*

In this chapter, our objective is to compare these two novels, focusing on their similarities and differences in term of structure and settings.

1) Plot :

Beginning with the plot in *A Grain of Wheat* , Ngugi uses a non-linear one plot where events are organized in a non-chronological order unfolding in a fragmented and interconnected manner. The story begins with a description of a small village named Thabai where the community is preparing for the celebration of Kenya's impending independence in 1963. The narrative then shifts back in time to the period leading up to Kenya's state of emergency declared by the British in the 1952. The most significant events that shape the story, occur during a different time frame, specifically during the Emergency period as Gurnah (2002) writes:

The present-time of *A Grain of Wheat* is the four days leading up Kenya's independence from British colonial rule in December 1963, although the unconfessed events which are the drama of the narrative mostly took place during the Emergency in 1950. (p.viii)

As modernist writer, Ngugi's adoption of non-linear plot makes the reading experience more exciting by using flashbacks, which create a sense of mystery, surprise and suspense pushing the reader to make efforts to piece together the chronology of events. In this respect Forster (1954) writes:

The plot, then, is the novel in its logical intellectual aspect: it requires mystery, but the mysteries are solved later on: the reader may be moving about in worlds unrealized, but the novelist has no misgivings. He is competent, poised above his work, throwing a beam of light here, popping on a cap of invisibility there, (p.144)

It is important to point out that Ngugi's use of a fragmented narration style is characterized by sudden shifts in the scenes, as in the seventh chapter where the author moves from a present conversation between Gikonyo and Mugo, where Gikonyo affirms: “ Yet the day I missed the train was the happiest in my life”(P.71) , to the days when he was a carpenter ; “then Gikuyu

worked as a carpenter in Thabai. Though an immigrant to the rigde, he and his mother had been absorbed into the community and its daily rotual” (P.71).

Furthermore, Ngugi employs the narrative technique of flashbacks to skillfully transport readers to pivotal moments in the characters' lives, particularly during their involvement in the Mau Mau rebellion. Through these temporal shifts, Ngugi intricately weaves a tapestry that sheds light on the multifaceted struggles against colonial rule, offering readers a nuanced understanding of the societal, political, and personal dimensions of the characters' experiences. The flashbacks become a literary vehicle for illuminating the sacrifices made by individuals in their pursuit of independence, capturing the human toll and resilience amid the tumultuous backdrop of historical events. This narrative technique not only adds depth to the storytelling but also allows readers to navigate the complex historical landscape, fostering a connection between the characters and the broader socio-political context of the Mau Mau rebellion.

Regarding *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, Yasmina Khadra uses a linear plot to shape the story, which follows a chronological plot from the 1930s to the 1960s. The events unfold the protagonist's life in a coherent and sequential manner. The plot is divided into distinct parts, each representing a specific phase in the protagonist's life. Furthermore, these parts are further subdivided into chapters, each explores specific events and experiences. This division establishes a clear and organized framework for the narrative. Khadra's novel turns around Younes, a young Muslim boy on a journey of self-discovery, love and identity within the context of colonial Algeria. To shape the story, Khadra uses the five elements of plot : exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. It begins with Younes , the protagonist and his early life in an Algerian village during the 1930s, which provides the context for the complex sociopolitical landscape of colonial Algeria. Afterwards, Younes moves to Oran with his family, due to circumstances, he lives with his uncle att Rio Salado where he is renamed Jonas. His new French identity helps him get French friends, but creates a profound internal struggle. The climax takes place with the Algerian War of Independence,

which led Younes to confront his identity and allegiance. The story ends with the consequences of characters' decisions and actions within the lasting impact of the war and Younes/Jonas' final understanding of his identity in post-independence Algeria.

Although Khadra has used a linear narrative structure, there are instances in the novel where the author includes brief flashbacks to provide additional insight into the characters' pasts. This technique sheds light on certain events and experiences that have influenced the characters' present actions, emotions, and memories of the past as when Younes affirms :

Cette apparition inattendue me catapulta des années en arrière et j'atterris dans la cour intérieure de notre habitation, à Jenane Jato, au milieu des voisines riant aux éclats dans le tohu-bohu de leur marmaille[...]Hadda ne riait pas ce matin là...Elle était triste...Jela revis tendant brusquement sa main pr-dessus la table, la paume tournée vers le ciel...(P.169).

To sum up, we can say that *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* differ in terms of their plot structures. Ngugi shapes his narrative in a non-linear plot while Khadra structures his story in a linear way. What is common is that, each author carefully selects the plot structure that best complements their respective narratives. Furthermore, both of them use flashback technique in their respective works. In *A Grain of Wheat*, this narrative device is prominently featured throughout the entire novel whereas in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, Khadra employs it more sparingly. Closely linked to the plot is the point of view, which is the next element of comparing the two selected works;

2) The Narrative Point of View Used in The Two Novels:

The narrative point of view refers to the voice through which the story is told: first, second or third person (twinkl, n.d.). Ngũgĩ's *A Grain of Wheat* use multiple characters, employing a third-person omniscient perspective. This method of narration allows readers to delve into the thoughts, emotions and experiences of various characters providing a comprehensive understanding of the story as the following excerpt illustrates: "Mugo felt nervous. He was lying on his back and looking at the roof. Sooty locks hang from the fern and grass thatch and all pointed at his heart (P.01). According to Gurnah (2002), *A Grain of Wheat* is narrated in a third-person, which provides a broader historical and political context and to

connect with the audience as if they were part of a shared cultural experience. This narrative approach has added depth and complexity to the storytelling, providing both a historical and a personal perspective on the events in the novel. The critic adds:

One of the most striking aspects of *A Grain of Wheat* is the method of its narration. The framing voice is the third-person narrator, who at times speaks with a clear political awareness of Kenya's colonial history, and at other times slides quietly into the inclusiveness of the oral story-teller speaking to the listeners who are familiar with the main events of the tale (p.ix).

Throughout the novel, the narration shifts between different characters, as Mugo, Kihika, Gikonyo and others. This shifting point of view conveys a multi-dimensional view of events and a deeper comprehension of each character's motivations and struggles. While the third-person omniscient perspective serves as the primary narrative technique in the novel, it's worth noting that the novel also includes sections of first-person narration. These latest are presented in the form of characters' interior monologues or personal reflections. As an illustration, the author creates a glimpse into Mumbi's thoughts and emotions, forging a deeper connection to her experiences and struggles: "Came a day when I felt I could not endure it. I must say that my mother-in-law and my parents seemed to bear it better than I. For me I felt I could not live another day" (P.141).

Distinctively, Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* is narrated in the first-person narrative point of view following a linear narrative structure with a clear beginning, middle and the end, using the protagonist Younes's pronoun "I", expressing his thoughts. Readers perceive the events through his eyes, which causes a sense of empathy and connection between the readers and the protagonist. The incorporation of such a technique establishes a connection between readers and Younes' personal odyssey.

In summary, the two selected novels exhibit disparities in their narrative point of view. Ngugi and Khadra employ the method of narration that contribute significantly to the plot structure of their respective novels. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the author uses a third-person omniscient perspective while *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* opts for a first-person narrative

approach, with the protagonist serving as the primary narrator. To the comparison of the two novels' structures another feature can be added; it is the use of myths and symbols

3) The Use of Symbolism and Myth in Both Novels

The use of myths and symbols has played a crucial role in enhancing the narrative and conveying profound significance. The title *A Grain of Wheat* itself is symbolic as it stands for the sacrifices made by the characters in the novel and represent Kenyans who gave their lives for the independence of their country. Ngugi mentions, for example, Waiyaki the catalyst who gave birth to the MauMau movement as the following excerpt shows it:

Then nobody noticed it ; but looking back we can see that Waiyaki's blood contained within it a seed, a grain, which gave birth to the movement whose main strength thereafter sprang from a bond with soil (P.12).

Also, Mugo's name holds a mythical significance in Gikuyu's oral tradition. Mugo wa Kibiru, also known as Chege wa Kibiru, was a renowned Gikuyu healer and prophet who lived during the 18th and early 19th centuries. He has prophesied about the arrival of the white man and the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway, envisioning it as an iron serpent (Arts & Cultures, n. d.). In this perspective Ngugi refers to this myth in what follows:

The iron snake spoken of by Mugo wa Kibiro was quickly wriggling towards Nairobi for thorough exploitation of the hinterland . Could they move it ? The snake held on the ground, laughing their efforts to scorn (P.12)

In addition, the Gikuyu and Mumbi myth serves as a prominent origin story for the Kikuyu people, which is employed by Ngugi. Parallely his latest literary offering, *The Perfect Nine: The Epic of Gikuyu and Mumbi (2020)*, has preserved this ancient oral tradition passed from generation to generation. This captivating tale delved into the lives of Gikūyū and Mūmbi, the revered ancestors, and their remarkable daughters. These extraordinary women, in turn, have ascended as the esteemed matriarchs, leading the nine clans of the illustrious Gikūyū community.

As far as Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit* is concerned, various images and symbols are used. Like Ngugi's novel, the very title itself is symbolic as it represents the

dichotomy between “day” and “night,” a contrasting concept that symbolizes also light and darkness, hope and despair, life and death. This contrast forms the novel's central themes of duality conflict and the coexistence of opposing forces. Moreover, it stands for the cyclical nature of time and nature of change. The perpetual cycle of day and night exemplify the continuous rhythm of life where in each component is connected to keep its very existence.

Furthermore, nature's seasonal transformations mirror the personal growth and the changing circumstances in life. For instance, autumn represents a period of transition in the characters' life as it symbolises the change and transformation while spring signifies new beginning and hope as expressed in what follows: “Chaque matin était un coup de génial; chaque instant que l'on volait au temps nous livrait une part d'éternité” (P.233). The opulent colonial villas symbolize power, privilege and the oppressive nature of French occupation as the houses in Rio Salado when compared to those in Jenane Jato. These structures served as reminders of the social and cultural divisions that exist within colonial time, it is represented by the author as two nations; one nation of the rich and privileged, the other nation of the have not, the poor and the indigenes

Khadra does not use traditional mythology from folklore , but his text is full of symbolism and narrative elements that resonate with mythological motifs ;For instance, the recurrence of theme of tragic love, which is a common feature in many mythological stories. This theme resonates in the novel through the love between Younes and Emilie, which transcend social and cultural boundaries. Their love story echoes the tragic tales found in mythological lore.

As a concluding statement for this section, both novels share similarities in term of mythology and symbolism since the two authos incorporate symbols to imbue their narratives with greater depth and facilitate a heightened comprehension of the underlying message. Both authors adeptly employ symbols and mythological elements that resonate with their respective oral traditions. The next element for our comparison is the setting.

4) Exploring Setting between Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *ce que le jour doit à la nuit*

Setting refers to the temporal and spatial context in which a story took place. It does not only enrich the reader's understanding of the narrative but also influences the characters, themes and emotional impact of the work. Both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* are set during colonial rule in Kenya and Algeria. In both novels, the temporal setting are crucial as they help capturing the tumultuous period of colonial domination. The two authors delve into the complexities of that era, shedding light on the political, social and cultural dynamics that shape the characters' lives and struggles.

Beginning with *A Grain of Wheat*, the novel was set during the final days of British colonial rule in Kenya more precisely in Gikuyu in December 1963. Kenya was on the cusp of a new era and the characters in the novel found themselves at a crossroads. The temporal setting has reflected the anticipation and tension that permeated society ; as people grappled with the impending changes and uncertainties of the post-colonial era. As the narrative has unfolded , the novel delved into the past experiences and choices of the characters, revealing the intricate web of relationships and secrets that intertwine their lives. The temporal setting has enhanced the narrative by providing a specific context in which the characters' actions and motivations can be examined. This setting set the stage for characters such as Mugo, Gikonyo and Karanja to respond to the circumstances differently. Mugo embodies the complex psychological state of a society during the period of colonization such as; his guilt about the act of betrayal that he has committed. Through Mugo's narrative, the author has highlighted the moral dilemmas faced by individuals in a time of political upheaval.

The temporal setting also refers to the Emergency Period declared by the British colonial authorities in response to the Mau Mau uprising, which lasted from 1952 to 1960. During that period of time the movement has been driven by a desire to reclaim land and to resist British colonial rule. The temporal setting of the Emergency Period provides a forceful

atmosphere in which the characters navigate their lives and face the consequences of their actions. In his book, *Writers in Politics* (1981), Ngugi explains that : “Literature then is produced by people in his history. It reflects, and reflects on , those activities that are the snuff of History. It affects people’s attitudes to the social context of lives of men, women and children” (P.22). Ngugi also shows the difficulty of nation-building and the complexities of achieving true independence. By depicting the disillusionment and broken promises of the post-independence era, the author invites readers to think on the continuous struggles for justice and equality as John Thompson expresses it to Margery ; “Africa cannot, cannot without Europe” (P.161). In this respect Fanon (1963) claims:

The national economy of the period of independence is not set on a new footing. It is still concerned with the groundnut harvest, with the cocoa crop and the olive yield. In the same way there is no change in the marketing of basic products, and not a single industry is set up in the country. We go on sending out raw materials; we go on being Europe's small farmers, who specialize in unfinished products (P.151)

As far as Khadra’s, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, the narrative is set during Algeria's tumultuous history and explores the interplay of time , its impact on individuals and society. Spanning from 1930 to 1961, which encompassed the colonial era of Algeria under French rule, the novel depicts the consequences of the historical shifts on the characters' lives. Through an exploration of temporality, the author illuminates the lasting effects of colonialism and invites readers to contemplate the intricate connections between the past, present and future in the context of Algerian colonial period. One key aspect of temporality in the novel is the juxtaposition of different historical periods. The story begins during the 1930s the high tide of assimilation policy, when Algeria was under the control of the French government. The Algerian population was subjected to discriminatory policies, economic exploitation and cultural suppression.

The oppressive nature of the colonial regime is vividly portrayed in the novel, highlighting the power imbalances and the struggle faced by Algerians, as Khadra (2008) describes: “En ces années 1930, la misère et les épidémies décimaient les familles et le cheptel avec une incroyable perversité, contraignant les rescapés à l’exode, sinon à la clochardisation (

P.12). Then he adds an unforgettable day in the Algerian history, which is the events of 8 may 1945 when Algerians demonstrated in Setif, Guelma, and Kherrata to claim independence. The day served as a reflection of the sorrow and profound shock experienced by Algerians. The author also refer to 01 November 1954 , which marked the battle of Algeria for the independence.

After the 8 years of war and damages, Khadra makes allusion to the date of Algeria's independence as the 5th of July, 1962 and writes: “Demain 5 juillet, l’Algérie aurait une carte d’identité, un emblème et un hymne nationaux, et des milliers de repères à réinventer. Sur les balcons, les femmes laissaient éclater et leur joie et leurs sanglots (P.395). In the final chapter of the novel entitled *Aix-en-provence (aujourd’hui)*, the author returns to the present 2008. These specific dates are significance in Algerian history because they sorrow, shock and suffering endured by Algerians. Additionally, they bear witness to the application of force and repression by the French colonial administration upon the Algerian populace.

Similar to Ngugi, Khadra strategically appeals to this temporal backdrop to delve into the psychological trauma emblematic of this era. This is aptly exemplified by Younes, who is due to circumstantial forces, found himself distanced from his familial milieu, compelled to forced to reside among the French. Hence, he has found himself lost between two opposite opposed worlds and different cultures.

With regard to the spatial setting in Ngugi’s *A Grain of wheat*, the village of Thabai serves as the primary spatial setting playing a vital role in the narrative. Situated in Kenya, this fictional village experienced disruption due to colonialism and later became a battleground for the fight for independence. The marketplace is also a vibrant hub where the characters converge, a space of social interaction, economic exchange and political discussions. However, it was dominated by British and Indians ownership. This spatial setting shows unequal distribution of economic power and influence which impact businesses in Nairobi. African-owned shops were often relegated to peripheral areas where they faced limited resources,

infrastructure and opportunities for growth. That's why Gikonyu wonders why there was not one single African shop in the whole of central and business area of Nairobi. In fact Nairobi unlike Kampala (at least, so Kariuki said) was never an African City. The Indians and Europeans controlled the commercial and the social life of the city (P.60).

Furthermore, the forest represents an important space of refuge and secrecy. It is a place where characters can find solace and engage in clandestine activities away from the watchful eyes of the colonial authorities. The forest facilitates the resistance efforts of the freedom fighter, providing them with a secluded space to organize and strategize. It is represented more than just a physical backdrop as it embodies the spirit of resistance against colonial rule and oppression, the reason why Kihika chooses the forest as his home and shelter: "Do you think Kihika, who was the leader of the movement in his region , was going to escape the heavy arm of the whiteman ? He had to choose between prison and forest . He choose the forest"(p.100).

Another important setting is the detention camp, which stand for the control and oppression exercised by the colonial authorities. It is a space of confinement and restriction where characters are stripped of their freedom and subjected to surveillance and mistreatment. Within the detention camp, characters experience various forms of physical suffering; they endure overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, face physical abuse, and live in permanent psychological torment of separation from their loved ones and uncertain futures.

Concerning *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, Khadra uses two spatial settings in the narrative, Algeria and France. The primary setting is characterized by an atmosphere of melancholy and discontent under the specter of colonialism. Early at the beginning of the novel, the protagonist and his family reside in a state of seclusion in their own land, which is characterized by profound solitude that estranged them from the dynamism of the external world. It is described as follows: « Nous vivions reclus sur notre lopin terre, pareils à des spectres levrés à eux même, dans le silence sidéral de ceux qui n'ont pas grand-chose à dire » (P.11). It is a dysphoric space, which means a profound sense of unhappiness, distress, a

symptom associated with various mental health conditions (Verywellhealth,2008). After the isolation of the family, they move to live in Oran installed in a patio in Jenane Jato that embodies a space of confinement, which stands as a poignant representation of the profound suffering endured by the Algerian populace during the era of colonialism, characterized by the deprivation of essential resources under French dominion.

Owing to adverse circumstances, Younes is relocated to his uncle's residence by his father, willing to provide a better life to him in Rio Salado, a significant place inhabited predominantly by Europeans, constituting a picturesque town with the comfort and affluence enjoyed by European settlers in Algeria. In this line of thought, Fanon (1963) points out:

The settlers' town is a strongly built town, all made of stone and steel. It is a brightly lit town; the streets are covered with asphalt, and the garbage cans swallow all the leavings, unseen, unknown and hardly thought about(P.39).

There are other places mentioned in the novel in relation to the events that happened over the country as Affreville, Koléa, Blida and the military school of Cherchell. Then after the independence, when the protagonist moves to France, the author uses Aix-en-Provence which is situated in Marseille, characterised by its unique architecture.

In conclusion, while the novels *A Grain of Wheat* by Ngugi and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* by Khadra may unfold in distinct geographical and temporal settings, a compelling affinity emerges through the shared colonial experiences depicted by both authors. Despite the divergence in their narrative landscapes, both stories are intricately woven into the fabric of the colonial era, offering readers a poignant exploration of the impact of colonialism on individual lives and collective identities. Moreover, a notable distinction arises in terms of narrative structure, where *A Grain of Wheat* employs a non-linear plot narrated with third-person omniscience, while *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* unfolds chronologically through the voice of the narrator Younes. This structural variance adds a layer of complexity to the comparison, revealing the diverse artistic approaches each author adopts to convey their respective narratives.

Chapter Two: Comparative Analysis of Themes and Characters Affinities in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*

I. Comparison of the Two Novels Themes

A Grain of Wheat and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* explore shared themes, despite the absence of direct influence between the authors. Examining issues such as colonialism, identity, love, and alienation, both novels delve into these universal topics. Set in distinct locations (Kenya and Algeria), the narratives provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by post-colonial societies. Despite the geographical disparity, the works resonate with common concerns and perspectives, offering a rich exploration of the complexities inherent in these shared themes.

As previously mentioned, this comparative study focuses on the study of the literary affinities or what is called analogy study of the two novels. As Gada (2014) explains:

Analogy studies are mostly concerned with the exploration of the psychological, social, political and economic contexts or backgrounds of literary creation across societies. They seek to explain how writers living in societies widely separated in terms of time or space manage to write in indistinguishable ways about more or less similar themes. Studies of literary influence and indebtedness deal with similarities between works, which are traced to the diffusion of ideas and forms, from one cultural area to another, as a result of factors like, education, colonialism, trade and other contacts. Unlike analogy studies, explain similarities between works of literature on other grounds than those related to background or context. (Wolfreys et al., 2006, cited in Gada, 2014).

1) The Impact of Colonialism in *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*

Colonialism is one important theme appeared in the two novels, reflecting the historical context and the impact of colonial powers on the colonized societies. Both narratives provide insights into the oppressive nature of colonial rule, the resistance movements that emerged the ways in which colonialism affected the lives and identities of the characters. Such an impact is explained by Fanon (1963) in this quote:

History teaches us clearly that the battle against colonialism does not run straight away along the lines of nationalism. For a very long time the native devotes his energies to ending certain definite abuses: forced labor, corporal punishment, inequality of salaries, limitation of political rights, etc (P.148).

According to Fanon, the populations who are subjected to various forms of oppression and exploitation under colonial rule direct their efforts toward addressing specific injustices such as forced labor, physical abuse, economic disparities and political disenfranchisement. When applied to *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi sheds light on the impact of colonialism on the lives of his characters. The author depicts British colonialism with its impact on the lives of the personal and the broader society. In his well-known novel *Writers in Politics*, he explains:

Colonialism is of course a practice and not a theory. It is a historical process and not an abstract metaphysical notion. Above all, it is a relationship of power at the economic, political and cultural levels. So to talk about colonialism in Africa is to talk about a definite power relationship between Europe and Africa at a particular moment in history. (Ngugi, 1981, p.07)

We understand that Ngugi considers colonialism, not merely an abstract idea or theory; it is a historical reality and a tangible process. It involved a power, dynamic encompassing economic, political and cultural dimensions, representing a concrete relationship of dominance and exploitation. Such a process comes to sight, in *A Grain of Wheat*, through the loss of agency and power experienced by the characters under the oppressive colonial system, which impose strict control, no freedom, autonomy and ability to shape one's life and destiny. Land expropriations, imposing taxes, establishing pass-books force the characters to subjection and life under oppression. As an illustration, Harry Thuku, who denounced peacefully the British injustice by sending letters to the colonizer was detained without trial as the excerpt shows:

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

Moreover, Ngugi depicts the violence perpetrated against Kenyans by illustrating it through characters who experienced different forms of discrimination and marginalization within the colonial system. He refers to those who endured the harsh conditions of detention camps such as Mugo who vividly articulates the suffering of detainees during a meeting convened outside Kabui shops near Thabai:

They took us to the roads and to the quarries, even those who had never done anything. They called us criminals. But not because we had stolen anything or killed anyone. We had only asked for things that belonged to us from the time of Agou and Agou. Day and night, they made us dig. We were stricken ill, we often slept with empty stomachs, and our clothes were just rags and tatters so that rain and the wind and the sun knew our nakedness (P.64).

Ngugi portrays the psychological repercussions of colonialism through the characters' personal experiences, delving into the profound effects it had on individuals. These effects become a sort of a spectrum of psychological wounds and internal struggles as which reflect the psychological trauma inflicted upon individuals living under colonial rule.

Additionally, the novel illustrates the economic injustices faced by the African peasants under colonial rule. The African characters are depicted as subordinated subjects. They are forced to work under harsh conditions for the benefit of the colonial powers while the settlers enjoy a comfortable life as this excerpt illustrates: "Once or twice when he was a boy [Mugo] saw a group of white people smoking, talking and laughing, while black people carried bags of maize and pyrethrum from standing into the railway trucks" (P.121). This reminiscence illustrates the British colonial authorities exercised significant control over the local inhabitants in Kenya. They dictate the terms of trade, ensuring that the colonial economy remains favorable to the interests of the colonizer. Meanwhile, African peasants and traders face restrictions and unequal treatment in accessing markets, limiting their economic opportunities. The novel sheds light on the exploitative economic practices and policies imposed by the colonial powers, resulting in the economic subjugation of the African population.

Like Ngugi, Khadra's novel *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* depicts the complex and multifaceted effects of colonialism on characters and society. Through Younes, Khadra illustrates the characters' diminished autonomy and power as he grapples with the oppressive burden of colonial rule. This point is exemplified early at the beginning of the story when Aissa's land was ravaged by fire, forced to sign on certain documents, as described by the author:

C'était le Caïd, escorté de sa grande prétorienne. Sans descendre de sa chaise, il somma mon père d'apposer ses empreintes digitales sur les documents qu'un Français émacié et livide, vêtu de noir de la tête aux pieds, s'était empressé d'extirper de son cartable (P.18).

Khadra's selection of the year 1930 stems from its significance in Algerian history. On the one hand, the narrative unveils the comfort and luxury enjoyed by colonizers. On other hand, it uncovers the convergence of all the hardships experienced by colonized. These two divergent realities coexisted throughout the colonial rule and Algerians were forced to live in poverty and suffering.

The French occupied strategic places and lived comfortably whereas, Algerians were dehumanized as animals living in cages as the following passage proves the point: “Le village ne disait rien qui vaille. C’était un trou perdu, triste à crever avec ses bicoques en torchis[...] Quelques arbres squelettiques se faisaient bouffer par les chèvres ” (P.14). Khadra describes how the French colonial system exploited Algeria's resources and economy for its own benefit. The colonial administration exerted control over trade routes and economic endeavors, aiming to cater to the needs of the French metropolitan markets. This focus involved favoring cash crops and various agricultural goods that can be readily exported to France. Khadra presents a detailed depiction of the subtle methods through which the French colonial regime harnesses Algeria's economic assets which resulted in enduring imprints on the nation's social, cultural and economic fabric. The subsequent conversation between André and Jonas is one example: « Nous avons tracé des routes, posé les rails de chemin de fer jusqu’aux portes du Sahara, jeté des ponts par-dessus les cours d’eau, construit des villes plus belles les unes que les autres, et les villages de rêve au détour des maquis » (P.325). Additionally, during the colonial period in Algeria, the French settlers considered themselves as culturally, socially and racially superior to the Algerian population. Fanon (1963) writes:

The west saw itself as a spiritual adventure. It is in the name of the spirit, in the name of the spirit of Europe, that Europe has made her encroachments, that she has justified her crimes and legitimized the slavery in which she holds four-fifths of humanity. Yes, the European spirit has strange roots (P.313).

This perception of superiority was deeply rooted in the ideologies of colonialism and contributed to the unequal power dynamics and discriminatory practices that characterized the colonial relationship. Consequently, it had a profound impact on the psychological side of the

colonized population. Such instance of discrimination appears in Khadra's novel *Younes*, who has endured suffering due to his identity. Even his friend Isabelle has abandoned him solely because he is an Arabe : "Quelqu'un peut-il nous dire pourquoi M. Abdelkader n'a pas fait son devoir ? Sans lever le doigt, Maurice avait répondu dans la foulée : Parceque les Arabes sont paresseux monsieur " (p.100).

Furthermore, Khadra makes reference to the OS *The Secret Organization* and the FLN (*National Liberation Front*) in the narrative, which symbolize the Algerian War and its impact on both characters and society. The OS is a group of insurgents who started the revolution and refused the French colonization. It organized itself through the FLN, which represents the nation's will for independence. By citing the two organizations into his story, the author sheds light on the moral dilemmas and arduous decisions confronting characters within this context. The presence of these organizations served to illustrate how the war for independence touched different parts of society, as it is made clear in this excerpt: "Même la fameuse OS (Organization Secrète) qui s'était illustrée vers la fin des années 1940 , n'avait divertie que des rares militants musulmans en mal de confrontations musclées" (P.312).

Like Ngugi, Khadra depicts the necessity of violence in confronting the colonial rulers through his characters. Among them Jelloul , who is like Kihika, joins the Maquis, an armed resistance group committed to the cause of independence. His commitment is voiced by Jonas : " Je suis un combattant, je suis prêt à sacrifier ma vie pour ma patrie"(p.362). Similar to Kenya, Algeria witnessed significant loss of life during its struggle against colonialism, with individuals who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for independence. Within this intellectual framework, Fanon (1963) writes :

In Algeria, for example, where almost all the men who called on the people to join in the national struggle were condemned to death or searched for by the French police, confidence was proportional to the hopelessness of each case. You could be sure of a new recruit when he could no longer go back into the colonial system. This mechanism, it seems, had existed in Kenya among the Mau-Mau, who required that each member of the group should strike a blow at the victim. Each one was thus personally responsible for the death of that victim. To work means to work for the death of the settler. This assumed responsibility for violence allows both strayed and outlawed members of the group to come back again and to find their place once more, to become integrated (Pp.86, 85)

Overall, the theme of colonialism is a compelling thread that links both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. In Ngugi's work, the novel focuses on the impact of colonialism on the Kenyan people, exploring their struggles for independence and the enduring scars of British rule. Similarly, Khadra's narrative center on the tensions between the French settlers and the indigenous Algerians. Both novels revolve around the trauma of colonial domination, emphasizing its consequences it inflicted on the personal and collective.

2) The Theme of Identity Conflicts in The Two Narratives

One of the most important impacts of colonialism is linked to identity conflicts . It is recurrent in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*, through the inner conflicts of characters, whose sense of self is affected by the historical, political and social backdrop of colonial Kenya. The author delves into the internal conflicts experienced by individuals as they embark on a quest to unearth themselves. Mugo, for instance, finds himself lost in the middle of a conflict. He has endured a life bereft of family following the untimely demise of his parents. Raised in the shadow of his inebriated aunt's influence, he grapples with persistent fears that shaped his existence. The passing of his aunt further isolates him, intensifying his solitude . The impact of colonial oppression drives him to commit an act of betrayal against Kihika. Through Mugo, Ngugi shows the profound identity crisis gripping the colonized. Following his detention, Mugo undergoes a transformative shift in his identity throughout the novel: "I did not want to come back,I did not long to join my mother,or wife or child because I did not have any"(P.65) . While others consider Mugo as a hero due to his resistance in the detention camp; his fears compels him to betray Kihika.

Furthermore, Ngugi refers to Mumbi as a symbol of Africa's struggle for identity. Mumbi is linked with two men of implicitly conflicting backgrounds, thereby encapsulating two distinct facts of Africa's multifaceted identity. On the one hand, through the relationship with her husband Gikonyu, she has embodies Africa's connection to its traditional tribal customs. On the other hand, her relationship with Karanja exposes her fears and panic.

Moreover, through Gikonyu, Ngugi depicts the aspirations of African to forge their distinct identity within their homeland by attaining social standing and assuming control of their nation's economy. Thus, many economic transformations were made by Gikonyo as he returned from prison : “Ditention has changed him ”(p.56).

The theme of identity also plays a central role in *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit*. The character of Younes/Jonas who was born to impoverished Algerian parents, was adopted by his uncle married to French Christian woman. This situation contributes to a cultural clash as he grows up in an environment where two cultures, two languages and two religions coexist. Later on, he changes his name from Younes to Jonas, which led to an identity transformation. This change reflects his cultural duality and the internal conflict he experiences between his Algerian roots and his life with Europeans. Due to his dual identity, he becomes marginalized. This situation generates a sense of ambiguity and isolation. This historical conflict adds further confusion to his identity, as he lost a sense of his national belonging and allegiance. According to Mucchielli (1986):

L'identité est un ensemble de critères, de définitions d'un sujet et un sentiment interne. Ce sentiment d'identité est composé de différents sentiments : sentiment d'unité, de cohérence, d'appartenance, de valeur, d'autonomie et de confiance organisés autour d'une volonté d'existence. Les dimensions de l'identité sont intimement mêlées : individuelle (sentiment d'être unique), groupale (sentiment d'appartenir à un groupe) et culturelle (sentiment d'avoir une culture d'appartenance).

We understand from the passage that Khadra uses Younes as a “tool” to describe the conflicts that emerge when different cultural collide. His duality mirrors the broader societal challenges experienced by colonised individuals. A clear identity conflict is set when the narrator found himself torn between two worlds, two different cultures as it is expressed in these questionings: “quelle langue me fallait-il adopter? Je me rendis compte que je m'étais menti sur toute la ligne. Qui avais-je été, à Rio ? Jonas ou Younes ? (P.303).

Furthermore, Khadra assigns Jelloul a pivotal role in the narrative. He stands as the protector of the Algerian identity by safeguarding Younes' Algerianess . His act is meant to let him remember his own origins, the environment he left to live in the European city:

C'est ça, Younes. Tourne le dos à la vérité des tiens et cours rejoindre tes amis... Younes... J'espère que tu te souviens encore de ton nom... Hé ! Younes... Merci pour l'argent. Je te promets de te le rendre un jour prochain. Le monde est en train de changer, ne l'as-tu pas remarqué ? (P.201)

Jelloul asks Younes to take part in the war, which can be an opportunity for him to regain his lost identity. Nonetheless, Younes like Mugo, refuses an active involvement in the war. In this context, the author states: « La vie, c'est comme dans les films : il y a des acteurs qui nourrissent l'histoire, et des figurants qui se fondent dans le décor. Ces derniers sont là, mais ils n'intéressent personne. Tu en fais partie, Jonas. si je ne t'en veux ; je te plains » (P.366).

It is important to notice that both Ngũgĩ and Khadra shape their protagonists to craft a significant narrative that encapsulates a fundamental aspect of the struggle for liberation. This concept has been articulated with Ngugi's interview :

In *A Grain of Wheat*, I look at the people who fought for independence. I see them falling into various groups. There were those who thought the white man was supreme. They saw no point in opposing that, which was divinely willed...there were others who supported the independence movement and who took the oath. Of these, some fought to the last, but others, when it came to the test, did not live up to their faith and ideals. They gave in. Finally, there were those we might call neutrals-you know, the uncommitted. But these soon find that in agiven social crisis they can never be uncommitted (Howard,1973, as Cited in Gada, 2014)

This quote implies that, according to Ngugi, individuals such as Younes and Mugo fall into the uncommitted category because they remain hesitant to become embroiled in the conflict but find it challenging to remain uninvolved and neutral.

The examination of identity's theme in both novels leads us to reach certain conclusions. In *A Grain of Wheat* identity is explored through the lens of post-colonial Kenya, where characters grapple with their individual and collective identities in the wake of independence. The novel includes the complexities of betrayal, loyalty and the legacy of colonialism on identity formation. Similarly, in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, the characters confront questions of identity within the context of colonial Algeria. The story revolves around the intertwined destinies of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, highlighting the tension between personal identity and societal expectations. What is common to both literary works is the two authors' description of identity conflict as an outcome of colonial and post-colonial context. In

so doing, Ngugi and Khadra provide a pertinent examination of how one's sense of self is shaped by a combination of historical events and cultural clashes.

3) The Theme of Alienation in the two Novels

The first link between the two characters is their alienation. In *A Grain of Wheat* Mugo lives in isolation mainly after the death of his aunt: “And then , he missed his aunt. Whom could he now call relation ?He wanted somebody,anybody who would use the te claims of kinship to do him ill or good. Either one or other as long as he was not left alone, an outsider” (P.08). His fears increase his sense of isolation. Mugo's sense of alienation is not rooted in the Emergency period; it is rather due to an existential nature. His upbringing was characterized by a sense of being abandoned, powerless, and disconnected from himself as Vaughan (1981) claims that:

Mugo's experience of alienation here is existential: it has only the vaguest social historical implications. And it is this form of alienation that leads, by an existential logic, to the betrayal of Kihika. What does Ngugi mean by this? Why does he give such prominence to a character suffering from such a primary, a historical in a work whose orientation is ostensibly of a social-historical kind ?

The quote suggests that Mugo's alienation is tied to his personal sense of isolation, detachment and disconnection from the world around him. Mugo's unfriendliness is not primarily linked to broader societal or historical issues.

Khadra gives a comparable role to Jonas. The main character's alienation and isolation is expressed clearly by the narrator in what follows: “et moi, garçonnet malinge et solitaire, à peine éclos que déjà fané, portant mes dix ans comme autant de fardeaux. Ce n'était pas une vie ; on existait, et c'est tout (P.12). Despite his move to his uncle, Jonas opts for solitude and tranquillity: “Le noir ne me dérangeait pas; j'étais un garçon solitaire, sans trop d'imagination” (P.82) . This solitude in which Jonas grew up is a result of his shift from the environment of his childhood, given that he was raised in a family with limited communication. His father was also solitary and was constantly working: “*Mon père n'en avait cure. Il aimait être seul*”(P.12) ; While his mother focuses on the household with his sister. His only companion is his dog, as he had no friends:“ *J'aimais beaucoup mon chien. Il était mon unique ami, mon seul confident*”(P.19).

To sum up, we can see that both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* incorporate the theme of alienation via the portrayal of Mugo and Younes. Both characters confronted circumstances that compelled them to live without their parents, subsequently fostering their solitude. The two characters live in a profound isolation that can result from choices made in tumultuous times. They converge in feeling estranged and disconnected in the face of societal and personal upheaval.

4) Theme of Love in The Two Works

Love is a complex and multifaceted emotion that has been a perennial source of inspiration for writers, poets and storytellers throughout the ages. For Vaillant (2002), love is the substance and existence of the novel: “Non seulement l’amour confère au roman son sens ultime, mais il est surtout nécessaire à son existence, parce qu’il en est toute la substance”. This theme is used by different writers as the case with the two selected novels.

Beginning with Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*, it portrays love as a profound emotion, entangled with elements of betrayal, sacrifice and redemption as the following passage illustrates: “Love-affairs were often hatched there ; many marriages with their attendant cry of woe or joy had their origin at the station platform ”(P.70). As it was his first love relation with Mumbi, their love shined with a genuine and innocent light, a reflection of their long-standing connection as childhood sweethearts and the shared experiences that have shaped their affection. However, their love undergoes a severe trial when Gikonyo was detained by the British colonial authorities. The tumultuous political climate and the oppressive colonial regime disrupted their love story, compelling them to make difficult choices they had never envisaged. The intricacies of their love affair is intertwined with themes of betrayal, which underlines the repercussions of colonialism on personal lives in a society striving for independence. In this sense, Gikonyo wonders:

Could the valley of silence between him and the woman be now crossed ? To what and the crossing since he would reach the other side to find a woman who had hardly waited for him to disappear round the corner, before she rushed back to bed with another man ? (P.114)

The same case of Njeri who sacrificed her life and joined the movement following her heart and her love for Kihika. She made this decision when Kihika went to the forest , she cried :“ I will come to you my handsome warrior, I will come to you ”(P.101) .

Furthermore, the novel also centers on the paramount importance of love for one's nation. Characters , like Kihika, stand as symbols of devotion to their homeland, Kenya. Their love transcends personal desires, comforts and even safety, as these individuals whole heartedly have committed themselves to the noble cause of their nation's liberation. Love is a powerful driving force behind their active participation in the various liberation movements as the Mau Mau. This love for the nation is not a mere romanticized sentiment but a motivation to struggle against colonial oppression. Kihika’s passion for Kenya's independence let him assume the role as a symbol of resistance against the colonial regime. Ngugi focuses on kihika’s virility and his motivation to fight for freedom: “ Is he a man who lets another take away his land and freedom ? ” (P.96) . In his willingness to make sacrifices and fight for his country, Kihika accepts to die for Kenya. His dedication to the cause amplifies the narrative's emotional depth, showcasing the tremendous impact of such love for the nation.

The same theme of love is used in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. Love remains a central and recurring theme, which intersects with the historical and sociocultural tapestry of colonial and post-colonial Algeria. Through Younes and his experiences, Khadra explores the transformative power of love, its capacity to transcend societal boundaries, and its profound impact on personal identity. In Younes’ journey, love is not merely a romantic sentiment but a force that shaped his life, choices and destiny. Younes is an Algerian boy who came from a poor family; he falls in love with Emilie, a wealthy French girl. Despite their different backgrounds, the societal pressures, and prejudices of the time, their love story survives. Their love defied all obstacles. Both bypass their differing backgrounds and the challenges they faced due to Algeria's struggle for independence. Their love becomes a symbol of hope and a refuge from the chaos surrounding them.

Through Younes' love story, Khadra proves that love can exist even in the most challenging circumstances and can provide individuals with a sense of purpose and belonging. In this regard, Mohellebi (2008) points out: "Aux amourettes fugaces, succède le grand amour, celui d'Emilie qui semble être le prétexte même du roman". The love story is sparked by Younes and Emilie's encounter at the pharmacy and continued in Rio Salado. But, the roles reversed and their love story ended before it begins because of the pressures exerted on them: "Cette histoire ne doit pas arriver, monsieur Jonas. L'histoire entre ma fille et vous ne doit pas avoir lieu. Elle n'a pas le droit ni aucune raison d'être (P.249). The narrator expresses the impossible reconciliation saying that: "ce qui n'avait pas vraiment commencé était bel et bien fini." (P.396).

In addition, the love story of Mahi and Germaine transcends cultural boundaries. Mahi is Algerian and Germaine is a French woman. They engage in a relationship that challenged the societal norms and prejudices of their era. Despite the barriers in backgrounds, their love has persevered and defied these obstacles. Their story becomes a powerful testament to the enduring nature of love in its ability to overcome societal divisions:

J'adorais les voir marcher côte à côte au milieu de nulle part, si fusionnels qu'ils n'accordent que très peu d'attention au monde alentour. Il y avait, dans la simplicité de leur rapport, dans la fluidité de leur communion, une tendresse, une profondeur, une authenticité qui les sanctifie presque. Ils formaient le couple le plus respectable qu'il m'ait été donné d'admirer... Ils étaient l'amour sans concession, l'amour parfait (P.264).

To conclude, it is clear that the theme of love, in both novels, emerges as a powerful force that transcends societal divisions and political upheavals. In *A Grain of Wheat* love is portrayed as a source of redemption and healing amidst the turmoil of post-colonial Kenya, bringing characters together despite their differences. Similarly, in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*; love is central theme within the complexities of personal and cultural identities in colonial Algeria, offering hope and solace in the face of adversity. These two novels remind us that love has the capacity to bridge divides, heal wounds and endure even in the most challenging of circumstances, serving as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

5) The Theme of Betrayal in Both Novels

Either in *A Grain of Wheat* or *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, the theme of betrayal adds complexity and tension to the relationships between the characters of the novels. Betrayal appears through a series of treacherous acts committed by various characters like Mugo's betrayal of Kihika, Mumbi and Gikonyo, Karanja to his friend, his allegiance to the colonial authorities, and Gikonyo's confession of the oath.

Mugo's betrayal results in the execution of Kihika, his act is protective and defensive. While he is supposed to be a great man, he changes when Kihika unexpectedly enters his life, disrupting his plans, as he confesses to Mumbi, “I wanted to live my life. I never wanted to be involved in anything. Then he came into my life, here, a night like this, and pulled me into a stream. So I killed him” (P.180). Mugo betrays Kihika by informing the British about his shelter. Mugo also betrays Thabai villagers, who regarded him as one of their esteemed heroic figures. They even want him to be their chief. However, as the novel progresses, he confesses his treachery on the day of Uhuru (independence) declaring: “You asked for the man who led Kihika to this tree, here. That man stands before you, now. Kihika came to me at night. He put his life into my hands, and I sold it to the white man. And this thing has eaten to my life all these years” (P.218).

Such betrayal as Ngugi writes in his novel *Moving the Centre*, that *A Grain of Wheat* is “a celebration of [Kenya's] independence and a warning against the pitfalls [of national consciousness]” (Ngugi 1992:4). The pitfalls are partly traced in the examination of Mugo's life since he betrays his nation during the war of liberation while he is falsely considered by the villagers of Thabai to be one of their prominent heroic figures. The Thabai people are warned that their expectations are wrong and that they have to be careful about any collective decision that they need to make (Aleph, 2020).

General R has alluded to the discernible presence of betrayal, expressing disappointment that the freedom fighters failed to reach a level sufficient to eliminate the remnants of colonialism. This anxiety made General R speak about it in Uhuru where he claimed that:

But what's the meaning of 'Uhuru' ? It is contained in the name of our Movement :Land and Freedom. Let the Party that now leads the country rededicate itself to all the ideals for which our people gave up their lives. The Party must never betray the movement and never betray Uhuru. It must never sell Kenya back to the enemy !Tomorrow we shall ask : Where is the land ? Where is the food ? Where are the schools ? Let therefore these things be done now, for we do not want another war. . . no more blood . . . in our hands. . . . (Pp.216 217)

Another situation of nation's betrayal takes place when Gikonyo confesses his oath and broke ties with the resistance movement, sacrificing his own pride in the name of love without any sense of guilt "We confessed, I would've done anything to come back home "(P.66).

Furthermore, betrayal also unfolds through Mumbi's actions during her husband's detention by the British colonial authorities. After seven years of Gikonyo's absence, Karanja, who loved Mumbi, eventually informed her about her husband's impending return. Overwhelmed by joy, Mumbi has succumbed to temptation by betraying her husband through physical relationship with Karanja. The consequences of Mumbi's betrayal resonate throughout the narrative, illuminating the devastating impact of external pressures on personal relationships during a tumultuous period in Kenya's history.

Another instance of a double betrayal appears, as mentioned previously, when Karanja deceives his friend, Gikonyo as he confesses: "Anyway, I must have gone mad. I suppose there is nothing so painful as finding that a friend, or a man you always trusted, has betrayed you" (P.119). Karanja's act of betrayal stems from his love for Mumbi. Ngugi also portrays Karanja's disloyalty when opting to align himself with the colonial administration. This decision helps him to get favors from the colonizer but goes against the interests of his own people. In his pursuit of personal gain and power, he betrays the trust of his close friends. His act of betrayal is justified in the subsequent passage:

The white man is strong . Don't you ever forget that. I know because I tasted his power[...] And bombs are going to be dropped into the forests as the British did In Japan and Malaya. And those in detention will never, never see the land again (P.144).

As Ngugi, Khadra uses the theme of betrayal. In *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*. It stands as a contrasting element that reveals the complexities of human behavior and the challenges faced by characters caught in a turbulent time. Throughout the narrative, there are several scenes that

illuminate this theme, as when Jonas inadvertently betrays his love for Emilie by sharing an intimate moment with Madame Cazenave. After that, he realizes that she is Emilie's mother, as he states: “Simon, Jonas, je vous présente Emilie, la fille de Mme Cazenave. Une douche froide me fouetta de la tête aux pieds (P.231) . This situation constitutes betrayal with profound consequences for Jonas and Emilie's relationship. The fact that Jonas shares intimacy with Emilie's mother without knowing her true identity creates a situation of intense emotional conflict. When he discovers the truth, he realises the betrayal he unintentionally committed against Emilie: “On ne couche pas avec la mère et la fille sans offenser les dieux, leurs saints, les anges et les démons (P.248). This act results a barrier between Jonas and Emilie. The complexity of the situation, including the guilt of Jonas contribute to a distance between the two characters.

Furthermore, Jonas' relationship with his friends is characterised by the act of betrayal as well as it did with Jean-Christophe. Like Mugo, Jonas has chosen to distance himself from the war of independence while his Algerian compatriots fought for their freedom. Even when Jelloul invited him to join, Jonas declines, effectively turning his back to his country. His decision reflects the enduring influence of the colonial era, marked by a focus on personal gain and self-preservation, which left a profound impact on the formation of a postcolonial nation, characterized by the emergence of bourgeois thinking. As Fanon points out:

In the colonial countries, the spirit of indulgence is dominant at the core of the bourgeoisie; and this is because the national bourgeoisie identifies itself with the Western bourgeoisie, from whom it has learnt its lessons. (p.153)

Upon Algeria's independence, Younes decides to remain in the country, even they have offered him the opportunity to join the republic “ Je me suis demandé si ça te dirait de mettre ton savoir et tes diplômes au service de notre jeune république”(P.393) . In fact, this was an involuntary sense of betrayal, as he becomes accustomed to European customs and attitudes while growing up, which allowed him to seamlessly integrate into colonial society.

All in all, both novels adopt the motif of betrayal to highlight the moral, personal and political conflicts that arised during times of social upheaval and change. Betrayal is caused partly by dilemmas the main characters face in their struggles for self-identity. Furthermore, as

evident throughout our comparative analysis, Ngugi and Khadra use the theme of betrayal to depict the significant impact of the colonial legacy in the shaping of a postcolonial nation, an idea that aligns with Frantz Fanon's concept explored in the third chapter. The other comparative element which completes our study of the selected novel is the representation of women in the two narratives.

II. Characters exploration of both novels *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*:

Ngũgĩ's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, do not only intersect through shared themes but also exhibit resemblances in the way they shape their characters. In this subsequent section, parallels will be drawn between the characters in *A Grain of Wheat* and their counterparts in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* with focus on their motivations, development, and relationships. How do, for instance, characters like Mugo in *A Grain of Wheat* and Younes in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* represent different aspects of the human experience in the face of historical and personal challenges?

a. The protagonists : Mugo - Younes

Mugo and Younes/Jonas emerge as intricate protagonists, each grappling with a profound burden of inner turmoil and guilt. Mugo is depicted as an enigmatic individual having a complex blend of thoughts and emotions. Throughout his life, he engages in conversation, instead he prefers silence and focussing on physical labor. Eventually, circumstances led him to a detention camp, an experience that transformed him into a heroic figure in the eyes of his people. He becomes the savior of his people since God called him Moses. Yet, Mugo's guilt by betraying Kihika clouds his thoughts very often, culminating in a confession during the Uhuru celebration. His childhood traumas added to the colonial violence continues till the end.

In Khadra's novel, Younes/Jonas's portrayal differs from that of Mugo in some aspects. He was characterized by his gentleness, courage and education. Described with white skin and blue eyes, he possesses a sensitive and kind nature. Consistently finding himself at the mercy

of fate's twists and turns. From a young age, Younes/Jonas faced adversity, starting with the separation from his family first, his father and later his mother and sister. He often carries a burden of responsibility and guilt for these separations and the hardships they brought upon his family. The revelation of his true identity as Younes, rather than Jonas, and his non-French background troubles him deeply when his friend Isabelle tells him the truth. Ultimately, his strained bond with Emilie compels him to guard a grievous secret, one he has never summoned the courage to divulge, especially to Emilie: a one-night stand with Emilie's mother. This secret left him in a perpetual state of sadness, also it condemned him to isolation since his love with Emilie was forbidden and impossible.

So, despite the differences between Mugo and Younes in their personalities, there exist commonalities in their actions and way of life. Both characters remain uncommitted to revolutionizing their respective countries. They share the painful experience of losing their families. Additionally, both suffer from feelings of guilt and betrayal, though Mugo displays courage by confessing; the other protagonist kept his secret hidden. Furthermore, both characters confront the challenges of identity, which prevent their personal growth and development within the context of colonialism.

b. The two charismatic leaders: Kihika and Jelloul

Kihika and Jelloul are depicted as charismatic and passionate leaders who played vital roles in the resistance movements for liberation. Kihika stands as the main hero in Ngugi's novel; he believes that Kenya belongs to black people. Though he was already dead in the novel's present storyline, he stood serving as a guiding force for the Mau Mau Freedom Fighters. Kihika's unwavering commitment proves the virtuous self-sacrifice demanded for the collective good, particularly significant historical struggles. He tries to convince Mugo of the real objective of freedom fighters and invites him to join the movement. Mugo betrays him when he informs the British about his refuge. Kihika is captured and executed for assassinating Thomas Robson.

Likewise, Heroism is evident in Khadra's depiction of Jelloul, who, through unwavering commitment, manages to evolve from a vulnerable twenty-year-old into a seasoned insurgent. Despite facing numerous challenges, Jelloul persists, driven by his sense of duty and the support of his family. A mentorship connects him to Younes to enlighten him about his roots and imparts an understanding of colonization's brutal impact on the Algerians. Jelloul is driven by a deep love for his homeland and an ardent yearning for its liberation. Like Kihika, he is accused of taking the life of Andre's companion, Jelloul finds himself incarcerated but he succeeds to escape what led him to join the ranks of the freedom fighters. Although there are distinctions between the two characters, both figures served as powerful sources of inspiration, rallying others to unite for their respective causes and demonstrating an unwavering commitment to selfless sacrifice for liberation. They both play pivotal roles because each liberation movement needs charismatic leaders.

c. The characters Gikonyo and Mahi :

The other pair of characters to be compared are: Gikonyo and Mahi, who emerge as significant characters within the two novels. Gikonyo stands for the challenges endured by participants of the Mau Mau movement. He begins life as a poor carpenter, supporting his mother, he falls in love with Mumbi and marries her. He was imprisoned in a detention camp because of having sworn the oath and conspired with the Mau Mau. Meanwhile, he confesses the oath for the sake of returning to find wife had a child from his friend Karanja, which triggers a deep-seated rage he internalized for years. After independence, he became one of the top rich men and political leaders in Kenya.

Regardant ce *que le jour doit à la nuit*, Mahi represents the category of Algerian intellectuals. He lives in Oran as a well integrated French citizen. As he had no children, he adopted with love his nephew, Younes and considered him as a true son. He told him about his origins. Espousing nationalist ideals, he is associated with Messali Lhadj, a pivotal figure in the movement hosting covert gatherings to discuss Algeria's plight. Following an arrest and

subsequent release by French authorities, he was relocated to Rio Salado due to the trauma he endured. In this new setting, his mental state deteriorated. Stricken by depression and isolation, he ultimately passed away several months prior to the inception of the Liberation Revolution on November 1st, 1954.

The two characters diverge in their respective narratives and the challenges they have encountered. However, they share a common thread in their associations with leaders of the independence movement. Additionally both Gikonyo and Mahi serve as embodiments of the intricate interplay of loyalty and political dedication.

d. Novels' representation of Karanja and Cazenave:

Karanja and Mrs Cazenave serve as contrasting figures of both novels. In Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* Karanja emerges as a multifaceted character intricately woven into the tapestry of post-colonial Kenya. His representation serves as a microcosm of the internal conflicts that plague the newly independent nation. At the heart of Karanja's complexity lies a struggle between conflicting allegiances—his ties to tradition, the allure of modernity, and the demands of political revolution. During his youth, he made friends with Gikonyo and Kihika, and he was in love with Mumbi. The thematic elements of identity and betrayal are seamlessly interwoven into Karanja's narrative arc, contributing to the novel's exploration of the intricate nuances of political and social change. Despite his early connections and shared history with his countrymen, Karanja later collaborates with the British authorities to suppress his fellow Black countrymen during the tumultuous Emergency period. Faced with the stark choice of aligning himself with the Mau Mau movement or facing arrest and detention, Karanja chooses to betray his country, thus saving himself and staying close to Mumbi. In the absence of Gikonyo, Karanja exploits Mumbi's vulnerability. As the narrative unfolds, Karanja undergoes profound character development, transforming from a seemingly passive and conflicted individual into a symbol of resilience and, in some ways, redemption. However, by the story's end, Karanja's exile becomes a poignant symbol of his status as a shamed traitor,

highlighting the personal and societal consequences of his actions. This journey mirrors the broader societal transformations occurring in Kenya, encapsulating the challenges of forging a new identity in the wake of colonialism and the complexities of personal choices amid political turmoil.

Madame Cazenave, a wealthy and captivating French woman in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* engages in a passionate relationship with Younes. It is revealed that she is the true reason behind Younes rejecting the love of Emilie. Faced with remorse, Madame Cazenave implores Younes to promise to distance himself from her daughter, Emilie. However, one day, she mysteriously vanishes. This narrative layer adds depth to the exploration of moral ambiguity, personal choices, and the impact of relationships on individual trajectories. The character of Cazenave serves as a nuanced representation of the complexities within the colonial relationship during the Algerian War of Independence. As a French officer, Cazenave becomes a pivotal figure embodying the clash of cultures inherent in colonial rule. Khadra meticulously delves into the moral dilemmas faced by individuals like Cazenave, torn between duty, loyalty, and a growing awareness of the injustices perpetuated by colonial powers. Cazenave's personal struggles become a lens through which the novel explores the profound impact of colonialism on both the colonizers and the colonized. The narrative unfolds against the backdrop of larger historical and political events, with Cazenave's internal conflicts serving as a microcosm of the broader societal upheaval occurring in Algeria.

It is crucial to note that, beyond Karanja and Cazenave, there are additional characters in both novels whose roles can be compared, as they play pivotal roles in shaping the plot's structure and making substantial contributions to the broader historical background. Notably, characters such as Wambui, Njeri, and the old woman occupy significant positions within the narratives. Subsequently, the exploration will delve into the portrayal of gender and identity in the novels. We will examine the roles and challenges confronted by female characters, assessing how they contribute to the overarching themes presented in the two chosen works.

e. The Female representation in *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*:

During the colonial period, women suffered from double discrimination and colonial oppression but with their active role in the struggle for independence, they succeeded to impose themselves. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the female characters play crucial roles in shaping the social and political landscape of colonial Kenya by contributing significantly to the nation's struggle for independence. Ngugi, for instance, portrays Mumbi as a symbol of resistance to the colonizers' cruelty; she refuses to be subjected to abuse, humiliation and exploitation. She and her family resist poverty and hunger, they were mistreated due to her brother's involvement with the Mau Mau movement and her husband imprisonment: "Mumbi was depressed because there was no man of the house. In the end, she tied a belt around her waist and took on a man's work" (P.136). Moreover, Mumbi suffers from sexual abuse when Karanja took advantage of Mumbi's state of vulnerability while her husband Gikonyu displayed disrespect towards her. Yet, despite enduring har experiences, Mumbi shows her bravery and resilience. Her persuasive power impresses Mugo, who confesses his secret about Kihika's death. The bravery of women in *A Grain of Wheat* also appears in their support of the Mau Mau fighters. For instance, Njeri courageously confronts numerous challenges and obstacles. Her resilience and determination became an inspiring testament to the powerful role that women played in the struggle for independence. Side by side with Kihika, Njeri valiantly took up arms in the depths of the forest; the following passage tells more about her courage: "[...] Anyway, not until she ran away to the forest to fight at Kihika's side. She was shot dead in a battle, soon after Kihika's death." (p.134) Ngũgĩ portrays women as brave individuals, wielding considerable power and willing freedom. Their lives were marked by hardships, but they are endowed with a capacity of resistance, leading them to achieve their aims.

As far as Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit a la nuit* is concerned , Khadra portrays in a negative way women in Algerian society. The female characters in the novel go through hard experiences, face challenges and fail to reach their aspirations. For instance, Younes' mother

represents the rural woman of that time; she is submissive to her husband Issa and experiences moments of pain, catastrophe, despair and abandonment. The second woman is Germaine, a French woman who gets married to Younes' uncle, a pharmacist by profession, she becomes Younes' adoptive mother. Lastly, there is Emilie, a French woman who loves Younes and remains only present in Younes' thoughts until his death (Idrissi Azami et al., 2023). Beginning with the mother who is portrayed according to the image of the Algerian woman in the 1930s. She lives in the shadow of her husband, focusing only on her children and her home, and neglecting her own self, confined in her household space. During that time, women had no rights until 1950's things has changed thanks to their contribution in the revolution.

The second woman is Germaine; she is a beautiful lady, a red-haired woman. She had a lot of affection for Younes: “Germaine était heureuse. Elle ne pouvait lever les yeux sur moi sans gratifier le ciel d'une prière” (P.98). Germaine devotes her time and life to her husband. Khadra uses the character of Germaine as symbol of the alliances between Algerians and the French. Despite the differences, she supported her husband by displaying exceptional courage when the guerrillas came to her seeking help. In contrast to Younes' mother who represented the closed world, this French woman represents openness, brightness emanating from the color of her light eyes and hair. The author shows the role of women through the voice of Uncle Mahi when he states: “Certes la femme n'est pas tout, mais tout repose sur elle” (P.284).

As far as the third woman Emilie is concerned, her relationship with the protagonist Younes/Jonas plays a significant role in the novel. She falls in love with the protagonist Jonas. This complex relationship highlights the conflict between two existing cultures. It represents the socio-political and the historical effect on individuals. Their impossible relation stands for France and Algeria's impossible shared destiny. Emilie is a pivotal character like Mumbi's character in *A Grain of Wheat*, Emilie is beautiful and exerts a great influence on Younes with his fourth friends. The parallels between these two women characters start by the fact that both play essential roles in the protagonists' lives. Both strong, beautiful, exemplifying the potency

of women and their capacity to shape and influence the events. Emilie is depicted as a young and enchanting French girl. She is the daughter of Madame Cazenave, who settled in Rio Salado. Despite harboring deep affection for her, Younes avoids her. Emilie and Fabrice decide to solidify their engagement while rejecting advances from Jean Christophe. However, Emilie's heart unmistakably yearns for Jonas/Younes. Despite Younes' rejection, she grapples with her emotions in silence, nurturing hope for a reunion that never materializes. Eventually coerced by her mother, she accepts Simon, carrying a silent ache born from Younes' inexplicable refusal of her love. She died in France in 2008 without knowing why Younes refused her love.

Overall, in both novels, women's roles are influenced by the historical and cultural contexts in which they lived. They cope with the complex societal expectations, traditions, and the impact of colonialism. Their experiences are portrayed as integral to the broader narratives of resistance, change and identity. While the specific roles and experiences of women differ in these two novels, they share common themes of resilience, love, and the desire for self-determination. Mumbi can be compared in many aspects to Emilie in Khadra's novel.

In conclusion, the examination of *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* reveals a striking convergence despite the disparity in their historical contexts. Ngũgĩ and Khadra, though separated by time and setting, skillfully navigate common thematic terrain. The resonance of colonialism, identity conflicts, alienation, love betrayal, and the nuanced portrayal of female characters bridges the temporal and geographic gaps between these two works. Through the characters of these novels, an intriguing parallel emerges, emphasizing shared human struggles and complexities despite differing circumstances. The thematic and character resemblances underscore the universality of the human experience, illustrating that, regardless of historical context, literature remains a powerful lens through which we explore timeless aspects of the human condition.

Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, we have compared two prominent literary works, part of African postcolonial literature, namely Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* and Khadra's *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*, with a primary focus on exploring of the possible literary affinities that might exist between the two fictions. Despite the differences in terms of geography, language, and culture, the two novels can be compared in many aspects. In other words, it is true that these two works differ in terms of their spatial and temporal settings and are distinct in the way the narratives are structured. However, the two fictions are interconnected by the depiction of a comparable colonial experience and the examination of universal themes that cover a contemplation of the human condition and the intricacies inherent in shared historical narratives.

Furthermore, both authors masterfully use their chosen narrative structures, settings, and character to provide profound insights into the multifaceted consequences of colonialism, encompassing its enduring impact on identity, psychology, economy, and other pertinent domains. To understand this impact of colonialism, we have drawn upon Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). More specifically, we have tried to apply Fanon's theoretical ideas as developed in the first and third chapters to understand the colonial impacts and the post-colonial experiences, as they are displayed in the two novels. Themes prevalent in both works underscore the shared human experience during periods of societal transformation. The characters in "A Grain of Wheat" and "Ce que le jour doit à la nuit" grapple with their personal identities within the backdrop of national struggles. They confront the moral complexities of betrayal and navigate the sacrifices demanded for personal and collective liberation. Both novels provide valuable insights into the profound impact of colonialism on the individual and collective psyche of the people they depict. In *A Grain of Wheat*, the characters cope with the betrayal and make compromises during the struggle for independence, reflecting the moral complexities of post-colonial societies. Similarly, *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* presents a

complex portrait of identity and belonging in the midst of the Algerian War of Independence, highlighting the intertwined destinies of the characters against the backdrop of history.

Beyond the above convergences, it is important to point out that the two texts diverge in many other aspects. As an illustration, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Yasmina Khadra, employ distinct narrative styles, the former mixed folklore and social commentary into his work while Yasmina Khadra employs a lyrical and emotional prose style. These differences in style and cultural contexts add richness to their respective narratives and make them stand out as unique contributions to world literature. Their universality resides in the fact that both *A Grain of Wheat* and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* reflect on the possible communality of the human experience as both novels address fundamental questions about identity, sacrifice, and the legacy of colonialism. They remind us that, regardless of geographical and cultural differences, literature can serve as a powerful tool for exploring and understanding the shared complexities of human existence.

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