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**“The Culture of Poverty” in Charles Dickens’s *David Copperfield*
(1850) and Mouloud Feraoun’s *Le fils du pauvre* (1950)**

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Abstract

This research is a comparative study which deals with the theme of poverty in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1850) and Mouloud Feraoun's *Le fils du pauvre* (1950). It suggests the existence of an "inherited" poverty in Charles Dickens on Mouloud Feraoun's work. To achieve this aim we rely on Oscar Lewis' theory: *The Culture of Poverty* (1966). It argues that people who live in economic deprivation tend to develop the same personal features and share identical social norms. Our research work has used four dimensions of Oscar Lewis' theory, which are the individual, the family, the community and its relation to society. Our work focuses on the relationships of the two protagonists, David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad, with their fathers; David Copperfield Senior and Ramdane Menrad. It has revealed that poverty and family are interrelated. Our findings highlight the marginalisation of the two main characters in their respective societies as a consequence of their economic deprivation. It emphasizes the estrangement of David Copperfield in Victorian England and the Subalternity of Fouroulou Menrad as a native, Kabyle boy in colonized Algeria. This study illustrates how similar are the conditions, the experiences and the exploits of the two protagonists against poverty, even though, they do belong to completely different cultures and geographical settings.

Key Words:

The Culture of Poverty, Oscar Lewis, Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*.

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General Introduction

There are several definitions of poverty depending on the context of the situation it is placed in. Usually, it references a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a certain standard of living. According to British researcher Robert Chambers “what poverty is taken to mean depends on who asks the question, how it is understood and who responds”.¹In order to answer this inquiry, we give some definitions to have a better grasp on the subject.

By convention, being poor means not having enough money to meet basic or primary needs including food, clothing and shelter. If we look into the Oxford dictionary, the term “poor” is defined as follows: having very little money, deserving pity and sympathy, low in quality or having very small amount of something². According to the **United Nations**, “Poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods”. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. In 2015, more than 736 million people lived below the international poverty line³.

When poor people themselves are asked to describe dimensions of poverty, many aspects are mentioned such as social inferiority, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness or humiliation. Furthermore, recent economy researchers seem to think that the causes and consequences of poverty are not purely economic, sociological and psychological factors are to put into consideration while discussing the origins of deprivation and its pitfalls on humans’ life⁴. This thinking takes its origins in Adam Smith’s *Moral Sentiments* published in 1759⁵. According to him, Poverty is treated “not as a condition of economic deprivation but as a cause of social isolation and psychic unease”. Smith argues that low incomes engender social inequality. This inequality affects people’s psychology because, in his opinion, being

rich does not only mean having enough money. It is rather to have a social position and gain acknowledgment from other society members and a sense of accomplishment. Inspired by this hypothesis, many modern sociologists and anthropologists have tried to draw the link between poverty and their field of study. This gave birth to a great number of concepts and theories among them Oscar Lewis' *The Culture of Poverty* (1960) which argues that poverty is related to people's values and cultural norms. It also implies that people learn certain standards when they grow up in a poor family; this shapes their choices and life opportunities ⁶.

As far as fiction is concerned, poverty has always been a major theme. The novel illustrates how society functions and how groups of people live and interact with each other. Thus, it is almost impossible to imagine a fiction that does not include at least one poor character or a hero who struggles with social inequality or a protagonist in quest of wealth. Charles Dickens is a world-known author who dedicated all of his writings to illustrating and putting into life the hardships and the misery of the poor. Until today, he is still considered as one of the best writers in British History, and probably the most read Victorian author ever ⁷. In 1850, he published his famous novel: *The Personal History, Adventures, Experience and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger of Blunderstone Rookery* better known as *David Copperfield*. The story revolves around David: a young orphan who struggles with deprivation and social inequality in order to achieve his dream of becoming a writer. A century later, and in another geographical setting, it is the Algerian- Kabyle author: Mouloud Feraoun who published his renowned work *Le Fils du Pauvre: Menrad, Instituteur Kabyle*. The story takes place in the mountains of colonized Kabylia and follows the life of Fouroulou Menrad, the poor son of a peasant, who dreams to become a schoolteacher. This work is the most celebrated novel by Feraoun ⁸, the Algerian author who used his pen to expose the agony, the repression and despair of his people through the colonization of Algeria.

The Literature Review

Charles Dickens and Mouloud Feraoun are two major writers whose works have received great critical attention. Both of them have made poverty and the condition of the poor a central theme in their writings.

Many critics have written about Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*. Gillian Ballinger argues that personal credit and debt relations play a vital role in the novel⁹. According to her, "David's circle of family and friends is economically interdependent"¹⁰. The way this group functions does not endorse the concept of the "possessive individual" which is a fundamental element of Victorian economy. In fact, this period is characterised by the emergence of individualism and capitalism. The latter is an economic system based on free markets and limited government intervention in which private actors own and control property in accord with their interests, and freely set prices in markets¹¹. The essential feature of capitalism is the motive to make a profit. Gillian Ballinger suggests that *David Copperfield* emphasizes the use of the "personal credit"¹² illustrating how obligations of "friendship, family and wider ideas of fraternity inform economic relations". For instance, Mr Micawber is a major character from *David Copperfield* whom we ought to introduce in the following chapters. He is poor and indebted, however, this does not stop his friend David Copperfield from lending him money¹³. This highlights Ballinger's idea which suggests that poor working people tended to develop a sense of humanity and support between each other.

Alan P. Barr argues that *David Copperfield* is a "sustained critique of the mid-nineteenth century social structure and economy"¹⁴. It occupies an important place among Victorian novels that examine contemporary British class system. According to him:

David encounters with the diverse British classes and his need, eventually, to relocate himself among them, involves a substantial criticism of the recognized middle-class virtues of

marriage and family, the ethic of work and financial success. The distaste for commercialism and getting ahead the dysfunctional families and their precarious habitats.¹⁵ The above-cited quotation highlights the highly regarded position of social class during the Victorian age. As a child, David Copperfield experienced the loss of his family and only financial support, which dragged him into severe deprivation. This painful experience made his character strive in order to reach the middle-class and fit into its standards. This struggle is shown when David Copperfield escaped from London and went to search for his great aunt, Betsy Trotwood, a middle-class woman who lived in the countryside¹⁶. In order to please her David accepted to change his name to Trotwood in order to mark a transition into his new life as a middle-class boy¹⁷.

Even though Mouloud Feraoun's career was relatively short in comparison with Dickens, he has received a great literary and critical recognition. Bousse Allouche suggests that *Le Fils du Pauvre* is a response to Albert Camus' *Misère de la Kabylie*(1939)¹⁸. The latter is a report that Camus wrote between July 5th and 15th, 1939 about the hardships of life in the rugged mountains of Kabylia and the suffering of its inhabitants¹⁹. Throughout this text, published in episodes, the young reporter highlights the "appalling misery"²⁰ in which the indigenous Kabyle population lived. The situation is dramatic. The finding is overwhelming! This "famine route"²¹, written in a direct and incisive style, reveals the image of a reporter, keen observer, admirer, respectful of Kabylia and deeply affected by the material deprivation of this region neglected by the local colonial authorities²². His in-site approach allows him to have a realistic vision of his field of investigation that he intends to introduce to public opinion in the name of truth, justice, common sense, duty and justice. "Kabylia is an overpopulated country which consumes more than what it produces"²³, writes Albert Camus straight away, he adds that:

In this harsh and ruthless region, especially in a period of extreme cold, human beings with sick eyelids, eyes full of pus, left without care are starving to death. Children are malnourished, to feed themselves, entire villages consume roots, pine seeds, herbs, nettles and the thistle stalk which is one of the stems of the Kabyle diet. In a "douar", five rascals died poisoned by (poisonous) plants. The health situation is alarming. Entire populations are exterminated by epidemics.²⁴

This thesis states that, even though Mouloud Feraoun disagrees with the fact that Albert Camus does not consider colonization as one of the causes of poverty in Kabylia he still approves of the content of his work as it displays the reality of the deprivation and alienation he grew up in as a Kabyle. Furthermore, his semi-autobiographical novel: *Le fils du pauvre* affirms the atrocities of deprivation in Kabylia and illustrates it with the personal experience of its author; something that Albert Camus could never do, as he was neither a Kabyle nor an indigenou.

Another critic, Madeline McDonough sheds the light on the affinities between Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950), Kateb Yacine's *La grande maison* (1952) and Mouloud Mammeri's *L'opium et le Bâton* (1965)²⁵. According to her the theme of war is very important in the three books because it affected the life of Algerians directly or indirectly in all regions of the country. Additionally, it engendered great misery and poverty. In *Le fils du pauvre*, Feraoun writes that "couscous" is the only food his people (Kabyle) could afford²⁶. For Madeline McDonough this is a solid proof that Feraoun is not only writing about his own experiences, he is also writing about a whole country under colonization²⁷.

Charles Dickens and Mouloud Feraoun are two international authors whose works reach beyond temporal and geographical boundaries. Even today, considerable amount of critiques and reviews are written about their literature and the themes they highlight such as poverty.

Issue and Working Hypothesis

The above studies have revealed some common points between the two novels as they both tackle in their own distinctive way the same theme of poverty and socioeconomic deprivation. However, to our knowledge the two works have been treated and analysed separately. As far as our investigation goes, there is no comparative study that juxtaposes Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* to Mouloud Feraoun's *Le fils du pauvre*. Therefore, the objective of our research is to explore both fictions from different perspectives in order to prove

the existence of an influence between the two authors. To achieve this aim, we use Oscar Lewis theory: *The Culture of Poverty* (1966). According to Lewis, people who are born or raised in deprivation tend to acquire some shared traits and develop some norms and standards, which he labels as “The Culture of Poverty”. The latter is based upon four dimensions: the individual, the family, the slum community and the community’s relation to society²⁸.

As part of our study, we will apply these four dimensions in the two novels by analysing the characters of the two protagonists: David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad, as individuals then we shall move to their family ties and interactions, the community they evolve in and their position in society. The main objective of this practice is to accentuate the affinities that connect the two main characters and draw attention to the eventual traits they may share together as they both were part of the poor community when they were children.

Methodological Outline

This dissertation studies *The Culture of Poverty* in both Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield* (1850) and Mouloud Feraoun’s *Le fils du pauvre* (1950). It is divided into three main parts. The first one is a general introduction that includes a presentation of the main theme of our study that is *The Culture of Poverty* and rise its centrality, it does also enclose a short introduction of the two authors and their works. The second section is devoted to the first chapter. It tackles the theme of the transmission of poverty within family by highlighting Oscar Lewis’ two first features that are the individual and family. The third chapter deals with the two remaining dimensions of Lewis’ theory that are the community and its relation to larger society.

II-Methods and Materials

1. Theoretical Framework

In order to analyse the theme of poverty in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* and Mouloud Feraoun's *Le fils du pauvre*, we are going to rely on four dimensions of Oscar Lewis' theory of "The Culture of Poverty" which are: the individual, the family, the community and its relation to larger society.

Oscar Lewis' "The Culture of Poverty"

Oscar Lewis (1914-1970) is an American sociologist and anthropologist who investigates poverty in society²⁹. His theory states that being in poverty tends to create a way of living that becomes a culture of its own³⁰. Social groups learn, share and transmit this culture as a social behaviour. He introduced his idea of "Subculture of Poverty" in 1958, at the International Congress of Americanists in San Chose, Costa Rica which later on became popular as "The Culture of Poverty"³¹.

The Culture of Poverty is fully developed in Lewis' book *La Vida* (1966) where he compares the lives of families from different countries³². Lewis notes certain persisted patterned associations of traits among families with the lowest income level and the least education such as lack of confidence, isolation and most of the time school failure. "What are the problems, conditions and factors favourable for developing a culture of poverty?" Lewis writes that they flow from an industrial, capitalist society with inequalities³³. According to him, it reflects the combined effects of a variety of factors including poverty to begin with, but also segregation, alienation, discrimination, fear, suspicion and apathy. He concludes that The Culture of Poverty "is both an adaptation and a reaction of the poor to the marginal position in a class-stratified, highly individuated, capitalist society" and "once it comes into existence, it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effects on children"³⁴.

Wide-ranging discussions and criticism of Lewis' work were most common during the 1960's and 1970's and continued until quite recently³⁵. One of the problems, which the critiques point out, is the difficulty to "operationalize" most of the traits that Lewis claims to be shared by poor people³⁶. Therefore, it is difficult to do a research about The Culture of Poverty. Some other critics think that this theory is "only negative". Although Lewis stresses that, his theory is "adaptive": it helps the poor to survive in their circumstances³⁷.

For three decades, Oscar Lewis' Subculture of Poverty has been misinterpreted as a theory bent on blaming the victims of poverty for their poverty. This essay corrects this misunderstanding. When compared to other approaches to poverty, the virtue of Lewis's thesis lies in the clarity with which it demonstrates that poverty's subculture is not a mere "personality problem" but consists, instead, of a set of positive adaptive mechanisms.³⁸

These adaptive mechanisms are socially constructed; the poor from the substance of their everyday lives collectively fabricate them, as they allow them to survive in otherwise impossible material and social conditions by underscoring the positive content of The Culture of Poverty.

In the *David Copperfield* and *Le Fils du Pauvre* both David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad grow up in poverty. According to Lewis' theory of The Culture of poverty both protagonists share some personality features such as determination as they both succeeded despite great hardships to achieve academic and professional success. The two of them seem to have developed some positive adaptive mechanisms in order to escape from poverty. David Feraoun and Fouroulou Menrad belonged to modest families and both were thrown into the harsh world of deprivation and manual labour since their childhoods. Confirming to Lewis's theory which states that family is a major factor to take into consideration while investigation poverty. In their adulthood, David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad had lived as middle-class men, however, they experienced some forms of isolation and alienation within their societies. For Oscar Lewis we cannot dissociate alienation from poverty. Accordingly, the

theory of The Culture of Poverty is crucial in order to explore the authors' interpretation of the theme of poverty in the two novels.

2. Materials

1.1 The Authors Biographies

This section is devoted to the respective biographies of the two authors starting with Charles Dickens then Mouloud Feraoun. This part will help the reader to understand the two novels in more depth and connect it with the writers' own lives and personal experiences.

Charles Dickens' Biography

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born on February 7th, 1812 in Portsmouth in England. He is the elder on nine siblings; he had four brothers and four sisters³⁹. His origins belong to the middle-class. One of his grandfathers was a domestic servant and the other an embezzler⁴⁰. His father was a clerk in the navy pay office, he was well paid, but his extravagance and ineptitude in spending money brought the family to financial difficulties⁴¹. In 1824, Dickens' father went to debt prison⁴². His eldest son, Charles, had to quit school and work in factories. This event gained Dicken that sympathy he had for the working-class. This compassion became the main inspiration for all his novels. He married in 1836, Catherine, the eldest daughter of a Scottish journalist. Together they had nine children⁴³. Before becoming an author, Dickens worked as clerk in a lawyer's office, then a shorthand reporter in the law-court. Finally, he became a parliamentary and newspaper reporter⁴⁴. In 1833, he started publishing stories and descriptive essays in magazines. Starting from 1837, he commenced publishing *Oliver Twist (1837/1839)* his first novel⁴⁵. What makes Dickens an outstanding writer is that through *Christmas Carol (1843)*, one of his novels, he created a new literary genre "Christmas Literature"⁴⁶. Through

the years and old age, Dickens' health deteriorated. Despite this, he remained inventive and productive. His last three books are *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1860) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865). In addition to an unfinished book *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). He died on June 9th, 1870 after a long battle with disease.

Frederick George Kitton was a British wood-engraver, author, and illustrator. He is best known for illustrating and editing the works of Charles Dickens to whom he dedicated the following words:

His genius has, indeed, vivified with the indestructible life many happy delineations that shall continue to be held dear by readers of future generations and, by his writings, he has inspired toward himself the feelings of love and sympathy who never saw him in face. Thackeray records an incident confirming this. He once heard two women speak of the "Christmas Carol". Neither knew the other or the author, and both said by way of criticism, "God bless him!"⁴⁷

This quote is a testimony of Charles Dickens' legacy and his everlasting popularity. He was and still is adored by a large public among the lovers of Literature.

Mouloud Feraoun's Biography

Mouloud Feraoun was born on March 1913 in Tizi-Hibel a village of Beni-Douala in Tizi-Ouzou. He belonged to a family of peasants. He had three sisters and a younger brother⁴⁸. Due to financial difficulties, his father immigrated to France in order to earn a living for his family⁴⁹. At the age of seven, Feraoun started his education in an elementary school that is seven kilometers away from his village⁵⁰. His hard work and love for knowledge earned him a scholarship to complete his studies in the college of Tizi-Ouzou. Then, he was accepted in the higher school of Bouzareah where he encountered and befriended writer Emmanuel Roblès who played a key role in starting his literary career⁵¹. After his graduation, he spent most of his career working as a teacher in his native Kabyle. In 1946, Feraoun became the headmaster of an elementary school in Taourirt-Moussa⁵². In 1960, he moved to Algiers where he worked as an education inspector. He married his cousin Dahbia with whom he had seven children⁵³. In April 1939, Mouloud Feraoun started writing his first novel. The original title is "Fouroulou

Menrad". This book, which is inspired by his own life, marks the start of his brilliant literary career⁵⁴. It was published in 1950 as *Le Fils Du Pauvre* and has received "Le Grand Prix Littéraire" of Algiers (1951)⁵⁵. It earned him praise and recognition and was translated into 24 languages⁵⁶. This best-seller was followed by *La Terre et le Sang (Earth and Blood)* in 1953. Most critiques agree that Mouloud Feraoun is the pioneer of the Francophone Maghrebine literature⁵⁷. Unfortunately, his growing success was interrupted by his sudden death in 1962 at the age of forty-eight, killed by French terrorist organization O.A.S at the dawn of Algeria's independence. Tahar Djaout, the Algerian writer and journalist, payed homage to Mouloud Feraoun - a tribute even more moving as he too was assassinated but in 1993 during the other Algerian war, this time by fundamentalists:

It is interesting to test the progress of the work of a writer who has played a key role in the 1950s where he greatly contributed to making know the harsh living conditions of his compatriots. Mouloud Feraoun was until twenty years ago the most frequented writer by schoolchildren from Algeria. *The Son of the Poor* remains (...) one of the most endearing and the truest of Maghrebine literature. Death prevented him from going deeper into his work and finding new axes as Mr. Dib for example did after the independence of Algeria.⁵⁸

The above quote emphasizes Feraoun's role in the foundation and development of an Algerian and Maghrebine literatures. It also illustrates the respect this author has gained from his peers and successors.

2.2 The Historical Background of the Two Novels

David Copperfield's Historical Background

Victorian era in British History is the period between 1820 and 1914. It is corresponding approximatively to the time of Queen Victoria's reign (1837/1901)⁵⁹. It is characterized by a class-based society, a growing state, economy, and Britain's status as the most powerful empire in the world⁶⁰. England is a powerful nation with rich culture. It had a stable government and

material wealth. This economic prosperity is due to Britain's industrialization and imperial holdings. Later in the period, this empire began to decline as a global political power especially at the beginning of world war one in 1914⁶¹.

The main organizing principles of 19th century England are gender and social class. Victorian gender ideology is based on "the doctrine of separate spheres" which states that men and women are different and meant for different things⁶². Males are physically strong, while females are weak. For men sex is central whereas for women it is reproduction, which matters most. Men belong to the public sphere and work in politics while women are for the private sphere and their job is to raise children and run households. However, most lower-class families cannot survive on a single male wage. This gave birth to Prostitution, child labor and women's employment in factories⁶³. Furthermore, the society was divided into three distinguished spheres: the lower working class, the middle class and the upper class. It is the lower class that suffered social deprivation and inequality; most of these people were factory workers. The middle class was a diverse group that included everyone between the working class and the elite. Indeed, the term was used from around the mid-eighteenth century to describe those people below the aristocracy but above the workers. As a social category, the 'middling sort' always referred to a broad band of the population, but this diversity increased in the nineteenth century⁶⁴. Alongside the businessmen associated with the growth of manufacturing, the period saw the increased numbers of small entrepreneurs. Shopkeepers and merchants⁶⁵. Finally, The Victorian upper class consisted of the king and queen, aristocrats, nobles, dukes, and other wealthy families of the Victorian court. They were in a powerful position giving authority and taking advantage of most of England's opulence.

Poor Victorians would put children to work at an early age, or even turn them out onto the streets to fend for themselves. In 1848 an estimated 30,000 homeless, filthy children lived on the streets of London; they were known as rookeries⁶⁶. Boys became chimney sweeps,

worked the narrow shafts in coalmines or were employed beneath noisy weaving looms retrieving cotton bobbins. Others would shine shoes or sell matches to earn a crust. People working long hours in Victorian times had to live close to their employment and available housing became scarce and highly priced. This encouraged youngsters to steal. At that time pickpocket was a common practice in London streets. Charles Dickens illustrates this dark facet of Victorian England through his well-known novel *Oliver Twist* (1838).

Victorian era is overall an age of transition and change. The England that had once been a feudal and agricultural society was transformed into an “industrial democracy”⁶⁷. “Between 1837 and 1901, social and technological change affected almost every feature of daily life”⁶⁸. Nevertheless, the Victorian age is not only about economy, industry and social class, it does also have a cultural value and great influence on England’s art and history. *Daily Life in Victorian England* is a book written by Sally Mitchell. As an introduction to her work, she writes the following:

Many of us have a vivid mental picture of Victorian England: a Charles Dickens Christmas with a large, happy family surrounding a table crammed with food. The dark and terrifying slums in other Dickens’ novels; Sherlock Holmes in London by gaslight; timeless country estates where laborers nodded in deference to the squire while ladies paid social calls and talked about marriage. In addition, Victorianism remains a living concept in social and political debates, although its meanings are contradictory; it is used to describe exploitation and class division, sexual repression [and] hypocrisy.⁶⁹

The above quote summarizes the main features of Victorian England; it does also accentuate the position of Charles Dickens an iconic symbol of this era.

The Poor Man’s Son’s Historical Background

The French colonialism of Algeria started the conquest in 1830 when the French defeated the Ottoman rulers there, the military used brutal force to overpower the indigenous population. “In 1845, a royal ordinance divided the overseas of Algeria and its three territorial sections (Algiers, Oran and Constantine) into three separate French regions (départments)”⁷⁰.

After the defeat of the Amir Abd el Qadir, the leader of the Algerian resistance to the French occupation, Europeans continued to take the majority of the Algerian lands. Rightly fearing that the colons could take the totality of the native property, people from Kabylia revolted against the colonizer in the first month of 1871⁷¹. One year after, the Algerian, resistance was subdued. The people of Kabylia had received very harsh treatment after the revolt of 1871, their economy had stagnated and their life conditions became much worse⁷². Feraoun was aware of this history in Kabylia and his own life⁸². James D. Le Sueur the writer of the introduction of *The Poor Man's Son* in its English version writes:

In fact, his family name "Feraoun" originated from this insurrection because, as a result of the revolt in Kabylia, a French officer in the indigenous affairs department who spoke only Arabic forced Feraoun's family to register under the surname of "Feraoun" (which means Pharaoh). The Feraouns' real surname was Ait Chaabane, and Mouloud Feraoun appropriated the family name (which he went by in Kabylia until his death) for the Menrads. In *The Poor Man's Son*: "The Sons of Chaabane"⁷³

By the beginning of the twentieth century, a propped indigenous political reaction against the colonial presence of France in Algeria came to be known as the Young Generation. The majority of its adherents were educated native Algerians, most of them have studied abroad. This movement was also nourished by the raise of the revolutionary movements in different colonies from all around the world. The year 1914 marked the start of the First World War. "Approximately 200.000 Algerians served the French flag, and another 119.000 went to France to replace the Frenchmen in the factories" such as Mouloud Feraoun's father⁷⁴.

Conscious of France's debt toward Algeria, French primer Georges Clemenceau called for liberal reforms in order to grant indigenous Algerians some rights since they did not have any at that time⁷⁵. By 1919, "the Jonnart Law oversaw the expansion of the electoral base of Algerian Muslims and created a separated non-European college of voters"⁷⁶. This reform did make a significant change in the lives of repressed Algerians who lived in poverty.

After the beginning of the Second World War Algerians were sent again in order to fight in the name of France. The public opinion started to shift little by little until giving birth

to an active political revolutionary movement led by some distinguished figures such as Messali el Hadj and Ferhat Abbas. However, on May 8, 1945 the very day that France celebrated the defeat of the Nazis and the end of the Second World War, Algeria had witnessed one of the darkest days of its history. The French bombed with planes the two cities of Guelma and Setif. They have killed between 7.000 and 40.000 in one day, another 5.560 Algerians were arrested, with 99 condemned to death⁷⁷.

This black dot of an event in the Algerian History changed the destiny of Mouloud Feraoun's country as it made Algerians lose all hope of pacific form of agreement with France. In 1954, the armed war of independence had begun in the high mountains of "Al Ourass" then Kabylia and eventually all the other regions of Algeria.

2.3 Summaries of the two novels

David Copperfield's Summary

David Copperfield or in full: *The Personal History of David Copperfield* is a novel written by Charles Dickens. It is published serially from 1849 to 1850 and in book form in 1850. This novel has always been one of Dickens most famous books and his "own favourite child"⁷⁸ as he states himself. It is a bildungsroman, semiautobiographical story⁷⁹. It features some events from the author's own life such as his hard childhood and work in factories. A middle-aged David, who is looking back on his life, narrates the story in the first person.

David and his deceased father share the same name. His young mother Clara raises him along with Pegotty, her devoted housekeeper. When he is eight years old, his mother marries a cruel man who beats him every day. After a while, the stepfather sends him to boarding school where he is abused by the Headmaster. When he is ten, David's mother dies and leaves him

nothing at all. He quits school and is sent to work in a factory. At the same time, he rents a room in Mr Micawber's house. When the latter goes to jail, David escapes to Dover where he searches for his great aunt Betsy Trotwood. Miss Betsy arranges for her nephew to go back to school. He stays with Mr Wickfield and his daughter, David's future wife "Emily". Finally, and after years of patience and perseverance David completes his education and works as a reporter then becomes a writer.

Le Fils du Pauvre's Summary

Le Fils du Pauvre, published in 1950 is a semiautobiographical novel where Mouloud Feraoun recounts his own childhood⁸⁰, within his village and his family in Kabylia. The story unfolds Fouroulou's childhood. His position in his family as a son, his battle to achieve education. He show us through the eyes of a Kabyle young boy his village and its geographical structure, the harshness of rural life in the mountains and the struggles of its people against poverty, colonization and segregation. Mouloud Feraoun writes this novel with the goal of making the Kabyles better known to the world.

The novel is a journey that narrates chronologically the life of Fouroulou Menrad from the age of seven when he starts school until his adulthood and becoming a teacher. Passing by the death of his grandmother (Tassadit), the conflict between his father and uncle, the death of his aunt (Nana), the birth of his young brother (Ddadar), his role as the elder son of the family and his father's immigration to France. The story ends the day before he enters the Teaching Institute of Bouzareah.

III-Results

This research work entitled *The Culture of Poverty in Charles Dickens' David Copperfield* (1850) and Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950) explores the theme of poverty and its impact on the construction of the main characters: David and Fouroulou. Our research relies on Oscar Lewis' theory "The Culture of Poverty".

According to Lewis, people living in poverty and deprivation develop a culture of their own. It means that, no matter how geographically far apart these people live from each other, or that they belong to different eras, or that they do not necessarily share the same language, social codes or religion, they still are linked by some norms and shared traits they develop growing up as deprived individuals.

Our study has revealed that both Dickens and Feraoun have grown up in poor environments, this allowed them to develop, as both individuals and writers, a deep sense of humanity and sympathy especially towards the subalterns.

The first chapter of our research entitled "**The Culture of Poverty: a Transmission from Father to Son**" has explored the theme of poverty using two main features of Oscar Lewis theory which, are the individual and the family and their role in the establishment of The Culture of Poverty in the two novels. This chapter shows that both David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad have "inherited" their poverty from their fathers which highlights the role of family as a channel of transmission in both Dickens' and Feraoun's works.

The second chapter of this thesis is dedicated to the influence of poverty on the social life of individuals. Entitled as: **David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad: Living in the Margin of Society**, it aims to depict the drawbacks of poverty on David and Fouroulou as social beings. This section is relying on Oscar Lewis' two remaining features that are the community and its relation to larger society. It has revealed that our two protagonist have suffered from

alienation and social isolation for the major part of the two novels. It does also divulge how poor communities evolve in larger, dominant societies and how they link with each other.

Our last, but not least, finding, which is overall the core of this study, is the influence of Charles Dickens on Mouloud Feraoun. In fact, Dickens made a name for himself by committing to write about the glories as well as the issues of Victorian England. What his literature reveals about him is that he was a social critic who described 19th century England with realism. If Victorian culture is as popular as it is today, it is partly thanks to Dickens.

In parallel, Mouloud Feraoun is an author who wrote in the aim of making the Kabyle culture known to the world. Just as his predecessor (Dickens), he illustrated with authenticity, using his own experiences as reference, the life in colonized Algeria during the first half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, *The Poor Man's Son* divulges that the two celebrated authors do not only share the same censorship in writing their novels, the construction of *Le Fils du Pauvre* as a novel can be clearly found in Charles Dickens *David Copperfield*. Both David and Fouroulou are the images of their creators; they grow up in poverty and struggle with social isolation and alienation, at the end they triumph against all odds and both succeed in fulfilling their dreams. Accordingly, we can state that *David Copperfield* can be perceived in *Fouroulou Menrad*. It is as if they were the same person living in different eras, geographical settings and societies.

End Notes

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Chapter I

The Culture of Poverty in the Two Novels: A
Transmission from Father to Son

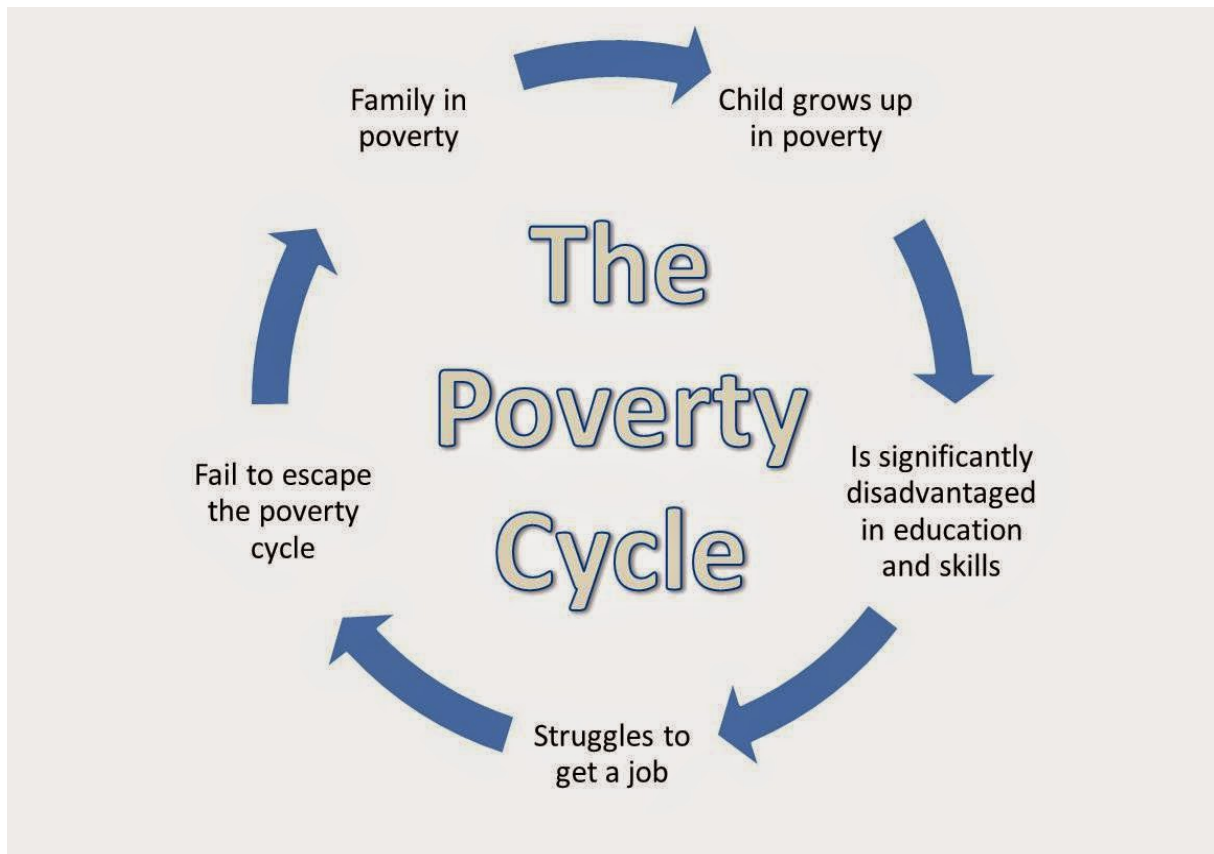
Introduction

Oscar Lewis Defines” The Culture of Poverty” as a set of values that poor people develop and transmit to their children and future generations. In this chapter, we investigate the theme of economic deprivation within the family in Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield* (1850) and Mouloud Feraoun’s *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950).

The first part studies the transmission of poverty in Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield*. It sheds the light on the character of David Copperfield and his relationship with his deceased father, whose name is also David, and how the latter have influenced the socio-economic life of his son. Whereas, the second part of this chapter emphasize the nature of Fouroulou Menrad’s family ties, especially his relationship with his father Ramdane.

Before initiating this chapter, we shall explain the relation between poverty and family within a general context prior to linking it with the two novels.

The cycle of poverty begins when a child is born into a poor family. These families often have limited or no resources to create opportunities to advance themselves which leaves them stuck in the poverty trap. Children are most affected by the cycle of poverty because they are dependant of their parents or guardians, they are young and lack resources, therefore, they cannot pull themselves out of deprivation.



1. David and David Junior Copperfield

Alain Jumeau contends that the phenomenon of inheriting property, things and money or perhaps simply some features or qualities, had profound consequences in the Victorian Age¹. The question of David's inheritance depends on the social status of his father. Since the boy is introduced in the title of the novel as "David Copperfield the Younger," and since Mr Dick refers to him as "David's son"², we may assume that his father is "David Copperfield the Elder" or "David Copperfield Senior." This character, who never appears on the stage, since he dies a short time before the beginning of the diegesis, nevertheless plays a great part in the novel. He seems to have been a well-to-do middle-aged gentleman who married a very young nursery governess who was an orphan, as David's mother tells Miss Betsey Trotwood, her husband's aunt³. So it is easy to imagine that, from a financial point of view, David's mother brought nothing to the marriage. Everything came from the father's side: a comfortable house with many

rooms and a garden, a domestic servant (Peggotty) and an unspecified but reasonable amount of money. As a legitimate and only child, David the Younger (or Junior) should have inherited his father's house with the furniture and whatever money was left after his decease. Yet, according to the marriage settlement, the house had been left to the mother, unconditionally⁴. Hence Aunt Betsey's indignant outcry, when the situation is explained to her by Mr Murdstone, Mrs Copperfield's second husband, after her death:

Of course it was left to her unconditionally. But when she married again—when she took that most disastrous step of marrying you, in short,” said my aunt, “to be plain—did no one put in a word for the boy at that time?”
“My late wife loved her second husband, madam,” said Mr Murdstone, “and trusted implicitly in him.”⁵

When Dickens started publishing the first chapters of his book in 1849, the original title was *The Personal History, Adventures, Experience and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger of Blunderstone Rookery*. The use of the adjective “younger” implies that David inherits his name from his deceased father. This fact is proven when Mr Dick refers to him as “David's son”⁶. In addition to his name, David does also inherit his father's looks and physique. When Mr Chillip, a doctor who has not seen him for years tells him at the end of the novel: “and it is Mr Copperfield, it is? there is a strong resemblance between you and your poor father, Sir”⁷. Even though David has never seen his father, the latter has a great impact on his life and choices. Dickens' protagonist gradually discovers that his father has left him with an invaluable legacy; “it is the small collection of books he left him which are now gone but persist and live on in his memory” thus forming the basis of his growth as an author.

My father had left a small collection of books in a little room up-stairs, to which I had access for it adjoined my own and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphrey Clinker*, *Tom Jones*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, and *Robinson Crusoe*, came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy and my hope for something beyond that place and time.⁸

It is important to highlight that Dickens' protagonist is not born in deprivation; his father is a middle-class man who owns a house and a decent income⁹. Nevertheless, when he dies he

bequeaths all his money and property to his wife, David's mother. Therefore, after she dies her second husband inherits everything. David becomes orphaned and poor at the same time. Even if he is not born into poverty, he still "inherits" it from his parents' actions and decisions.

Alain Jumeau further explains that Mrs Copperfield is too naïve and inexperienced to have made a special provision for her son David in case of her own death. But in fact, David's father proves to have been even more improvident, for, by generously giving all his property to his beloved wife he has brought about her ruin, turning her into an easy prey for Murdstone the predator, always looking for young ladies and widows with a fortune. Thus is an inheritance transmuted into a scourge, rather than a blessing. After the death of his mother, David is an orphan for the second time. Not only is he deeply afflicted, but he knows he has lost his inheritance and he cannot expect any succour from Mr Murdstone, who finds him an "encumbrance"¹⁰ and wants to get rid of him. Accordingly, he has to leave school and he is sent to do manual work in the London firm of Murdstone and Grinby's. Thus, he loses his social status completely. He is no longer the son of a gentleman; he has to toil hard, and to endure all the hardship of the life of the workers. Murdstone's brutal decision completely deprives him of his birth-right. So, the early episode when his "caul" is taken from him to be advertised for sale seems to have a proleptic function¹¹. Nothing of his inheritance is left to him.

As far as his father's house and money are concerned, this might have been avoided if his father had made the appropriate provision. But his Aunt Betsey deplores his lack of prudence. In the first place, he made an unwise marriage by choosing a child-wife whom Aunt Betsey calls "poor Baby"¹² who had no experience of house-keeping, and whom he had to teach how to keep a housekeeping book regularly and to balance it every night¹³. Moreover, he was prone to illusions and to mistakes, as she remarks when she learns the curious name he gave to his house:

In the name of Heaven,” said Miss Betsey, suddenly, “why Rookery?” “Do you mean the house, ma’am?” asked my mother. . . . “Where are the birds?” asked Miss Betsey. “The——?” My mother had been thinking of something else. “The rooks—what has become of them?” asked Miss Betsey. “There have not been any since we have lived here,” said my mother. “We thought—?Mr Copperfield thought—it was quite a large rookery; but the nests were very old ones, and the birds have deserted them a long while.” “David Copperfield all over!” cried Miss Betsey. “David Copperfield from head to foot! Calls a house a rookery when there’s not a rook near it, and takes the birds on trust, because he sees the nests!”¹⁴

David Junior does also make the same mistake as his father when marrying Dora. This first marriage of David was unhappy and similar to his parents’. This time aunt Betsey chose another nickname for the bride: “little blossom”¹⁵ which is quite similar to “poor baby”¹⁶. In addition, he too makes mistakes when it comes to reading clues or tokens or interpreting character.

Taking things on trust, or misinterpreting the signs in this way, seems to have been a familiar blunder of David Copperfield Senior, who typically lived in the town of Blunderstone, a name which is probably meant to reflect his tendency to make errors, because he was blind to the signs which life offered him. David Junior is very much like him, and in this respect he is not deprived of his inheritance, if we take the word as a “natural derivation of qualities or characters from parents or ancestry,” a sense which is not recorded by the OED until 1859, but which may have been meant a decade earlier, when the novel was serialized¹⁷.

Not only does David bear a striking physical resemblance to his father, but he seems to have inherited his nature and many of his weaknesses. The tragedy of his teenage years is that he fails to realize the sound honesty of “Traddles” and the deep villainy of “Steerforth” (both were his classmates). At school, he tends to treat the former with some condescension, while he idealizes the latter because he was reputed to be a great scholar, and was very good-looking. Later, when he has grown up, and Steerforth has deceived him with his selfish actions, he loses his former fascination for the young man, but keeps something of his former fondness for him:

Deeply as I felt my own unconscious part in his pollution of an honest home, I believe that if I had been brought face to face with him, I could not have uttered one reproach. I should have loved him so well still—though he fascinated me no longer.¹⁸

Alain Jumeau highlights that David comes to realize that the inheritance of his father is not completely lost, for it lives on, it persists as a cultural gift which accompanies him throughout his career. It comes from a discovery he makes when he is still a child. After his mother marries Mr Murdstone, he has to leave his comfortable bedroom, close to his mother's room, and to move up to a smaller one upstairs, adjoining a little cabinet where he finds books that have been left by his father. And this represents a major change and even a revelation in his life:

My father had left a small collection of books in a little room up-stairs, to which I had access (for it adjoined my own) and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, The Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe, came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time,—they, and the Arabian Nights, and the Tales of the Genii[...]. I forget what, now—that were on those shelves; and for days and days I can remember to have gone about my region of our house, armed with the centre-piece out of an old set of boot-trees—the perfect realisation of Captain Somebody, of the Royal British Navy, in danger of being beset by savages, and resolved to sell his life at a great price. The Captain never lost dignity, from having his ears boxed with the Latin Grammar. I did; but the Captain was a Captain and a hero, in despite of all the grammars of all the languages in the world, dead or alive.¹⁹

This legacy of the father keeps a special significance for the young boy and for the future artist, as Michael Hollington has pointed out:

This is clearly an appropriate moment to return to David's biological father and look again at what he bequeaths to his son. There is something of real significance, to balance the Blunderstone 'blunder,' which makes him in some ways a more useful father than Wilhelm Meister's. In Goethe's novel it is only the grandfather, with his art collection, sold by the father and then restored at the novel's end, who offers a real base for Wilhelm's Bildung; in David Copperfield the father offers his son one priceless inheritance the collection of books that provide a crucial stage on his road to becoming an author. It is through them that he learns to construct psychomachian narratives pitting himself against the forces of evil that surround him. It is his capacity to empathise with the characters of the books he reads—again he does not make any sharp distinctions, this time between himself and them that seems to enable him to transform into fiction and thereby in a way overcome the disturbing protagonists and events of his daily life.²⁰

According to Jumeau, the narrative of David's development from disinherited orphan to successful novelist is a typical Victorian story recording the hero's progress from rags to riches, celebrating the Smilesian virtue of Self-Help and showing that a man's true inheritance,

however small it may be, always persists in him, for it can never disappear, perish, or get irretrievably lost²¹. However, this optimistic celebration of persistence is not incompatible with a series of losses, which all have a dreadful impact on David's formation²². In spite of its seemingly rambling and "meandering" narrative line, the novel is structured around three essential losses: the death of David's father, which immediately precedes the beginning of the diegesis and the birth of David; the death of his mother, which marks the beginning of his real disinheritance

Accordingly, we may conclude that the character of David Copperfield and his personality is deeply influenced by his parents' life choices and decisions especially his father. His poverty and misfortune as a child is mainly caused by his father lack of prevention. Conforming to Oscar Lewis' theory, poverty and economic deprivation are transmitted within family members and do influence the individual and his life conditions and opportunities.

2. Ramdane and Fouroulou Menrad

Mouloud Feraoun chooses to entitle his novel *Le Fils du Pauvre*, not the "Pauvre Enfant" for instance or The "Le Pauvre". This may be a direct evidence which highlights the fact that Ramdane Menrad is the cause of his son's deprivation. Fouroulou lives in poverty only because his father is poor as was his grandfather probably.

Menrad is a humble Kabyle teacher who lives among the blind, this is how Mouloud Feraoun chooses to introduce his main character at the very beginning of the novel. Fouroulou describes himself as an ambitious man who makes fun of his own ambition. He decides to become a teacher who lives with his "brothers the peasants" because he knows that the lack of means and money is a perfidious obstacle he cannot overcome.

Menrad was ambitious. He made fun of his ambition. He understood, poor man, that if he tried too hard to soar like an eagle, he would only waddle in the mud like a duck.²³

In order to understand Fouroulou's lack of motivation in chasing grander and greater dreams we rely on "*Teaching with Poverty in Mind*" (2009) which is a book by Eric Jensen²⁴. It claims that children living in poverty tend to spend less time finding out about the world around them and more time struggling to live within it.

He therefore resigned himself to being a mere schoolteacher, in a village like the one that welcomed his birth, in a one room schoolhouse, in the middle of all his peasants brothers, shouldering with them life torments, his soul perfectly at peace, and waiting, like them with absolute fatalism and absolute certitude, so he claims, for the day when he will enter Muhammed's paradise.²⁵

To analyse Fouroulou's personality we go back to his origins, to his father: a poor man from whom he "inherits" poverty and deprivation. In fact, Ramdane Menrad is calm and shy, he seems entirely destined for the work of Fellah.

Ramdane est brun plus solide et plus trapus que son frère[...]Ma grand-mère l'a toujours considéré comme un espèce de lourdeau peu exigeant. Il n'était pas bavard comme son frère mais timide jusqu'à l'impolitesse. Il semblait tout destiné aux travaux du Fellah.²⁶

Consequently, Fouroulou is also a calm, shy and humble man. He does not seem to have a high opinion about himself "he does not want to consider himself a king" and constantly doubts his abilities. "Poor Menrad is unable to philosophize! "how could he compare himself to great authors? No, never!"²⁷ He grows up thinking that he is a peasant, he must be a peasant because this is what he is taught. In one of Mouloud Feraoun's letters published in "Les Débuts Littéraires de Mouloud Feraoun de Menrad Fouroulou au Fils du Pauvre du Pauvre" (1981), he tells his friends Roblès that "he has never thought before that he could ever make a Kabyle boy (Fouroulou) enter the prestigious world of literature".²⁸

Debra Kelly writes that the publication of Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* in 1950 is generally recognized as a founding moment in the literary, cultural and political context of north African writing in French.²⁹ She highlights the role of family in this novel. According to her, most critics comment on the simple style employed in *Le Fils du Pauvre*, on its description and portraits of Kabyle life. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* reference, to which an average

reader wanting to know more about Feraoun might turn, describes Feraoun as a gentle man of integrity and *Le Fils du Pauvre* as the portrayal of the simple life of the mountains filled with nobility, human compassion, love of family and native soil.³⁰

The actual life story of the son of a poor man is complex than this apparently straightforward itinerary of the farmer's son who becomes a primary schoolteacher through his own diligence. Debra Kelly notes that *Le Fils du Pauvre* opens with a quotation from Chekhov, an epigraph that seems to set the tone for and indeed presage the life and death of its author, who will not be allowed the luxury of growing old:

nous travaillerons pour les autres jusqu'à notre vieillesse et quand notre heure viendra, nous mourrons sans murmure et nous dirons dans l'autre monde que nous avons souffert que nous avons pleuré, que nous avons vécu de longues années d'amertume, et dieu aura pitié de nous.³¹

Education plays an important role in *Le Fils du Pauvre*. Debra Kelly, explains that the indifference of the family to the young boy's education is apparent:

I become a good pupil, almost without effort[...] for the peace lovers and the cowards, who were necessarily mixed together, there remind the noble pleasures of study and coming first[...]with the consent of all my comrades, therefore, I become a good pupil[...]so from the start I worked with unshakable seriousness, unknown to my parents, who continued to show the greatest indifference towards my progress.³²

In fact, Fouroulou's father is far more concerned with feeding his family and his education is primarily useful because it means that the boy is at home less and therefore eats less.

Je n'outrepasse pas la vérité en disant que la seule utilité visible de ma scolarisation était mon absence prolongée de la maison qui réduisait la quantité de figues et de couscous que je mangeait.³³

Education and knowledge, will therefore, create a gulf between the young boy and his family. The experience of poverty will also bring about another form of knowledge and a specific life lesson is learnt by Fouroulou when he and two other friends decided to go and see their fathers, currently labouring on building sites. The visit is not innocent. The boys chose to go at the moment where the men stop to have their meal (their boss is an educated man and likes to imitate certain French habits such as taking meals at set times). Their fathers are clearly unhappy but the boss allows the boys to eat and their shame is overcome by the appeasing of their hunger³⁴.

Additionally, in the original edition of *Le Fils du Pauvre* published in 1950 Feraoun divided his work into four main parts. The first part is entitled as “Family”, the second one is: “The Elder Son” and the third section is "Bouzerreah" and last section is “War”. Feraoun chose to dedicate more than the half of his novel to describe family life in Kabylia because it was the most important aspect of society. When Fouroulou’s father immigrates to France in order to work in a factory, he leaves his elder son (Fouroulou) a great and heavy responsibility. Despite his young age, he becomes the head of his family.

Fouroulou in losing the title of the only son took on that of the elder son, which involves he was told certain duties in the future, when the little one would be big, but lots of advantages in the present. To begin with he got his share of all the good things (meat, eggs, bread) his mother ate for recovery.³⁵

This quotation reports Fouroulou’s words on the day of his brother’s birth. However, Feraoun’s protagonist was far from imagining the reality of an elder brother in the traditional Kabyle society. In times of need he takes the place of the father, and when he is old enough he has the duty to feed the whole family.

The second part of the novel "Le fils aîné" opens up with another epigraph, this time bringing the nineteenth- century French historian Michelet, who was himself born into poverty, into the dialogue of voices. The reader's attention is once again drawn to the theme of poverty through the epigraph:

Aujourd'hui cette indigence, fièrement, noblement supportée par les miens fait ma gloire. Alors, elle me semblait une honte et je la cachait de mon mieux.³⁶

According to Debra, the narrative construction takes on another voice as Fouroulou hides himself, moving from the first person to the third. There is then a complex relationship between Fouroulou and the narrateur- frère. It is if to say that after the birth of his brother, Fouroulou loses his individual voice after becoming the elder brother who has to look for and support his whole family including his parents, his sisters and younger brother.

As we have mentioned before Fouroulou has inherited many features from his father's personality, such as his modesty and shyness. However, what makes our protagonist different from his dad is his education. For Ramdane Menrad the most important aspect of life is feeding his family, for him knowledge and education are supplementary and useless. In contrast, Fouroulou believes that education is vital.

Le père Menrad n'était pas dupe. Il savait très bien que son fils n'aboutirait à rien. Mais en ville Fouroulou serait nourri mieux que chez lui. Puisque l'Etat voulait bien aider à l'élever Ramdane ne s'y opposait pas. L'essentiel était de voir son fils vite devenir un homme afin qu'il partageat avec lui le soin de nourrir sa famille.³⁷

This passage taken from *Le Fils du Pauvre*, sheds the light on Ramdane Menrad's real motivations of sending his son to attend college in Algiers. It highlights the influence of poverty in all aspects of the Menrad family life. But most importantly, it witnesses the moment where Fouroulou escaped from his destined future of a peasant as his father once wanted him to be, towards a bright future as a teacher.

Conclusion

In this chapter, entitled **The Culture of Poverty: a Transmission from Father to Son**, we shed the light on two patterns of Oscar Lewis' theory: the individual and family. The first part focuses on analysing the nature of this transmission in *David Copperfield* by explaining the mechanism through which young David has "inherited" not only his father's name and looks or love of literature, but also his naivety and innocence. Furthermore, it explores how David's father and his lack of prevention caused Young David to lose his wealth and social status to be thrown in poverty. The second part of the chapter deals with Fouroulou Menrad and his father Remdane. It highlights the importance of family in traditional Kabyle society as well as the prestigious yet burdensome role of the elder brother. The main idea of this section is that, as the title suggests, Fouroulou's poverty is transmitted to him by his father.

End Notes:

- ¹ Alain Jumeau, *The Strange Persistence of David Copperfield's Inheritance*, 96-110.
- ² Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, XIV:188.
- ³ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, I:15.
- ⁴ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, XIV:194.
- ⁵ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, XIV:185.
- ⁶ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, LIX:699.
- ⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁸ *ibid.*
- ⁹ Alain Jumeau, *The Strange Persistence of David Copperfield's Inheritance*, 96-110.
- ¹⁰ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, II:27.
- ¹¹ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, I:10.
- ¹² Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, I:15.
- ¹³ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, I:13.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Alain Jumeau, *The Strange Persistence of David Copperfield's Inheritance*, 96-110.
- ¹⁸ John Jordan, *The Social Context of David Copperfield*, 61-92.
- ¹⁹ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, IV :53-54.
- ²⁰ Hollington, 74.
- ²¹ Alain Jumeau, *The Strange Persistence of David Copperfield's Inheritance*, 96-110.
- ²² *ibid.*
- ²³ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 03.
- ²⁴ Eric Jenson, *Writing with Poverty in Mind*.

- ²⁵ Alain Jumeau, *The Strange Persistence of David Copperfield's Inheritance*, 96-110.
- ²⁶ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 15.
- ²⁷ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 05.
- ²⁸ Jeanne Adam, Les débuts Littéraires de Mouloud Feraoun de Menrad Fouroulou au Fils du Pauvre.
- ²⁹ Kelly Debra, *Autobiography and Independence: Selfhood and Creativity in North African Post-Colonial Writing in French*.
- ³⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mouloud-Feraoun>
- ³¹ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre, Preface*.
- ³² Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 52.
- ³³ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 53.
- ³⁴ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 60.
- ³⁵ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 82.
- ³⁶ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 89.
- ³⁷ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 113.

Chapter II

David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad: Living
in the Margin of Society

Introduction

The second chapter of this dissertation bears the following title: **David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad: Living in the Margin of Society**. Its focus is to highlight one major consequence of economic deprivation on the lower class of society that is marginalisation. This chapter relies on Oscar Lewis' two remaining dimensions, which are the community and the community's relation to society. The first part of the chapter "**The Estrangement of David Copperfield in the Victorian Society**" relates the experience of young David with poverty and social alienation. In addition, it introduces David's circle of (poor) friends and depicts their role in his life. This section does also aim to illustrate how these friends together with David form a community. Last, we explain the position of this community in larger society and its relation with its institutions.

The second part of the chapter "**Fouroulou Menrad's "Subalternity" and the Isolation of the Kabyle Community**" deals with the notion of "Subalternity" and explains how it applies on the character of Fouroulou. The second focus of this section is to illustrate the isolation of the Kabyle community within the Algerian and colonial society.

As an introduction to this chapter, we shall answer the following question: what is marginalisation? And how does it influence the life of the individual and community?

Social exclusion or social marginalisation is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. It is used across disciplines including: sociology, economy, philosophy and psychology. It illustrates the process through which individuals are blocked from or denied full access to various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights. Alienation or disenfranchisement resulting from social exclusion can be connected to a

person's social class, race, skin colour, religious affiliation, ethnic origin, educational status, living standards, and or political opinions, or even physical appearance.¹

The marginal man is one whom fate has condemned to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures his mind is the crucible in which two different and refractory cultures may be said to melt and, either wholly or in part, fuse.²

The above quotation explains that, social exclusion at the individual level results in an individual's exclusion from meaningful participation in society. It highlights the feeling of estrangement it engenders in the alienated individual's mind by comparing him to someone living in two societies.

1. The Estrangement of David Copperfield in the Victorian Society

Dickens hero's characteristic progress goes from alienation to self-discovery then returning to alienation once more³. It can be found in most of his protagonists, among them his personal favourite: David Copperfield. The latter have experienced alienation in his childhood when he found himself orphaned, homeless and in poverty. The self-discovery phase of David's life is the process of his maturation. During that time, he tried to fit himself in the Victorian norms of the middle-class. His return to alienation can be perceived in his criticizing of the socio-economic sphere of nineteenth century England especially after becoming a writer.

Now words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionships ,compared these henceforth every day associates with those of my happier childhood –not to say with Steerforth, Traddles ,and the rest of those boys; and felt my hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man .the deep remembrance of the sense I had , of being utterly without hope now ; of the shame I felt in my position ; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that day by day what I had learned and thought ,and delighted in and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, would pass away from me ... I mingled my tears with the water in which I was washing the bottles⁴

Nevertheless, our study will stick to the first period of alienation he experienced as a child because it is during that time that he mingled with the lower class and became part of them. It is also during that period that he built important friendships with some people that would become his second family. Moreover, Charles Dickens is famous for his unlimited

creativity and originality when creating what critics label as “Dickensian characters”⁵ among them the eccentric Mr Micawber: a man who could not fit himself in the standards of Victorian society.

Mr Micawber is one of Dickens’ most famous and influential characters. Young David encounters him when he rents a room in his house; this marks the beginning of a lasting friendship. Mr Micawber is a thoroughly good-natured man; he is cheerful and optimistic even under drastic circumstances⁶. However, he is terrible with money as he is noted for being unable to work his way out of poverty. His persona gave birth to the “Micawber Principles”⁷. One of them is the claim that something good will turn up, especially when used to justify optimism. The second is the belief that financial surplus is success and debt is failure. Mr Micawber is also known to be selfless and generous, “he is a most untiring man when he works for others”. This means that his character is far from being individualistic; this is why he cannot succeed in a capitalist society such as Victorian England⁸.

Mr Micawber and his wife Emma seem to lead a happy life with their children as David notices when he lived with them. Yet, Mrs Micawber is perpetually stressed because of her husband’s financial difficulties and because the couple has a large and growing number of children, they have to feed. As we note that, the structure of their family is based on the Victorian doctrine of Separate Spheres. Mrs Micawber’s only role is to bear and raise children and take care of her house and husband even when her husband cannot feed his family. When Mr Micawber is arrested and taken to debtors’ prison his family joins him there. David observes, “They live more comfortably than they had lived for a long while”⁹. Emma Micawber vows that she “will never desert Mr Micawber no matter how difficult things become”. It seems that the Micawbers are more at ease living in seclusion among themselves “forming a small community” than living in the exterior world where are part of a large community.

Gillian Ballinger's argues, "Personal credit and debt relations play a vital role in *David Copperfield*"¹⁰. She affirms that Micawber's "monetary obligations" are based on trust and mutual obligations; this is why it can only function within his circle of friends. When Micawber is taken to jail, David offers to help the family with the loan of his wages, but Mrs Micawber asks him to "pawn household goods" for them, so that the family can buy food¹¹.

Because poor people could not borrow money from banks, they tended to help each other through this system of borrowing money between themselves as both a reaction and adaptation to their poverty. They create a community, which belongs, according to Lewis, to The Culture of Poverty. Ballinger also states, "David's circle of family and friends is economically independent"¹². This group does not function according to the general economic pattern of Victorian England that is based on individualism. Thus, Micawber's financial reliance on family and friends supports Ballinger and Historian Margot Finn's hypothesis, which argues, "Insufficient attention has been paid to the role of personal credit in the development of England's economy"¹³. On the other hand, Charles Dickens seems to be completely aware of this fact and gives it major importance in his novel. His realism and understanding of the marginalisation of the working class is obvious in all ways.

David Copperfield is concerned with a number of attempts to deal with the chaos of the world. The basis natural unit of order in society, the family is broken, and the novel contains a long and full catalogue of orphanage, widowhood, and separation. Ironically, The Micawbers are the only whole family in the novel; the rest are alone, or in artificially constructed family groups banded together from safety and succour. Some of these groups...Mr.Peggotty's in his Noah's Ark, Miss Betsey's in her much restricted donkey-free Eden ,are in retreat from the large world and thus are unsatisfactory.¹⁴

This quotation sheds the life on the life style of three major characters in *David Copperfield*. Mr Micawber who, as we have explained above, lives in his own world with his family, which may be perceived in this context as his own community. The second character is Mr Peggotty, the elder brother of David's old nurse, He is a fisherman living in the coastal city of Yarmouth in his old boat, here compared to Noah's Ark , in seclusion from the outside world and

industrialized society. In fact, the majority of anglers shifted their professional activity and went to London in order to find work in factories. Mr Peggotty did not care about finding better job opportunities or creating a new life environment, which would probably be more fitting in the eyes of the evolving and modernizing Victorian society. He indeed insisted on sticking to his family's tradition and his own identity. The last character is David's great aunt and only remaining relative "Betsey". Even though, she is not economically deprived, she is known to have a strong and peculiar personality, which make it hard for her to fit in the Victorian norms of that time where women were supposed and expected to be docile and obedient. Aunt Betsey does also live alone, with only one servant, in what is named in the quotation as "donkey-free Eden".

Thus, it might be stated that, conforming to his tradition of writing about the alienated and disadvantaged groups of Victorian England, Charles Dickens succeeded to create in *David Copperfield* a community constituted of marginalised characters including David and his circle of friends and family.

2. Fouroulou Menrad's "Subalternity" and the Isolation of the Kabyle Community

Subaltern studies as a whole aim to uncover the histories of groups that within the colonial and nationalist archives went largely shunted to the margins or undocumented altogether. It does also analyse the "binary relationship" of the subaltern and ruling classes, and thus studies the interplay of dominance and subordination in colonial systems, most notably India, though the methods of the movement have since been applied to other nations, spaces, and historical moments. In fact, the term "Subaltern Studies" was first used by Ranajit Guha to describe general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender or race¹⁶.

The formulation of the term "subaltern" used by the group is not taken from the British colonial rank of the "subaltern," which referred to military officers who were subordinate.

Instead, the term “subaltern” is taken from Italian Marxist scholar Antonio Gramsci’s own use of the word in his *Prison Notebooks* (English translations of which appeared in 1966). In its original Gramscian context, “subaltern” referred solely to peasants who had not been integrated into Marx’s conception of the industrial capitalist system¹⁸. Subaltern studies then seeks to fill the gap in historiography between the people’s history and the perceived history of colonized countries such as Algeria. The scholars of the subaltern studies group sought, and still seek in the group’s subsequent iterations, to give the subaltern, peasant domain autonomy as the voice that facilitated political action despite imperial dominance. Dipesh Chakrabarty notes that subaltern studies emerged out of “anti-colonial” thought rather than “postcolonial” as it is claimed by postcolonial theorist: Gayatri Spivak.¹⁹ Nowadays, the term subaltern literature is widely used to describe any type of fiction or narrative which deals with theme of marginalisation and isolation caused by colonialism.

Le Fils du Pauvre is widely regarded as one of North Africa’s greatest literary masterpieces. On the occasion of its translation to English, James D. Le Sueur writes:

Today the English and indeed French-speaking worlds both have reason to renew their affection for this Algerian literary humanist, whose writings spoke out against the injustices of colonialism and demonstrated how, despite all odds, the human spirit can prevail.²⁰

The above quote accentuates the impact of colonialism in Mouloud Feraoun’s literature especially in this specific novel through which the reader can perceive Fouroulou Menrad’s struggle against socio-economic deprivation in addition to colonial abuse and segregation. Accordingly, it is safe to suggest that Fouroulou Menrad is indeed a subaltern protagonist.

James D. le Sueur further explains that this work is not only dealing with French colonization; its major aim is to “make the Kabyles better-known to the world”.

The most important thing to remember about the *Poor Man’s Son* is that it is not intended to be a novel about the French colonial experience as was, for example, Albert Camus’s posthumous best selling novel, the first man (French,1994/ English,1995); rather, it is a novel about Algerians, and even more specifically, about the Kabyles. Feraoun’s distinctive turn inward, his desire to describe everyday life in Kabylia as an indigenous Algerian writer, has rendered his writings uniquely important.²¹

This quote, taken from the Introduction of the English translation of *Le Fils du Pauvre* by Lucy McNair, draws our attention to the importance of Feraoun's belonging to the Kabyle community. If his aim is to make Kabyles known to the world, does it actually mean that this community is hidden? Ignored or Isolated?

Indeed, our objective in this specific chapter is to prove that Fouroulou Menrad suffers a triple alienation. The first one is linked to his Subalternity, which is caused by colonialism. The second one is the isolation of the Kabyle community regarding the rest of Algeria and the colonizer. The third and last one is the estrangement of the Menrad family in their own village that is mainly the result of their poverty.

French Natives but not Citizen

The Second Empire established in law the legal difference between Europeans and natives, which remained in force until the law of May 7, 1946²². The Muslim native is French; nevertheless, he will continue to be governed by Muslim law. The native may be admitted to serve in the land and sea armies. He may be called upon to civil functions and jobs in Algeria. He can, on his request, be admitted to enjoy the rights of French citizen; in this case, the civil and political laws of France govern it. The last sentence is only a pretext of this denial of citizenship: until 1870, no more than two hundred applications for naturalization were registered on the part of Muslims and one hundred and fifty-two on the part of Jews²³. . In 1870, the decree of Crémieux, which granted French nationality to Jews from the three departments and not to Muslims, was amended. It establishes particular penalties for the natives and organizes the continuous dispossession of their lands²⁴.

Le Fils du Pauvre does not tackle the theme of "indigénat" explicitly. Nor it does with politics, or land dispossession. The subtle but harsh messages Feraoun dissimulated about colonial authority in Algeria can be read between the lines. James D. Le Sueur highlights Feraoun's thoughts about the French colonizer as follows.

Feraoun's criticism of France before, during and after the Second World War are harsh. He makes no effort to distinguish his frustration with French colonialism, be it for Vichy variety, which he mentions by name, or of the Gaullist, which he does not, or of the usual small-minded colonial types, whom he refers to as "small town French" or "Roumis".²⁵

Actually, Fouroulou's Subalternity in the novel is cultural and intellectual, rather than economic or political. The reader can sense it with the way Fouroulou speaks so humbly about himself, always trying to remind himself (and the readers) about his own inferiority.

Menrad, a humble rural kabyle schoolteacher, lives among the blind. But he does not wish to be a King. First, he is for Democracy; second, he is firmly convinced he is not genius.²⁶

In addition, James D. Le Sueur emphasizes the fact that it has taken so many years to translate *Le Fils du Pauvre* into English, and that it took half a century for the world to have access to the original version of the novel in any language without censorship. He affirms that this overlaps with two main themes of the novel and Algerian History: patience and perseverance.

In opposition, we underline Feraoun's use of words in describing Fouroulou:

He believed he could write. Ah! Neither poetry nor a psychological study, nor even an adventure novel, since he has no imagination. But he has read Montaigne and Rousseau, he has read Daudet and Dickens (in translation). He quite simply, like those great men, to tell his own story. I told you he was humble, far from him to compare himself to geniuses; he intended only to borrow from the idea, the simple idea, of portraying himself.²⁷

This quote illustrates how Fouroulou: the subaltern, the dominated, the colonized knows and admires the dominant culture of the colonizer and develops feelings of inferiority towards it which, leads to marginalisation.

Menrad: Kabyle School Teacher

Le Fils du Pauvre: Menrad Instituteur Kabyle is the complete title of Mouloud Feraoun's most celebrated novel. The use of the word "Kabyle" instead of "Algerian" highlights the importance of Fouroulou's belonging to the Kabyle community.

The tourist who dares to penetrate into the heart of Kabylia admires, out of a sense of conviction or duty, the sites, which he finds marvellous, the landscapes, which he thinks resonate with poetry, and always he feels an indulgent sympathy for the customs of its inhabitants.²⁸

This passage taken from *Le Fils du Pauvre* reports the first words Fouroulou uses to describe his native land. He describes the tourist who visits Kabylia. The use of the verb “dare” implies that this region is geographically isolated and hard to accede. “Its dwellings cling to each other along the summit of a ridge like the gigantic vertebrae of some prehistoric monster” he further explains.

My apologies to all tourists, past and future. You find such wonder and poetry in nature because you pass through as tourists. Your dream ends when you return home and find banality on your doorstep.²⁹

The above quote shows how Fouroulou is trying to tell the tourists that they do not know the reality about Kabylia. They are only attracted to its beautiful landscape and blinded from seeing the sorrows of its people. This statement is grounded by Fouroulou’s following words:

We Kabyles understand that others praise our country. We even like it when they conceal its vulgarity under flattering terms. Yet we well imagine the dismal impression left by the sight of our poor villages on the most obliging and least poetically minded visitor. The above quote explains how Fouroulou, along with other Kabyles, are aware of the poverty of their villages and the modesty of their life.³⁰

Actually, Kabylia’s extreme poverty at that time was caused by a set of factors. First, the “indigénat” system we have explained before dispossessed most Kabyles from their lands dragging them into severe poverty because at the time Kabylia’s economy was based on agriculture. The second reason is France’s severe punishment after the Revolution of 1871. Furthermore, the isolation of this distinguished region of Algeria is due to its use of a different language, which is Kabyle.

The Menrads: a poor family

Fouroulou Menrad affirms that Kabyles live in exactly the same manner. There are no rich or poor. However, he admits that there are two categories of people.

Those who manage to get by on a regular basis and those who, depending on good or bad luck, swing from abject misery to the modest comfort of heaven’s chosen ones. But one can neither establish a strict classification nor distinguish essential differences in how the villagers live.³¹

Rich families have many fig and olive groves, a hectare of land to plant, and sometimes a spring in one of their fields. He does own livestock a pair of oxen, a cow, a few sheep, a mule or a donkey. “When the property of such fellah is assessed by other villagers as a month of labour, you can read the admiration and envy in people’s eyes,” remarks Fouroulou. On the other hand, the Menrad family is constituted of seven people. One alone works and brings home money: Remdane. Fouroulou recalls his father’s struggle to make ends meet.

Father, he works as a devil, never losing a day and permitting no one any luxury, including himself. He trembles as the “Aids” approach, which swallow the money. He trembles as winter approaches, which swallows the provisions.³²

Through the years, the Menrad family’s situation kept on degrading. Finally Remdane decided to emigrate to France and leave his family and beloved land in order to send home some money.

Conclusion

David Copperfield and *Le Fils du Pauvre* are two fictions inspired from the lives of their authors. David is a character and his experiences stands to illustrate the life of Victorian England. After losing his family and social status, he faces the cruel reality of the working class during that time. He faces not only poverty but also the estrangement and marginalisation it engenders on the lower class people. Paradoxically, it also during this this period of his life that he encounters most of his life-lasting friendships and the persons that would shape his future life. David’s circle of friends is economically interdependent and develop towards each other sympathy and support one another in moments of need forming a community which, is linked overall by the bond of poverty. Nevertheless, this community lives in isolation of society conforming to Oscar Lewis’ *The Culture of Poverty*. In the other hand, Fouroulou’s journey, which starts in the rough mountains of Kabylia, highlights the Subalternity of Fouroulou as a colonized individual. Furthermore, it does also shed the light on the isolation of the Kabyle community.

End Notes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_alienation

² *ibid.*

³ Dianne Sadoff, *The Dickens Hero: Selfhood and Alienation in Dickens World*, 419-422.

⁴ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, 63.

⁵ Dianne Sadoff, *The Dickens Hero: Selfhood and Alienation in Dickens World*, 419-422.

⁶ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, 95.

⁷ <http://micawberprinciple.com/the-micawber-principle-living-the-fundamental-law-of-personal-finance-45/>

⁸ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, 98.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Gill Ballinger, *Countering the Contract-Bargain: Credit, Debt and the Moral Economy in David Copperfield*, Vol. 46.

¹¹ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, 96.

¹² Gill Ballinger, *Countering the Contract-Bargain: Credit, Debt and the Moral Economy in David Copperfield*, Vol. 46

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Bingbing Zhou, *An Analysis of the Critical Realism in David Copperfield*.

¹⁵ <https://globalsocialtheory.org/concepts/subalternity/>

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ Lucy McNair, James Le Sueur, *The Poor Man's Son* by Mouloud Feraoun, xii.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² https://www.axl.cefano.ulaval.ca/afrique/indigenat_code.htm

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ Lucy McNair, James Le Sueur, *The Poor Man's Son* by Mouloud Feraoun, xi.

²⁶ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 03.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 05.

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 08.

³² Mouloud Feraoun, *Le Fils du Pauvre*, 82.

General Conclusion

This research compares and contrasts one of the classics of the English literature Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1850) to one of the most celebrated novels of the Algerian literature Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950) using Oscar Lewis' theory: *The Culture of Poverty* (1966). The aim of this comparison is to analyse the theme of poverty in the two fictions and depict its relevance in the construction of the characters of David Copperfield and Fouroulou Menrad.

This research has proved that the theme of poverty is universal, and that no matter what might be the ethnicity, the nationality or the era of the individual, humans face deprivation the same way. Moreover, the world of literature accounts a considerable number of authors who have made socioeconomic deprivation a main theme of their writings. Charles Dickens is one of these literary figures. His criticism of social inequalities during the Victorian age of England, and his profound compassion with the lower, working class earned him a worldwide reputation as a humanist writer. *David Copperfield* is a novel written in 1850, which denounces the issue of child labour during the industrial revolution in Britain. It does also tackle other major themes as the hideous working conditions, extreme poverty as well as marginalisation and alienation.

Furthermore, the Algerian writer Mouloud Feraoun is also known for his humanism. One of his major works is *The Poor Man's Son*, a story he wrote and published during the French colonization of Algeria. The story revolves around a Kabyle poor family of peasants and their daily struggles in order to survive in a harsh environment.

Through the analysis of the two fictions, we have concluded that in both settings the deprivation of the two protagonists was caused or rather transmitted by their family, especially their fathers. The first chapter illustrates how David Copperfield Senior (David's father) engendered his son's misery by leaving all his property and money to his young and immature

wife. Dickens wanted to highlight David's influence on him as an individual by giving them the same name, the same physical features and the same passion for literature. On the other hand, David inherited his father's naivety and flaws, he trusted people easily and misjudged them based on their appearance, and he even married a child-like wife like his mother. Through this resemblance, Dickens explains why as an adult David was not interested in becoming rich or climbing social classes, he rather chose to live a quiet life as a writer in opposition to the Victorian materialistic norms of that time which incited people to invest and work in the field of industry.

Fouroulou Menrad does also inherit his poverty from his father Remdane. As the title suggests Fouroulou is the son of a poor man. From the day of his birth onward, the poor man's son has to bear the burdens of life as a part of a poor family of peasants. Even after the departure of Ramdane to France, Fouroulou inherits from him the title of the head of the family. Mouloud Feraoun wanted to emphasize the burdensome role of the big brother in the Kabyle family. In addition, Ramdane's humble and shy character is also transmitted to his son. Even as an adult, Fouroulou is shown to doubt himself and his abilities, which prevents him from chasing grander dreams, instead he is content by just becoming a teacher in his village.

This research has also illustrated how marginalisation is a major consequence of poverty. The first part of the second chapter underlined David's estrangement in the Victorian society. Indeed, after having grown up in a poor environment, Dickens' hero could not cut all ties with his past or fit himself completely in England's middle class. Inside his heart, he always had sympathy and compassion towards the people from lower class such as his nurse Peggotty, her brother, the fisherman who lived in his boat and the indebted Mr Micawber. David did consider these people, along with Aunt Betsey, as his family not caring much about the social standards, which forbade the upper, and middle class from mingling with the poor. Dickens wanted to portray David as humanist character, having his own views and convictions that

distinguished him from the majority of people from his class and era. Thus, he and his friends, who for the majority were part of the deprived community, lived in isolation from the larger Victorian society.

The second part of the second chapter has dealt with Fouroulou's Subalternity. Through his character, Mouloud Feraoun wanted to spotlight his own suffering growing up as a colonized individual and highlight the negative impact it had on his life as both a person and author. In parallel, Feraoun's main objective in writing his novel is to introduce the Kabyle culture to the world. This part has revealed that Fouroulou suffered a triple alienation. The first one being his marginalisation as an indigenous, colonized person. The second one is the alienation of the Menrad family in their village as a poor family. The third one is the isolation of the Kabyle community. Mouloud Feraoun wanted to illustrate how Kabylia was a remote region during the colonization of Algeria. Because of the roughness of its mountains "colons" did not settle there, only few tourists as Feraoun calls them dared to visit it, there were no transportation means nor many schools, in addition to the Kabyle language, which distinguished this area even more. Thus, we conclude that Feraoun wrote his novel in order to cease the isolation of his community in regard of the Algerian society and the world.

Through the similarities we have depicted between *David Copperfield* and *Le Fils du Pauvre* we can suggest that Charles Dickens has influenced Mouloud Feraoun in creating the character of Fouroulou Menrad as both David and Fouroulou have stood to portray the struggle of their authors and relate their own life experiences against the universal theme of poverty and revile the marginalisation of the deprived people in Victorian England, and in colonized Algeria especially in the high mountains of Kabylia.

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