

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE  
SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE MOULOUD MAMMERI DE TIZI-OUZOU  
FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES  
Département d'Anglais

جامعة مولود معمري – تيزي وزو  
كلية الآداب و اللغات  
قسم اللغة الانجليزية

Domaine : Lettres et Langues.  
Filière : Langue Anglaise.  
Spécialité : Arts Dramatiques et Lettres  
Anglaise.



Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master in English

***Title:***

Psychological Repression in Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*  
(1946) and Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* (1998)

**Presented by:**  
Ghania ZAMOUM  
Lamia BELKACEMI

**Supervised by:**  
Sabéha LARABI

**Board of Examiners:**

**Chair:** Dr. Fadila BOUTOUCHENT, MCA, Department of English, UMMTO.

**Examiner:** Mrs. Dalila MATMER, MAB, Department of English, UMMTO.

**Examiner:** Mr. Mohamed MOUHOUBI, MAB, Department of English, UMMTO

**Supervisor:** Mrs. Sabéha LARABI, MAA, Department of English, UMMTO.

**Promotion: June, 2017**

N° de série:.....

N° de série :.....

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor Mrs Hadj Bachir Sabéha for her guidance, advice and encouragement throughout the fulfillment of this work.

We are also very indebted to Dr. Fadila Boutouchent , Mrs. Dalila Matner and M<sup>r</sup> Mohamed Mouhoubi for their acceptance to assess our work .

*Dedication*

*To*

*My beloved grand-parents Mamace and Vava Lali*

*My dear parents Malha and Rachid*

*My brothers and sisters whom I love a lot*

*My cousin Drefa for her precious help*

*My mate Lamia and her respected family*

*Ghania*

*To*

*My beloved parents Tassadit and Said*

*My brother Jugurta, my sisters, Lydia, Louiza, Melissa*

*My grand- parents Omar and Zahra*

*My uncles Hamid, Hassen, Nacer, Amar and Areski*

*My aunts Hassina, Zahia, Nora*

*My friends, Jiji, Leila and all my class mates for their great encouragements*

*My mate Ghania and her respected family*

*Thank you all I Love you*

*Lamia*

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Dedication.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>I. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
a. Literature Review .....	1
b. Issue and Working Hypothesis.....	6
c. Methodological Outline.....	7
<b>II. Methods and Materials</b>	
<b>Methods</b>	
a. Sigmund Freud’s Theory on Repression.....	8
b. Harold Bloom’s Theory on Influence.....	10
<b>Materials</b>	
a. Biographical Backgrounds on Tennessee Williamsand Malika Mokeddem.....	13
b. Synopses of <i>A Streetcar Named Desire (1946)</i> and <i>La Nuit de la Lézarde</i> (1998).....	14
c. Historical Backgrounds of <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> and <i>La Nuit de la</i> <i>Lézarde</i> .....	17
<b>III. Results.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>IV. Discussion.....</b>	<b>22</b>

**Chapter One: Affinities between *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde***

1. Blanche and Nour as Victims of Repression.....	22
2. Stanley and Sassi as Agents of Repression.....	30
<b>3. Chapter Two: Tennessee Williams' influence on Malika Mokeddem</b>	
➤ Symbols of Repression in <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> and <i>La Nuit de la Lézarde</i> .....	33

**Chapter Three**

**Section One**

1. Violence as a Cause of Repression in the South.....	47
2. The South as a Place of Escape.....	51

**Section Two**

3. Bathing and Blue as Therapies for repression.....	54
--	----

<b>VI. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>60</b>
----------------------------	-----------

<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>61</b>
--------------------------	-----------

## ***Abstract***

*This dissertation is an attempt to study the influence of the American playwright Tennessee's play **A Streetcar Named Desire** (1946) on the Algerian novelist Malika Mokeddem's novel **La Nuit de la Lézarde** (1998). Our purpose in this piece of research is to shed light on the representation of repression in both works. Throughout our study, we have borrowed some concepts of Sigmund Freud's theory on Repression. For the purpose of relevance; we have also borrowed some concepts from Harold Bloom's theory of influence developed in **The Anxiety of Influence** (1973). Our study reveals a noticeable influence of Williams' play **A Streetcar Named Desire** on Malika Mokeddem's novel **La Nuit de la Lézarde** despite the fact one is a play the second is a novel. Our interest in comparing Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokeddem, though distant in geography, culture and language stems from Mokeddem's recognition of her reading of the American literature. It also comes from the striking biographical background shared by both authors.*

## **I. Introduction**

This piece of research aims to study the American playwright Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1946)'s influence on the Algerian novelist Malika Mokkedem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* (1998). Despite the two authors' distinct geographical, social, historical and political backgrounds, they manifest the same interest to the South. Both view the South as a rich terrain in which their characters can behave spontaneously far from external pressures and rigid conventions. Our study of influence stems from Harold Bloom's theory of the predecessor's influence on the new writer.

Indeed, South America of the post war era and South Algeria of the 'Black Decade' offer appropriate grounds for psychological, religious and social repression. In fact, the atmosphere of the post Second World War in the United States was conservative. However, a new generation of innovative novelists and playwrights find inspiration in the horror of the war. This era was featured with great fear of the bombing of Hiroshima. Like America, Algeria experienced a cruel civil war in 1990 which spilled the blood of thousands innocents. It was characterized by harsh poverty and insecurity. Both Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokkedem often deal with delicate relationships between individuals living in decadent circumstance, leading them to suffer from psychological traumas.

After the emergence of the theoretical approach to psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud, playwrights as well as novelists tend to include Freud's study of the human psyche in their works. They also depict both men and women challenging the barriers of conformism in order to achieve their quest of liberation and social emancipation. This allows the two authors under study to depict accurately the suffering and struggling of their characters against repression.

### a. Review of literature

While handling Tennessee Williams's play *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1946), and Malika Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de La Lézarde* (1998), we have noticed that both authors and works of arts have been scrutinized from different perspectives.

To begin with, James Fisher states '*In the Tennessee Williams Encyclopedia*', that the famous Russian writer Anton Chekhov influenced Tennessee Williams in many ways. According to him, there are several parallels between Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard* and Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, since the two plays contain themes of social class and a changing struggle between the classes. Fisher adds

He [Williams] learned from the Russian author about creating melancholy, character-driven dramas that explore the intimacies of the psyche in subtle, highly symbolic ways." (Fisher, 2000:12).

As still another critic, J. Cash in '*The Mind of the South*' (1996) looked at Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* from a feminist point of view distinguishing between white and black women (Cash, 1996:10). He considers that the Western tradition perceives a white woman as pure, whereas the black one is often associated with lust (Cash, 1996:11). The critic also assumes that, within this Western tradition, the woman's sexual purity was essential. Then, Cash assumes that this commandment is directed to both man and woman, but oddly it has been applied primarily to the woman. He also adds that Patriarchs and kings had many wives, but the adulterous wife or the sexually active maiden was anathema. (Ibid). In addition, the prostitute could be stoned to death for her misconduct. (Ibid). Although, Jesus admonished that intent on stoning as a punishment for their sins, this fierce judgment against women guilty of sexual transgressions has continued. (Ibid). The same critic explains that, during the medieval times, the fall for women



meant sexual misbehavior outside marriage. The critic concludes, Adam's fall had a far more impressive religious meaning, the refusal to serve God, 'Satanic pride'. (Cash,1996:10).

In his essay '*Blanche Dubois and the Kindness of Ending, Streetcar's rape*' (2003), GeorgeToles claims that he finds it shocking that many recent critics insists that strong endings are reductive. Unlike many critics before and after him, Toles does not question the need for the rape to precipitate Blanche's departure from the Kowalski apartment. However, he focuses on the necessity of the rape to provide "a final effect that is densely intermingled and catharsis". (Toles, 2003:7). In other words,the critic explains that the behavior of both Stanley and Blanche is a suitable ending to the play.According to Toles

[My] aim is not to oppose traditional readings of Blanche's significance as the play's "difficult" protagonist, butto show more fully than has been previously attempted how Williams's ending...My contention is that the ending takes a constructs of competing values into simultaneous account and then, in a manner of plotting Blanche's exit, gives her unexpected authority where she previously had none".(Toles, 2003:16).

It is clear that Williams' play has been scrutinized from different angles. Yet, as we can notice it has not been compared to other pieces of literature, though it shares a lot in common with worldwide literary productions.

Like her American counterpart, the Algerian novelist Malika Mokeddem and her work *La Nuit de La Lézarde*(1998) have been subject to a wide range of criticism. Sophie Laval,Nevine El Nossery and Jane Evans studied the novel from different perspectives.

To begin with, in her article entitled '*Oublier les Limites de la Censure*', Sophie Laval states that the Algerian literature developed during a period of political unrest and conflicts (Laval, 2002:2). But this didn't prevent women writers like Mokeddem from challenging the frontiers and silence imposed upon them. Sheclaims

L'acte d'écriture se transforme, dans ces conditions, en un engagement pour lutter contre les limites imposées par un pouvoir politique décidé à taire toutes les

revendications, à faire fi de la liberté personnelle pour imposer une dictature implacable. Les écrivains Algériens se sont retrouvés face à cette situation sociale et politique qui conditionne leur art et rend impossible le développement de celui-ci sans une prise de position contre le pouvoir en place. Ceux qui se risquent à le questionner payent souvent cette audace de leur vie ou, du moins, de leur sécurité. (Laval, 2002:2).

Then, Laval goes further to consider that Mokeddem's aim is not restricted to the rejection of these boundaries in her writing, but to renew the act of writing. (Laval, 2002:2). Mokaddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* can be interpreted in relation to many issues, such as revolution, unemployment, madness, family problems and loss of identity. As the same critic says

Dans *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, le conflit sévit au loin, dans le Nord du pays. L'ambiance qui règne dans le lointain est décrite pour la première fois à la page vingt et un: y dominant la guerre, l'éclatement des familles, le chômage, la folie et la perte d'identité. Les personnages et les actions qui sont à l'avant-plan dans le récit, la vie de Nour et de Sassi dans le ksar, ne trouvent leur explication que par rapport à cette trame plus profonde, ce contexte politique où les atrocités ne se réduisent pas à des actes ou événements isolés... (Laval, 2002:8).

As still another critic, Nevine El Nossery in *'Review of Témoignages fictionnels au féminin: Une réécriture des Blancs de la guerre civile Algérienne'* (2013) argues that the main theme of the novel is death. The latter will not be final and the voices of the silenced will be heard. (El Nossery, 2013:2). She also views Mokeddem's texts as revolving around the theme of wandering, a symbol for woman's refusal to be confined and marginalized, as in Mokeddem's *Les Hommes qui Marchent* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde*. According to her, Mokeddem is "la plus rebelle des écrivaines Arabes". (Ibid). In other words, she is an Arab writer writing in the French language. One of her main points of focus is rape, a horrific crime and tool of male dominance that is most often overlooked, and in fact, blamed on the dishonored and shamed woman of the patriarchal culture. El Nossery catalogues many other women writers who treat the subject of rape. (Ibid). She considers that the women writers, who provide a fictionalized view of history

aim to fight the falsification of Algerian National history by those who denied women their basic humanity. El Nossery concludes by arguing that these writers took up the pen often at great personal risk, and thus their stories have added truth-value. (El Nossery,2013:2).

In her piece of criticism, '*Accommodating Arabic: A Look at Malika Mokeddem's fiction*' (2005) Jane. E. Evans states that Mokeddem is inspired by the stories of her grandmother in her novels. Although, she wrote in the French language, she provides her readers with Arabic equivalents.

In the case of contemporary Algerian author Malika Mokeddem, French, her vernacular language for writing, has been territorialized, that is, made to accommodate her cultural backgrounds. She has stated that as a child in pre-independence French schools, the French language colonized her, but that now it is up to her to colonize it, "... pour y être nomade et, au gré de mes envies, lui imprimer, la lenteur, la flamboyance des contes de l'oralité, l'incruster de mots arabes dont je ne peux pas me passer". (Evans,2005:1).

Besides, Evans claims that *La Nuit de la lézarde* incorporates a nomad figure in the character protagonist Nour. The latter has traveled alone from the Algerian North to the South, after being repudiated by her husband for a childless marriage. (Evans, 2005:4). Evans adds that Dounia, a secondary character, represents for her narrow-minded education at Arabic school of the 1990's by figuratively traveling throughout the world via books. (Ibid). She also affirms that like *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, *L'Interdite*, presents an altered version of typical nomad wandering in the forms of mental flights and sea travel. (Ibid). She goes further in arguing that, *La Nuit de la Lézarde* defies easy categorization as to genre and the novel has been criticized for its lack of action. (Ibid: 6). However, despite this lack of action, *La Nuit de la Lézarde* has distinct poetic overtones. Evans considers that the opening paragraph mainly the negative expressions «aucune fumée» (Mokeddem, 1998:1) «pas d'enfants», «pas d'hommes», «pas de femmes» and «pas de portes». (Ibid) illustrates the dominance of silence in the novel. (Evans ,2005:6).

Last but not least, Evans suggests that Nour and Sassi spend their free time in remembering their former neighbors and their past life in the Ksar with regret. (Evans, 2005:7). Evans believes that this kind of past time resembles the classical Arabic poem or Qasida, in which the narrator is lamenting an important and abandoned place. (Ibid).

Through the review of literature discussed above, we notice that Tennessee Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1946) and Malika Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la Lézarde* (1998) have been analyzed by many authors and critics. While critics of the play as James Fisher are interested in the influence of Russian playwright Anton Chekhov, Cash and Toles studied the portrait of the black, white woman and the significance of the rape. Yet, the critics have overlooked the psychological motives of Blanche's degeneration. Concerning the reviewers of the novel, Jane Evans, Sophie Laval and Nevine El Nossery tried to compare it to Mokeddem's *L'Interdite* and *Des Rêves et des Assassins* focusing on feminine literature in Algeria and the marginalization of women.

### **Issue and Working hypothesis**

From the review of literature on both Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de La Lézarde*, we have noticed that the two works have been studied separately. Yet, it is surprising that little research, to our knowledge, has been devoted to put them into perspective together. So, it remains our task to study repression and influence in the two works under the theoretical approach of both Sigmund Freud and Harold Bloom. We relied on the two theories supposing Tennessee Williams's influence on Malika Mokeddem. Our interest stems from many reasons.

Though the two authors had never met each other, they experienced the same family troubles and rude childhood. They also fight against the repression of their respective societies. Since Mokeddem acknowledges her reading of American literature, she has probably read

Tennessee Williams' play. This explains the striking resemblance between *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde*.

## **Methodological Outline**

We intend to undertake our piece of research following the IMRAD method. Our work starts with an introduction, which states our issue, our working hypothesis, and the different review of literature done on the two writers. In the methods section, we will deal with Sigmund Freud's theory on "Repression" and Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*. In the material section, we will explore Tennessee Williams' and Malika Mokeddem's biographies, then the summaries of their works *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *La Nuit de la Lézarde* and their historical backgrounds. In the Result section, we will provide the findings of our research. The discussion section, will examine deeply the repression of the characters. It is divided into three chapters. The first chapter concerns the issue of repression represented by Blanche and Nour, Stanley and Sassi relying on some concepts of the Freudian theory. The second chapter will tackle the possible influence, by analyzing some symbols namely 'Streetcar' and 'Lizard', 'Light' and 'Darkness'. Finally, the third chapter includes two sections. The first section is concerned with violence as a cause of Repression, in addition to the South as a place of escape, whereas, the second section studies bathing and Blue as therapies of Repression.

## **II. Methods and Materials**

### **1-Methods**

This section of our memoire deals with the theoretical approaches that we will use in our research work. We intend to borrow Sigmund Freud's theory on 'Repression' and Harold Bloom's theory of 'Anxiety of Influence' elaborated in his book *The Anxiety of*

*Influence(1973)*. Our choice of Freud's theories stems from the need to explore the issue of repression in both Tennessee Williams's play *A Streetcar Named Desire (1946)* and Malika Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la Lézarde (1998)* from a psychological standpoint. Bloom's theory is relevant, for the purpose of understanding the ways into which Tennessee Williams exerts an influence on the Algerian novelist distant from him in too many respects.

### **Freud's Theory on Repression**

The understanding of a phenomenon like repression is extremely important for us. Yet, the scope of our memoir prevents us from using all Freud's theories. Therefore, we intend to borrow only those concepts of relevance to the discussion of Repression in both Tennessee Williams' and Malika Mokeddem's works namely the 'Id', the 'Ego', and the 'Super Ego', 'Repression', 'Primal Repression', 'Repression Proper', and the 'Return of the Repressed'. (Freud, 2000:3089).

To begin with, Sigmund Freud is an Austrian therapist, psychologist and neurologist. He is the founding father of psychoanalysis, which is at once a theory and a therapy healing the patients from their physical symptoms by remembering their memories. He is known for his theories on the 'Unconscious Mind' and 'Defense Mechanism', which still influence modern psychology. Among his works we can mention: *The Unconscious(1905)*, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis (1916)*, *The Ego and the Id (1923)* and *An Outline to Psychoanalysis(1938)*.

In his theory, Sigmund Freud made an analogy of an iceberg in order to explain the three levels of the human psyche. According to him, the surface of the iceberg refers to our 'consciousness'. (Freud cited in Boag, 2006:60). The second level is the 'Pre-Consciousness', which consists of all thoughts pressed or kept from the 'conscious', whereas the 'unconscious' resembles the bottom of an iceberg, because of its invisibility. (Ibid). It is clear that Freud's

contribution to psychology described several influential elements in understanding personality such as the '**Id**', '**Ego**', and '**Super Ego**' (Freud, 1900-1905:3089).

**The Id:** it contains the inherited primitive drives or impulses functioning according to pleasure principle. Its objective is to satisfy what Freud calls Primary Process, including hunger and self-protection. (Ibid: 3954).

**The Ego:** It plays the role of a watcher over the wishes of the '**Id**'. It works according to the principle of reality, which requires a particular acceptable behavior, corresponding to the laws of the external world. (Ibid: 3944).

**The Super ego:** It is the part of personality dictating what the person should or shouldn't do. It contains our moral values and social conventions, which are often come from the rules of right and wrong, acquired since childhood from the family and society. (Freud cited in Ivan,2000: 4021).

Furthermore, Freud explains that these three parts are in a constant conflict, since the '**Id**' is checked and oriented by the moral judgment of the '**Super ego**'. This leads the '**Ego**' to use strategies or '**Defense Mechanisms**' to face danger which manifest itself in the form of '**Repression**'. The latter is defined as an attempt made by an individual to direct his desires and impulses toward pleasurable instincts by excluding the desire from consciousness and transferring it to the unconscious. According to Freud, the "Essence of repression lies in turning something away and keeping it at a distance from the conscious". (Freud, 1915:147). He also states that the theory of Repression is the corner-stone on which the whole Structure of psycho-analysis rests. (Freud, 1914:16). In Freud's view, a repression is possible if it leads to some pleasure or satisfaction as he claims

An impulse or urge is present which seeks to release pleasure from a particular source and, if it was allowed free play, would release it. Besides this, another urge is present which works against the generation of pleasure inhibits it that is, or suppresses it. (Freud, 1905:135)

Furthermore, 'Repression' is divided into three phases, '**Primal Repression**', '**Repression Proper**', and the '**Return of the Repressed**'. (Freud, 1939:128). The Primal Repression initiates the information of the unconscious. It consists of denying a physical representative. According to Freud it is

As a result of the experience, an instinctual demand arises which calls for satisfaction. The ego refuses that satisfaction, either because it is paralyzed by the magnitude of the demand or because it recognizes it as a danger... The ego fends off the danger by the process of repression. The instinctual impulse is in some way inhibited, its precipitating cause, with its attendant perceptions and ideas, is forgotten. (Ibid).

Concerning the second phase 'Repression Proper' or 'After Pressure', it affects the mental derivatives of the primary repressed material and also serves to keep guilt. The last phase is the 'Return of the Repressed' in which the repressed elements hidden in the unconscious reappear in consciousness. In Freud's words, it is defined as "Repression of the memory of a distressing sexual experience which occurs in mature years is only possible for those in whom that experience can activate the memory-trace of a trauma in childhood." (Freud, 1896:166).

Freud assumes that Repression can be dangerous, as it leaves symptoms or illness behind it. Thus, Freud believed that old memories of childhood, sexual abuse or lack of affection can lead to unbalance. In order to recover or modify a particular behavior in his patients such as blindness, hysteria, Freud proposes a therapy called "**Hypnosis**" which consists of helping patients to remember their deeper memories to get rid of traumas or shocks. According to Freud, the most significant way of hypnotizing a person is the situation in which the patient is asleep in relation to the external world, but he is aware of the person hypnotizing him. (Freud cited in Ivan, 2000:1604)



## **Harold Bloom's Theory on Influence**

This part of our dissertation explores Harold Bloom's theory on influence discussed in his book *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973). This theory attracts many critics and students working mainly on inspiration, imitation and influence. Therefore, we intend to borrow only some concepts, we think are relevant to the discussion of Williams' influence on Malika Mokeddem namely 'Askesis' and 'Apophrades'.

Harold Bloom is an American literary critic, known for his theories on literature and poetry. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in which he won a gold medal for criticism. He published many books such as, *The Map of Misreading* (1975), *The Western Canon* (1994), *The Anatomy of Influence* (2011) including *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973), a theory of poetry, in which he argues that new poems are inspired from old ones. So, the poet as an 'ephebe' must create a space for himself through misreading the poem of his master. Bloom developed six brands of revisionist concepts. (Bloom, 1973:5).

### **1. Clinamen or poetic misprision:**

Bloom explains that this concept is taken from Lucretius where it means 'swerve' of the atoms so as in order to make change in the world. A poet swerves or deviates from his precursor by reading the latter's poem as to accomplish a 'clinamen'. In other words, the precursor poem arrives to a point which should swerve in the direction of the new poem. (Ibid: 14).

### **2. Tessera:**

Bloom states that in the ancient mystery rituals, it means a token or sign of recognition. It is a fragment of a small pot with which the other fragments would constitute the vessel. In other words, a poet completes his precursor by reading the parent poem keeping the latter's own words and concepts by giving them new meaning. (Ibid).

### **3. Kenosis:**

It is defined according to Bloom, as a device similar in a way to mechanisms our psyches use against repetition compulsions. Kenosis function is to emptying or discontinuity with the precursor. In St Paul's account of Christ humbling himself from God to man, when he accepts reduction from divine to human status. Like Jesus, the poet is emptying himself of his imagination. So, this leads to a deliberate break with the precursor's poem which no more absolute as it seemed. (Ibid: 14-15).

#### **4. Daemonization:**

By '**Daemonization or the counter Sublime**', Bloom means that it is a kind of repression. Poems rise in reaction to others. The new poet turns against his precursor, so that the poet metamorphoses from the state of Apollo to Dionysus. Poems rise in reaction to other poems. For Bloom, the strong poet is never possessed by a daemon, since it leads to total identification. By turning against the precursor's sublime, the new poet undergoes Demonization. (Ibid: 15).

#### **5. Askesis:**

Bloom asserts that the poet is subject not emptying but of curling. The later poet doesn't undergo a revisionary movement of emptying but of curling as in Kenosis, to separate himself from others including the precursor, he does this by situating it in regard to the precursor.(Ibid).

#### **6. Apophrades:**

Or the '**Return of the Dead**', Bloom takes the word from the Athenian dismal or unlucky days in which the dead returned to inhabit in their previous houses. Strong poets keep returning from the dead. The new poem's seems, as if it was written by the precursor himself. (Ibid: 15-16)

It is evident that Bloom's theory on influence concerns poetry, however this does not prevent us from applying it on the play *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde* and study its relevance in both works.

#### **1- Materials**

This part of our work intends to look for possible biographical kinship in the lives of Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokeddem with relevance to the issue of repression. Then, we will give synopses to *A Streetcar Named Desire (1946)* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde (1998)*. As a last step, we will put the two works in their historical contexts.

**a. Biographical background of Tennessee Williams**

Tennessee Williams is one of America's greatest playwrights. His full name is Thomas Lanier Williams, born on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1911, in Columbus (Mississippi). His father Cornelius Coffin Williams was a shoe company executive and his mother Edwina Dakin was the daughter of a Southern Episcopal minister. She was hysteric and over protective. (Dawson, 2009:7).

Williams's past and family environment influences his writing. His father was an aggressive, abusive and drinking gambler. He was emotionally an absent parent, since he preferred working instead of parenting. In addition to this, Cornelius favored his youngest son, may be of Williams's effeminate character. He nicknamed him 'Sissy' which leads Williams to be a victim of trouble childhood that are clearly rooted in his adolescence. For this, Williams grew in the South very close to his maternal family. His mother has lived the adolescence and young womanhood of a spoiled Belle. Despite her harshness, she provided her son with love and tender. Moreover, she encouraged him to fulfill his passion for writing by offering him a typewriter. In fact, Williams had an intimate relation with her. (Previn, 2012:3).

Tennessee Williams was influenced by the events of his earlier life, which he had repressed and then being a homosexual. He suffered from diphtheria that paralyzed his legs for nearly two years. He was alone with his mentally ill sister Rose with whom he had a close relation. But the latter's lobotomy leads him to become alcoholic. Furthermore, Williams's long companion Frank Merlot died of cancer. All these tragic events caused Williams's repression. As a result, Williams described his childhood in Mississippi as happy and carefree. But this sense of

belonging and comfort were lost when his family moved to the urban environment of St. Louis Missouri, where he experienced misery and poverty with his crazy father. Some of his successful plays: *The Spring Storm (1938)*, *The Battle of Angels (1939)*, *The Glass Menagerie (1944)*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1955)* and *The Night of the Iguana (1961)*. He wrote also novels and poems. (Previn, 2012:5).

In 1946, he wrote *A Streetcar Named Desire*, another great success in the American theatre. Since the first night, the play obtained the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1948, and turned into a movie within three years. Tennessee Williams continued his writing until his death on February 25<sup>th</sup> in the Elysee Hotel in New York City, filled with half-finished bottle of wine and pills.

#### **b. Biographical background of Malika Mokeddem**

Malika Mokeddem is an Algerian novelist, born on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1949, in Kenadsa (Bechar) in the Algerian South. She is the daughter of an illiterate nomad family composed of ten children. She studied in the primary school of her native village. At the secondary school, she was the unique girl to go to school and obtaining her baccalaureate exam in Bechar. She specialized in Nephrology in Medicine in Oran. In 1979, she settled in Montpellier, where she devoted herself completely to literature. (Wikipedia, 2016:5).

Mokeddem's personal life, especially her rejection by her parents influenced her writings. Her father rejected her as she transcended the traditional values and conduct of women. In addition to her parents' favor over her brothers. Her works reflect different autobiographical details of her own private life. She also tackled and denounced the violence and atrocity of the 'Black Decade', which made her the target of the Islamists Fundamentalists in Algeria. The latter were the enemies of artists, especially when a woman is concerned. Under the threats of F.I.S party, Mokeddem exiled in France looking for more security. (Ibid).

The Algerian novelist, Mokeddem almost covered the Algerian history from colonialism to independence, and even after. Among her works we cite: *Les Hommes qui Marchent* (1990), *Le Siècle des Sauterelles* (1992), *L'Interdite* (1994), *Des Rêves et des Assassins* (1995), *La Nuit de la Lézarde*(1998), *N'Zid* (2001) and *Mes Hommes* (2005).

**c. Synopsis of Tennessee Williams *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1946)**

*A Streetcar Named Desire* is a three acts play published in 1946. It explores the destination to which desire leads. It is set in the exterior of two-corner building in a street in New Orleans, which is named Elysian Fields, in South America. The play centers on four main characters, Stella and her husband Stanley, Stella's sister, Blanche, and Stanley's friend Mitch.

In act one, the play opens with, the unexpected arrival of Blanche Dubois, a school teacher from Laurel, carrying all her own luggage. Then, she informs her sister, Stella that her visit is due to her shattered nerves from teaching. But noticing that the apartment has only two rooms, she hesitates to stay. So, she tells Stella that Belle Reve, their ancestral home, has been lost following the death of all their family. Even though, Blanche seems shocked by the quarter, she decides to stay. When Stanley arrives home, he learns that Belle Reve is lost. Thus, he suspects Blanche of taking her sister's share of money. So, he rifles through her things until the latter shows him the evidence detailing the estate of its bankruptcy.(Previn, 2012:6).

In act two, Stanley considers Blanche as an intruder in his house. He is afraid that she wants to destroy his marriage to Stella. So, tensions continue to rise between the two as Stanley persists to know all her past in Laurel. But Blanche denies all this, starting a relation with Mitch who is looking for a bride as he promises to his dying mother. So, Blanche relates to him about her marriage with a young boy who commits suicide after a long struggle with homosexuality.(Previn,2012:7).

In the third act, Stella is preparing for Blanche's birthday. As Stanley reveals everything to Mitch about Blanche's immoral behavior in The Flamingo Hotel, where she invites gentlemen, the latter does not come. In addition, Stanley also informs Stella that Blanche is fired from her job because she is discovered with one of her seventeen old students. Stella defends her sister by answering that the death of the young man she married deeply affected her. (Previn, 2012:8).

At the end of the play, Mitch refuses to marry Blanche because she lies about her past considering her not clean enough to enter his house. During Stella's stay at the hospital, Stanley raped Blanche and decides to transfer her into a mental asylum.

#### **d. Synopsis of Malika Mokedem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* (1998)**

Mokeddem's *La Nuit de La Lézarde* is a novel published in 1998. It is divided into eleven chapters. It is set in an abandoned Ksar in the Algerian South. All the inhabitants deserted except two friends, a middle aged woman 'Nour' and a blind man 'Sassi' who persists to live in this abandoned desert.

Nour's sorrow starts after her husband informs her that he will get a new wife, since Nour cannot give him children. So, she refuses the imposed marriage and leaves her husband's house wandering in the Sahara seeking more freedom and independence. Her first contact with the Ksouriens deceives her, as many speculations circulated about her mysterious past, especially living alone without any family or husband. Then, she settles in a dead man's house, who hanged himself because his wife betrayed him with another man. Later on, Nour avows that his ghost haunts the house; she even hears his voice calling her in the night. Nour also tells Sassi about her several relations with passengers until she meets her last lover, who promises that he will come back but never comes.

After the departure of the dwellers of the Ksar, Nour and Sassi suffer from loneliness and sadness in their daily struggles with the silence of the desert. So, they spend their times in growing all sorts of vegetables in their little garden in order to sell them in the village. From time to time, Nour paints her house. She finds consolation in the visit of Dounia, an adolescent girl, who finds refuge in her books, which are a flight to external world. In addition to the two little boys, Kamel and Alilou, who help Nour to endure her solitude in the Ksar. But the most Faithfull companion is the lizard 'smicha' to which Nour compares herself.

Nour often complains from an ache in her breast, until one day Sassi finds her unconscious and transports her to the hospital, where doctor Zineb warns her from returning home. The novel ends with Nour's return home, where she dies just after.

**e. Historical background of *A Street Named Desire* (1946)**

As an autobiographical dramatist, Tennessee Williams' play reflects his private life and personal experiences that he encounters in the harsh and cruel South. *A Streetcar Named Desire* is typically Williams' own experiences in New Orleans. Critics believe that the play is based on his sister's own life. Williams's points out in his preface to the play.

[ ] It is only in his work that an artist can find reality and satisfaction, for the actual world is less intense than the world of his invention and consequently his life, without recourse to violent disorder does not seem very substantial. The right condition for him-that in which his work is not only convenient but unavoidable.(Williams, 1947:2).

During the period in which the play was set, New Orleans was transforming from the Old Aristocratic South to the New Industrialized South. America was becoming a melting pot i.e. the majority of immigrants, emancipated Africans and Americans and job seeking Americans chose to reside in. (Sharouki, 2008:10).

The late 1940's were characterized by fear of government and of nuclear attack. People felt alienated, they could no longer trust traditions, and they looked for new stability".(Sharouki, 2008:11). According to Alder "Streetcar Named Desire examines post-World War II America ...Americans were still escaping reality through dance halls and bars, movies and sex".(Sharouki,2008:2).

It was here that he was inspired to create *A Streetcar Named Desire*. It is said that he saw on the View Carré, two streetcars. One was named 'Desire' and the other 'Cemetery', which he thought was somehow symbolic of life itself. (Sharouki, 2008:3).

**f. Historial background of *La Nuit de La Lézarde* (1998)**

During the time of the publication of Mokeddem's novel, Algeria witnessed the bloodiest years in its history. This era is referred to as the 'Black Decade', which resulted in the death of at least 100.000 civilians. (Bennan, 2015:1).

Despite the president Bendjedid and his party F.L.N's reforms in the 12<sup>th</sup>, June 1990, the F.I.S party won the election with a quotas of 54%. (Ibid). At the beginning, this party was praised and supported by most of the Algerian for its philanthropic work in comparison to its predecessor party F.L.N. But the newly elected party imposed the veil on women working, and took gradual measures against video-shops and liquor stores. As Ali Benhadj, a co-leader of the party claims: "To ban France from Algeria intellectually and ideologically and to be done for all with thosewhom France has poisoned milk". But in fact, the party's program was an indirect colonialism restricting the individual freedom.(Fearon and Laitin,2006:8).

In spite of women's contribution in the war for independence, the conservative party refused to give them equal rights as men. Women were the first target for the fundamentalists who wanted to reduce their role to the domestic sphere, denying them any attempt to develop



their skills or career. The Islamic Salvation Front was preaching a narrow traditional view of women in society and a new government ruled by the laws of the Sharia, after; the F.I.S was put aside by its rival party. So, the latters are organized into armed groups who attacked slaughtered police officers or army, then teachers, judges, journalists, artists and intellectuals. During this period which lasted ten years, the Algerians lived in terror, many had lost their families.

The shock and the memories of this black tragedy still affect many Algerians. Mokeddem herself had lost two of her close friends Abdelkader Alloula and Tahar Djaout who are murdered. In addition to many intellectuals and artists of the 1990's. This explained the exile of many of them abroad, but the novel reflects some autobiographical details and events in her life. To be more explicit, her heroine Nour's lack of love and rejection of her family is similar to Mokeddem's life. Like Dounia, Mokeddem fought her lack of affection and marginalization by the family in plunging in books looking for her identity.

### III. Results

This part of our work deals with the results reached through our research, as stated before. Our purpose is to study the way the Algerian novelist Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* is influenced by the American playwright Tennessee Williams' play *Streetcar Named Desire* (1946).

Our first finding is that in spite of Mokeddem's and Williams' distant geographical, cultural, and language backgrounds, they converge in their treatment of repression be it psychological or sexual in their works under study.

As still another result, we have concluded both Mokeddem and Williams themselves lived psychological and sexual repression in their past lives i.e. their childhood. This has pushed them to reflect repression in their works.

Third, our reading of psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's theories on repression and Harold Bloom's theory on influence helped us to reach the result that authors (novelists, playwrights or else) may produce the same works under the same circumstances of repression. It is worth mentioning here that both authors lived in the South (South America and South Algeria), which have been places of repression.

Besides, this comparative study has revealed that the American playwright Tennessee Williams lived repression in his conservative society that condemns him for his gayness. His character Blanche is a portrait of his sister Rose who suffered from lack of balance in her personality. Like Williams' protagonist Blanche, Rose is transferred to an asylum too. We also find that Stanley resembles Williams' abusive father. Like her protagonist Nour, Malika Mokeddem rebels against the norms and values of her patriarchal society by rejecting the social

and religious conventions to live as an independent woman detached from the barriers of both her family and restrictive society.

Last and most importantly, Algerian novelist Malika Mokeddem recognizes herself in more than an interview that she has read American literature. The result is that, she may have read Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and influenced by it. Because of these interesting findings, we can safely discuss our issue that is repression in both *La Nuit de la Lézarde* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

All in all, both Williams and Mokeddem revolt against the constraints of marriage in that Williams became a homosexual, while Mokeddem prefers to engage in a free sexuality far from the boundaries of marriage.

#### **IV. Discussion**

In this part of our work, we will shed light on the common affinities between *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de La Lézarde* by focusing on Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokeddem's depiction of the Psychological repression of their characters. As a first step, we need to analyze the characters Blanche and Nour, Stanley and Sassi. Secondly, we have opted to study some symbols that best represent repression. We also need to borrow some concepts from Freud's theory on Repression.

##### **Chapter One: Affinities between Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde***

This chapter intends to study repression in *A Street car Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde*. In the former, the events center on sexual attraction between Blanche and her brother in law, Stanley. In the latter, the blind man Sassi is attracted by his friend Nour. The two heroines Blanche and Nour are struggling against their sexual desires.

##### **1. Blanche and Nour as Victims of Repression**

The two protagonists, Blanche and Nour struggle against their sexual desire. This is noticeable throughout their lives and interaction with their surroundings. Their semantic impacts of their names try to challenge the imposed codes in order to affirm their individuality. While Nour manages to survive after a divorce, Blanche tries to live after Allan's suicide.

To begin with, *A Streetcar Named desire* portrays the psychological states of the protagonist Blanche Dubois who is extremely suffering. The latter is a school teacher, once married to Allan at a very early age. As time passes, she discovers the homosexuality of her husband. Through our reading of the play, we know that Stanley finds her love letters while he was rifling in her things. In fact, the letters are very precious to Blanche, since they are the only

thing reminding her of Allan who died at a very young age. This why, she loses her head and panicked when Stanley discovers her love letters. Because she considers that everyone has something personal to hide from others. Blanche claims in this context “Everyone has something he won't let others touch because of their intimate nature”. (Williams, 1947: 42).

In fact, Williams' play includes some personal details of his personal life. Tennessee Williams' experienced a troubled childhood, as we have already mentioned it, in the biographical section. His father preferred his eldest son, because of Williams' effeminate character. By the way, he nicknamed him 'Sissy'. All these events affected Williams' life and influenced many of his works including *A Streetcar Named Desire*. So, we can say that Allan's struggle with homosexuality is inspired from Williams's real life.

In addition, she regrets the way she has deceived Allan by failing in understanding and assisting her husband, when he was in great need of her. We also learn from Blanche that, he was a sensitive person; this is why he is easily hurt by Blanche's reaction towards his homosexuality. Once again, Tennessee Williams attracts our attention to the extreme suffering of Blanche who is blaming herself for the death of her beloved husband.

Blanche: Poems a dead boy wrote. I hurt him the way that you would like to hurt me, but you can't! I'm not young and vulnerable any more. But my young husband was and I never mind about that! Just give them back to! (Williams, 1947:42).

Like Blanche, Nour is a victim of her failure in marriage as she opposed her husband. As a matter of fact, Nour left her home when the latter announces to her that he decided to get a second wife on the plea of not giving him children. “[Un jour] l'homme à qui on l'avait mariée lui avait déclaré, puisqu'elle ne lui donnait pas d'enfants, il lui fallait une autre épouse...” (Mokeddem, 1947:34). It means that with or without her consent, he will get a second wife. Because Nour's patriarchal society forbids women from saying their own words. Since the laws and conventions of that tribal society are initiated and applied by men in order to restrict women's

freedom. Being tired of being a mere slave to her husband, Nour breaks out and rejects all the constraints to embrace life in the huge desert. In this kind of society, children are considered to be indispensable in the life of a couple. In fact, this issue is not the concern of the couple but of the whole family and tribe. Men often blame women for not having children taking advantage of their superior position to crush women's rights. All in all, Nour is very strangled by this repressive Algerian patriarchal society.

Furthermore, Nour settled in the Ksar where all the inhabitants abandoned their houses, so that no one can interfere in her private life. As a result, she becomes a free woman refusing to bear the unjust life, she was forced into. So, she gave voice to all her hidden desires to come back to life. In this desert, she escapes the laws of religion and taboos to affirm her own identity. From a Freudian perspective, we can say that every human being has an 'Id' which consists of instinctual drives or Libido as Freud calls it. It accompanies us from birth until death and its unique objective is to seek pleasure. Balance between the three elements, 'Id', 'Ego', 'Superego' is indispensable in a stable person. Through our analysis of Nour's character, we noticed the way she repressed her desires because of the risk of punishment of her patriarchal society. To be more explicit, her duties to her husband and to marriage as a sacred institution in the Islamic religion obliged Nour to postpone all her sexual desires in front of the judgments of her society. So, all the previous factors function as a means to reinforce Nour's 'Superego'. (Evans:3954).

Nour avait admis, en définitive, ce que cela signifiait: elle était une femme libre! Elle en fut la première étonnée car ce mot, liberté, n'était pas de son langage. Jusque-là, il n'avait été qu'une aspiration instinctive, limitée au refus de ce qu'elle ne pouvait endurer, sans revendication particulière. Il lui a fallu des années et un célibat forcé pour qu'elle comprenne que, par sa constance, son opposition était devenue affirmation d'elle-même. (Mokeddem, 1947:36).

Always within the same context, just after her escape from her husband's house, Nour rejects all the moral judgments of her 'Superego' which fails in his mission in checking the excesses of

the 'Id'. So, we can say that the latter takes advantage of the 'Superego' unawareness to show out in the conscious.

Je n'avais ni l'envie, ni le courage d'affronter encore une fois un nouveau bourg, de mettre encore une fois des années à me faire accepter comme je suis : une femme seule, obligée de cacher ses amants... (Ibid: 29)

Obviously, Nour is very similar to the novelist Malika Mokeddem, since both of them suffered from an oppressive husband. Mokeddem experienced a harsh childhood that deeply disturbs her life. Her illiterate and rude father preferred his sons over her. In addition, she was rejected by the latter, since she transgressed the social and religious norms of her patriarchal society. From our reading of the novel, we find some hints of her real life. This is why, she engaged in a battle to denounce the injustice imposed upon women. Like Nour, she escapes the boundaries of the Algerian conservative society, in addition to the rejection of her family. In the above quotation Mokeddem avows her rejection of the conventions imposed by her patriarchal society.

J'ai quitté mon père pour apprendre à aimer les hommes, ce continent encore hostile car inconnu. Et je lui dois aussi de savoir me séparer d'eux. Même quand je les ai dans la peau. J'ai grandi parmi des garçons. (Mokeddem, 2011:1).

Concerning Blanche, she has lost many members of her family. So, she reminds lonely without neither family nor husband taking care of Belle Reve, her mansion in Laurel.

It is noticeable that Nour lives alone without family or husband; this makes her subject to many speculations among the inhabitants of the Ksar. Sassi declares on this subject

Tu es restée au Ksar, suscitant des rumeurs contradictoires et la convoitise de bien des hommes. Une femme sans mari, sans enfants, sans aucune famille et qui, de surcroît, leur affirmait en crânant qu'elle n'avait pas même pas de passé... Je te soupçonne de t'être bien divertie à nos dépens. (Ibid :55).

Similarly, Blanche is the victim of the culture that restricts women's liberty to have free sexual relationships. This is the reason for being condemned by society in Laurel for her reputation in the Flamingo Hotel. This is well illustrated in this passage as Stanley declares: "She is as famous in Laurel as if she was the President of the United States, only she is not respected by any party!" (Ibid: 99).

Both Blanche and Nour escaped then rebelled against the social conventions of their respective societies seeking more freedom. This is why; she chooses to live in the Flamingo or Tarantula hotel which became her kingdom. Relying on Freud's theory, every human being has an unconscious side called 'the Id' or 'libido' which seeks to satisfy its pleasures above all. Then, when Blanche was married to Allan, her 'Id' was controlled by her 'Superego' represented by her American conservative society; restricting women sexuality inside marriage. The latter has to consult 'the ego' who warns him from danger or risk of punishment. So, Blanche's 'Id' is restricted by the citizens of Laurel, who condemned and fired her, since the pleasures of the 'Id' are reached in accordance to the orders of 'Superego'. In Blanche's case, after the death of her husband, followed by all the members of her family, she seeks refuge in the Flamingo Hotel, where she has several sexual intercours with strangers. Consequently, her 'Superego' becomes weak paving the way to the 'Id' to take advantage of his weakness to manifest in the consciousness. Blanche is expelled by Laurel's town's people, where she was considered a prostitute. This leads her to redeem from all her sins. This explains the way she repressed all her sexual desires in the Kowalski apartment, especially with Mitch. So, when the latter shows his desire to have a sexual relation with her, she rejects him. She even asks him to marry her if he really loves her. This proves that her 'Superego' is well developed as she succeeds in controlling herself.



[ ] She moved to the Flamingo! A second class hotel which has the advantage of not interfering in the private social life of the personalities there! The Flamingo is used to all kinds of goings-on. But even the management of the Flamingo was impressed by Dame Blanche! In fact they were so impressed by Dame Blanche that they requested her to tum in her room-key-for permanently! This happened a couple' of weeks before she showed here. (Ibid: 99).

In addition to her feeling of guilt, Blanche was affected by the loss of her teaching position, after her affair with a seventeen student has been discovered. This is the result of the repression of her past life with her young love Allan. So, any detail or memory of the past related to Allan will make her remember and live once again her suffering. This idea is emphasized in her use of the French language with Mitch. Instead of speaking the English language mastered by Mitch, Blanche prefers to speak in French in order to express her inner impulses.

Voulez-vous couchez avec moi ce soir? Vous ne comprenez pas? Ah, quelle dommage! I mean it's a damned good thing- I've found some liquor. (Williams, 1947:88)

From our reading of the play, we deduce that the Varsouviana music to which Blanche and her husband were listening is symbolic. It was played just before Allan shot himself with a revolver. So, when Blanche hears this music with Mitch, all her repressed memories came back to her mind, "There now, the shot! It always stops after that. Yes, now it's stopped." (Ibid: 114). According to Freud, this phenomenon is called 'The return of the repressed'. It consists of repressed memories that come back to the individual's mind, causing him trauma and hysteria which is the result of hallucinations. As Freud points out, "It is true that. They have driven it out of consciousness and out of memory but these repressed wishful impulses continue to exist in the unconscious" (Ivan, 2000:1759). It is the case of Blanche, imprisoned in her fictitious, imaginary world.

As Blanche is tormented by the death of her husband, she seeks refuge and consolation in her intimacies with strangers. After her encounter with Mitch, Blanche hoped to find stability with

him. But the latter deceives her. This is clear through their conversation where he blames her for her past experience in the Tarantula Hotel.

Blanche: Yes, a big spider! That's where I brought my victims. Yes, I had many intimacies with strangers. **After the death of Allan-intimacies with strangers was all I seemed able to fill my empty heart with ...** I think it was panic, just panic, that drove me from one to another, hunting for some protection—here and there, in the most-unlikely places—even, at last, in a seventeen-year-old boy—but somebody wrote the superintendent about it—This woman is morally unfit for her position! (ibid: 118) Emphasis. Ours.

In the above quotation, it is noticeable that Blanche is compared to the tarantula; since she attracts her lovers in the same way the tarantula traps and catches whatever falls in her web. Stanley avows to Blanche that her sister was “washed up like poison in Laurel.” (Williams, 1947:99). After her departure to the asylum she tells the doctor: “Whoever, you are I have always depended on the kindness of strangers”. (Ibid). Williams’ protagonist Blanche is very similar to his mother, transferred into a mental institution when Williams was only nine, as he declares it “When I was nine years old, I made my first visit to a mental institution”. (O’Connor, 2004:1). Later, his beloved sister Rose enters a mental asylum too because of her loss of balance, when she reached adolescence. She is moved into hospital in 1937. This affected deeply Williams who has a friendly relation with his sister.

It was my first visit to the site but not my last, for my mother’s brief but thrice-repeated stay was echoed tragically in my older sister’s long-term residency, a life time, really, a life sentence, one that began soon after she reached adulthood. (O’Connor, 2004:1).

Malika Mokeddem’s protagonist Nour resembles in many ways Tennessee Williams’s character Blanche. In the novel Nour is compared to the Lizard which is sexually powerful.

Tu n’as pas d’âme sœur? Je n’ai pas vu ici d’autre lézard aussi grand...  
Comme s’il dédaignait la remarque, Smicha tend le cou, redresse un peu plus la tête et progresse, avec un dandinement prudent, en direction de l’assiette. (Ibid: 150).

Moreover, the repressive desires, the silence and the loneliness of the desert influence Nour's psyche «[Cependant], au plus sombre de ses moments, Nour ne perdait jamais l'idée que cet isolement était la rançon de sa vie affranchie. »(Ibid: 38).

From our analysis, we notice that Nour suffers from an unlimited excessive desire that resulted from the harsh nature of the desert and her loneliness. All these lead Nour to be hysteric to the extent that she imagines someone telling her «Je t'aime», leading her to suffer from a mysterious pain in her breast. In this sense, Freud points out, that patients feel ill as they cannot remember the events that traumatize them. This is called Amnesia, as it is shown in this quotation.

Nour ne sait pas où commence en elle cet abysse, ce vertige sans nom. Sans fond ni les trahisons de l'amour ni la succession des amants de passage n'ont pu l'en éloigner. Il reste ouvert comme un mirage aveuglant vers lequel elle tendra toujours...Nour cligne des yeux et murmure : « Je t'aime » sur un ton de supplice. Juste pour troubler le silence. Juste pour l'illusion. (Ibid: 87).

Both Blanche and Nour transgress the rules imposed by their societies by having sexual intercourse even with married men. In fact, Blanche betrays her elite backgrounds of a refined and respected lady by exposing herself to Stanley. Blanche seduces her sister's husband as she declares: "...I called him a little boy and laughed and flirted. Yes, I was flirting with your husband". (Williams, 1947:44). Nour hoped to find love with her mysterious lover but the latter abandons her. She confesses to Sassy that he helped her to bear her solitude in the ksar. « Sans lui, je ne serais pas restée dans un Ksar désert. Mais j'aurais continué à transporter le désert en moi. Sans lui, la nuit aurait fini par éteindre mes jours ». (Ibid : 58). Her mysterious lover helps Nour in resisting the solitude of ksar.

Being an attractive woman, Nour seduces the husband of her neighbor Zoubida. Nour justifies herself by believing that Zoubida is very busy with her children that she neglects the needs of her husband. As she tells Sassi, « Peut-être. Quoi qu'il en soit, je ne pouvais pas lui

prendre ce qu'elle n'a jamais eu: le plaisir ...». (Ibid.110).Nour is considered a prostitute in her conservative society,by having sexual intercourses,and giving freedom to her desires.

As far as Blanche is concerned, she was ready to stop her relations with strangers seeking stability and protection with Mitch, but he deceives her, ashe considers her unsuitable for marriage. As he declares coldly“you're not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother”. (Williams, 1947:121). By doing so, Mitch prefers to protect his honor rather than his love.

It becomes clear, from the above analysis that both Mokeddem and Williams are very akin in their portrayal of sexual repression of the main characters in their respective works *La Nuit de la Lézarde* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

## **2. Stanley and Sassi as Agents of Repression**

Though, they may seem opposite as Stanley is described as a violent man, whereas Sassi is depicted in angelic terms, both characters are blinded by their sexual drives.

To begin with, Stanley is a complex character embodying both features of violence and sensitivity. Tennessee Williams pictures him as a domineering man without any patient for Blanche's presence in the flat. The name 'Stanley'is Polish name which means 'Island name'. Italso derives from the old English elements 'Stan' (Stone).In other words, Stanley is perceived by Stella and Blanche as behaving like a beast. With reference to Freud, we can say that the lack of intimacy between Stanley and his wife leads him to repress his desire to his wife because of Blanche'spresence. This is the reason which pushed him to oppose her stay in the apartment.In addition, when he sees Blanche for the first time; Stanley hesitates to engage into a sexual relation with her. This is due to his 'ego', divided between his sexual attraction towards Blanche and the moral judgment of his society. Here, we understand that Stanley succeeds in controlling

his 'Id';however, it happens that the 'Id' escapes from the unconscious to the conscious. At the end of the play, Stanley loses control over his 'Id' which demands satisfaction.

Although he behaves in a violent way, Stanley loves his wife Stella; this is very clear in his reaction after she left him. "My baby doll's left me! Eunice? I want my baby. Eunice! I'll keep on ringing' until I talk with my baby!"(Williams, 1946:59). From Stanley's behavior, we conclude that he insults and even beats his wife in front of his sister. After her departure from home, Stanley weeps as a child begging her to come back and ask for forgiveness with a violent cry. In this sense, Stanley feels guilty after hitting his wife. This phase of repression is called by Freud 'After pressure'.

Stanley:STELL-LAHHH

He falls to his knees on the steps and presses his face to her belly, curving a little with maternity. Her eyes go blind with tenderness as she catches his head and raises him level with her. He snatches the screen door open and lifts her off her feet and bears her into the dark flat. (Ibid: 63)

In addition to Nour, Mokeddem develops another character Sassi who suffers from repression and the impact of the silence of the desert. He is described as Nour's best friend. Though a blind man, Sassi develops an incredible way of his other senses. Mokeddem refers to him and Nour as the 'Night' and the 'Day'. As it is mentioned at the opening of the novel, "Ne restent plus, dans ce site esseulé, que l'aveugle Sassi et Nour "La nuit et la lumière". (Mokeddem, 1998:11-12). Sassi is portrayed as a faithful and loving person. Like Stanley, he feels lost without Nour; she is the light illuminating his life. After her hospitalization, Sassi declares to himself.

Nour, lumière de ma nuit. Chaque jour, je suis allé vers elle, comme un somnambule, sans jamais l'atteindre. Elle prend tous les chemins de la fuite : Le rire des images insolites, son désir pour d'autres hommes... Quand je crois l'avoir enfin rejointe, elle fait une pirouette et me renvoie à mille lieues... Je la coucherai, l'embrasserai et lui ferai l'amour à en perdre le souffle, à combler tous ses manques et les miens. (Idid: 172).

Relying on Freud's theory, Sassi has a strong sexual desire towards Nour, which is evident from his repeated trials to touch her dress. By doing so, he experiences a 'Primal Repression' which happens when the 'Id' makes calls for the satisfaction of his needs. But his 'Super ego' which consists of his surroundings prevents him, as it is shown in this quotation 'Primal Repression' is accompanied with physical representative of the repressed desire. In the novel, Sassi asks Nour about the color of her dress and even touches it « [ ] Dis-moi, comment est ta robe? » (Ibid:60). When the blind man hears the steps of someone coming, he drops Nour's dress. « Soudain il lâche la robe et tend l'oreille en direction du village: Quelqu'un vient un pas très léger ». (Ibid).

Moreover, 'Repression Proper' concerns the mental derivatives of the 'primal Repression'. The 'Return of the Repressed' is where repression failed as the repressed elements hidden in the unconscious succeeds to reappear in the conscious. As far Sassi is concerned, his failure to repress his desire towards Nour leads his repressed desire to return once again to his conscious, is what is called by Freud the 'Return of the Repressed'.

Sassi compares himself to a little desert. This analogy shows his great desire. The desert has a great need of water, in the same way Sassi needs love in his life to appease his thirst. By comparing himself to a black desert Sassi wants to express the absence of light in his life, because his blindness. Literally speaking, Sassi longs for light to admire beauty of Nour and metaphorically speaking, Sassi feels isolated in the Ksar, which is abandoned by its inhabitants. So, his loneliness and the routine characterizing his life lead him to think that he is a desert, as it is shown in the novel.

Et le reg, et le reg?  
Aveugle de lumière.  
Aveugle de lumière ?  
Alors je suis un petit reg, un petit desert noir. Comme lui, ma carcasse absorbe des sensations par tous. (Ibid :15).

Similarly, Stanley is blinded by his sexual desires towards his wife and even Stella. This is revealed through Stella's and Blanche's conversation about his drives.

Stella It isn't on his forehead and it isn't genius.

Blanche: Oh. What is it, and where? I would like to know.

Stella: It's a drive that he has. You're standing in the light, Blanche!  
(Williams, 1947:50).

From all what has been said above, we conclude that both Williams and Mokeddem portray the two protagonists Stanley and Sassi as asexual. Unlike, Blanche and Nour, they succeeded in repressing their sexual desires. So, they do not suffer from hysteria.

#### a. **Symbols of repression in *A Street-car Named Desire* and *La Nuit de La Lézarde***

This part of our work aims to analyze some symbols that best illustrate repression in the two works. Both Mokeedem and Williams tend to use different symbols in order to describe accurately their characters' struggle against their repressed desires. Thus, we have started with the symbolic meaning of the two titles 'the Streetcar', and 'the lizard' then, we will move to the symbolic use of 'Light' and 'Darkness'. Our study will also include the 'Blue color' as a symbol of Repression. Therefore, we have opted for Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*. The selected theory is relevant to the study of possible influence between Mokeddem and Williams and selected only the ones that we think are relevant to our analysis. We suppose that Mokeddem acknowledges her reading of the American literature.

#### **1. The Streetcar and the lizard**

It is obvious that both Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokeddem are similar in their way of depicting and exploring their characters' desires. In fact, the two authors used real symbols that exist in their characters' setting. To be more explicit, the streetcar is set in New Orleans; the lizard is Nour's faithful friend in the desert.

As far as Williams' play is concerned, Blanche was told to take a streetcar named Desire in her way to Stella's house. "They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at-Elysian Fields."(Williams, 1947:2).In fact, Desire is the name of a street in New Orleans that Williams uses to show, that a person blinded by his desire is lead to Cemeteries or death. The title of the play *A Streetcar Named Desire* refers to the way desire can drive one to destruction.

Like her counterpart, Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la lézarde* sheds light on the suffering of the protagonist Nour, in the oppressive South.Mokeddem uses the 'Lizard' as a symbolic reference to Nour's repression and anxiety.This reptile is a prominent symbol depicted from the opening lines of the novel. Significantly, this animal is portrayed like a prophet sent by God in order to predict the secret life existing in human being, in the same way that the lizard does. In her Doctorate thesis entitled '*la poeticité de l'Epigraphe dans Trois Romans de Malika Mokeddem*', Faïza Baïche assumes that the Algerian novelist opened her novel by an epigraph which consists of an extract from René Char's poem *La Complainte du Lézard Amoureux*.

L'écho de ce pays est sûr.  
J'observe, je suis bon prophète ;  
Je vois tout de mon petit mur,  
Même tituber la chouette.  
Qui mieux qu'un lézard amoureux,  
Peut dire les secrets terrestres?(Mokeddem,1998)

The epigraph is related to the title. According to Baïche, the lizard is a reptile who observes everything from his wall without being perceived by others. It is the case of Nour is in hurry to arrive to the Ksar. Like the Lizard Nour is moving from place to place. (Baïche,2014:61)

Cette prophétie de la fin de ces horreurs et de cette violence n'est prédite que par ce lézard qui côtoie les hommes et se déplace en toute liberté dans les crevasses des murs, ce qui lui permet de tout voir et de méditer. A travers une métaphore filée, le poète se compare à un lézard pour dépeindre un monde qui refuse toute haine et



toute violence. Il marque une sorte de résistance en écrivant ces vers représentant un chant d'espoir, de liberté et d'amour.(Baïche, 2014:61-62).

It is obvious that, Blanche was deeply tormented by the tragic end of her husband; she blamed herself for not holding him when he was alone struggling with his homosexuality. She believes that her disgusting reaction towards her husband drove him to commit suicide as she informed Mitch. Though Blanche's husband Allan embodies all these romantic features, he suffered from homosexuality which is clear in this conversation.

He was in the quick sands and clutching at me-but I wasn't holding him out, I was slipping in with him! I didn't know that. I didn't know anything except I loved him unendurably but without being able to help him or help myself Then, I found out in the worst of all possible. By coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty-which wasn't empty, but had two people in it... the boy I had married and an older man who had been his friends for years....(Williams,1947:102).

Similarly, Mokeddem uses the lizard to foretell the death of Nour's father. The latter was sitting in a group of men reciting Coran. Nour feels is terrorized by this atmosphere. This event occurred, when she has only six years old.It was only later that she informed about his death, so, she waits for his return. Here the lizard is used to describe the panic which 'lézarde' in the group.(Mokeddem,1998:164).

Les yeux clos, le père de Nour est allongé au milieu du groupe. La panique qui règne parmi ceux qui l'entourent la tétanise.  
Brusquement un homme se met à réciter à tue –tête des versets du Coran. Un deuxième se joint à lui, puis un troisième, puis tous les autres .A son insu Nour se met à trembler sans comprendre la cause de cette hystérie collective qui lézarde la quiétude du soir...(Mokeddem,1998:164).

In fact, the American playwright attracts our attention to the consequence of desire. In other words, desire may lead to death.As an illustration, Allan's death is caused by his desire for men.

[ ] Then I heard voices say-Allan! Allan! The Grey boy! He'd stuck the revolver into his mouth, and fired-so that the back of his head had been-blown away! **[She sways and covers her** had been-blown away! **[She sways and covers her face.]It**

**was because-on the dance-floor:-unable to stop myself-I'd suddenly said..., "I saw! I know! You disgust me"... (Ibid: 96) emphasis.Ours.**

Moreover, Blanche declares to Mitch that death is the opposite of desire. She also informs him that when she in Belle Reve, she lived near a camp where young soldiers were trained. They get drink in the town then call for Blanche who answers their calls. "Death-I used to sit here and she used to sit over there and death was as close as you are ..." (Williams: 1947:120).This means that Blanche or Dame Blanche consoles these young military boys terrorized by death. So, we conclude that desire and death are intermingled.

Furthermore, the lizard is depicted as a member of the family and a consoling friend to Nour and Sassi. It helps especially Nour to endure her solitude in the abandoned Ksar. Because the lizard has a golden back Nour and Sassi nicknamed him 'Smicha' meaning a little sun in Arabic.

Smicha, le lézard, s'approche avec prudence de l'assiette où elle lui dépose les restes de ses repas. Smicha, « Petit Soleil ».Nour et Sassi l'ont appelé ainsi parce que sa tête et son dos éclatent d'un jaune soutenu et luisant. (Mokeddem, 1947:64).

After Nour's transportation to the hospital Sassi finds the lizard Smicha near Nour's house. We can understand that the lizard is presented as a guardian to the house. According to the African mythology, the lizard is a sacred animal with a protective spirit. Its presence in the house keeps away evil and bad spirits. So, the Lizard is depicted as the king of the Ksar, as Nour affirms it.Nour considers the lizard as the guardian of her house. This is why Nour warns the children from touching it.In fact,Nour often compares her state to that of the lizard 'Smicha',since she considers that there is a lizard inside her heart on the breast that causes her pain. « []Alors comme ça il y a une lézarde dans tricineti de mon cœur ? Et ça fait un point mort?» (Ibid: 150).After Nour's transportation to the hospital, Sassi finds the lizard Smicha near Nour's house. We can understand that, the lizard is presented as a guardian to the house.

According to the African mythology, the lizard is a sacred animal with a protective spirit. Its presence in the house keeps away evil and bad spirits. So, the lizard is depicted as the king of the Ksar, as Nour affirms it. Nour considers the lizard as the guardian of her house. This is why Nour warns the children from touching it.

Furthermore, Blanche's conversation with Stella about sexual desire reveals the latter's distinct point of view on the subject. So, desire is associated with death as Blanche remarks. Unlike Stella, Blanche is terrified by the brutal desire and violence of Stanley. Stella "It's a drive that he has..." (Williams, 1947:70). It means that Stanley has a destructive desire. However, Stella persists to justify her husband's behavior believing him a hero. She refused to quit him claiming that "But there are things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark—that sort of make everything seem-unimportant". (Ibid). Blanche answers her arguing that

what you are talking is brutal desire—Just —Desire!—the name of that rattle—trap street-car that bangs through the Quarter, up one old narrow street and down another...(Ibid).

In other words, all the characters are driven by "that rattle-trap street-car" (Ibid) in various ways. Stella reminds her sister that she has ridden on this street-car. "Haven't you ever ridden on that street-car".(Ibid). In fact, this sentence can be interpreted into two distinct ways. Literally speaking, it means that Blanche really drove on the street-car to attain Stella's apartment. Metaphorically speaking, it implies that Blanche has already passed through the street of Desire in her life.

Similarly, from our analysis of the novel, we notice that l'Explication, one of the characters, assumes that the walls wear the lizard of its inhabitants. As he says « Franchement, ces murs portent nos lézardes, mais les voilà débarrassés de notre présence et de nos chicanes. Du coup, les ruines paraissent presque belles, c'est vrai. » (Mokeddem ,1998:174). Metaphorically speaking, this means that the walls of the Ksar witness all the secrets of its inhabitants who

complain of their routine and silence of the desert. It is important to mention too, that these walls have really lizards, since they have chinks or narrow openings that resemble the lizard. This makes the contemplator of the ruins of the Ksar think of the lizard.

From our reading of the play, we understand the dual meaning of the streetcar, it can mean either the station as a place for travelers or the sexual desire as an emotional impulse. Therefore Blanche declared to Stella: "It brought me here...Where I'm not wanted and where I'm ashamed to be..."(Williams, 1947:70). From one hand, Blanche is aware of her brother-in-law who wishes to get rid of her at all means, considering her a threat to his marriage to Stella. Added to this, being accustomed to a luxurious mode of life, Blanche is ashamed of living in the tiny and noisy quarter of New Orleans, so she tries to persuade Stella that

I take it for granted that you have sufficient memory of Belle Reve to find this place and these poker players impossible to live with."(Ibid).

On the other hand, after losing her dignity in Laurel and her job, though embarrassed, Blanche is obliged to live with her sister and her husband.

Tennessee Williams refers to the symbol of the streetcar to highlight the way desire can lead to destruction. He portrays Blanche's excessive desire and attraction especially towards the young man. When Blanche is surrounded by other people, she pretends to be a respected lady by repressing her hidden desires. But once alone, she releases her desires to overwhelm her. Blanche wants to satisfy her desire at any means, behaving according to her natural impulses and ignoring her surroundings as it is demonstrated in her conversation with the young porter.

Blanche: Well, well what can I do for you?

Young Man: I'm collecting for *The Evening Star*.

Blanche: I didn't know that stars took up collections.

Young man: It's the paper.

Blanche: I know. I was joking-feeblely! Will You-have a drink?(Williams, 1947:83)

The above passage illustrates Blanche's seduction of the young man. It is the first time she meets him, but she addresses to him with certain informality and she even permits to herself to invite him for a drink, as if she knows him from a long time. But the young man rejects her invitation by replying "No, ma'am. No, thank you. I can't drink on the job". (Ibid). With reference to Freud, we deduce that the boy's refusal to the drink is related to his well-developed 'Super Ego' which prevents him from accepting Blanche seductive manners, since he is afraid of losing his work. It means that he doesn't mix between work and private life.

It is clear that Blanche is attracted by this beautiful young man who reminds her about Allan, her young husband. Despite her great desire for the young man, she couldn't go further with him, because of the fear of punishment. In fact, this young man resembles her dead husband, who was extremely beautiful and charming. So, her contact with the young porter awakens all her repressed memories that come back to her mind again, as the unconscious representations of the stored memories affects the mental behavior of the individual. The following passage illustrates Blanche's degeneration and strong desire for the young porter, who looks like a young prince of the Arabian Nights. It means that, he is very attractable.

**Young man! Young, young, young man! Has anyone ever told you that you look like a young Prince out of the Arabian Nights?**

[The Young Man laughs uncomfortably and stands like a bashful kid. Blanche speaks softly to him.]

**Well, you do, honey lamb! Come here. I want to kiss you, just once, softly and sweetly on your mouth!** (Williams, 1947:83). Emphasis ours.

Blanche is attracted by the young man; however her 'Superego's prohibits her to have an affair with children, as she tells the porter "Now run along, now, quickly! It would be nice to keep you, but I've got to be good-and keep my hands off children". (Ibid). This is due to her previous punishment in Laurel after, having a relation with a seventeen years student. So, her

'Ego' represses its desires in the unconscious preventing her to run after sexual desires demanded by her 'Id'.

At the beginning of the novel, Mokeddem relates the 'Smicha' the lizard to Nour's house. This reptile lives in the ruins of the Ksar, where it spends its time drawing different forms on the sand similar to those of children...«Parfois, ils'adonne à des jeuxfrénétiques, traçantsur le sable des esquisses brouillonnes, semblables aux graffitis maladroits des enfants».(Ibid :65).

Smicha le lézard, posté devant la maison de Nour, détail à l'approche du groupe  
Nour retient les enfants qui veulent le courser:  
Laisser-le ! Il est intouchable. C'est le roi de ces ruines. (Ibid:186).

Mokeddem's accurate portrayal of the different roles of this lizard is remarkable. As it is common to everyone, the lizard is known for its ability to adapt to its environment with its flexible movements. Like the lizard, Nour tries to adapt to the circumstances of the Ksar. It is described as follow

D'autre fois, il course des lézards beaucoup plus petits qui filent sur les murs comme des flèches et se cachent dans leurs anfractuosités. Avec sa taille, une bonne trentaine de centimètres, et sa corpulence, il fait figure de géant parmi ses semblables à peine plus gros que l'une de ses pattes. Tête et dos parés d'écailles dorées, Smicha se pavane avec l'air de régner sur les différentes espèces de reptiles qui grouillent dans les décombres.(Ibid: 65)

## **2. Light and Darkness as symbols of Repression in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde***

It is obvious that Malika Mokeddem is influenced by Tennessee Williams' play in many ways, including her use of the symbol of 'light' and 'darkness'.

To begin with, Blanche Dubois is a French name meaning the white woods resembling "an orchard in spring" (Williams, 1947:50), as she tells Mitch. Basically, she wears white clothes in all the play which denotes purity and virginity; this is why this color is designated for brides. In Blanche's case it represents longing for her past youth, and her disguise into a respected

lady. Constantly, throughout the play there is a reference to light; as Tennessee Williams stressed the description of the image of the sun light seen from the windows. By doing so, he is picturing the sun light which is fading gradually in order to pave the way to the night. Williams's reference to windows thrice is not done haphazardly, but it is a hint at Stella's worry about the future of her sister who is left by Mitch and will soon be fired from the flat by her brother in law Stanley.

Three-quarters of an hour later, the view through the big windows is fading gradually into a still-golden dusk. A torch of sunlight blazes on the side of a big water-tank or oil-drum across the empty lot toward the business district which is now pierced by pinpoints of lighted windows or windows reflecting the sunset. The three people are completing a dismal birthday supper...(Williams, 1947:106).

Like her counterpart, Nour's name is an Arabic name meaning light. In addition, Sassi refers to her as "Nour lumière de ma vie" (Mokeddem, 1998:172). She also refers to the burning sun light of the day in the Ksar. As we know; the sun is extremely unbearable in the desert. During the day it is burning like torches. This doesn't prevent Nour 'la lézarde' to move from house to house.

De retour au Ksar, Nour déambule de maison en maison. A cette heure du jour, les lucarnes s'allument comme des torches, déversant la lumière en faisceaux tourbillonnants qui semblent forer la pénombre des pièces. (Ibid: 85).

It is worth mentioning that, light is used in the form of candle during Blanche's birthday. Through our reading of the play; we notice that the moment of Blanche's encounter of her first lover Allan is depicted with reference to light, as if someone turns the light on her inner desires that has been hidden in the darkness. It means that Blanche has discovered love with Allan, her dead husband, who has lightens her life. Here, light stands for her dreams and hope in life.

[ ] When I was sixteen, I made the discovery-love. Once and much, much too completely. It was like you suddenly turned the light on something that had always been in shadow. (Williams, 1947: 95).

Unfortunately, Blanche was unlucky in her marriage. After the death of Allan, the bright light of her life was extinguished, when she declares to him, her disgusting reaction towards his homosexuality. “It was because—on the dance floor—unable to stop myself-I’d suddenly said—“I saw! I know! You disgust me...”(Ibid: 97). So, after the death of her husband, Blanche loses her desire for life and love and even light, since Allan was the light illuminating her life. So, now her whole life relies on the light of a flame of a candle.

And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for a moment since there’s been any light that’s stronger than this—Kitchen candle...(Ibid).

Blanche longs for what she calls magic, so she covers every light bulb with paper, in order to bury her shameful past. By tearing the paper lantern, Mitch wished to unmask Blanche’s real face. But the latter declares that she refuses to be realist, preferring to live in her world of imagination that protects her from the bitterness of truth since it hurts and caused the death of her husband. From his part, Stanley awakens her from her illusions, after shedding the light on her disguised appearance. So, we can say that light stands for the reality which Blanche is trying to escape.

I don't want realism. I want magic I [Mitch laughs] Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I misrepresent things to them. I don't tell truth, I tell what ought to be truth. And if that is sinful, then let me be damned for it! Don't turn the light on! [Mitch crosses to the switch. He turns the light on and stares at her. She cries out and covers her face. He turns the light off again.](Ibid: 117).

Similarly, Mokdeddem’s portrayal of Nour’s contemplation of the horizons is very significant. Since, she is depicted many times speaking and questioning the horizons which represent her dreams and hopes. «Les rayons de soleil ricochent sur les concrétions de silex...transforment le reg en un ciel jaune fourmillant d’étoiles en plein jour» (Mokdeddem, 1998:102). Nour relies on the light of the moon which overwhelms her with dreams to improve her life. It means that the moon light makes her sink in her dreams, as she confirms to her friend



Sassi «La lune se remplit. Elle sera bientôt ronde. Mais elle nous inonde déjà de sa lumière de songe de fantôme». (Mokeddem, 1998:105). By looking to the moon, Nour plunges into another universe created by her imagination in the repressive desert. Like Blanche, Nour longs for magic and illusion to escape the truth of the sterility and routine of the desert. The light of the moon turns the sand hills into white rocks of salt, the desert to lagoon, the stones to a shellfish, and the clay of the earth and the walls into a milk powder. So, we can say that Nour dreams a lot, as Sassi declares to her doctor. These dreams collaborate in her resistance to the desert.

Une lumière opaline, striée de lignes d'une incisive clarté entre lesquelles se nichent des flocons d'ombre pâle. Une lumière qui transforme les dunes en rocheuses salines, le reg en lagune, ses pierres en incrustations de nacre, l'ocre de la terre et des murs en poudre de lait. C'est ça... le lait de la lune dilué par l'atmosphère. (Ibid :105).

We align our opinion, with the critic Lindsay Price's comments on the above quotation by arguing that, every action and every word out of Blanche's mouth is based on illusion. Her story of why she has ended up at Stella's house is a lie. According to Price, the only true time in her life was when she was 'happily' married to her husband. But even that happiness was unreal; her husband married her only to get rid of his homosexuality. (Price, 2010:3).

Similarly, Nour and Sassi spend their time in exchanging conversation with the dead people in the Ksar like the hanged man and Si Ahmed the taleb. In fact, the two friends occupy themselves to create noise in their empty lives. «Oui laissons-le tranquille. Viens, rendons plutôt visite aux autres revenants ». (Mokeddem, 1998:107).

Just after her arrival at the Kowalski household, Blanche refuses to be seen by her sister in light. In fact, Blanche is not hiding only her real age but she is also hiding from society, being ashamed of her sexual behavior and her loss of honor. She is haunted by the death of her husband and the loss of her lifestyle at Belle Reve. This is the reason behind her love for darkness.

Now, then, let me look at you. But don't you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I've bathed and rested! And turn that over-light off! Turn that off! I won't be looked at in this merciless glare! (Williams, 1947:18).

As far as, *A Streetcar Named Desire* is concerned, Blanche the main character dislikes light. So, she covers the bulbs with a paper, this is why she never goes out after six. Throughout the play, Blanche avoids appearing in direct bright light, especially in front of her suitor, Mitch, who wonders about her attraction by darkness "It's dark in here"(Williams, 1947:116). In general, light symbolizes the reality of Blanche, haunted by the ghosts of her first love, her honor, and her elite background. In fact, Blanche refuses to go on dates with Mitch during the daytime. The latter, refers to Blanche's avoidance of light in scene nine, "You never want to go out in the afternoon"(Ibid). When he confronts her with the stories, Stanley has told him of her past, he forces her to stand in light. Mitch tells her that he doesn't mind her age, but he wanted to have a good look at her. Blanche replies by saying she believes magic, rather than reality represents her life. So, Blanche's inability to tolerate light means that she is unable to endure reality.

Mitch: Not Sunday afternoon. I've asked you to go out with me sometimes buton  
Sundaysbut you always make an excuse. You never want to out till after six and then  
it's always

Some place that's not lighted much.

Blanche: There is some obscure meaning in this but I fail to catch it.

Mitch: What it means is I've never had a real good look at you,

Blanche. Let's turn the light on here.

Blanche: Light? Which light? What for? (Ibid).

The paper lantern over the light bulb represents Blanche's attempt to mask both her sordid past and her present appearance. As an illustration, she lies to Stanley about Mitch who doesn't come to apologize, but wanted to put an end to their relation. In this context, Blanche resorts to lies to defend herself.

But then he came back. **He returned with a box of roses to beg my forgiveness I  
He implored my forgiveness. But some things are not forgivable.** Deliberate  
cruelty is not forgivable.

It is the one unforgivable thing in my opinion and it is the one thing of which I have never, never been guilty .**And so I told him**, I said to him, "**Thank you," but it was foolish of me to think that we could ever adapt ourselves to each other. Our ways of life are too different. Our attitudes and our backgrounds are an incompatible.**(Ibid: 126).Emphasis.Ours.

Similarly, Stella as well as Stanley are comfortable in the dark. This is depicted, when Stanley breaks all the light bulbs with his shoe on their wedding night, but Stella is not afraid of darkness. This why, the couple did not mind Blanche's covering the light bulbs. On the contrary, it provides them with an opportunity to enjoy their intimacies, since they are disturbed by Blanche's presence in the tiny flat. In addition, Stella claims that "There are things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark that sort of make everything else seem unimportant."(Ibid: 70).

Like Blanche, Nour feels that darkness is a protection for her. It also expresses her inner self. As far as *La Nuit de la Lézarde* is concerned, darkness is associated with her loneliness and suffering in the desert, mainly after the departure of the inhabitants, who abandoned their houses one after the other leaving behind them the unbearable conditions of the desert. It is noticeable that, every departure deepens the obscurity of the Ksar as Nour assumes «Un malheur. Chaque départ amputait mon obscurité, me dépossédait de sons familiers, repères de mes journées...» (Mokeddem, 1998:29). After her escape from her husband, Nour moves from place to place like 'a lizard' hunting for a prey to feed on, only she is not starving from hunger but from love. During the night, she disappears with a man of passenger.

La nuit, je sombrais, terrassée par la fatigue, pour me remettre en route comme un automate, le soleil à peine levé. Parfois, il m'arrivait de rester deux ou trois jours au même endroit. Le temps d'un repos, de la recherche d'expédients pour me nourrir. Puis je disparaissais à l'aube d'une nuit d'étreintes avec un amant du hasard, aussi affamé d'amour que moi. (Ibid: 49)

Furthermore, darkness is associated with Sassi, blind since birth. Therefore he is accustomed to the darkness of his eyes, but the latter learnt to live with it as an inseparable

companion to him. He claims: « Et moi donc! Si l'obscurité est mon univers, la lumière est la toile de mon imaginaire » (Ibid :46).As it is mentioned in the novel, Sassi's name means "cesser de voir" (Ibid: 10), in French. When Nour encounters Sassi for the first time, he is always in a hurry to inform Nour « Il va faire nuit. Il va faire nuit. » (Ibid : 42). Despite her efforts to ban this expression, she fails, as she understands his struggle with the obscurity of his eyes «...Elle n'avait pas tardé à comprendre à quel point Sassi avait transformé un handicap en subtilité, la cécité en un sens plus riche, plus perspicace que la vue». (Ibid).

Like Williams's protagonist, Nour expresses her inner desires. She also believes that darkness is protecting her and sending her back to her inner self. As she is living alone with a blind man as a friend, Nour feels free from the judgments of other people. In fact, light contributes in shaping the external judgments on the individuals. This is well illustrated in the passage below

Les mots qui se dérobent, les métaphores sont autant de feintes aux regards des autres. Braquées sur nous, les yeux influent sur le langage et le jugement. La lumière favorise leur pouvoir. Tu dis qu'elle t'est devenue une blessure. L'obscurité, elle, nous protège, nous renvoie d'abord à nous même, à notre infini intérieur. Elle est une immensité qui surpasse la lumière. (Ibid: 45).

Nour announces to Sassi, that she loves light, even if it is harmful. So, we deduce that she is not afraid of confronting the reality of her life. As she declares it, to the blind man « Arrête! Tu n'arriveras pas à me donner envie d'être aveugle. J'aime trop la lumière, même quand elle blesse ». (Ibid :40). During her stay at the hospital, Sassi dreams of Nour telling him that she has crossed the night to embrace the light of fine days waiting for her.

[] « C'est ça que j'attendais, l'aube des beaux jours. Enfin, nous avons traversé la nuit. » Elle est de si bon augure que Sassi s'en est trouvé ragaillard. (Ibid: 149).

Malika Mokeddem's novel associates darkness to the atmosphere of terror and death prevailing in the 1990's in Algeria. Being an Algerian novelist, she denounces the atrocities committed by the Islamist extremists, during the 'Black Decade' which sank the country into a

total obscurity. Alilou, one of the characters in *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, assumes that he is not afraid of darkness. In fact, this little boy is an orphan who has lost two of his relatives murdered by the terrorists. Nour is astonished by Alilou, who walks alone in the night without being afraid of darkness. «Tu as raison, mon fils, il ne faut pas regarder ces horreurs. Mais... tu n'as pas eu peur de traverser cette nuit noire ? » (Ibid : 61). The latter answers her by saying « Je n'ai pas peur du noir. J'ai peur de ce qu'il y a dans les yeux. » (Ibid: 61).

In short, Mokeddem is inspired by Williams's use of symbolism, which is a powerful mean to transmit and makes readers feel the real suffering and struggling of the characters. Significantly, these symbols are not selected randomly.

### **Chapter Three**

This chapter intends to study, violence as a cause of Repression in the desert, the South as a place of escape, bathing as a cure from Repression in both *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, blue as a therapy for Repression. Even though Mokeddem has never encountered Tennessee Williams, we have noticed a remarkable resemblance between their two works. Therefore, we will use Harold Bloom's theory as a paradigm of study. As Harold Bloom pointed out; every poet is inspired by his predecessor. So by our analysis of Williams's influence on Mokeddem, we have noticed the echoing of Tennessee Williams's voice in *La Nuit de la Lézarde*.

### **Section One**

#### **1. Violence as a Cause of Repression in the South**

One of the most striking affinities between *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde* is the way both authors portray the spread of violence in America and Algeria respectively. Indeed, Williams and Mokeddem picture violence exercised by man on woman to

show off his masculinity and reinforce his domination, in addition to the violence of death which is common in the two works.

To begin with, Tennessee Williams's play sheds light on the violent death of Blanche's parents and her sister Margaret. So, she reminds lonely without neither family nor husband taking care of Belle Reve, her mansion in Laurel. As it is clear, from this quotation, Blanche is deeply affected by the death of the members of her family.

I, I, I took the blows in my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, mother! Margaret, that dreadful way! So big with it, it couldn't be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for the funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths—not always! (Williams, 1947: 26).

Similarly, Mokeddem attracts our attention to violence, a wide spread phenomena in post-colonial Algeria, as consequence of the domination of religion, during the era of the 'Black Decade'. In fact, this kind of violence is the result of the repressive atmosphere of Algeria during 1990's. To be more explicit, the boy Alilou's name is coined with Mokeddem's Abdlekader Alloula murdered by terrorists.

La belle découverte ! Il n'y aura jamais que les tornades de sable à surgir de ce côté-là. Les nomades ont abandonné ces contrées. Les terroristes ne les franchissent pas. Même la mort semble souvent les boudier. Seuls les échos de ses ravages nous parviennent... (Mokeddem, 1998:16).

Mokeddem's novel, *La Nuit de la Lézarde* refers to the atrocity of the 'Black Decade' as Oualou remarks that people are terrorized by terrorists' attacks and wonders how can people speak of peace and people are slaughtered «La paix? Comment peut-on encore prononcer ce mot? Pas un jour sans massacre, là-haut»(Mokeddem, 1998 :21).

Furthermore, this act of violence is acted by Stanley towards his wife Stella and Blanche. We are concerned with two sorts of violence verbal and non-verbal. In fact, Stella is a

victim of her husband's violence and abuse. "A chair scrapes. Stanley gives a loud whack of his hand on her thigh". (Williams, 1947: 48).

In parallel, Mokeddem's novel explores the issue of violence acted upon Nour by her dominating husband, in spite of Nour's refusal to evoke of her previous life with her husband to Sassi «Tu ne veux toujours pas me parler de ton enfance, de ton mariage, de cet homme avec qui tu as vécu» (Mokeddem, 1998:59). Therefore, one can guess that her life was very hard. Despite her great esteem for her friend Sassi, she doesn't want to evoke or even remember this phase of her life.

As we have already mentioned, Nour lives in the house of a hanged man. The latter committed suicide, because his adulterous wife. This is very similar to the death of Blanche's husband. In Mokeddem's novel the dead man's wife is blamed for driving her husband to death. Likely in Williams's play Blanche is taken responsible for not holding her homosexual husband.

Stanley boasts "When the telephone rings and they say, "You've got a son!" I'll tear this off and wave it like a flag!" (Ibid: 125). In invoking these lines, Williams emphasizes the cruelty and violent nature of the Stanley who is blinded by his excess of desire. He takes advantage of his wife's absence to abuse her sister without any consideration to his marriage. Because, he wears his wedding pyjamas, as Stanley comments "Here's something I always break out on special occasions like this. The silk pyjamas I wore on my wedding night!". (Ibid). In analyzing Stanley's words, we conclude that his choice of that pyjamas over another proves indifferent to marriage as an institution or even his wife's emotions. Even his manner of celebrating the birth of his son fits his violent temperament. So, his resort to the rape is the result of repression of his desires for Blanche.

In addition, to physical violence Stanley insults and offends Blanche many times, by making remarks on her past life in the Tarantula Hotel. He even puts an end to her unique chance

of starting a new life with Mitch by revealing her secrets and condemning her. The verbal violence is exercised on the protagonist Blanche.

And look at yourself! Take a look at yourself in that worn that Mardi Gras outfit, rented for fifty cents from some rag picker! And With the crazy crown on! What queen do you think you are? (Williams, 1947: 127).

Obviously, Stanley was attracted by Blanche from the beginning; however, he was waiting for the best opportunity to attack his prey. As we have mentioned before, Stanley abused Blanche during Stella's absence. Some critics accuse Blanche of seducing her brother in law with her perfume, especially when, she asked him to button her dress. Indeed, Blanche transformed the Kowalski apartment by covering the light bulbs, into a hot and romantic atmosphere. Therefore, Stanley Blanche is guilty for provoking him as it illustrated in this quotation.

I've been on to you from the start! Not once did you pull any wool over this boy's eyes! You come in here and sprinkle the place with powder and spray perfume and cover the light bulb with a paper lantern, and lo and behold the place has turned into Egypt and you are the Queen of the Nile! Sitting on your throne and swilling down my liquor! (Ibid: 126-127).

From this perspective, it is noticeable Stanley couldn't resist Blanche's seduction, because he is blinded by his desires for women. We align our opinion with the critic Kathleen Lant who claims in her article '*A Streetcar Named Misogyny Violence in Drama*' that Williams "harbors false notions about rape" and believes Blanche is "a loud-mouthed, flirtatious whore who really asked for what she got" (Siegle, 1991:). According to Lant, Williams condemns Blanche considering her as an accomplice to the rape. But when we consider Blanche's life with her husband we understand her degeneration.

Like Stanley, Sassi is attracted by Nour from the beginning of the novel, however he represses his desire for Nour but, when she falls on the ground; he seized the occasion to abuse her. « Le sang de Sassi s'affole aussi []prend soudain conscience de la rondeur du sein sous sa



main». (Mokeddem, 1998:128). Then, he embraces Nour « Il la retire d'un mouvement brusque, ferme les bras sur son amie, la serre contre lui. » (Ibid).

Stella also avows to her sister that Stanley throws her shoe towards the bulb in their wedding night. Instead of being afraid of her husband's strange behavior; she is excited when "[he] snatched off one of my slippers and rushed about the place smashing the light bulbs with it". (Williams, 1947:64). In other words, Stanley uses violence in his intercourse. After Nour's transportation to the hospital, Sassi is imagining himself with Nour. « [Je] la coucherai, l'embrasserai et lui ferai l'amour à en perdre le souffle, à combler tous ses manques et les miens » (Mokeddem, 1998 :172).

## **2. The South as a place of Escape**

Throughout our reading of both Williams and Mokeddem works under study, we have noticed a striking resemblance between the settings of their respective works. In fact, a setting is very significant in shaping and influencing the actions and reactions of the characters. South America and South Algeria are two historical settings that experienced psychological repression due to the impact of the characters' loneliness and suffering. It also reflects the repression and empty lives of all the characters especially Blanche and Nour. It is used as a way to escape the constraints of their respective societies.

Both *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *La Nuit de la Lézarde* are set in the South, in spite of the fact that Mokeddem's story happens in Algeria and Williams in America. *A Streetcar Named Desire* is set in the city of New Orleans, two years after the end of World War II, in the poor French quarter, in the street of Elysian Fields. The action takes place between May and September in a shabby apartment which consists of two rooms. "It is late afternoon in mid-September. The portieres are open and a table is set for a birthday supper..." (Williams, 1947:97).

The exterior of a two story corner building on a street in New Orleans which is named Elysian Fields and runs between the L & N tracks and the river. The section is poor, but unlike corresponding sections in other American cities, it has a raffish charm. (Ibid: 13)

From another perspective, the setting can be seen as embodying a sense of open minded community, since the play opens with Blanche's encounter of Eunice, a Black woman. This demonstrates the acceptance of diversity in the French Quarter, which is a mixture of all races. There, Blanche seeks refuge and escape searching for something or someone to believe in. So, in the noisy apartment the characters enjoy their freedom. At the beginning of the play, Williams points out "In this part of New Orleans you are practically always just around the corner or a few doors down the street..." (Ibid: 13).

Indeed, Blanche compares the apartment to Edgar Allan Poe's ghoul haunted woodland. (Williams, 1947:19-20). In other words, the Kowalski flat resembles the fearful and gloomy setting of Poe's stories, in which we find ghosts returning to life like in *The Fall of the House of Usher* where the sister of the protagonist haunts the house, in which she has lived.

[ ] Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture—Only Poe! Only Mr Edgar Allan Poe!—could do it justice! Out there I suppose is the ghoul haunted woodland of Weir! ( Ibid).

Moreover, the Elysian Fields is coined with paradise in Greek mythology, and it is the destination of the virtuous that ironically becomes synonymous with hell in Tennessee Williams' play. Blanche takes a streetcar to arrive at the Elysian Fields her destination, but the apartment is very far from being paradise. In reality, the Kowalski flat resembles to hell. This idea goes hand in hand with George Marotous' discussion of the play, in which he affirms that Stanley and Stella have created their own type of paradise in the sensual. He thinks that, the location has an opposite effect on Blanche. Instead of finding happiness and contentment, she encounters nothing but sorrow and despair. Marotous also suggests that paradise was originally created for two, but the

intrusion of a third member caused sin. He concludes that after Blanche's departure, Stella and Stanley find again their paradise. (Marotous, 2006:2).

Similarly, Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la Lézarde* is set in a Ksar in the Algerian desert. Like Blanche, Nour crosses the desert to arrive in the Ksar. Literary speaking, the Ksar means a castle. Instead, of providing prosperity and happiness, it makes Nour and Sassi suffer from sorrow and loneliness. It is worth mentioning, that the Ksar is an abandoned place, where Nour suffers from anxiety and solitude, but she prefers to live there rather than submit to the limitations of her conservative society and family. Significantly, Mokeddem depicts the Ksar like a huge cemetery, as we can notice from this quotation « [ ] Ainsi, le Ksar a l'air d'une nécropole où le temps se confond avec les ravages de abandon ». (Mokeddem, 1998:34). In fact, Mokeddem compares the Ksar to a sepulchre, where silence dominates the ruins. This analogy is very similar to Blanche's comparison of the flat to a haunted place. In addition, Nour's house is often visited by the ghost of a dead man. Instead of being frightened by the phantom, she is fascinated by inhabiting his house, as she declares to Sassi « [ ] J'étais très émue d'habiter la demeure d'un homme qui s'était suicidé « Par amour d'une traîtresse » (Mokeddem, 1998:34). Mokeddem goes further in comparing the Ksar to a cave dominated by fear, mainly during Nour's absence as it is affirmed by Sassi.

Le Ksar sans Nour ressemble à une vaste grotte, son silence à une chape étouffante. Sassi tente en vain de lutter contre de telles considérations et s'oriente d'abord vers le jardin. (Ibid : 145).

It is worth to mentioning that Malika Mokeddem has a close relationship with the desert that opens to her new ways to life. It is also used to show the atmosphere of her real life, mainly her adolescence which is compared to a desert, since she was oppressed by the restrictive conservative society. In this context she declares in an interview that she spent her childhood and adolescence in the desert.

Le désert est simplement mon enfance et mon adolescence. Pour moi, l'écriture est une réappropriation du désert parce que toute mon adolescence, je me sentais tellement enfermée que je lisais des livres qui me racontais des ailleurs. (Khaldia, 2012-2013:378).

## Section Two

### 1. Bathing or Water as a Cure for Repression

The play *A Streetcar Named Desire* develops another symbol which is bathing. Blanche takes frequent baths throughout the play to escape from the sweaty apartment. She also seeks rejuvenation, as if the bath water was a fountain of youth hood. So, it is used by Blanche as a therapy to rub her ills. Blanche is always looking for compliments about her looking. She has just come out of the bath, and made herself fresh and young again. "Hello, Stanley! Here I am, all freshly bathed and scented, and feeling like a brand new human being!" (Williams, 1947: 37).

This is clear from her conversation with Stella, where she expresses her great relief after taking a long bath "Oh, I feel so good after my long, hot bath; I feel so good, and cool and rested!" (Williams, 1947:105). She also claims that it provides her with new hope for life. "Yes, I do, so refreshed! A hot bath and a long, cold drink always give me brand new outlook on life". (Ibid). Blanche declares to Stanley that water is a therapy healing her from her anxiety.

I take hot bath for my nerves. Hydro-therapy, they call it. You healthy Polack, without a nerve in your body, of course you don't know what anxiety feels like!" (Ibid: 110).

Moreover, she even wishes to take an initial bath after her meeting with her sister in order to wash herself of her past, so that she may have a new start.

Like Blanche, Malika Mokeddem's protagonist Nour refers to the symbol of water as a therapy. Bathing helps her to overcome her traumatic past that haunts her. Nour finds great pleasure in washing herself in the open air. Nour finds spiritual peace and relaxation by enjoying her baths that relieves her from her suffering.

Le plaisir de ce premier bain pris à l'extérieur, face à un Ksar muet, à une terre nue elle aussi, n'est venue qu'après quelques instants. Nour n'avait jamais éprouvait pareil sensation dans l'atmosphère confinée des vapeurs des hammams. Dehors, l'eau, véritable flot de lumière cascadaient sur son corps; le massait, le lissait, ridait le sable à ses pieds, faisait deux, trois sauts, puis s'étalait, formant une peau plus sombre à la terre.(Mokeddem , 1998:91-92).

Water is very significant in both Christian and Islam Religion. It is often used for cleansing and purification of the souls of the individual, both physical and spiritual. Concerning Christianity, Water is used for baptism which is a ritual consisting of sprinkling water on a person or dipping his body in water. Similarly, water is sacred to Muslims. It is used to embrace Islam as a means of purifying the soul from its sins. It is used too in the ablutions.

In fact, Blanche is constantly taking baths in the play. This is because; she is trying to cleanse herself of her past sins. According to Aslan, Blanche never succeeds in cleansing herself, so, she must return to the bath again and again. He adds that, Stanley showers after he beats his wife, and unlike Blanche he is able to come out cleansed and without remorse. (Aslan: 2013). Aslan concludes that, her sexual experiences have made her a hysterical woman, but these baths, as she says, calm her nerves. But in reality, she wants to forget and rub her ugly past in the new community of New Orleans. These baths represent her efforts to cleanse herself of her sins. Stanley also turns to water after beating his wife Stella. Since his showers are not repeated, we can say that he succeeded in cleansing himself.

Likely, Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* shows the importance of water as a medium of the flourishing of life despite the sterility of the desert. Infact, the desert is featured with high temperature, wind and sand. Therefore, water is a vital element in appeasing the harsh nature of the desert. In this way Sassi and Nour succeeded to transform the sterility of the desert into a beautiful garden in which grew all sorts of vegetables.

Nour contemple l'avancée de l'eau. Les pans de terre s'imprègnent et brunissent avant d'être inondés. Celle des carrés, déjà irrigués, a tout sucé. Sa surface s'enfonce par endroits, suite à un tourbillon disparu comme à la recherche d'un souvenir trop vite enfoui.(Mokeddem, 1998:120).

Despite its power to cure, water can lead to destruction, as it is common in both Christian and Muslim cultures, since it can lead to floods which destroyed many populations. It seems that Blanche's baths makes her sink. Similarly, It causes Nour's perish as she died just before Sassi dreams her in a lack

## **2. Blue Color as a Therapy for Repression**

Color is a complex subject which can influence our emotions and actions. It is a powerful means of communication and it can be related to religious, cultural, political and social influences of the individual. It can also reflect the inner side of human psyche and conveys different values and topics in relation with repression.

Both Tennessee Williams and Malika Mokeddem used some colors to indicate the mood in which their characters lived. So, the character's tendency towards color preferences is the result of the repressed desires that disturb their way of behaving. Like Tennessee Williams, Malika Mokeddem refers to the blue color throughout the novel.

As far as *La Nuit de la Lézarde* is concerned, Nour calls the boy Alilou « Mon petit bleu ». (Mokeddem, 1998:61). As it is common to the reader, this expression is repeated many times through the novel. It is used to refer to the brown skin. « Mon petit bleu. Mon fennec indigo à moi ». (Ibid). To illustrate the meaning of the blue color, we need to recall the following passage. The little boy is an orphan living with his step mother. He lost two of his relatives. « Ce n'est pas la peur, mon petit bleu. Il s'agit de la souffrance. Et celle-là nous larde tous. » (Ibid).

In addition to this, Mokeddem uses this color to mean the brown color, which is related to the nature of the desert. In other words, the blue is used in the South to refer to the brown.

«Bleu(e) *azreg*, *Zarga*. C'est ainsi qu'on dit brun (e) dans le désert, une dénomination provenant du temps où l'indigo des étoffes teintaient les peaux. » (Ibid). So, this color is very significant to Nour. From a psychological point of view, the blue is nostalgic; it is a color that lives in the past. «Nour aime ce mot. Il a la couleur nostalgique de son passé nomade».(Ibid).

Like his counterpart, Tennessee Williams uses the blue color to express the context of the blue sea and sky. The play opens with a description of the sky as it is well illustrated in these opening lines in which the playwright describes the mood of the characters' lives. He also uses the blue piano to show the atmosphere of the play. "[ ] The sky that shows around the dim white building is a peculiarly tender blue, almost a turquoise..." (Williams, 1947:13).

In Greek and Roman mythology, Blue was associated with the sky Gods, Jupiter, Juno and Mercury. In the Catholic Church, it is related to the Virgin Mary, whereas in Islam Blue, including turquoise is the color of religion and community, because it is used in the decoration of mosques.

Similarly, Mokeddem uses the blue color to denote the sea. «Le bleu, c'est aussi la mer. Il paraît qu'elle est parfois indigo». From a psychological stand point, the blue reduces stress, helps to relax, since we feel better after looking to the sea or the sky. So, Sassi's preference of the blue color demonstrates his deep need for peace and harmony. Sassi asked Nour to paint his house with the blue. « Du bleu? Foncé ou clair? Celui de ton turban ». (Mokeddem, 1998 : 97). Sassi refuses to put the brown color in his house, since it is the color of the desert. « Du brun sur du corail ou du safran, ce serait mettre encore du sable et de la pierre à l'intérieur de la maison».(Ibid).

From this we conclude that, Sassi is tired of the extreme silence of the desert. This is why; he wants to introduce the spirit of life inside his house by using the color of the sea and sky. We can say that, Sassi associates the blue color to desire, since the desert is made for water. «Ici,

c'est la couleur d'une soif éternelle, le ciel. Pourtant le désert est fait pour l'eau. Comme toutes les soifs...». (Ibid).

Similarly, Tennessee Williams uses the blue color to express and to introduce life in the flat. This "Blue Piano" expresses the spirit of the life which goes on here. (Williams,1947: 1). Significantly, the music of the blue piano is heard many times in the play to refer to the sad mood mainly before Allan's death to shed the light on Blanche's past. Moreover, the male characters Stanley and Mitch wear blue uniforms. "... They are about twenty-eight or or thirty years old, roughly dressed in blue denim work clothes". (Ibid: 13). This color refers to their sexual desire.

From our reading of both Tennessee Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Malika Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, we uncovered striking affinities between the two works. For Harold Bloom, all texts are inter-texts, thus, we find much of Tennessee Williams' voice in Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde*. The absorption of an author by another one is called 'Apophrades', meaning in Greek mythology the return of the dead. (Bloom,1973:15-16). Accordingly, we find many analogies to Williams' play in Mokedddem's novel. So, we conclude that her imagination is haunted by her precursor's voice, as we have shown through the different similarities between the two works at the level of characterization. That is to say, Mokeddem's characters Nour and Sassi are similar to Williams' protagonists Blanche and Stanley respectively. In addition to, Williams' influence on Mokeddem at the level of symbols namely streetcar, lizard, light, and darkness. There are other similar aspects, which should be studied in reference to Bloom mainly the stinking resemblance in the description of the South as a place of Repression and the two authors' references to both blue color and bathing as therapies from Repression in the South.

Despite the striking resemblance between Tennessee Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Malika Mokeddem's novel *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, there is a slight distinction



between the two works. Bloom asserts that, the new poet may separate himself from his precursor by giving his work originality; this is what Bloom calls 'Askesis' (Bloom, 1973:15). First of all, we have noticed a remarkable distinction between Mokeddem's work, which is a novel and Williams' work is a play. The latter is set in a noisy, enclosed apartment; Whereas Mokeddem's novel is set in a silent Ksar. Moreover, Sassi is depicted in angelic terms contrary to Stanley who is brutal. Sassi's love for Nour is sincere and constant, whereas Stanley's love for Blanche is perverted, since he just desires her. There is a big difference between loving someone and desiring him. Furthermore, Mokeddem includes an animal as a character. She also introduces new themes such as religion, politics, polygamy, terrorism in *La Nuit de la Lézarde*. The Algerian novelist develops repression in childhood, adolescence and maturity. In this sense, the boy Alilou and Kamel represent the way children look for the satisfaction of their pleasures by enjoying sweets. Concerning the adolescence phase of life, Mokeddem demonstrates Dounia's escape from the repressive South and family constraints, by entering into the universe of her books. The last phase, maturity is related to Nour, Sassi, Oualou, l'Explication, Zoubida and her husband portraying their struggles to surpass the obstacles they encounter throughout their lives in the desert. Another divergence is that Blanche ends in an asylum, but Nour died at the end of novel.

## VI. Conclusion

Throughout this piece of research, we attempted to compare Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1946) and Malika Mokeddem's *La Nuit de la Lézarde* (1998). We have examined the way, both Malika Mokeddem's novel and Tennessee Williams' play deal with Repression, relying on Sigmund Freud's theory on Repression. As we have studied Tennessee Williams' influence on Malika Mokeddem with reference to Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*.

We have shown that the two authors derived from different geographical, social and political backgrounds, but they manifest the same interest in the South. Both authors view the South as a representation of their characters' repressed desires. In fact, the characters are struggling against their sexual desires in order to keep balance between the three parts of their psyche: the 'Id', 'Ego', and 'Superego'.

Besides, we have found evidence that Mokeddem is surely influenced by Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. This is clear through her depiction of characters' repression, who are the products of their environment, in addition to the representation of the South as a place of escape. Lastly, we have shown that both Williams and Mokeddem use similar symbols, especially blue color and bathing as therapies curing from repression. Among all the teachings, we have learnt throughout undertaking of this piece of research is our discovery of Algerian novelist Malika Mokeddem's oeuvre. Indeed, we have been much honored to be among those students who have contributed to the study of Algerian literature. We have also, tried our best to give importance to Malika Mokeddem as an Algerian modern novelist though she has been long discarded from the literary scene, because of her breaking of taboos.

Yet, the scope of our memoir prevents us from exploring all the issues related to Williams' and Mokeddem's study. We invite other students to undertake other pieces of research on both authors. Among interesting topics, we cite the representation of patriarchy in both works. We also think that the theme of matrimony can be very interesting, since Williams and Mokeddem are inspired from their private lives in their writings. Lastly, the study of the fall woman in the two works will be a workable topic to deal with.

## Selected Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

- ❖ Tennessee, Williams, (1947). *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, New York: Penguin Group.
- ❖ Mokeddem, Malika, (1998). *La Nuit de la Lézarde*, France: Grasset.
- ❖ Harold, Bloom (1973). *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- ❖ Ivan, Smith, (2000). *Freud-complete Works: 1890-1939*. Accessed on: March, 2017 available on:

[http://WWW.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/Freud Complete Works.](http://WWW.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/Freud%20Complete%20Works.pdf)

### Secondary Sources

- ❖ André, Prévin, (2012). A Study Guide, *A Streetcar Named Desire*: Virginia Opera.
- ❖ BaicheFaiza. 'La Renaissance par l'écriture Dans N'Zid de Malika Mokeddem PhD 20% diss, Mentory University, Constantine, 2006-2007. Viewed on 28 December 2017.
- ❖ Belkhir- Ghariri, Khaldia, (2012). *Le Discours sur l'espace et le Temps Dans l'œuvre de Malika Modem*, Alegria : University of Oran.
- ❖ Christina, Benn, (2015). 'Mothers' and Daughters' Memories: The Palimpsest and Women Writing during the Algerian Civil War' University of Edinburgh Postgraduate journal of Culture and the Arts.
- ❖ Jane: E. Evans, (2005). 'Accommodating Arabic: A look at Malika Mokeddem's Fiction', U.S.A: University of Texas

- ❖ Jeffery, Dawson, (2009). 'A *Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams', U.S.A: Sydney Theatre Company.
- ❖ .Névine El Nossery and Anna Rocca, eds (2011). ' *Frictions et devenirs dans les écritures migrantes au féminin: Enracinements et renégociations*. Available on: <http://newprairiepress.org/sttcl>
- ❖ Shadi, Sharouki, (2008). Object Relation Psychoanalytic Criticism on Selected Works of Tennessee Williams: University Putra Malaysia.
- ❖ Simon, Boag 'Freudian Repression, the Common View and pathological Science' 2006, vol.10, No.1, 74-86 accessed on February, 2017, available on [http:// WWW. bostonneuropsychiatry. net/ PDF Files/ Boag 2006 RGP.PDF](http://WWW.bostonneuropsychiatry.net/PDFFiles/Boag2006RGP.PDF).
- ❖ Sophie, Laval 'Oublier les *Limites de la Censure*', Loja : Granada.
- ❖ Soualah, Keltoum (2008). 'L'Écriture Auto fictionnelle au Secours d'une Identité Dans l'Interdite de Malika Mokeddem',
- ❖ Syntycle, Assa Assa, (2014) *Migration et Quête de l'Identité Chez Quatre Romancières Francophones*, Montpellier : University Paul Valéry.