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**Discourse Analysis of Post-Colonial Novel: Assia
Djebar's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and
Oksana Zabuzhko's *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex*:
A Comparative Analysis**

*A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctorate in Literature.*

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Abstract

The current research study is a comparative study of two major postcolonial feminist literary works; the Algerian author Assia Djébar's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and the Ukrainian author Oksana Zabuzhko's *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex*. Despite the fact that the two authors belong to a different period of time; Djébar's first experience of postcolonial feminist writing starting earlier in the first half of the twentieth century, while Zabuzhko's first experience of postcolonial feminist writing was towards the end of the same century. Moreover, the two female authors were writing about their countries; Algeria and Ukraine, whose colonial situations in return were not the same. Algeria being it colonized by France; a Western-European imperialist country which colonized Algeria; a totally different country beyond the sea for about a hundred-thirty-two years. While Ukraine was colonized, or should it be said annexed by Russia to what was called the Soviet Union, without forgetting to mention that both Russia and Ukraine shared more than one aspect; geographical area, religion, race, language and culture. Despite all these seemingly differences in both the colonial situations of Algeria and Ukraine, both Djébar and Zabuzhko were writing about the same devastating colonial consequences on both Algerian and Ukrainian women. In the first chapter, I shall be dealing with the different nature of both the French and Russian colonizer, then I shall illustrate that despite of their ideological differences, both the French and Russian colonizer practiced almost the same horrible acts of war and injustices against the Algerian and Ukrainian people. In the second chapter, I shall demonstrate how both Djébar and Zabuzhko wrote the body of the Algerian and Ukrainian women; how their women's bodies were full of scars which attest to the atrocities practiced against them both by the French and Russian colonizer. Finally, in the third chapter I shall demonstrate how both Djébar and Zabuzhko used different languages in decolonizing their cultures; how Djébar used French, the language of the enemy and Zabuzhko used her national language to decolonize their cultures. The methodology applied in this research is based on the close-reading, discourse analysis as well as comparison of the texts of Djébar's *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and Zabuzhko's *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex*.

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my wife and son Yazen,

Thank you for being a part of my life...

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I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Boulenouar Mohammed Yamine, whose fruitful suggestions and wise remarks have helped accomplish this project.

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General Introduction

Since eternity the world has witnessed turbulent wars which have contributed in determining the domination of certain nations over others. These wars have also helped in reshaping the world, thus creating thousands of new countries and nations who felt the obligation to fight for their existence as well. Not only have these nations become geographically distant confined in their new boundaries, but they have also fully or partly transformed into new entities; some of which embraced their transformation but others chose resistance to preserve their identities from slipping away.

The major wars which have engaged the world into a constant, changing turbulence of transformation were originally provoked by the concept of superiority, mostly adopted by the Western colonial imperialism. The Western imperialist ideology claimed supremacy geographically, racially, religiously and even ethnically over the rest of the world. The white race claimed the utter supremacy over all other races, the fact which restricted the civilizing mission to the Western bloc.

The Western sense of superiority was the engine to search for more territories to conquer, until these nations who claimed superiority eventually found the urge to create a whole country where they would bring the entire world to feed their imperial machine. The Western major countries; that is Britain, the Netherlands, France, Italy and Spain all cooperated to bring people from Africa, Asia, Latin America and East-Europe to work as part-time slaves who cultivated the lands for a short amount of money like those poor people who were brought from Eastern and sometimes Western Europe. While, those who were full-time slaves were mainly brought from Africa and Asia.

When the Europeans first came to the New World, they immediately jumped to eradicate the whole native population, thus claiming the American land as their own. Again, their sense of superiority dominated entirely America and anyone who obstructed their progress would be classified as uncivilized and thus deserved to be obliterated.

The Western imperialism did never falter; it was well-nourished to the point where Western countries ventured to conquer many other countries that lied overseas. The Western pig-headed imperial ideology of expansion was never satisfied, thus causing the world to undergo dangerous changes which affected the global correlations.

Thus, the sense of superiority which the Western imperialism has been suffering from was in fact what one might call the delusions of grandeur, and on that basis entire countries which lied behind the far seas were conquered; some obliterated and many meddled and transformed into other smaller and weaker entities. The West, who conquered other nations often using military force, did never have the intention to give up; rather these Europeans regarded themselves as the sole people who decided what is right and what is not.

Moreover, only because they could, the West viewed themselves as the only ones capable of launching what is called the colonial enterprise. Thus, anyone who was not western and could invade other lands was never considered as someone who belonged to the colonial club, rather it was considered as just a mixture of a good metal with a bad one.

On the other hand, those powers that were capable of launching colonial enterprises yet were not considered as part of the colonial club, were at the same level of inflicting horrible atrocities against the weaker nations they had invaded. Such powers were also driven by their sense of superiority, yet in their colonial quest they did not claim to civilize the peoples they conquered as the imperialist ideology of the West did.

Rather, they claimed more territories neighboring their borders; thus instead of trespassing thousands of miles behind the seas to conquer other lands, they simply devoured adjacent territories that contributed to enlarge their colonial land mass. In Germany Adolf Hitler had terribly great colonial ambitions which not only caused many European countries such as France and Hungary fall under Germany's rule, but also engaged the whole continent together with the rest of the world into a world war.

Similarly, in the former Soviet Union Joseph Stalin adopted the same colonial ideology. The Soviets did not travel thousands of miles away from their borderland to claim further territories; rather they engaged themselves into a constant series of devouring almost all of Europe's landmass. Certainly, such colonial ideology of Hitler and Stalin were not in any way milder than that of the West, and the nations which succumbed to their colonial expansion had suffered from the same ugly practices that brought but misery and despair.

Moreover, and quite cunningly Germany and the Soviet Union colonized neighboring nations on the basis that these countries shared similar cultures as well as languages; that is why probably they were not faced with much resistance as did the colonial imperialism of the West. The countries of the Second World; that is mainly of the former Soviet Union not only did they live in grave conditions, but also after this Union was dissolved in 1991 they were left not knowing what to do with their broken economies as well as their souls.

It was then, after the direct colonial enterprise was ended that emerged the necessity of a literary theory which needed to express the suffering of the people and devise new ways which would help recover the postcolonial effects down the long way towards therapy. This theory came to be known as Postcolonialism.

Postcolonialism is a literary theory that emerged as a reaction to colonialism and imperialism. Postcolonial critique has witnessed its peak especially at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. Its objectives of priority were to try to cope with the lethal effects which were left by the colonizer, to help recover the long-lost identity and rebuild a new stronger one; a task which clearly was not an easy one.

In the pursuit of recovering the lost identity many postcolonial writers emerged, these writers each were relentlessly searching for new ways to attain full cleansing of their people's identities of the traces of the colonizer. Among these writers are two renowned postcolonial authors; the Algerian Assia Djebar and the Ukrainian Oksana Zabuzhko. The two female authors joined the global struggle of decolonization, and brilliantly interpreted their people's sufferings.

In addition, not only did Djébar and Zabuzhko earn themselves a strong voice which allowed them to speak for those who did not have a voice, but also the two authors are considered among the pioneers of Postcolonial feminism in their countries. Clearly, as two women who had survived colonization, Djébar and Zabuzhko's writings were in no way fictional; rather their writings are considered as live testimonies of the horrible atrocities inflicted by the French and Soviets upon the Algerian and Ukrainian peoples.

Both Djébar and Zabuzhko combined between writing the suffering of their people in the postcolonial era, together with their own as females. In their novels; *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, both Djébar and Zabuzhko tackled the issue of the female body and how it endured the systematic horrible practices of the colonizer. So, how could both authors manage to describe the psychological as well as physical suffering of their people in the postcolonial era? As two renowned female authors, to what extent did both authors succeed to raise the problematic of the suffering of the postcolonial female body?

Furthermore, even though Djébar and Zabuzhko might not actually have been colonized; that is they were not shoved through the painful experiences of rape and torture, yet surely the two authors were in constant contact with those whose memories were plagued with the atrocities of the colonizer, especially women. When both Algeria and Ukraine regained their independence, colonization was over.

Yet, with the end of colonization the suffering of women did not end. After independence Algerian and Ukrainian women were still colonized, both by their plagued memories of what they have received from the colonizer, and then by being neglected then thrown into a state of oblivion after they had bravely fought together with men in the struggle for independence.

Especially after Algeria and Ukraine regained their independence, many postcolonial women were excommunicated and thus becoming voiceless. As any eager feminist writers both Djébar and Zabuzhko, first and foremost aimed at giving a voice to those females who had no voice. It was an urgent matter for them to stand for the

majority of women whose contributions in the struggle for independence was undeniable, yet were hardly mentioned in the history books.

The colonial situations in both Algeria and Ukraine were shaped by dichotomous circumstances, in that the nature of the French and Soviet colonizer was ideologically different. Therefore, both Djébar and Zabuzhko adopted different techniques in their writings which automatically corresponded to the colonial situations in their countries. The reader notices that Djébar depended in her writing mostly on the tales and testimonies of those Algerian women who survived the French colonizer. Whereas, Zabuzhko counted on her personal experiences with the Soviet colonizer.

Moreover, in their writings both Djébar and Zabuzhko pursued different language choices. While Zabuzhko automatically adopted her mother tongue the Ukrainian language to decolonize the culture of her people, Djébar chose to write in French; the language of the enemy. Certainly, both authors were often harshly criticized in terms of their language choice; Zabuzhko was accused of abusing the Ukrainian language by adding profanity to it, while Djébar was often criticized for writing in the language of the enemy.

Therefore, why did Zabuzhko not write in the English language while writing her novel in the United States of America (hence US)? This way, her voice would be heard well. And why did Djébar choose to write in French, the language of the enemy, while she could write in Arabic, or her mother tongue Berber? Was the language choice of both authors carefully chosen? Or was it done spontaneously as a result of the long presence of the colonizer in both Algeria and Ukraine? If so, then why did Zabuzhko not write in the Russian language?

Knowing that writing in the Ukrainian language would only bring her more troubles, Zabuzhko challenged the Russian ban on writing in the Ukrainian language, that is why she travelled to the US to complete her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*. Zabuzhko also anticipated that her novel would not be well received, since not many Ukrainians were reading in their mother tongue; rather the majority was still under the influence of the Russian language.

Yet, she insisted on using her mother tongue in writing her book; she believed that the Algerian people have their own language, and would definitely be better addressed in their own language. While Djébar's choice of the French language, some may argue, was not necessary. Therefore, why did Djébar not write in Arabic, considering that it is well-classified among other languages and that it has a wide range of readability? Was that because Djébar saw a deficiency in the Arabic language comparing to the French? Or was she simply in love with the French culture, and could not write but in the French language?

Many critics confirm that in her writings Djébar was certainly contributing to decolonize the Algerian culture; her use of Arabic and Berber words is a better proof. Moreover, most of her characters are Algerian and her stories have either happened in Algeria or center around Algeria. So, to what extent did Djébar succeed to decolonize the Algerian culture in the language of the enemy? And how did she manage to raise the issue of the Algerian Arab-Berber woman in the French language?

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The Historical Background of Postcolonialism

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Chapter One

The Historical Background of Postcolonialism

1.1. Introduction

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially, colonialism was at its peak; the European super powers were the major players who colonized almost all the continents. After colonizing a weaker nation, the colonizer was exercising its power over the colonized nation in order to bring about a sweeping transformation on it, if not wipe it out. This resulted in the fact that after colonialism was over, the colonized people experienced a half and sometimes full merging of the colonizer's culture with their own. This had positive and negative outcomes on both the colonizer and the colonized.

The postcolonial theory which attempts to study the complex relationship between the colonizer and colonized is in fact difficult to define. Simply put, postcolonialism is a literary theory which deals with the study of the people who were once colonized by a hegemonic different or similar power.

It is like a foreigner who intrudes in someone else's house without permission, and then this intruder starts to decide on how things should be done or arranged in the host's house. In the meantime, the host is trying politely to explain to the intruder that he does not have any rights to claim for. However, the intruder is insistent on staying in the house which does not belong to him while meddling with the host's affairs.

It is when the host starts to apply force in dealing with the intruder's insolence that postcolonialism is concerned. Postcolonialism, thus is concerned with the reactions and transformation of the colonized people, in the post era of colonialism. Usually, postcolonialism tackles issues of how people adapt in the period following colonialism; the confusion and pain these people experienced when hanging in between a violent past, unstable present and a blurry future, rendered them in a dangerous turbulence.

Postcolonial studies can be carried out both by the people who were and still are colonized, and also by the people who were part of the colonial society. The people who were once colonized are usually defied by challenging issues of the national identity, decolonizing the culture and freeing the national memory from the dark colonial past. While those who belonged to the party of the colonizer are defied by the bad reputation they have built out of their ruthless practices against weaker people.

Therefore, postcolonialism was born amid the confusion of the national struggle against the imperialist colonial ideology which came for one mission only; that is to steal, oppress and impose a foreign culture on a weaker nation. The resistance of the colonized nation prevented the full merging or even replacing of the colonizer's culture with that of the colonized. Those colonized people who offered less resistance were threatened by the danger of fading away in the graveyard of history.

For his part, the colonizer relentlessly persevered to adopt well-planned strategies in order to break apart the culture of the colonized nation; the latter whether decided to resist the colonizer or not was never immune from these devastating colonial strategies. The most effective colonial strategy was divide and conquer, which brought upon the colonized people more misery and pain seeing their culture being stolen away from them.

The Russian imperialism inflicted upon the Ukrainians all kinds of atrocities, in order to guarantee its superiority and remain the ultimate super power whose colonial traces are still to be found in modern Ukraine. The Russians were experts in devising ways of exterminating weaker people, such as; organizing famines that killed millions of people, the absence of fair trials where thousands of people who were meant to be sentenced to prison disappeared on the way.

On the other hand, the French were colonizers par excellence. Part of the reason why the Algerian great war of revolution (1954-1962) is not only famous, but also even inspiring is that the French used all the power they had to torture, terrorize and exterminate the Algerian people. And until the very end of the Algerian Great War in 1962, the French refused to stop their terrorist acts towards Algerians.

For a century and a half the French acquired the habit of terrorizing the Algerians without any consequences, when the Algerian people finally retaliated to defend themselves the French eventually understood that what goes around definitely comes around. Therefore, in this raging conflict between the colonizer and the colonized, how far were the colonized people aware of the dangers threatening the future of their existence? How did they react to the atrocities of the colonizer? And what were the final strategies adopted by the colonizer in dealing with the growing project of independence?

1.2. The Postcolonial World

After the end of the Second World War (1939-1945) there emerged what is known as the double polarity, two parties; the east and the west. Almost the western hemisphere was controlled by the United States of America, while the eastern hemisphere was controlled by the former Soviet Union. The world map was in a constant change; as a result various nations had experienced major changes such as; Japan.

Japan had witnessed a radical change especially after the US nuclear bombings of the two Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan not only did succeed to overcome the massive demolition of the Second World War, but also it has succeeded to become one of the major countries of modern world, especially in the two branches of technology and economy.

Moreover, the Second World War helped in giving birth to the revolutionary movements, especially those countries that were once colonized. In Africa and Asia, there were two major models of revolutionary movements whose struggle has become nearly legendary; Algeria and Vietnam. While the armed resurrections of the colonized nations were at their peak, there emerged a field of study in these nations known as postcoloniality.

In Vietnam the struggle had lasted a long time, almost as long as Algeria's. The French conquest of Vietnam was attained gradually starting in 1859. By 1884 the entire country was at the hands of France. Nearly a century later Vietnam had joined the global resurrections of the colonized nations and thus the first Indochina war started

under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh. The struggle against the French colonial rule did not end until 1954 with the massive defeat of the French at the battle of Dien Bien Phu.¹ With the Geneva Accords² Vietnam was divided into three countries; Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

Vietnam was further divided into two parts, North and South. In 1965, the military intervention of the United States who was supporting the somewhat democratic government of the South was at its peak wherein a war between the north and south of Vietnam emerged. With the former Soviet Union and China supporting the communist government of Ho Chi Minh in the north, and the United States and France supporting the South, Vietnam had suffered great losses with the total estimated death toll of four million. In 1976 Vietnam was once again reunited and proclaimed independent.

India was not very far from the global resurrections, yet the struggle took a new form. After the First World War (1914-1918) and as a result of the repressive legislative rules, mainly related to taxes, the Indians revolted against the British oppression under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) who would later become India's icon and the symbol of non-violent movements in the world.

In addition, India's struggle against the British rule brought desolation to the point where India had also to be divided. The conflict between the Hindus and Muslims under the pretext of religious differences culminated in the division of the country into two parts; a country of Hindus called India and another of Muslims called Pakistan. The British colonial empire definitely had a hand in the sudden conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

¹ **Dien Bien Phu:** The Battle of Dien Bien Phu was a fateful battle between the forces of the Vietnam Liberation Union and the French army, which was supported by NATO forces. The losses of the Vietnamese army were three times the French losses, but the real victory was when the commander of the French armies came out with a white flag declaring the victory of the Vietnam Army. The commander of the Vietnamese army was General Von Nguyen Jiyab.

² **Geneva Accords:** In July 1954, the Geneva Agreement, which ended the war between France and Vietnam, was signed in the presence of the delegations of Vietnam, the delegations of France, Britain, the Soviet Union, China, the United States, Laos and Cambodia. The outcome of the agreement was the division of Vietnam into two parts, separated by Latitude 17. Despite their presence in Geneva, the United States and its pro-Saigon government did not sign the agreement.

In 1937-1939 the British Empire convinced Muhammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) to believe in the two-nation theory supporting him with the claim that Indian Muslims were misrepresented under the government of Gandhi. As a result, a referendum was held in 1946 where the majority of Muslims in India agreed upon the creation of Pakistan.

Furthermore, it has always been rooted in the colonial ideology to divide and subdivide the colonized nations. Only between the two world wars hundreds of countries were divided and then subdivided, thus giving birth to other smaller countries. In Asia, Vietnam was subdivided into Cambodia and Laos, India was subdivided into Pakistan, and the latter was further subdivided into Bangladesh in 1971.

When it was finally time for the departure of the colonial powers, the latter devised a plan to add fuel to the fire creating non-ending ethnic and religious conflicts in order to gain more time to keep exploiting the colonized nation. The division in the Korean peninsula in 1948 into North and South could not have been achieved without the intervention of the west led by the United States of America and the East led by the former Soviet Union.

Moreover, in Latin America conflicts did not seem to be ending and some of them did not end until fairly recently like the Colombian civil war³. Latin America, especially the region of the Caribbean gulf was also put to the test of choosing sides; whether to be with the west led by America or follow the preaching of communism under the Soviet Union. The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 is the best example of the immense struggle of the double polarity between the US and the Soviet Union.

These two major colonial powers had to confront each other at many occasions, but often through what is called proxy wars where the fight takes place on a ground away from the mainland. Cuba had also had various serious internal conflicts as a result to denouncing American interference in its internal affairs and embracing the Soviet

³ **Colombian Civil War:** began in the mid-1960s, it is a war between the Colombian successful governments, paramilitary groups, crime syndicates, and far-left guerrillas such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN), fighting each other to increase their influence in Colombian territory. Two of the most important international actors that have contributed to the Colombian civil war are multinational companies and the United States of America.

Union instead. The major revolutionary figure in Cuba is Fidel Castro (1926-2016) who has become a national icon in Cuba.

Another notorious revolutionary figure in Latin America is Che Guevara (1928-1967) who was later captured and executed in 1967. The list goes on and on, yet the common thing between these resurrections and revolutionary figures is that most of them succeeded only for a while, to be then smothered and put down. Many of these resurrections were either created to serve a temporary purpose or found themselves in the middle of the struggle of two heavyweight colonial powers; in either ways they were mostly destined to fail.

Furthermore, more nations kept being subdivided into even more nations. By the time the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991 tens of countries, mostly east-European regained their independence. Countries like Kazakhstan, Georgia, Ukraine and many other east-European countries all the way to Poland, Czechoslovakia and eastern Germany.

The strategy of dividing and subdividing countries of nations which were considered weaker or "less-civilized" plagued all the five continents. Africa was also, if not the most, plagued continent by colonialism. Being considered dark, the color of inferiority, the entire continent of Africa was colonized by the European colonial powers and mostly by France. Not only Africa was constantly in subdivision and being shoved in ethnic and tribal conflicts that did not seem to end, but also Africa was the main source of slavery; the bulk supplier of the slave trade for Europe and North America.

One can hardly talk about the struggle of Africa with the steel shackles of colonialism without discussing the legendary struggle of Algeria against the French colonial rule. Especially at the end of the first half of the twentieth century, France decided to give up many of its colonies to devote its full time to put down the Algerian revolution.

Algeria was the last country in North Africa to regain its independence from France. All of the countries in North Africa were granted their independence with the

minimum of casualties. However, Algeria fought heroically offering more than two million brave martyrs to finally snatching their freedom in 1962.

The post-world war revolutionary movements gave birth to literary movements and theories. The main dominant theory of the post-war era is called postcolonialism; the latter is concerned with the study of the effects of colonialism on the colonized nations usually after being geographically independent from the colonizer.

Ania Loomba argues that it is hard to define postcolonialism, in her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* she defines "postcolonialism not just as coming literally after colonialism and signifying its demise, but more flexibly as the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism" (16).

In almost all parts of the globe where colonialism had left an impact, there emerged authors and critics who adopted the principles of postcolonialism. In doing so, these scholars were determined to get rid of the traces left by the former colonizer, to help in completely decolonizing their cultures.

When comparing the works of Assia Djébar and Oksana Zabuzhko the theory of the "third world" becomes dominant in the field of postcolonialism. Yet, one can find that some of the nations those who had experienced the atrocities of colonialism are sometimes referred to as "second world." In fact, it is hard to classify countries of the second world and countries of the third world. So, what is the second world? And what is the third world?

In brief, the second world may refer to those countries which were colonized by the former Soviet Union. Some critics tend to call the east-European countries which had once formed the former Soviet bloc as second world, because they believe that the Soviet Union did not colonize those countries, rather they were annexed by geographical adjacency. This claim rules the former Soviet Union out of the European colonial club; of the colonizing countries of far overseas.

The third world theory which is more dominant and more common includes almost all the colonized nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Countries like

Algeria were often considered as barbaric, uncivilized, inferior and who were born to be submissive to the "superior" European race.

Both the second and third worlds had suffered unspeakable atrocities from their colonizers. Yet, the third world was usually the one who had experienced more calamities in that the colonizer was usually different in race, language, culture and religion. Take for example the French conquest of Algeria. Both the Algerians and the French were and will always be different in terms of their race, language, culture and religion. This is explained as the traditional concept of colonialism, where the colonizer invades a country situated overseas.

Whereas; the second world usually shared similar culture, language, race and even religion with the colonizer. If the former Soviet Union is to be considered a colonial power, then its conquest to Ukraine for example can hardly be considered as a conquest. Being an adjacent country Ukraine was simply added to the Soviet bloc.

Even when the Russian race was proclaimed to be the noblest in the Soviet bloc, the truth remains that both Ukrainians and Russians for example are of Caucasus race, have similar languages to the point where the Ukrainian language was for long considered as a variant of the mother Russian language. Both Ukrainians and Russians are of Orthodox Christianity and share similar cultures.

The theory of the second and the third worlds entitles Western Europe and Northern America to be the "first world," the dominant colonial empires. Countries of the "first world" are the only powers capable to launch colonial enterprises, classifying all the weakest economies under the category of the third world.

In taking a closer look at the term "third world" one realizes that the term was definitely coined by the western imperialism to serve its interests. Indeed in 1952 in an article of the magazine L'Observateur, the French historian Alfred Sauvy (1898-1990) coined the term "third world" or in French "*Tiers Monde*."

The colonial powers were not satisfied for having brutally exploited countries of the "third world." Instead, they were the ones to invent racist labels for those countries

whose riches were the bedrock on which was built the western civilization. Of course, these types of classifications were to guarantee permanent dominion of the colonizer over the colonized.

As a major country of the second world, Ukraine was naturally annexed to the Soviet Union in 1921. Having similar cultural traits with mother Russia, Ukraine was treated as an extension to the expansion of the Soviet empire. Yet, in sharing similar traits of culture Ukraine was never truly treated as quite similar to the Russian mainland.

Rather the superiority of the Russian race was unquestionable and very unnegotiable. Consequently, and as many countries of the former Soviet bloc, Ukraine had suffered from unspeakable atrocities of the same Union which perceived itself as the vessel which protected and represented the eastern communist ideology.

For its part and without exaggeration Algeria can be considered as a major country of the third world. The Algerians never accepted the French rule, from the first moment of the French conquest of Algeria in 1830 there were fierce resistances of Algerian tribes who refused any type of foreign occupation, and especially from France who was deep in the neck in debts to Algeria and which have not been paid back yet.

For a hundred and thirty-two years the Algerian people had resisted the French colonization using all their power. Yet, all these small-scale revolutions were smothered and put down sooner. From the moment France conquered Algeria in 1830 until 1962, France did not confront a regular army, rather it fought against barely organized militias who were mercilessly exterminated.

In his essay "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," David Chioni Moore offers a brief definition of the postcolonial situation that fits both Algeria and Ukraine, he states: "According to a rough consensus, the cultures of postcolonial lands are characterized by tensions between the desire for autonomy and history of dependence, between the desire for autochthony and the fact of hybrid, part-colonial origin, between resistance and complicity, and between imitation (or mimicry) and originality" (12).

It becomes apparent thus that no matter what the differences that exist between the postcolonial countries, the truth remains that all these countries are unified by their postcolonial experiences. This becomes further evident in the works of both Assia Djebar and Oksana Zabuzhko. Even when the colonial situations of Algeria and Ukraine were marked by different circumstances, yet the peoples of Algeria and Ukraine have experienced the same postcolonial calamities.

Both Djebar and Zabuzhko were the representatives of two different cultures that are geographically way far from each other. Yet, in their literary works one notices that they were mostly anticolonial. Not only they have tried to terminate the threat of the remnants of the former colonizer, but also in their writings they have tried to come closer to their people using the tools they have in an attempt to relieve their sufferings.

Unfortunately, the two female authors were not greatly supported especially by their people in their quest to liberate their cultures of the past. Yet, they have remained resilient in front of the harsh criticism they have received, proving to themselves and to the entire world that they are not merely two women experiencing feminist writing, rather they have fought the good fight in trying to defend and liberate their cultures to finally be able to restore the identity of their people and permanently erase the traces of the former colonizer.

1.3. The Alleged Civilizing Mission of the White Man

Classifying himself in the first world, the European white man had allowed himself to go overseas and conquer those whom he regarded as inferior. In his classification of races the white man depended on the color of the skin, the white or pale face was the superior of them all, then the rest were degraded all the way down to the black. Not only did the white man claim that the other races were uncivilized and inferior, but also he regarded them as a property where he is free to do with it whatever he wishes.

In the western European colonial ideology the peoples that were normally regarded inferior were usually attributed bestial characteristics. In 1902 the Polish-English author Joseph Conrad published a novella entitled *Heart of Darkness*. In this

novella Conrad deliberately denigrated the black African people who were brutally exploited beyond description.

In his novella Conrad immediately described the African people as savages and definitely subhuman. Ironically describing a black man in the Congo, Conrad states: "he was an improved specimen; he could fire up a vertical boiler. He was there below me, and, upon my word, to look at him was as edifying as seeing a dog in a parody of breeches and a feather hat, walking on his hind-legs" (8).

Conrad seemed to have forgotten why him and his people were in the Congo in the first place. They were of course determined to gather as much money as they could out of the ivory business. In the first part of his novella Conrad confesses that the European colonizers were in Africa for one main objective, that is to exploit as many riches as they could and then export them back to Europe upon which they built their civilizations. He states: "they [Europeans] grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind- as it is very proper for those who tackle a darkness" (3).

The European acquisition of weaker people's lands was not only done by force, it was also achieved through the European Christian missionaries which often acted as institutions for gathering significant information on the local people in order to facilitate the military conquest which would follow later.

Moreover, these Christian missionaries worked on wiping out the local cultures by spreading Christianity and luring the locals to adopt a foreign tongue by mesmerizing them with western methods that seemed magical; usually these missionaries brought with them a dentist, a doctor, a musician and definitely a preacher of Christianity.

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is considered by many as a response to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. In his novel Achebe demonstrated that Africans were not savage and low people, rather they had their own civilization. In the novel Achebe shows the complex societal system of the African people, that they were governed by laws; when the protagonist Okonkwo accidentally killed the son of a clansman (Ezeudu)

this is considered as an offense against the goddess of earth, according to the law he must go with his family into exile for seven years.

In referring to the threats of the Christian missionaries and the desolation they brought to the African people instead of peace and prosperity, Achebe demonstrates this in a scene where an albino approaches the village of Okonkwo riding on an iron horse (bicycle). After consulting the Oracle the albino is immediately killed by the locals for fear to ruin their sacred culture. Following his death a church is established in the village, having several African people converted to Christianity including Okonkwo's eldest son (Nwoye). As a result, Okonkwo hangs himself to death.

By having Okonkwo committing a suicide Achebe attempts to explain that the African people were enjoying prosperity and peace before the coming of the European colonizers through the door of Christian missionaries. After the coming of the European invaders, Africa embodied in Okonkwo refuses the foreign culture imposed on them and as a result commits a suicide.

Conrad's behavior was not quite surprising when supporting the colonial ideology of his country. In fact, he is not the first one to have done that. The colonial ideology was strongly supported and advised by the British poet Rudyard Kipling who was a great supporter of the Western-European colonialism especially that of Britain.

Kipling, and in an imperial poem entitled "The White Man's Burden" (1899) urges the Europeans to take care of the "sullen peoples, / half-devil half-child" (7-8). According to Kipling the peoples who are susceptible to being colonized are dismal people whose origins are a mixture of the devil and childishness, that is why it is up to the West to go beyond the far borders and teach these unfortunate nations the basics of the human manners.

Kipling further denigrates the colonized peoples by calling them "the threat of terror" (11), indicating that the West would always be at war with those they consider as inferior. This is achieved through the pretext of preemptive strike, where the power considering itself superior launches an offensive against those considered inferior, usually culminating with full seizure of the target area.

Moreover, Kipling not only scorns these sullen-childish peoples, but also he justifies the brutal wars brought upon them calling them: "the savage wars of peace" (18). Kipling explains that the horrific, savage and barbaric practices against weaker people are for the sake of achieving prosperity and peace in the world. Thus, according to Kipling the ends justify the means.

Kipling finishes his colonial-imperial discourse by strongly advising his colonial peers to "not stoop to less, / nor [should they] call too loud on freedom" (42-43). He, then strongly recommends his fellow European colonizers that they should never be satisfied with what they have, rather they should be glad to engage in the frenzy of exterminating whole civilizations for the sake of building their own, nor should they call loud and promote the benevolence of freedom.

Hence, it is apparent that the colonial powers legitimized their brutal practices over weaker people under the pretext of doing god's work on earth in civilizing these people. However, in reality the colonial machine was pursuing a pig-headed ideology of exploiting weaker people to the very end, while being backed by artists such as; authors, poets and painters.

1.3.1. The Occident as "us" and the Orient as "them"

Being the sole player in a first world it had created, the occident created an inferior reflective image to remind it constantly of its superiority, this image it called the orient. But first what is the occident? In a simple definition the occident can be defined as a group of countries geographically situated mainly in Western Europe and North America (USA and Canada). However, the definition of the occident extends further to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea and even sometimes Singapore. So, what is really the occident? And in what way is it different from the image of the orient it created?

The conventional definition of the occident was restricted to the countries of Western Europe and North America and very often they have been labeled the West,

being situated at the North-Western hemisphere of planet earth, and anyone else outside these parameters was referred to as the orient even when the latter was sometimes capable of launching colonial enterprises.

In his book *Orientalism* Edward Said explains how both the occident and the orient are merely two man-made ideas, he states: "as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West" (5).

Yet, the modern definition of the occident encompasses mostly the allies of Western Europe and North America. That is to say that any country who accepts and embraces the ideology of Western Europe (European Union) and Northern America (USA and Canada) is automatically included in the occident even if it is not geographically situated in the western hemisphere of planet earth.

Earlier, countries of Western Europe were in a constant competition with each other; enslaving more people and confiscating their territories contributed in building their bloody civilizations and has definitely placed them as the leaders of the modern world. It was the countries of Western Europe who have created the United States of America; the latter was firmly established on the blood and bones of the Native Americans.

In fact, it is hard to find a common consensus on the nature of both the occident and the orient. Since it is man-made everyone have their say in the matter, according to the western hegemonic discourse the occident is a bloc of countries who have created the modern civilization and who were born to rule over the non-white race.

Anyone whose complexion was not as pale as the people of North-Western Europe were less civilized and thus deserved to be ruled. The occident had the supreme authority in looking over the rest of the world, even by confiscating and sometimes exterminating entire civilizations only because they had a different complexion or spoke in a different tongue.

It becomes even more ambiguous when taking into consideration the definition of the occident as those countries that were able to launch colonial enterprises and were not colonized in return. Yet, history tells that many countries of Western Europe were colonized.

It is argued by some that the Roman Empire (27BC-395AD) was the first to colonize countries of Western Europe mainly France, Italy, Germany and England. Yet this is hardly considered as colonization, because at times these nations were not established as countries in the modern sense; rather they were merely tribes and towns scattered in the area.

Thus, it can be safely claimed that the first foreign conquests of Western Europe were achieved at the beginning of the eighth century by the Arabs. The latter fit in the conventional definition of the colonizer, since they came from the Arab peninsula all the way to invade Spain, France, Portugal and Italy. These countries were besieged and conquered by the Arabs between 711 and 1492.

In addition France was colonized by the British Empire in the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) where the British monarchs claimed the throne of France to England. While in 1794 France colonized Spain through the Pyrenees Mountains, together with Belgium and parts of Germany (Rhein). In 1796 the French leader Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) successfully invaded Italy. In return Italy invaded France in 1940 in the Battle of the Alps.

The United States of America, the ruling state of the modern world was itself founded out of thirteen British colonies. Earlier, America was invaded by several countries of Western Europe who then confiscated the entire continent. Almost all of the major countries of Western Europe colonized America (the British, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Italians and French).

In colonizing a certain nation, that nation was to be the other of the colonizer; it had to be made different so that the people of the colonizing country would embrace the concept of confiscating someone else's land. Yet, and as a result of the discussion

mentioned above one can deduce that terms like "other" and "orient" were mostly applied to the peoples who did not belong to the white race, that is of Western Europe.

When France was colonized by the British, the French were by definition the other to the British. When the Italians were invaded by Napoleon Bonaparte, the Italians were definitely the other to the French. And when the Germans invaded France during the Second World War, then the French were the other to the Germans.

Yet, when these countries were colonized they never called themselves "orient." So, again what is the orient? Does it refer to the Eastern hemisphere of planet earth? Or is it anyone who was different in the complexion and ideology to that of Western Europe?

The Orient appears to be those nations who were not colonized only for a short period of time; rather they experienced constant colonization by outsiders. The orient seemed to be the permanent other to the occident. In his book *Orientalism* Edward Said offers a broader definition of the nature of the relationship which binds the two concepts of the occident and the orient, he states:

The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony...The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be "Oriental" in all those ways 'considered common place by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it could be-that is, submitted to being-made Oriental. (5-6)

Yet, one can find in the western colonial discourse that a country like Russia is sometimes included within the parameters of the orient, even though the Russians belong to the same white race of Western Europe. Undeniably, in the nineteenth century Russia had established good commercial relations with central Asia, especially with Persia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Moreover, through the centuries Russia had established itself to be a colonial empire and very often the Russian colonial interests collided with the British ones, especially in imposing commercial dominion in Asia. In fact, the Russian acquisition of lands outside its mainland is considered to be as equal as the British, if not larger.

Only a while before the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991 Russian borders were extended all the way reaching Western Europe taking half of Germany. Even after the Soviet Union was dissolved, Russia remains the largest country in the world with an area of 17,125,200 square kilometers.

In the Western European colonial discourse, colonization is usually connected with the concept of orientalism; the weaker people who are prone to be subjugated are often orientalized, they are made to be passive. While in the Russo-Soviet model of colonization it is quite different. In his essay "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," David Chioni Moore argues that for centuries Russia had the fear and the belief that its culture was inferior to that of the West (26).

It should not be confused that Russia was not a colonial power; the Russians had scrambled for their share of the pie and it contributed as well in escalating the pressure and suffering on the colonized people. In addition, the people who fell under the control of Russia were mostly made to be the other.

In fact, even inside the Russian mainland the Russian peasants were usually the other to the nobles, and consequently were deprived of their rights for education, healthcare and simply for freedom, while the Russian nobles were boasting by speaking in French and dressing and eating like the English. In brief, Russia was a colonizer but it could never join the colonial club of the occident.

Like most of the Western European colonial powers, the French colonization of Algeria was a dynamic one; that is to say a colonizing country which lies overseas undertakes an offensive action against another nation which also lies overseas for political, economic and geostrategic objectives. In this regard, it becomes easier to classify the colonial situation; the colonizer exercises hegemonic authority and thus belongs to the industrial first world, while the colonized is orientalized and made to be passive and therefore is part of the third world.

While the Russian type of colonization is considered to be "dynastic" where the colonizer takes control over neighboring countries, and usually shares

geographical borders, language and culture with the colonized nations. This complexity in the Russian colonial situation further confirms the impossibility of joining the Western European colonial club.

Lord George Nathaniel Curzon who was the Viceroy of British India (1899-1905) wrote a book entitled *Russia in Central Asia*. In his book Curzon explained that despite its many endeavors of becoming a major colonial power, Russia would never be a colonial power in the same model of the British and the rest of Western Europe. He states: "the [Russian] conquest of Central Asia is a conquest of Orientals by Orientals, of cognate character by cognate character. It is the fusing of strong with weaker metal, but it is not the expulsion of an impure by a purer element" (392).

Curzon's declaration regarding both Russia and the peoples it once colonized confirms the narcissistic behavior the Western colonial discourse had possessed. Where does it come from the claim that it was up to the West to civilize and free the weaker nations? If that is so, then why was not Russia denounced for the atrocities it had caused to many nations? And if it happened that the Russian colonial past would be denounced, then what would the free world do to denounce the horrific, unforgiveable atrocities of the West against tens of thousands of nations throughout history?

The answer to all these questions can be summed up in one answer; that is both Russia and the West were two faces of the same colonial machine which has brought to the many nations of the world nothing but suffering, pain and permanent injuries that are impossible to recover from. And no matter what the differences are between the East and West, whether they like it or not, the two cooperated to claim more riches to themselves on the expense of the weaker nations.

1.3.2. The Pleasures of Imperialism

When reading both the colonialist or imperialist literary discourse it becomes inevitable but to notice that the colonizer had immense pleasure in imposing its authority on the native peoples. The colonizer committed unspeakable atrocities not only to fund its growing industrial economy, but also to satisfy its unquenchable pleasure in controlling as many nations as it could.

Looking back in the past of imperialism one can observe that the claim of civilizing the colonized masses is but a big fat lie. The claim fades away when studying the past and current state of the colonized peoples. Everyone knows that all of the African countries still suffer from agonizing poverty, and have turned to become even more inferior than they once were. Furthermore, and despite their abundant riches most parts of Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America still remain centuries behind those imperialists who have exploited them for decades

When America invaded Vietnam in 1954 US troops massacred hundreds of innocent people. American national security could not possibly have been threatened by Vietnam or any part of Asia, it was simply necessary for the US to guarantee permanent presence in the Far East Asia.

During the Gulf War in 1991, the US interfered once again in the internal affairs of the Middle East of course to guarantee its interest in the region. The US established a coalition with the United Kingdom of Great Britain (hence UK), Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Egypt. The coalition managed to fend off what was called the Iraqi's colonization of Kuwait in 1990. After the war was ended the US urged the United Nations (hence the UN) to impose an international economic and military embargo on Iraq.

The rush in the US response to the internal affairs which do not concern continental US in the first place indicates only one thing, that is to say regardless of its interests, the American imperialism enjoys playing the role of the policeman of the world.

After ten years of invading Iraq in 2003 under the pretext that Iraq had possessed weapons of mass destruction, and deliberately destroying an ancient civilization of centuries, the American official response came cold saying that the US intelligence made a mistake and that Iraq did never possess any type of mass destruction weapons.

If the reader to history thinks that the pleasures of imperialistic interference in many parts of the world belongs only to history, then that is definitely not true. Currently, the US remains the ruling state of the world, not only in terms of economic and military dominations but also through a strong political-imperialistic ideology. The

current American imperialism is present in Syria; for eight years now Syria have been almost entirely destroyed by the US and its allies, only for the pleasure of seeing the Arab region going in non-ending turmoil.

Every decade or two the western imperialism regenerates the scenario of interference in others' internal affairs, and for the sake of distraction every time colonization takes a new form. France has caused unspeakable injuries to the Algerian people for decades, and has not given an official apology to the Algerian people. While it is known to the public that France had used the fly-whisk incident⁴ to invade Algeria in 1830, the truth remains that France was in heavy debts owed to Algeria and which to this very moment they remain unpaid.

Instead, in 2005 the French parliament issued a law where all high-school teachers in the republic were required to teach the "positive morals" of the French colonial imperialism. This is found in Article 04, paragraph 02. In article 13 the law speaks in favor of the French terrorist organization called Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS), glorifying the French terrorist militants who murdered hundreds of thousands of innocent Algerian civilians, even after the official cease fire on March 18, 1962.

Regardless of its economic interests, or ensuring its national security as they say, Western Imperialism had long imposed its hegemony on the orient. In their book entitled *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin argue that: "[the] pleasure [of imperialism was] derived from the moral superiority and material profit that motivate[d] [it]... [it] justif[ied] the moral authority of the colonizer and—by positing the inferiority of the native as a metaphysical fact—to mask the pleasure the colonizer derive[d] from that authority" (23).

The western imperialism could not have found immense pleasure only in taking over lands lying overseas. In its colonial dangerous missions the imperialist machine

⁴ **Fly-whisk:**The incident took place in a meeting between Deval (French consul in Algeria) and Dey Husayn on 29 April 1827. In the consul's version of the event, the session rapidly degenerated into an exchange of insults culminating with the Dey striking Deval three times with his fly whisk and ordering him from the room—an accusation Husayn did not refute but justified on the basis of crude comments made by the consul about Islam and Muslims. Enraged by Deval's behavior, the Dey rejected the French government's demand for an apology. On this pretext the French enforced a blockade on Algiers in 1827, to be invaded three years later in 1830.

activated many fields of study as well as art; there were sociologists, psychologists, politicians, economists, military personnel, working for the colonizer. In addition, there were painters, authors, poets and musicians serving the colonizer in every possible way they could. All these experts were recruited to serve the general interests of imperialism.

Moreover, just a short period after the French invaded Algeria in 1830, the French painter Eugène Delacroix was called for the job; his famous painting *Les Femmes d'Alger dans leur Appartement* (1834) is considered as a good example of portraying the colonized people in the same old manner; passive and oriental.

Furthermore, Rudyard Kipling better demonstrates how the British imperialism was enjoying exploiting India and the Indians. Just like Conrad in his novella *Heart of Darkness*, Kipling turned his country's imperialism in India into a work of art. Despite spending most of his life time in India, in his works Kipling rarely spoke of Indians as individuals who had names.

In his novel *Kim* (1901), Kipling frequently uses the term "sahib" which comes to be derogative; it is very much identical to the modern term "*hadji*" which literally means in Arabic a pilgrim, but it is sometimes deliberately used as a slang word instead of the word terrorist. In an introduction added to Kipling's *Kim*, Edward Said further explains that: "a Sahib is a Sahib, and no amount of friendship or camaraderie can change the rudiments or racial difference, and the right of the white European to rule than he would have argued with the Himalayas" (10).

The European claim that their main concern is to free the weaker people is but a false claim. Once the colonized nation is categorized as inferior, this nation loses all rights not only to be equal to the colonizer, but also in benefiting from the riches of their own native lands. It is thus urgent to say that no matter what the imperialistic colonial discourse may use as a pretext, the truth will always remain that imperialism's first priority is to divide and conquer, and nothing else.

Imperialism has played the major role in shaping the modern world; despite its horrific impacts on many nations until now, it has helped in bringing together the nations of the world. Take for example what is known as the linguistic imperialism

embodied in the English language, it is hardly possible for any nation seeking economic, political and technological global recognition without having to master the English language. Even when that is considered by many as an obstacle for other languages to coexist, the truth remains that the English language has brought the entire world together.

Western Imperialism has not degraded or faltered in anyway, it has simply taken a new form, and adopting new principles. European states realized that the nineteenth model of imperialism where a foreign country invades another one is no more profitable; it costs a great deal of money and time, both of which are necessary for the continuity of imperialism.

The modern imperialism costs less in terms of money and time, imperialistic states no longer need to break a sweat in imposing a full dominion over weaker countries. Instead, these states have conjured a better plan to ensure the maximum of profit from those nations who are "metaphysically" inferior.

The modern imperialism or neocolonialism as some may prefer to call it, not only has it brought down the world under its control, but also it has ensured that the wealth of the world remains in the hands of a handful of people. In the last three centuries imperialism has been engaged in the pleasure of invading, exploiting and enslaving many nations. However, it has now reached the point where it has become nearly impossible to shake off its pillars.

Moreover, using their military, economic and technological advancement, the imperialist states and thanks to their centuries ahead of the rest of the world have now reached the formula of how to permanently mobilize the world. It is unacceptable how a handful of countries keep ruling the entire world for centuries successively, only if one realizes that it is more than just imperialism; it is an alliance of diverse imperialistic expertise collected over centuries of exploitation.

Thus, imperialism was not only an ideology adopted to enslave weaker people and confiscate their natural riches, but also a privilege offered to those who belonged to the club of the West. No matter how strong can the East become, it will always be regarded

as the orient; the latter might be stronger than the people it colonized, but the truth of the matter remains that the stronger orient was invading the weaker orient. In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said defines the parameters of the occident against the orient. He states:

The colonial divide was a white Christian Europe whose various countries, principally Britain and France, but also Holland, Belgium, Germany, Italy...Portugal and Spain controlled most of the earth's surface. On the other side of the divide there were an immense variety of territories and races, all of them considered lesser, inferior, dependent, subject. (134)

Said's definition makes it clear to draw an analogous relationship between the occident and the orient. Geographically speaking the occident is situated in Western Europe and North America, it adopts catholic Christianity as its official religion. The occident firmly believed that it was its duty to go invade and "civilize" most of earth's surface; this ideology was deeply rooted in the Western culture which was first started and promoted by the Roman Empire thousands of years before the birth of Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him).

Therefore, the firm ideology of the West to control nations of the world cannot only be as a result of the lack of resources and the growing need for natural riches which mostly and mysteriously exist outside the sphere of the West. But also the pleasure in controlling other people seemed to bring more ecstasy to the colonial powers, and no matter what happened they had to remain in perpetual control over the rest of the world.

1.4. The Mechanism of Othering

Western imperialism achieved success by creating an opposite reflective image against which it would establish its principles. In order for imperialism to rise and flourish, it had to create an enemy, an "other" in order to justify the uglier motivations that truly were the engine of its colonial ideology.

After having done fighting and invading each other for decades, Western European countries agreed that their interests might not collide, and cooperation with each other was finally possible. Thus, the "other" was never found within the

parameters of the West, rather it was situated overseas waiting for it to be taken over. The "other," chiefly, inhabited Africa, Asia, East Europe and Latin America.

Thus, it was necessary for the colonizer to single out the "other" against which the colonizer's identity isolates and liberates itself. Throughout its colonial past, at some point in history the colonized gave up the true essence of its identity. Instead, it was in constant search of creating an identity considered inferior to imperialism.

When the first European settlers made their first contact with the Native American people, they noticed that those natives had a complex culture; they celebrated what they considered gifts of nature to them, so they considered the trees, rivers, mountains and animals as living creatures which deserved to be respected. However, regarding these acts as practices of superstition the European settlers did not hesitate to urinate in the rivers they drank from, they brought the poisonous plant of tobacco to the virgin American land.

Sooner, the native Americans were turned to become the "other" to the European invaders; not only they were disrespected and dehumanized in their own land, but also hunted down and murdered, like they were some dangerous insects that needed to be exterminated. In addition, when some of the Native American tribes rejected the European invasion waves, they were further made to become the "others" to themselves, by charging some native tribes against each other.

Instead of fighting the common enemy whose threat was already on their lands, the Comanches and Apaches⁵ for example would often fight to expel each other from their lands. Furthermore, the Mohicans were in constant enmity with the Mohawks (who are also two prominent Native American tribes); the latter were greatly supported allies of the French. Such practices were common mechanisms for "otherizing" the colonized nations.

Algeria was "otherized" and "objectified," but never integrated by the French. It was incorporated but never represented. As David Prochaska nicely put it in his book *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bone, 1870-1920*: "Algeria was a French

⁵ **Comanche and Apache:** are two ethnical groups of American Native people who reside in present Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona and Southwestern Kansas.

colony-the colonizers maintained hegemony over the colonized and at the same time Algeria was not a French colony-it was an integral part of France. In short, Algeria had been incorporated but not integrated into France...ingested but not digested (qtd. in Chaudhuri and Strobel⁶ 64-5).

Thus, and according to the claim of France that Algeria was French, merging with the "other" was impossible to attain, not only with Muslim Algerians, but also the many European settlers who had been called by the French government to inhabit Algeria adopting the face imperialist policy of closing the gap. These European settlers who were neither Algerian nor French were often included in the "other."

Algeria became the "Other" against which the French constructed their identity as a "civilized nation." For a hundred-thirty-two years the French had deprived the Algerian people from their rights for education, national identity, freedom of religious practice. The Algerian people were often discriminated against, banned from taking part in not only the French politics but also their own.

Moreover, Ukrainians were also denied their right to belong to their own identity. Despite the similarities in the Russo-Soviet culture with the Ukrainian, the latter was always made to be passive and inferior to the superior Russian identity. Thus, Ukrainians were neither allowed to speak in their native language, nor write in it and any attempt to do so was usually met with a great sum of violence.

The Ukrainian people had to be made inferior in front of the superior Russo-Soviet identity; they had to glorify it and embrace it as if it was their own. This long, systematic practice to denigrate the Ukrainian culture and identity has succeeded to the point where Ukrainians themselves finally dropped the idea of having a strong identity of their own. Even when the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991, modern Ukraine is still struggling with major issues threatening its identity.

A 2012 law regulating the use of the languages in Ukraine caused a huge turmoil in and outside Ukraine. The law would have made the Russian language together with other minority languages in Ukraine to be used in several sectors of the government

⁶ Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel: *Western Women and Imperialism*.

such as; in courts, administrative and educational institutions and airports. The law was considered by many opposition leaders as a threat to the Ukrainian identity; that the Russian language was not given an official status but on the ground it was a threatening rival to the Ukrainian national language.

As a result, a second law was issued in 2014 to repeal the former one. The law declared the Ukrainian language as the sole official language to be used anywhere in the country. Consequently, Ukrainian regions where Russian-speaking populations resided were angered by the law, the fact which resulted in the Crimean crisis in 2014 where the Crimean peninsula in the south of Ukraine held a referendum and was thus officially annexed to Russia later in the same year.

Therefore, and in adopting the global strategy of "otherizing" the colonized people, the colonizer cunningly employed various techniques and mechanisms to ensure the maximum of inferiority for the colonized people. However, "othering" was based mainly on two key factors; ethnicity and national identity.

1.4.1. Ethnicity and the Inferiority Complex

While adopting the strategy of divide and conquer, imperialism has utilized ethnicity as a weapon. In turning multi-ethnicity from a positive contributor to promote cultural diversity, to a weapon directed against the colonized people, the colonizer undertook a pig-headed policy to wipe out the local cultures of the colonized people, threatening their existence. Ethnicity then turned from a blessing to become a curse haunting multi-ethnic nations.

Moreover, the colonizer did not only use ethnicity to divide and weaken the colonized nations, but also he made sure that these ethnic groups were made weak and inferior. The colonizer also worked on creating constant tensions and conflicts between these ethnic groups. And since they were made to be inferior, total allegiance was paid to the colonizer.

While the hatred and wrath were constantly growing between the ethnically-inferior groups to the point where sometimes they would engage in lethal conflicts,

these groups strayed from their main objective which is to fight the common enemy which travelled all the way from behind the seas to separate them and steal their riches.

American imperialism is considered as the representative of the Western imperialism in the modern world; starting its debut by exterminating the native Americans at the beginning of the seventeenth century, all the way to be the new ruling state of the modern world. One should never forget that the Native Americans who were brutally massacred, and whose homeland has been stolen from them have not yet been repaid, not even with an apology.

The European migrants who consider themselves the natives of America, have not felt the dignity at least to share with the Native Americans the riches they stole from them; the latter were regarded as savage and inferior and thus not deserving to live in their own land.

The famous expression that America is a melting pot is quite controversial and debatable; it is true that America can be considered as the largest country where multi-ethnicities choose to live. Yet, this does not confirm that America is the land of the free and the home of the brave as they say; rather American imperialism was founded on an ideology of exterminating thousands of lives, only to build a new country at the expense of innocent people; an incubator of one of the most destructive forms of imperialism ever.

Modern America is not a melting pot, rather it is a fruit salad where the multi-ethnicities coexist, yet they are never allowed to achieve full merging or melting with each other. The ruling white Americans with Western-European origins have made sure that inferiority is deeply rooted in these ethnically-inferior minorities.

The Europeans who were born in America had the full rights in casting votes, in taking part in shaping the politics of America, while the Arabs, Chinese, Hispanics, Africans (sometimes mildly referred to as African-Americans) and Native Americans who were the first to be born in America were never considered as natives of America; they were always considered as inferior ethnicities to the superior European race.

The Irish, Dutch, French and the English who were born on American soil and whose forefathers were migrants in the same way as were the other minorities, were never considered as minorities; rather they are regarded as native American citizens with European roots. Therefore, the European sense of superiority definitely succeeded to place a stable foot in America.

In order to be a "pure" native of America, it is important to be of Western-European origins, and anyone who is not will find themselves categorized in one of the various inferior ethnic groups; these ethnic groups are usually stereotyped as follows: Arabs as terrorists, Hispanics as violent, African-Americans as drug-dealers and the Chinese as enclosed and dangerous people.

However, one must ask the question where does this narcissistic imperialism originate from? It is true that the Roman Empire is considered as the primal root for the modern Western imperialism, yet the Roman imperialism was driven by territorial expansion rather than dehumanizing the other.

Earlier, the New World was mainly established by many of Western European ethnicities; before the British ethnicity took over America, the latter was administratively ruled by the Dutch and New Amsterdam was later given the name New York. The British then officially began to conquer the New World to finally establish the first American thirteen colonies in the seventeenth century.

Being the empire on which the sun never sets, the British had conquered most of the area of planet earth. The British controlled the world for so long that hardly anyone anticipated it would falter and withdraw from the many countries it had conquered for centuries. However, before withdrawing the British had a long time to break down the countries it colonized into countless ethnicities and who were surely made to be inferior.

Moreover, the British had mastered the strategy to employ the ethnically-inferior minorities to promote their English culture. Very often the British invaded weak countries on the idea to impress them with the superior English identity, and for a long time the British were considered as the symbol of civilization; in the way they spoke, ate, dressed and fought.

The British had firmly inculcated the culture of inferiority in the minds of the colonized people, resulting in what is called the inferiority complex. The latter was deeply rooted in minds of the colonized people to the point where, they themselves were treating each other with inferiority.

Africa for instance was divided and then further subdivided into multi-ethnicities; thus every tribe of the same nation had to look different, dress different, talk different and even think different. These cracks in one's culture were deliberately made so that imperialism is peacefully allowed to exploit the riches of one's nation.

Moreover, there are reservations of some critics to categorize the Soviet Union within the colonial club, these critics often tend to believe that the Soviet Union was as well oriental even when it colonized several countries outside its borders, and was never colonized in return. By geographical standards the Soviet Union was not part of Western Europe; therefore it cannot be recognized as a colonial power; at least not in the model of the Western European imperial colonialism.

The Russo-Soviet Union had inflicted horrible atrocities upon the countries it once colonized, yet many critics especially of the west do not recognize that as a direct colonialism. Rather they consider it as nothing more than an expansion in territory of the Russo-Soviet Union, annexing neighboring countries who shared a similar culture, language and race with the Russo-Soviet Union.

As one of the major countries that formed the Soviet bloc, Ukraine suffered destructive effects from the monstrous practices of the Soviet Union. The practice of the systematic ethnic cleansing by causing famines killing thousands of people, practices like the Gulag prison still cause nightmares to the Ukrainian people, plaguing the memory of even those who were luckier not to experience it.

Being one of the major countries of Western Europe, the French colonial Empire was not very different from the British one; in that enslaving the colonized nations constituted the core of its imperialism. Algeria being its largest colony ever, France did whatever it could to wipe out the Algerian national identity. Thus, essentially Algerians

were ethnically divided into two categories; Arabs with their counterparts non-Arabs, and Muslims with non-Muslims.

When dealing with the two closely-related categories, the French often related Arabs to Islam and non-Arabs were considered as not "fanatical" about Islam. In fact, all the Algerian ethnicities were dehumanized, orientalized and could never reach the superiority of the European race. However, the French imperialism did adopt a strategy of maintaining a permanent disequilibrium in between the Algerian multi-ethnic groups.

The Arabs and the Tamazight were and still are the two major ethnical groups in Algeria. In trying to break the two groups apart, the French, as would a western imperialist colonial country do, favored one group over the other. Not all the Tamazight were favored over the Arabs; only one Tamazight group (Kabyle) was favored over the Arabs. As it will be discussed later in this chapter, the Kabyles were more entitled for gaining the French citizenship, while the Arabs were not.

In addition, and as it was mentioned earlier that the French related Islam to the Arabs, the Algerian Muslim was made to be the worst form of France's other. In their book *Western Women and Imperialism* Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel contend how the French used the Algerian Muslim as the black sheep of Algeria. They state that: "Algeria was very much an "imagined community" whose heterogeneous, and potentially antagonistic, components were kept in unsteady equilibrium by the creation of the Algerian Muslim Other" (65).

The very dangerous turn in the French strategy to break down the Algerian people into various sub-ethnicities and favoring some over the others, constituted a growing threat to the very existence of the Algerian individual as a whole. Thus, fighting for their freedom, Algerians had to regroup their breaking national identity, forming a strong front to better resist the French imperialist threat.

1.4.2. National Identity

The national identity has always been at the core of the colonial and postcolonial critique. The idea of nativizing or alienating the other has constituted the foundation of imperialism. The essential components of the national identity are embodied in the national flag, language, history and culture. Without these components there cannot be said to have a national identity.

Soon after the military takeover would be achieved on the ground, the imperialist invader would start working on the strategies to first disunite the national identity of the colonized nation, to finally be able to wipe it out entirely. The colonizer's first mission would be to remove any national symbol; it would prohibit raising any flag but its own. Moreover, no languages would be allowed except that of the invader, and soon the colonizer's culture would replace that of the colonized.

In multi-ethnic countries the national identity would often be in conflict with the concept of ethnicity. Take for example the conflict of the Australian national identity against that of the Aboriginals. Like America, Australia was also conquered by waves of Western Europeans; mostly English who reacted to the Australian Aboriginals by exterminating almost the entire population.

In the twentieth century the European invaders, who now became the natives of Australia nearly wiped out all of the Aboriginal people. The successive governments in Australia issued laws supporting the majority European population, leaving the Aboriginal culture unrecognized as part of the new Australian identity.

Moreover, as the ruling state of the modern world imperialism, the United States of America is regarded as the most country that has experienced the most of disputes related to the national identity. America has been built by waves of immigrations, first mainly from Western Europe and then from almost all parts of the world. Thus, the US can be considered as a country of migratory ethnicities par excellence.

Today, modern America has a lot to say in relation to the issue of national identity since it has become one of the most wanted destinations of our time. The Hispanic

nations are on top of the migration groups that keep flooding the American-Mexican borders; the growing destitution and privation in the countries of Latin America are the main motivation for these groups to trespass the borders in search for survival opportunities.

In relation to the issue of the Mexican illegal-crossing of American borders, Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi views the American perspective towards their national identity as one which cannot exist without the opposite other. In her book *Beyond Dichotomies* she states that:

"In spite of America's foundational myth that it is an immigrant nation...[the] binary form of cultural and political classification in which [western] national identity is articulated through and depends on an alien other who, by threatening to invade, helps define the citizen as a white, English-speaking person who, work[s] hard, pay[s] taxes, and obey[s] the laws... [it is the] other who helps define the [Western] citizen as white." (202)

Countries like America, who use immigrant groups to refresh their economies based on low wages, are the first to abuse these immigrants regarding them as pests. These immigrants who are often otherized and orientalized are not made to feel the sense of belonging to the host country. Thus, the orient or the other who helped the imperialist establish its national identity was never given the credit; rather he is often dehumanized and denied the least of the freedom for which he abandoned his home.

In Algeria, France typed the Algerian land as barbaric, crude, and not civilized; therefore the people of Algeria were savage and less human. France deliberately gave those harsh traits to Algerians, while it would build its national identity based on the opposite of the other it created. The Algerian people were dehumanized to the point where all kinds of studies and tests were performed on them.

In 1962 while tying them alive against wooden posts, France performed nuclear tests on a hundred-and-fifty Algerian prisoners in order to know the burning degrees the nuclear radiations caused to the human flesh. Algerians were the guinea pigs for the French imperialism; they were turned to be the material for their inhumane studies and tests.

France shared the same sense of the narcissistic superiority just like any other European colonial power in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Just like the British snobby Englishness, or the German notion of the Aryan race, the French colonial machine was fed by the idea of the civilizing mission.

Initially, Western imperialism was founded on the concept of creating an "other" which represented the opposite of the colonizer. The other had to be dehumanized to finally become a subhuman. As a result, the other was made to become inherently weak and was used as an illustration for miscellaneous theories which frequently portrayed it as uncivilized and deserved thus to be ruled.

1.4.2.1. Nativism / Alienation

The colonizer developed two effective tools when trying to break down the national identity of the colonized people; nativism and alienation. The two terms are quite interrelated with each other, in that the latter is the ultimate result of the former. In order to alienate them from their own lands, the colonizer had to play with terms calling the owners of the land in different names but never in a name that aroused national identity, such as; natives, inhabitants, indigenous and aboriginals.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century France had dropped the use of the term Algerian, and replaced it with "indigène" (indigenous, or native). The French strategy to alienate the Algerian people from their own identity was enforced with the famous *Code de l'indigénat* (code of the indiginate) in 1871. The code of the indiginate was a set of laws creating an inferior status of the Algerian people between 1871 and 1947.

The policies of alienation adopted by the French authorities in treating the Algerian people were numerous, and in a constant state of proliferation. The French colonial authorities were always trying to devise new methods and strategies to draw the Algerian individual away from his/her homeland. Such strategies were further enforced by creating a mirage-like sense of pursuing the French citizenship. The latter was hardly fetched since there were other criteria at work, mainly race and gender.

1.4.2.2. Race / Gender / Citizenship

The issue of race and ethnicity has always been at the core of defining national identity where the European race was considered to be the superior and thus had the right to impose political, economic as well as military dominion over the other races. The modern European colonial discourse has used many forms where it had built its national identity on the idea of denouncing and despising the native cultures of the "Other."

There had been many examples of this where the colonizer would form entities whose sole job was to exterminate the native cultures. Many instances of such terrorist organizations created by the colonizer was, for example, the KKK⁷ in America where it had spent almost a hundred (100) years killing and exterminating the natives or locals who did not belong to the Anglo-Saxon (European) race. A French instance of this would be the bloody, terrorist organization called Secret Army Organisation⁸ or (OAS) whose only job was to kill and exterminate any Algerian people who opposed the idea of the French Algeria.

Thus, the French national identity was constructed against the native Algerian (mainly Arab) culture. In his book *A Dying Colonialism* Frantz Fanon argues that the effects of the French terrorist strategy to wipe out the Algerian indigenous ethnicity was dangerous to the point where being an Arab became equivalent to being inferior by nature. Fanon explains the concept of being Arab, who was made to be inferior saying that "an Arab...can't get away from nature," (40).

During the wars of Crusades, othering was mainly based on one's faith; how one was faithful to the Western Christianity determined his/her status. Thus, those

⁷**Ku Klux Klan:**(abbreviated as **KKK**) is a name for a number of fraternal organizations in the United States of America, including the old ones, and those who are still working today. These organizations believe in white supremacy, anti-Semitism, racism, anti-Catholicism, homophobia, and finally atheism. These organizations generally use violence, terrorism and torture practices such as burning on the cross to persecute those they hate like African Americans and others.

⁸**Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS):** meaning **Secret Army Organisation** was a short-lived right-wing French dissident paramilitary organization during the Algerian War (1954–62). The OAS carried out terrorist attacks, including bombings and assassinations, in an attempt to prevent Algeria's independence from French colonial rule. Its motto was *L'Algérie est française et le restera* ("Algeria is French and will remain so").

considered as being infidels were definitely made to be the other. Then, in the modern colonial ideology of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, othering took a different form and meaning; it now shifted from the religiously-based classification to the ethnically one.

In her book *Gender Epistemologies and Eurasian Borderlands*, Madina Tlostanova demonstrates how otherness had shifted from religious basis to racial basis; she better explains this transformation in the ideology of othering in more of a scientific way, stating that: "racial taxonomies that came to replace the former religious taxonomies transformed the purity of blood into the color of skin and into ethnic characteristics as a basis of othering. Primitive people took the place of infidels. In Western Orientalism the Orient was regarded within the racial and ethnic, rather than religious taxonomies" (63-4).

Gender-based classification was not very much dissimilar to the racially or ethnically-based classification. The colonizer adopted the same strategy to "otherize" the colonized people based on the gender difference. The colonizer had cunningly created and benefited from the sexual differences, the fact which had helped to create additional possibilities in discriminating against the colonized subjects.

Tlostanova explains how the colonizer succeeded to exercise violence systematically on the basis of the differences of gender. While it was only natural to have sexual differences between the genders, the colonial scientific machine had benefited from this difference only to create even further ways of othering. Tlostanova argues that:

Naturalizing of sexual differences is yet another product of the modern use of science for the purpose of othering. Gender differentiation was introduced where it had not existed before. It created additional possibilities for discrimination, exploitation, and objectifying. The civilizing mission became a euphemism for the violence of the bodies populating the colonial difference. This violence could take the form of exploitation, fertility control, rape, or terror. (42)

Citizenship also was one of the main tools the colonizer used in order to maintain its authority over the native peoples. In Algeria, France would often try to lure the Algerians to getting into an indefinite circle of pursuing the French citizenship, if but to abide by the French colonial rule.

Algerian Jews for example were easily granted the French citizenship, because according to the French the Jews were somewhat less fanatical about their religion, and therefore did not cause a threat to the colonial machine. Whereas, the Algerian Muslims who were considered to be so fanatical about Islam were not likely to acquire the French citizenship. In 1870 Algerian Jews, mainly male Jews were granted full French citizenship.

In addition, the idea that only the very little minority of the natives were entitled to getting citizenship of the colonizer is considered to be another form of racism. Not only did the colonizer gave himself the right to meddle with the internal affairs of the colonized, thus unjustly imposing a foreign culture on a foreign people, but also this colonizer arrogantly laid rules in order to exclude the native people from getting the citizenship of their invader.

As a result, the colonized subjects were forcibly put to the test of choosing between accepting the way of life of the colonizer in order to be entitled to gain his citizenship, or rejecting the entire concept of being ruled by a foreign power and thus facing the consequences of being neglected and shunned from their own lands.

Therefore, citizenship just like racism and the caste system were tools in the hands of the colonizer with which to execute its colonial agenda. The strategy of luring the colonized subjects with getting the citizenship of the colonizer was used by the colonizer simply to help increase the tensions on the already divided and classified natives.

Moreover, race was an effective tool in the hands of the colonizer and racializing the other was an exclusive weapon that only the West had the right to acquire. Thus, even Eurasian countries like Russia together with Central Asia belonged to what the West referred to as the "East, Orient, and Other." Even when countries who were from the East, like Russia and who were viewed to be part of the Orient, were able to colonize other nations. These countries were never regarded as part of the colonial club of the West.

Madina Tlostanova clarifies this idea, explaining that Western scholars tend to classify Caucasus and Central Asia as parts of the great orient. Tlostanova continues to argue that in the Western imperial-colonial discourse the Russian colonial Empire, for example are definitely non-Western. Russia and most of the countries of the East were classified as part of the mythic orient. Therefore, the East was inescapably marked as the other of the Western-European subject (63).

The foundational relationship which bound the colonizer with the colonized was far away from the embellished liberating words the French or Russian colonizer adopted in their colonial discourse. The colonizer had not ventured and crossed the far seas and spent tons of money in order to "liberate" and "civilize" the "non-civilized" nations, rather the colonizer was drawn by an instinctive desire to rule over the weaker nations who were considered as non-civilized.

1.5. The Western Imperialism versus the Soviet Expansion

The constant disagreement of the critics of postcolonial critique regarding the differences and similarities which exist between the Western Imperialism and the Eastern one seems not to know any end sooner. In the dominant Western colonial discourse, there exists only one true imperialism; that is of Western Europe and North America. While, it is still believed by many that the Soviet bloc was as well an imperialistic empire par excellence.

Many critics of postcolonial critique, especially those of Eastern Europe refuse the Western claim that the Russo-Soviet Union was nothing but a Russian expansion in territories towards neighboring nations which shared similar cultural backgrounds. These critics continue to argue that the deep injuries inflicted upon the countries it had devoured, testify to the horrible atrocities of the Soviet Union and which ascend to become crimes of war.

However, if we accept the claim that there existed an Eastern imperialism, a more basic analogous study of the two types of imperialism is at hand and which reveals that the Western imperialism was the original one; the mother of all imperialisms.

Whereas, the Russian imperialism was always trying to follow the footsteps of the Western, proving that Russia as well was capable of colonizing other nations.

In his essay "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," David Chioni Moore explains how there existed only one type of imperialism; that is Western imperialism, and if it happened that Russia was considered as an imperialist country, then it would always be regarded as inferior to the West. He states that:

Once again, the standard Western story about colonization is that it is always accompanied by orientalizing, in which the colonized are seen by their masters as passive, ahistorical, feminine, or barbaric. However, in Russian–Central European colonization this relation is reversed, because for at least several centuries Russia has, again, been saddled with the fear or belief that it was culturally inferior to the West. (26)

There is no doubt that the countries of Western Europe were truly imperialistic countries, in that they colonized countries far beyond their main lands. Thus, Western European countries colonized almost all continents. These countries which were colonized by the Western imperialism often did not share the same languages, culture, race or religion with their colonizers.

The Western imperialist machine was rather fed by the ideology of wiping out entire cultures, mainly because they were completely different. This ideology originated from the sense of the narcissistic superiority of the European race, and the rest was the huge orient which existed to be conquered and "civilized" by the West.

Starting from the fifteenth century *Pax Britannica*⁹ was the ruling state in the world; there is hardly any continent that the British did not invade, namely; America, Europe (Scotland, Ireland and Wales), Africa, Asia and even Australia. Beside the pure sense of superiority they had, the British colonial strength was enormously encouraged by a growing industrial economy.

⁹ **Pax Britannica:** *Pax Britannica* (Latin for "British Peace", modelled after *Pax Romana*) was the period of relative peace between the Great Powers during which the British Empire became the global hegemonic power and adopted the role of a global police force.

Earlier, Spain had a very strong naval force. However, when the British defeated the Spanish armada which attempted to invade Britain towards the end of 1588, the British acquired a stronger naval force which enabled them to conquer all continents. Starting from the eighteenth century, and mainly as a result of the industrial revolution that had swept all over Europe, Britain had the most powerful naval force in the world.

It is reported that the Dutch were the first Europeans who had first conquered Australia in 1606, and until the nineteenth century Australia was called New Holland. However, after being defeated in America in 1783 losing the thirteen colonies, the British redirected their attention towards Australia, or the New South Wales and the first British settlement was established in 1788.

For their part, the French were always trying to imitate the British imperialism; often venturing far away in order to impress them. It is reported that while being in heavy debts to Algeria in the nineteenth century, France invaded Algeria on the pretext of the fly-whisk incident. In 1827 France besieged Algiers for three years, to finally invading it in 1830.

The huge and expensive colonial campaign to invade Algeria was not only driven by the wealth of the Algerians which lured the French like blood would do to sharks, but also the French and even when being cruel and unjust to use such a silly pretext as the fly-whisk incident, did never hesitate to terrorize the Algerian people.

The French considered themselves as a supreme race, that is why they invested a huge sum of money to invade a country which lied on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. In fact, the campaign was started just about time when king Charles X (1757-1836) of France was starting to lose popularity in France, and thus it helped restore the people's loyalty to the king of France by arousing national emotions.

The French colonial campaign against Algeria not only was it done on the pretext of the fly-whisk incident, but also on the pretext that Algerians were pirates who terrorized the Mediterranean Sea by imposing taxes on the ships which navigated the sea. Therefore, the French government convinced its people that the Algerians

constituted a growing threat to the French economy by imposing taxes on their mercantile ships. Thus, the war against the Algerians was greatly justified.

On the other hand, history hardly records any Russo-Soviet invasion of faraway nations who were entirely different in culture, language, race and religion. Except the temporary Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and which only lasted about ten years (1979-1989), the Soviet colonial operations were mostly restricted to those East European nations who shared the same cultural characteristics. That is why, in the Western colonial discourse it is considered as merely a territorial expansion towards the East of Europe.

Moreover, in annexing these countries the Soviet Union did not receive any resistance from their people, this confirms that these nations, to some extent, did not view themselves as different from their invader despite the fact that their invader did not share the same views, and thus all kinds of horrible atrocities were practiced against them.

In its colonial ventures the Western imperialism was met with fierce resistance which often developed quickly into national revolutions. Therefore, the models of resistance against imperialism found in Algeria (North Africa) and Vietnam (South East Asia) for example, are not found in the countries (East Europe) which were colonized or annexed by the Russo-Soviet Union.

1.5.1. The Algerian Rejection to the Western Imperialism

The Algerian people have never accepted the French colonial rule over their country. Right from the start of the French conquest in 1830, many Algerian small-scale revolutions bravely fought the French numerous, well-equipped army. Most of these revolutions were soon brought to an end due to the unbalance in the fighting forces.

The French had a regular army whose supplies in soldiers, food and weapons never stopped; it was constituted of thousands of well-equipped soldiers, together with towed cannons that bombarded thousands of armless civilians. While the Algerians depended mostly on traditional weapons like swords and horses, who were often forced

to leave ground for the enemy, and who usually suffered from shortage of supplies of weapons, food and clothes.

The Algerian major revolutions were; the revolution of Emir Abdelkader in the West (1832-47), Ahmed Bey in the East of Algeria (1837-48), Lalla Fatma N'Soumer and Cherif Boubaghla (1851-57), and many more. In fact, the Algerian resistance to the French never ceased; all these small-scale revolutions led to the major revolution (1954-62) which snatched the Algerian independence offering more than two million martyrs.

The first major resistance to the French was carried out by the Algerian Emir Abdelkader (1808-83). Were it not for the resistance of Emir Abdelkader, France would probably have exterminated the entire Algerian population right from the start of the French conquest to Algeria. The severe losses he caused to the French invaders forced them to rethink their strategies in dealing with the Algerians many times. However, due to the lack of resources and supplies, the revolution of Emir Abdelkader lasted only fifteen (15) years, where he was forced to move westward.

Between 1830 and 1837 Abdelkader made a tremendous success over the French invaders, forcing them to sign a number of peace treaties; namely the Treaty of Desmichels (1834) which was named after the French general Louis Desmichels who was the Governor-General in Algeria (1779-1845). The Treaty stated that Emir Abdelkader was in full control of the Oran province (North-West of Algeria) as well as his birth place in Mascara (West of Algeria).

The second treaty which Emir Abdelkader forced the French to sign was the Treaty of Tafna (1837); after the heavy losses which Abdelkader inflicted upon the French army at the Battle of Macta¹⁰ (1835), the French were forced to adopt a more mild strategy in dealing with the Algerian strong resistance. The Treaty of Tafna was signed between Abdelkader and the French general Bugeaud. It stated that Emir Abdelkader should recognize France's imperialist presence in Algeria, while in return he would be given back two thirds of his country (Oran, Tlemcen, Kolea, Medea, and Algiers).

¹⁰ **Macta:** A region between Sig and Mohammadia (Mascara), in the west of Algeria.

Two years later in 1839 and as expected the French broke the agreements of the Treaty of Tafna, and marched through the Iron Gates¹¹. Emir Abdelkader was thus compelled to resume fighting for the freedom of his country. Faced by a regular army whose supplies never ceased, Emir Abdelkader was obliged to lead a guerrilla warfare, trying to delay the French rapid incursion in Algerian lands.

By signing the Treaty of Tafna in 1837, Emir Abdelkader not only did he force the French invaders to recede from two thirds of the Algerian land, but also wanted to reduce the pressure of the fight on the Algerian people. In the meantime Abdelkader was buying time to expand further towards the East of Algeria trying to reunite as many tribes as he could and join him in his fight against the invaders. However, what Emir Abdelkader did not know is that by signing the Treaty of Tafna, the French were also buying time in order to bring down the revolution of Ahmed Bey in the East (Constantine).

It is reported that before the fall of Bey's revolution in 1837, Emir Abdelkader wrote the Bey several times imploring him to join him in the fight against the enemy. Yet, Bey refused Abdelkader's request, rejecting to recognize him as Emir (leader). There are many historians who declare that Ahmed Bey's arrogance in refusing to unite with Abdelkader was the main reason which led to his downfall.

Moreover, many of Bey's subjects were conspiring against him, because he was accused of being a coward and doing nothing to defend his people. However, Ahmed Bey's resistance was important, otherwise the French would not declare peace with Abdelkader in order to buy time and bring down his government in 1837.

After the brave resistance of both Emir Abdelkader and Ahmed Bey, the French were met with another resistance in the Kabyle region. The resistance was led by Cherif Boubaghla (d.1854) who was later joined by Lalla Fatma N'Soumer (1830-63). The two bravely fought the French invading forces and succeeded to defend, especially the region of Djordjora (Central Algeria). Lalla N'Soumer's support to Boubaghla was vital in stabilizing him while fighting the enemy.

¹¹ **Iron Gates:** Also called the Bibans or the Biban Range, are a chain of rugged and steep mountains situated at the North-East of Algeria, bordering the Kabyle region from the south.

Bouabghla later made a proposal to N'Soumer to marry her, but the two could not get married because she was not yet divorced by her former husband whom she refused to marry. Bouabghla was finally assassinated in 1854 where his location was revealed to the French by certain traitors. While Lalla N'Soumer continued her fight against the enemy, in 1857 the French sent forty-five (45000) thousand armed men to capture her and was eventually sentenced to prison until she passed away in 1863.

The resistance of the Algerian people against the French never stopped; Sheikh Mokrani (1815-1871) led a revolt in 1871 as a result to the French policy to impoverish the Algerians by depriving them of more than eighty (80%) percent of their harvests. Mokrani's revolt continued a year after his death in 1872. The resistance was later resumed by Sheikh Bouamama (1833-1908) leading an insurrection from 1881 to 1883. After the French succeeded in their strategy of divide and conquer, Bouamama's insurrection was soon put down while he retreated to Morocco in 1882.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the French realized that they could not keep fighting the Algerian people, thus they adopted a strategy of forming an Algerian elite whose mission was to urge the Algerian people to call off their policy of fighting the enemy. Rather, these elite recommended that Algerians should adopt the political way to reclaim their rights, which cost the Algerians half a century to realize that it was a waste of time.

For nearly a century the French had deceived the Algerian people; they created a beautiful dream that Algeria would one day be free. Algerians soon realized otherwise after the French committed one of the most unspeakable genocides in the history of humankind in May 08th 1945, exterminating forty-five (45000) thousand Algerian armless civilians, only because they called the French to fulfill their promise. The Algerian people then realized that freedom is snatched and never is handed by the enemy.

In 1954, a group of brave Algerian men decided to launch a revolution that would be the mother of all revolutions. Indeed, the revolution evolved to become a war for independence. Suffering from hunger and lack of resources, the Algerian people bravely fought the French one last time, finally earning their freedom in 1962.

Furthermore, it should be noted that from the first conquest of Algeria in 1830, it took France exactly eighty-one (81) years to complete its conquest of Algerian territories. Being distracted by the idea of political struggle to gain their freedom, Algerians resumed fighting the French after half a century, kicking out the French imperialism forever.

1.5.2. The French Strategies to Maintain Superiority

Before setting foot on Algerian lands, the French together with most of the Europeans had heard about the riches of the Algerian people, this made their mission of invading the country more pressing than ever. After they successfully invaded Algeria, the first invaders launched another campaign of digging the floors of Algiers because they had heard that Algerians were hiding their treasures beneath the ground. It is reported that only in the first round, the French managed to steal more than fifty million Sterling Pounds worth of gold from the inhabitants of Algiers alone.

Since the invasion of Algeria in 1830, France made sure to follow exactly its generals' counsels who all agreed that in order to win the war in Algeria, the indigenous people had to be segregated, starved, and killed to reduce their numbers and replace them with French and European settlers. This radical imperialism was greatly endorsed by the French successive governments; the latter were unconditionally supported by the French radical scholars who supported the war of genocide in Algeria, thus becoming quite popular.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) who was a popular French radical imperialist confesses that the French were savage in killing the Algerian people, and that there are many French men whom he greatly respects, yet these men criticize the French savage methods in arresting the men, women and children, destroying the Algerian depots of wheat and barley. Tocqueville reminds that he feels sorry these men disagree with the French savage methods, because according to him these barbaric practices against the Algerians are justified, explaining that this is what should be done when fighting the Arabs.

In order to maintain its superiority as well as supreme authority, France adopted many strategies to better control the Algerian people; some of these strategies were quite effective like dividing the population into multi-ethnic groups, the latter then would be subdivided into smaller ethnical groups. This way, it would be easier to dominate smaller groups than bigger ones.

France, however, never stopped at that when the issue was related to Algeria; its major colony. It, remarkably and systematically substituted lands owned and inhabited by Algerian citizens with European settlers who later became known as *pieds noirs*¹² (Black feet). In its endeavors to maintain permanent superiority, as I have argued France not only divided and subdivided the Algerian people into many ethnicities, but also made sure to keep these ethnicities in permanent conflicts; mainly ideological, linguistic, racial and religious.

Moreover, France finally understood that in order to control the whole of Algeria, Algerians had to be divided into two main groups; a group who allied with France and another who did not. Among those who did not ally with the French were mostly Arabs; these Arabs who were considered of being so "fanatical" about Islam were made to be the worst form of France's other, the fact which alienated them more and thus were not entitled to having the French citizenship.

Even when Algeria and Algerians were totally different, a number of Algerians were finally convinced by the concept of the Frenchness of Algeria. The French knew that their judgement day would come, and that one day Algerians were going to revolt against their tyranny. Yet, the strong belief of the French in the myth of "French Algeria" greatly influenced some of the Algerian elite, the fact which facilitated their colonial franchise in Algeria.

In 1930, the French president Gaston Doumergue (1863-1937) paid Algeria a visit celebrating the hundred years of the French colonial presence in Algeria. Arriving in Algeria the colonial president was well-received by a delegation of Algerian Caïd¹³ who

¹²**Pied-noir:** literally "black foot," is the term used to refer to French nationals who were born and raised in North Africa, especially Algeria.

¹³**Caïd:** was usually an Algerian official who was appointed by the French as the head of an Algerian municipality during the French colonization of Algeria (1830-1962). The Caïd was not welcomed by

all convened to pay him homage and declare full loyalty to their mother France, they were all dressed up in white *Djellabas* (Algerian traditional clothes).

In his visit to Algiers Doumergue insisted on rewarding the Algerian *Harkis*¹⁴ for their unconditional loyalty to the French Empire. A photograph was taken to commemorate the special historic event, in the photo's caption the following words read; "there is no longer present, on this African earth, an Algeria and a France; there is nothing but France." In celebrating the occasion, Doumergue also uncovered a statue (*See Appendix, Picture 01*).

In the center of the statue were two women; on the left a woman symbolizing France as a caring mother, and on the right of the statue another woman symbolizing Algeria and who was clearly underneath the other one, while looking up at her in search of protection and care. This statue was erected in Algiers in order to celebrate the African army; an army which was constituted mainly of Africans including Algerians, and who fought with France against its enemies, including their own people.

In fact, the French were not the only ones to despise the Algerian people and discriminate against them in their own country. Most of the European settlers, regardless of their religion and origins shared France's unjustified hatred for the Algerian people. Thus, the white European race allowed itself to despise and decide the matters of the Algerian people and of their own country.

Edward Said explains this narcissistic French-European superiority towards the Algerian people. Regardless of whether Algerians were civilized or not, democratic, liberal or not they were regarded as oriental and inferior and thus deserved to be ruled by the white European supremacy. Said¹⁵ states: "after 1850...[the Algerian] land was and had been dominated by an alien power for whom distant hegemony over nonwhite

most of the Algerian people due to his ill-treatments to his own people, and his greatest treason he ever committed against his country.

¹⁴ **Harkis:** The Harkis in Algeria were divided into two groups; the first group of Algerians who were conscripted into the ranks of the French army during the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962), was used by France to suppress and spy on the Algerian Mujahidin (fighters). At the time of the Liberation Revolution they were obliged to complete the military service. The second category is a group of Algerians who chose to join the French army voluntarily, i.e. without coercion and most of them had participated in World War I or II or the Indo-China War alongside France.

¹⁵ **Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, Edward W. Said:** *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*.

peoples seemed inscribed by right in the very fabric of European and Western Christian society, whether that society was liberal, monarchical, or revolutionary" (71).

1.5.2.1. The War of Genocide

France has always claimed that the Algerian total population did not exceed three millions by the time it invaded Algeria in 1830. As a result to the French savage murdering of Algerian innocent civilians, the total population in Algeria was reduced catastrophically. France adopted the strategy of the war of genocide, where in thousands of Algerians were killed without mercy; crimes that certainly ascend to be crimes of war. In his book *Travail sur l'Algérie* (1841) Alexis de Tocqueville states, on the war on Algeria, that: "at this moment we are waging a war far more barbaric than the Arabs themselves" (16).

The war of genocide which was waged against Algerian unarmed civilians is divided into two phases; the first phase was a spiritual war of genocide while the second was more of a military one. Both served the main objective of the French colonizer, that is to reduce as many of the Algerian population as was possible.

In the spiritual war of genocide, mainly under the French bloodthirsty marshal Thomas Robert Bugeaud (1784-1849) who was then the Governor-General of Algeria (1841-1847), the Algerian people were discriminated against, deprived of the freedom to speak their language, practice their religion and nearly separated from their long history.

Taking his new post as the Governor-General of Algeria in 1841, Bugeaud immediately jumped to wage a spiritual war against the Algerian people together with the military one. He prohibited the use of the Arabic language among Algerians, educational institutions were shut and replaced by French ones, and mosques were demolished to be substituted by Christian churches. The first French Roman Catholic church was established in 1838 in Algiers.

Moreover, the Algerian people were not allowed to use the Arabic language in any of their daily administrative affairs. Rather, all documents were released in the

French language and any protest against this unfair practice of linguistic segregation against the Algerian people would declare that person as not abiding by the law, the fact which could lead one to be imprisoned.

The second phase of the French war of genocide against the Algerian people was purely military, and which aimed at reducing the population tremendously, usually through the torture of millions of Algerians to death, causing deliberate diseases and famines and of course the countless rapes and assassinations of entire Algerian villages.

From the very start, France was determined to reduce the Algerian population to the point where they could not cause a threat to its unceasing colonial expansion. Yet, and especially towards the end of the first half of the twentieth century, France's determination to reduce the numbers of Algerians dramatically came to be more serious than ever.

The best example of the French determination to reduce the numbers of the Algerian population systematically is the massacres of May 08th, 1945. During World War II the French promised the Algerians if they would fight on their side against the Germans, France would grant them their independence in return.

Thus, thousands of Algerians fought on the French side in the war. In May 08th 1945, and as a result of the French defeat of the German forces and which could never be achieved without the major participation of the Algerians, and who were put in the front lines to be used as human shields covering for the French, thousands of Algerians rallied in the streets of Algeria celebrating the Algerian-French victory.

However, to their surprise the French immediately started killing thousands of Algerian unarmed civilians, only because they rallied outside in the streets of their country expecting their colonizer to honor his word. France then committed one of the worst genocides ever to be registered in the history of humankind. The French official number of Algerian men and women who were killed in the genocides of May 08th is a little more than forty-five (45000) thousands.

Nevertheless, the actual number of the death toll of the massacres based on the testimonies of both Algerian and French witnesses, indicate that the number varied between fifty (50000) and seventy (70000) thousand armless Algerian civilians who were murdered immediately as a response to their peaceful rallies.

As it has been mentioned earlier that the French claim that by the time of invading Algeria, the total Algerian population did not exceed five (05) millions. However, other factual statistics based, mainly on the testimonies of both Algerians and European settlers show that the number was greater than that. Below are the official statistics of the development of the Algerian population between 1830 and 1966, according to the Algerian National Office of Statistics:

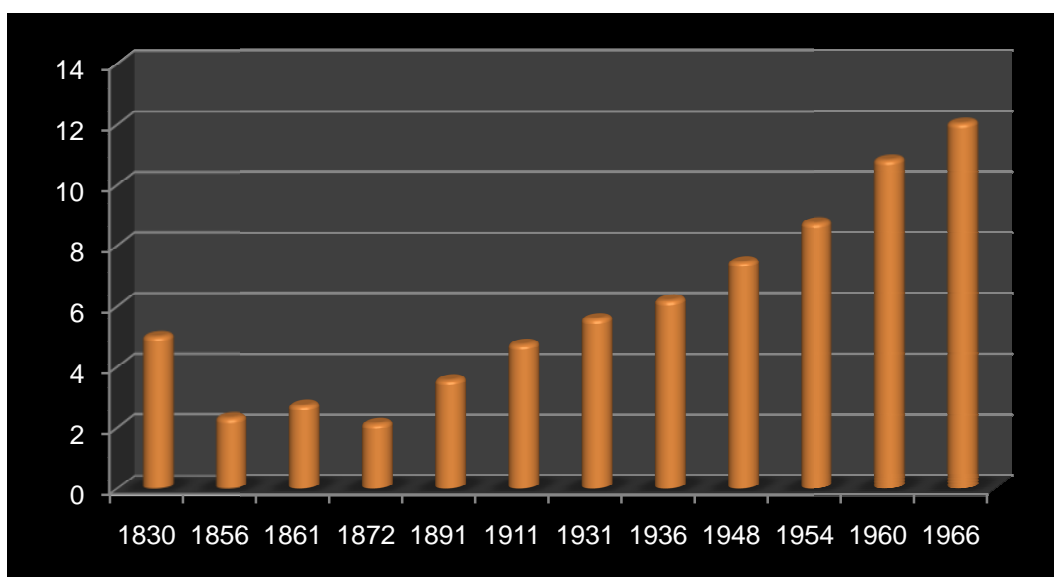


Figure 01: The development of the Algerian population (1830-1966).

Source: <https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki>

The graph above illustrates how the Algerian demographic development had gone through three main phases; the first phase was usually called the recession phase (1830-1872), the second phase was called the slow development phase (1872-1960), and finally there was the demographic explosion phase which started after the Algerian independence in 1962.

It should be noted that the statistics mentioned above are according to the Algerian National Office of Statistics and the United Nations (hence UN). But, it should

also be noted that these statistics are taken from the French colonial authorities, being the only official source of information regarding the period of the French colonization of Algeria. The French claim that by the time of the Algerian conquest in 1830, the Algerian population varied between three (03) and five (05) millions.

However, there are several experts; mainly historians who assure that the official numbers presented by the French colonial authorities remain falsified. According to Hamdan Khodja¹⁶, when France invaded Algeria in 1830 the total population was ten (10) millions. Taking this into consideration the systematic reduction in the Algerian population by the French is even more catastrophic than ever.

When taking into consideration the French colonial authorities that by the time of the conquest of Algeria there were five million Algerians; in 1830 there were five million Algerians and in 1872 the number was dramatically reduced to 02.12 million, that is in only forty years more than half of the total population of Algeria was exterminated, the fact which entitle the French colonial crimes against Algerians as crimes of war.

Especially in this period Algerians were subjected to various ways of extermination; the French colonizer had deliberately caused the lethal famines, tifoos and cholera by the end of the nineteenth (19th) century which reduced the numbers of the Algerian population quite dramatically. While in the second phase which was after 1872 and ending with the Algerian independence in 1962 is usually diagnosed as the phase of slow development.

Besides the usual terrorist practices of the colonizer against the Algerian people such as; the torture of hundreds of civilians and the mass killing of innocent people without giving them the right of a fair trial, the colonizer had sought the opportunity to slaughter thousands of Algerians whenever they were organizing a peaceful rally, like what happened in the famous massacres of May 08th, 1945 where more than forty-five thousand Algerian civilians were massacred.

¹⁶**Hamdan ben Othman Khodja (1773-1842):** Was an Algerian well-respected man and scholar. He wrote the book *Le Miroir* (1833), in which he denounced the French colonization of Algeria, thus becoming the first essayist on the subject of decolonization.

Moreover, the French did not hesitate to use the Algerian people as guinea pigs in their nuclear tests; the latter were also performed on Algerian soil. France performed several nuclear tests, mainly in the Algerian desert starting in 1957 while colonizing Algeria and ending after the Algerian independence in 1966, since the Algerian desert remained under French rule after the independence in 1962 according to the Evian Accords¹⁷.

Fatima Ben Brahim, who is an Algerian lawyer and a feminist activist, confirms that in 1960 a hundred and fifty (150) Algerians were tied against posts near the site of the nuclear explosion, in order to observe the effect of the nuclear dust on human flesh. These Algerians Ben Brahim confirms that they were Algerian prisoners in both Sidi Bel Abbes and Mascara (North-West of Algeria).

Experts confirm that the French nuclear tests carried out in Algeria in the period (1960-1966) were two-hundred and ten (210) nuclear tests. The *Gerboise Bleue* was the name of the first French nuclear bomb, it was tested in Raggane (South of Algeria) in 1960; the *Gerboise Bleue* was labeled the "mother of all A-bombs." Comparing it the American "Trinity" which was twenty (20kt) kilotons, the Soviet "RDS-1" which was twenty-two (22kt) kilotons and the British "Hurricane" which was twenty-five (25kt) kilotons, the *Gerboise Bleue* was larger than any of the three A-bombs combined altogether.

Only in the period between 1945 and 1962 France had exterminated about fifteen (15%) percent of the entire Algerian population. Most of the Algerians who were massacred and assassinated have not yet been identified, since the French have not yet up to this moment confessed their crimes of war.

The French insults to the Algerian people continue, and perhaps the best example for that is the confiscation of more than forty (40) skulls of Algerian martyrs and leaders of the holy revolutions against the French. These skulls are savagely kept in a museum in France like they were some remains of dinosaurs.

¹⁷ **Evian Accords:** The Évian Accords comprise a treaty which was signed on 18 March 1962 in Évian-les-Bains, France by France and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, the government-in-exile of FLN (*Front de Libération Nationale*) which sought Algeria's independence from France. The Accords ended the 1954–1962 Algerian War with a formal ceasefire proclaimed for 19 March, and formalized the idea of cooperative exchange between the two countries.

The extreme hatred of the French to the Algerian people is unjustified; it is well-known that it was the French who assaulted and invaded Algeria while they were in heavy debts to the Algerians, and which have not as yet been repaid. In a letter¹⁸ to his friend in 1843 telling him what the French had been doing in Algeria, Lieutenant-colonel Lucien de Montagnac wrote:

All populations who do not accept our conditions must be despoiled. Everything must be seized, devastated, without age or sex distinction: grass must not grow any more where the French army has set foot. Who wants the end wants the means, whatever may say our philanthropists. I personally warn all good soldiers whom I have the honour to lead that if they happen to bring me a living Arab, they will receive a beating with the flat of the saber.... This is how, my dear friend, we must make war against Arabs: kill all men over the age of fifteen, take all their women and children, load them onto naval vessels, send them to the Marquesas Islands or elsewhere. In one word, annihilate all who will not crawl beneath our feet like dogs. (334)

Montagnac's letter is but an excerpt of the long-lasting hatred of the French to the Algerian people. It was this hatred which gave the French the right to invade Algeria in the first place, even when they were in heavy debts to the Algerian people. As a result, the unmatched narcissistic sense of superiority of the French entitled them to be the undisputed colonizers of North Africa, and Algeria in particular.

1.5.2.2. The Scorched-earth

The scorched earth was a well-known military strategy which was used against a certain people in order to cut out supplies on them. In this strategy the assaulter would burn all the harvests and destroy the water supplies in an attempt to weaken the forces of the enemy.

Reports of such a strategy date back to the failed Napoleonic War to invade Russia in 1812, the scorched earth was also used in the American Civil War (1861-65) in what is called the Sherman's March to the Sea (1864); where the Union Army¹⁹ under

¹⁸**Lettres d'un soldat - Algérie 1837-1845:** A book of letters written by Lucien de Montagnac, it was first published in August 1885.

¹⁹ **Union Army:** During the American Civil War, the Union Army referred to the United States Army, the land force that fought to preserve the Union of the collective states. Also known as the Federal Army, it proved essential to the preservation of the United States of America as a working, viable republic.

the leadership of Major Sherman (1820-1891) destroyed civilian property, attacked military targets and destroyed infrastructures of the enemy.

The French strategy of scorched earth was heavily used against the Algerian people during colonization. The French colonial authorities did not hesitate to adopt a systematic policy to keep the Algerian population in permanent food dependency to the French, by burning a lot of Algerian fertile lands, especially of producing wheat leaving the Algerians in sharp food shortages which often led to famines that killed thousands. Thus, the French colonial authorities were the sole suppliers of food.

In his book *Tocqueville's Road Map: Methodology, Liberalism, Revolution, and Despotism*, Roger Boesche explains how the French deliberately adopted the scorched-earth strategy, aiming at inundating the Algerian people in constant famines and diseases. He states that: "The French conquest in Algeria was in fact murderous and included the killing of innocent civilians and a scorched earth policy that led to famine and disease" (113-4).

When the strategy of the scorched earth did not seem to have attained the desirable results to break the will of the Algerian people, the French turned to their famous strategy of divide and conquer. This strategy has proved to be quite effective, and the Algerian people were once more put to the test of losing their national identity, which could lead to losing their national land.

Bas du formulaire

1.5.2.3. The Policy of Divide and Conquer

By the time of the French invasion to Algeria in 1830, Algeria comprised of two major ethnical groups and who had learned for centuries to live in peace; the Arabs and Tamazight. Both of these ethnical groups constituted to France a threat of arousing the national cause of their country if let united. Thus, France urgently gathered sociologists, psychologists, ethnologists and linguists and thus the team of experts was set to work on studying how to break down the Algerian society, first ethnically and then ideologically.

The Algerian multi-ethnic groups had learned to live in harmony for centuries, and thus were never disturbed. Soon after the French invasion of Algeria, many of these ethnic groups were provoked to live in turmoil; this made it easier for the French to pursue their territorial expansion and the full takeover of Algeria was attained in 1848 immediately after the defeat of Emir Abdelkader (1847).

Earlier, in dividing the Algerian people the French adopted the strategy of favoring some ethnical groups over the others, by virtue of race (color of the skin) and attachment to religion (Islam). Thus, at first one Tamazight group (Kabyles) were made to be the superior Algerian race who would later be entitled for gaining the French citizenship. The other race which was made to be inferior were the Algerian Arabs, being viewed as fanatical Muslims the Arabs were mostly hated by the French and thus were not encouraged to be French citizens.

France successfully created a group of Algerians (mainly Algerian elite), who so enthusiastically called for Algerian integration with France. This faction were so eager in their job that they carried the mission of divide and conquer better than the French themselves. In his book *A Dying Colonialism* Frantz Fanon states that: "The advocates of integration, for their part, here saw a new opportunity to promote a "French Algeria" by making the occupier's language the sole practical means of communication available to Kabyles, Arabs, Chaouias, Mozabites, etc." (91).

The French strategies to divide the Algerian people and then subdivide them into even smaller ethnical groups did not seem to be ending any sooner. The Algerian groups, who were mostly from the elite and whom France, had utilized to break down the Algerian national identity were eventually fabricated into active agents of the French colonizer. These agents were recruited to work against the national interest of their people and country; they were known as *Harkis*.

1.5.2.4. The Fabrication of *Harkis*

Immediately after the French conquest of Algeria, France was met with fierce Algerian resistance; the Algerian people did not accept to be ruled over by an alien force, and certainly not by a European one. Earlier, the Algerian resistance was mainly

distributed into three parts; East (Ahmed Bey), Center (Boubaghla, Lalla N'Soumer) and West (Emir Abdelkader). In order to bring down the Algerian sense of revolution once and for all, France had to devise a new but effective plan, that is to hit the Algerian resistance right at the heart; and thus *Harkis* were fabricated.

A *Harki* is any Algerian who chose to fight with the French enemy against the interests of his people and nation, in other words a *Harki* is someone who sold out his country; a traitor. There are many advocates of the *Harkis*, especially those who participated with France against the Algerian war of independence.

These advocates call for the "rights" of *Harkis* to return to their country, Algeria which they once had participated with the enemy to destroy it. If their country ever was Algeria, then one may wonder why they sold out their country to the enemy. And since their truly supporting country is France, then they have nothing to claim for, and they are right where they belong; with their mother France.

The word *Harki* in Arabic means an agent of a movement. However, the concept of *Harkis* was utilized by the French colonizer to create an Algerian counter-movement whose mission was to bring down the national movement who was fighting for the liberation of the entire Algerian colonized territories.

The issue of the Algerian *Harkis* is still one of the most complicated issues that seem never to be sorted out in the bilateral relations of Algeria and France. The problem is that there are two voices; the first which is usually French or simply western, accuses the Algerian resistance of hunting down those who sold out their country and asks them to simply embrace them as if nothing happened. While the second which is usually Algerian or simply a free voice, refuses to forgive the unanimous greatest crime ever to be committed; that is the crime of national treason.

In fact, recognizing the *Harkis* as traitors or not has a lot to do with recognizing the Algerian national struggle for liberation. The French aggressive campaign against innocent armless Algerian men, women and children and which lasted nearly a century and a half is known to everyone, even with the countless falsifications of many events by the French. Yet, one can hardly find anyone denouncing the crimes of war

committed by the French in exterminating whole Algerian villages for more than a century, and not even apologizing to the Algerians up until now; that is unforgiveable.

Thus, the issue of *Harkis* is an Algerian internal affair; the Algerian people are free to do whatever the Algerian people want to do with the *Harkis*. If the Algerians decide that *Harkis* should be executed for betraying their country allowing it to live under slavery and destitution for more than a hundred-thirty-two years, then they have right. And if they decide to forgive them because they were fabricated by the French, and were themselves victims to some extent, then the Algerians should be recognized as a great people.

The Algerian revolution led by the FLN (*front de libération national*) was often accused of assassinating a lot of Algerians who betrayed their country for the French. The French minister Lacoste (1898-1989) had published some photos of some *Harkis* who were assassinated by the FLN, in an attempt to portray the Algerians as barbaric and uncivilized.

However, Frantz Fanon explains in his book *A Dying Colonialism* that the so called crimes committed by the Algerians nationalists were justified because they were fighting to free their country. Fanon adds that the crimes committed by the *Harkis* against entire Algerian tribes on behalf of the French are brutal and unjustified.

He states that "there are other photographs that show some of the thousands of crimes of which the Bellounis²⁰ and the *harkis*-armed by the French Army have themselves been guilty. Finally and above all, there are those tens of thousands of Algerian men and women who have been and continue to be victims of the French troops" (25).

Harkis like Bellounis were employed by the French generals to blow the Algerian resistance from the inside. It is reported that general Bellounis, also known as Olivier to the French was recruited in May 31st, 1957 by the French general Salan²¹, the founder of

²⁰ **Mohamed Bellounis (1912-1958):** An Algerian general who was loyal to Messali Hadj, and who was known to the French as Olivier. He is considered as a Harki by most of the Algerians who claim that he was fabricated by the French intelligence to weaken the Algerian revolution from the inside.

²¹ **Raoul Albin Louis Salan (1899-1984):** was a French Army general. He served as the fourth French commanding general during the First Indochina War. He was one of four generals who

the French terrorist organization (OAS). Bellounis's mission was to weaken the Algerian resistance in the strong Third District (Kabyle region) which fell under the command of Krim Belkacem.²² The FLN is often accused of the assassination of Bellounis, yet the specifics of his death remain unknown.

Were it not for these *Harkis* who provided the French colonizer with a lot of essential information regarding Algeria and its people, the Algerian people would probably not have spent a hundred-thirty-two years to liberate themselves from the French oppression. Therefore, the Algerian people must be excused when not being able to forgive the greatest crimes of treason committed by the *Harkis*, and who sometimes committed atrocities against their own people uglier than those of the colonizer.

1.5.2.5. Exile

Another effective strategy which was often used by the French colonizer against the Algerian people was exile. Earlier, the French generals often suggested sending the entire Algerian population into exile. The war criminal General Bugeaud suggested exiling all the Algerian people to Jamaica in 1840. When that did not work out, a presidential law was issued which stated Algeria as part of France. In 1846 another law was passed declaring the Algerian people as French.

In 1865 the French emperor Napoleon III issued an act declaring the Algerian people as equal as the French and the *pieds noir*²³ (black feet). Yet, this law was nothing but an ink on paper; Algerians were never treated as equal as the French. Rather, they were made to be passive, oriental and inferior beyond imagination; they were strangers on their land. Such ruthless practices were of course enforced by laws like the famous Indiginate Code (1871) where Algerians were hence called indigenes (indigenous), and who were made to be inferior as subhumans.

organized the 1961 Algiers Putsch operation (pressing de Gaulle not to give up Algeria). He was the founder of the Organisation armée secrète (OAS), becoming the most decorated soldier in the French army.

²² **Krim Belkacem (1922-1970):** A well-known Algerian leader of the Algerian revolution, and the commander of the Third District (Kabyle region). He was assassinated in Germany in 1970 by an unknown party.

²³ **Pieds Noir:** The European settlers who were brought by the French colonial authorities after the French conquest of Algeria in 1830 to settle in Algeria. These European settlers were often given the Algerian lands as their property.

Moreover, resistance leaders like Emir Abdelkader and Lalla Fatma N'Soumer and many others were sent into exile, often away from their homelands. After the capture of Emir Abdelkader in 1848 he was sent to prison in France, to be later sent to Damascus, Syria in 1855 to live the rest of his life in exile. Lalla N'Soumer was also imprisoned in 1857 only to die six years later in prison in 1863.

The years 1870-71 had witnessed an Algerian uprising against the French colonization of Algeria. The uprising was immediately repressed and those who took part in it were forced into exile in New Caledonia, which is an island in the South-East Pacific and which was colonized in 1853 by the French at the orders of Napoleon III.

These Algerians who were forced to live in exile in New Caledonia, were also forced to work there as a sort of punishment for their participation in the insurrection of 1870-71. Up until today, their descendants are still experiencing the pain of living away from their country Algeria; after a century and a half of oppression, they are still forced to live in exile.

1.5.3. The Russian Empire and its Other

The Russian "other" was not the same as the "other" of the West, in that Russia often regarded its peasants and the people considered of lower social status as an "other." The Russians have always considered themselves to be different from the West in terms of their religion; both the East and West belong to the Christian faith, yet the two groups accused each other of being wrong. Thus, according to the Russians who represent Eastern Christianity (Orthodox), the West has been following the untrue version of Christianity (Catholic).

In addition, countries of Western Europe held the belief that being Protestant or Catholic, capitalist and finally imperialist meant to be white. That is to say that the Western colonial discourse often associated the Protestant or Catholic Christianity with the white race; hence occidental and civilized. Whereas, the Orthodox Christian faith of Eastern Europe; mainly Russia was considered as an inferior version of Christianity, thus oriental and uncivilized.

In order to be considered as civilized meant to be white, and to be able to perform the "civilizing mission" also meant to be white. Historically, Western colonial powers like France emphasized on race, and how highly esteemed were those Europeans who contributed a great deal in promoting the colonial-imperialist ideology of the West.

Initially, the selection of race was based on how dark or fair the skin of the colonized subject was, and thus whole continents were confiscated based on the ideology of one's race. Yet, especially during the twentieth century Western imperialism took another turn regarding the issue of race. In France, for instance the classification of race was always based on the color of one's skin, yet it was later embellished by connecting it to the acquisition of the French citizenship.

Therefore, in the new concept of Western imperialism, how dark or fair the skin of the colonized subject was did not necessarily constitute the basic element of acquiring the citizenship of the colonizer. To be white definitely was the ideal component to acquire the French citizenship, yet new elements were now taken into consideration in determining one's "Frenchness;" now language and culture became as essential. Thus, the people who belonged to a different culture and religion were perceived as a different race, undesirable and not likely qualified for acquiring the colonizer's citizenship.

Furthermore, there were those considered of mixed blood origins; hybrids. In Algeria, the French adopted a very sinister strategy of replacing the Algerian people by many Europeans from all parts of Western Europe. These Europeans were often the trouble makers of their countries; hybrids that Europe wanted to get rid of; Algerians usually called them *pieds noir* or black feet. The policy which France adopted is still being used by the Western imperialism and is often called the policy of filling in the blank.

The European hybrids or *pieds noir* were always treated as superior than the Algerian people, yet these hybrids were never treated as equals to the French for example. Thus, they were often banned from some of the civil rights that were usually provided for the French people, such as; casting a vote. Therefore, according to the French, the *pieds noir* were unable to promote Western colonial ideology.

On a more global scale of colonial-imperialism, the Russians could not possibly be considered as white, and thus the "civilizing mission" could not possibly be entrusted to them, simply because they were not Western. While the West constantly regarded Russia as inferior and not able to perform the "civilizing mission," Russians did not do the same. On the contrary, the Russians considered Western values as highly-esteemed; often the Russian nobility considered speaking French as a way to be civilized, especially in the nineteenth century.

According to the West the "other" usually was the "uncivilized", "savage" people outside the Western-European sphere. However, to the Russians the "other" usually were Russian peasants, the people considered of lower social status who were clearly not familiar with the Western values; they could neither speak French nor could they be accustomed to the Western habits of eating and dressing. To the Russian nobility, the people of lower social status did not share the same concept in glorifying and worshipping Western values. Thus, they were viewed as inferior, barbaric and thus made to be the "other."

While the Russian nobility was enjoying in otherizing their peasants and poor people, they were in the meantime enjoying the status of being the "other" to the West. Russia desperately wanted to join the colonial-imperialist club of the West; chiefly Britain and France. Therefore, winning more territories outside its main land was a significant task for the Russian Empire.

In his essay "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," David Chioni Moore explains that while the British did not mimic anyone except being themselves, the Russians were desperately trying to act like the French and the British, to whom they had long felt culturally inferior. Moore then explains how the territorial expansion meant the admission ticket for the Russians into the European colonial club (23-4).

Being it one of the major colonies of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine can be considered as the reflective image of the Russian other. Due to the resemblance in the Russian-Ukrainian cultures, Ukraine was devoured and often referred to as "small Russia," especially that the Russians and Ukrainians shared a similar tongue.

Being it the major French other, and thanks to the Algerian unceasing strong resistance, Algeria was never a part of France even when the French have always believed in the Frenchness of Algeria. However, the Russian/Ukrainian relations demonstrated a scenario of complete merging of the two cultures. Thus, any differences between the colonizer and colonized have become hardly traced.

1.6. Conclusion

As a conclusion, the postcolonial theory has helped in defining the atrocities inflicted upon the colonized nations, by the colonial super powers. Thanks to the postcolonial critique that the reader is now more interested in the historical studies, proving that every disease must have a cure and that without colonialism there would never be such a thing as Postcolonialism.

It was discussed earlier in this chapter that especially the West regarded Russia as a non-white nation, thus Russia was not a colonizer; not in the model of the West anyway. However, and regardless of the terminology addressing the Russian colonial enterprise in Ukraine and most of East-European countries, there was a Russian colonization of Ukraine.

The violent Russian atrocities in Ukraine attest to the ruthless colonial machine that was feeding off the Ukrainian people. As a super power Russia felt the obligation to exercise its hegemonic power over the Ukrainian people; thus the torture, rape, murder and systematic extermination of the Ukrainian people were arrogantly justified.

Thus, the Russians were merely exercising their birth right to rule over weaker nations such as; Ukraine. Besides, geographically speaking the Russians prioritized themselves in taking over neighboring countries, better than to wait for the West to take over them. That is why they replicated the same means in terrorizing, especially the Ukrainian people as the West and that in order to achieve full control over the colonized subjects.

Algeria, however, was a whole different story. The French not only came far from behind the Mediterranean Sea to "restore" their lost dignity following the fly-whisk

incident. But also, shortly after the invasion of Algeria, the French legitimized themselves to withdraw the "Algerianness" from Algerians. At first, they proclaimed the Algerian people as French, then as indigenous and then as barbaric and uncivilized.

By the end of the first half of the twentieth century and under the pressure of the national movements which called for the liberation from the colonizer, France suddenly decided to give up all of its colonies in the Middle East and Africa; all except Algeria. According to the French, Algeria was not a colony; rather it was an extended French territory which was situated behind the Mediterranean Sea and on a whole different continent.

Finally, and regardless of the differences between the two colonial situations in both Algeria and Ukraine, and between France and Russia both Algerians and Ukrainians experienced the same devastating effects of the colonizer. It is wrong to think that colonialism was over in both Algeria and Ukraine; both peoples are still being haunted by the painful past with their colonizer, and their memories are still plagued by the violence they have experienced up until today.

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Chapter Three

Language to Preserve Culture

3.1. Introduction

One of the main challenges that have been facing postcolonial women is the concept of writing; women have always found themselves defying restricting rules when writing. They had to remain in their natural place; below men and any attempt to outsmart these men would cause an undesirable turmoil. Yet, the general representation of women was insufficient and cruel mostly, the fact which motivated postcolonial women to write not only for the sake of writing, but also to give voice to the great voiceless majority.

The woman constitutes a very important component of culture if not the most important one. She has always played a vital role in protecting, preserving and promoting the national culture through keeping secrets related to the national security and through getting involved in the armed fighting. But, most importantly through writing her experiences and contributions, the postcolonial woman shed lights on her teaching the world that she has earned her right for freedom.

The woman wrote about love, how it once existed and how it was lost. She wrote about what she is capable of doing, the great role and responsibility assigned to her in endorsing the principles of her culture. The woman wrote her side of the story; she narrated events perceived from her point of view. The woman bravely broke the restrictions imposed on her for a long time, she boldly ventured in an activity which was long attributed to men.

Yet, the question that poses itself here is; did the woman succeed in her quest of writing? Was she lucky to make her voice heard outside the borders? If so, then why was she often made to be a passive agent of culture? But again, in making herself heard and seen the woman was once again recognized as an active agent whose massive contributions are undeniable.

In this chapter, the researcher will demonstrate how the postcolonial woman was confronted with all the difficulties and hardships in her attempt to write. The researcher then will exemplify the instances where the postcolonial woman have succeeded in writing, and how much (male) others have succeeded as well in writing the woman's struggle and her long-term commitment in promoting the culture.

The woman writer has first earned the respect of her male compatriot as her equal partner to decolonize and promote the national culture. Second, her respectful reputation has reached beyond the borders making her the symbol of the resilient national culture. In this chapter, the researcher will clarify this interrelated relationship between the man and the woman in writing.

Moreover, in this chapter, the researcher will explain how the postcolonial woman ventured in the journey of writing. Then, the researcher will illustrate to what extent the postcolonial woman has succeeded in making her voice identified. The researcher will also explain the reasons that motivated the postcolonial woman in choosing her language of decolonization; how Assia Djébar chose the French language, the language of the enemy to promote the Algerian culture, and how Oksana Zabuzhko chose to write the suffering of her women in the Ukrainian language, a language which had long been considered dead during the Soviet Union era.

Finally, the researcher will also illustrate the challenging difficulties both Djébar and Zabuzhko have faced in terms of choosing to write in the first place, then their choice of language with its undesirable yet unavoidable ramifications. The researcher will then show the boldness of both authors in choosing their somewhat controversial themes, and how much they have succeeded to decolonize their culture and raise the voices of their women.

3.2. Women and Culture

Women have always been connected with culture through history; the two are inseparable and essential for making a nation. Since the dawn of history and in most of cultures the woman resembled the earth on which a nation can stand. The woman guaranteed the continuity of the nation; on the one hand she guaranteed the process of reproducing the population, and on the other she made sure to pass on the tradition of preserving the heritage and telling it to the younger generations. Despite the fact that most nations throughout history practiced all kinds of segregations against women, yet it was women who made sure their culture did not fade away.

In times of war, when nations fell at the hands of invaders it was women who were at the first line to defend the culture. Very often, the invader would stand still impressed by what he saw in the woman whose land he had invaded. Women like Pocahontas who stood tall in front of the consecutive invasions of the Europeans against the Native Americans.

As a woman, Pocahontas did never give up her traditional clothes or her language to the European ones. Instead, she was the source of culture for her people. When the Europeans saw her for the first time they immediately knew that the Native Americans were not barbaric and savage as they thought; Pocahontas showed everyone that she and her people did not come from nowhere, they had their own language, their culture and surely they were where they belonged.

Moreover, Cleopatra is still the source of inspiration in modern world of fashion and beauty. Even after forced to getting married to the Cesar of Rome (Antonius) after invading Egypt, Cleopatra did never abandon her people or the traditions of her country. She did not turn into a Roman; rather she remained the constant source of inspiration for her people.

Cleopatra remained faithful to her husband Antonius as long as that did not contradict the interests of Egypt. Cleopatra also opened a huge royal library which she frequently visited for reading, and she remained a source of inspiration for many kings and queens to follow.

Men have often undermined the value of women, yet at the same time women were the muse of art for men; in paintings, songs, poems women were always the subject of artistic productions. The best of poems were written for women, the sweetest of songs enchanted the beauty of women, the best novels told the stories of women either in love or breaking free of the shackles of society and the best of writers is he who combines the beauty of the woman with her culture and intelligence.

In Gabriel Garcia Marquez's literary works the protagonist is often a woman who is so beautiful and a good housewife, in doing so Marquez wants to show that despite the Caribbean woman is always a busy woman, she remains a faithful agent who supports her husband and preserves his culture.

In Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* the author demonstrates how Hester the female protagonist was forced to wear the scarlet letter A, in doing so he exhibits the brave sacrifices the woman undergoes in order to bring about a change in her society. Not only does she gladly accept her punishment, by going into public wearing the scarlet letter A, but also after her punishment was over she willingly goes back to wear the scarlet letter A, as if challenging the whole town.

Queen Zenobia of Yemen is also strongly connected with the culture of her people, she was well-known for her mastery of several languages such as Arabic, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and ancient Egyptian. She was a great supporter to her husband that she fought many wars with him.

Queen Zenobia was famous for her wisdom and beauty and many people including herself claimed that she was the descendant of queen Cleopatra of Egypt herself. Zenobia's famous saying was: "Rome has to differentiate the strength of civilization and the civilization of strength".

Queen Tin Henan who established the Touareg clan is considered a very important figure in relation to the Algerian culture especially the Touareg. Queen Tin Henan who ruled in the fifth century was considered a brave woman who fought relentlessly to defend her people against the invaders of the other tribes. Moreover, she

was well-known for her magical relationship with animals especially cattle like camels which would come graze peacefully wherever she would go.

It is reported that queen Tin Henan was much braver than many men; a lot of men of her tribe fled resisting the invaders, while she bravely engaged in the fights to defend her people; that is why modern Touareg men cover their faces with scarfs as a symbol of shame that a woman was braver than them. Moreover, in Touareg tribes usually women are revered, they do not cover their faces and are usually the ones who rule over the men.

Tin Henan's skeleton was discovered in 1925, it was confiscated by the French colonial authorities to be returned later to the Algerian authorities after independence, while all her precious jewelry were stolen by the Americans where they still lie today in the museum of California.

The Queen of Sheba or Bilqīs was also known for her strong hold of culture; she combined both intelligence and bravery. Bilqīs was fond of her people; she was the promoter of the culture and civilization of the kingdom of Sheba. She was also known for consulting her people in all matters.

When Bilqīs received the letter of the king-prophet Solomon (1011-931 BC), she immediately realized that this king was different than the others; that he was far more strong than those she had fought, and even when her people were known for their fierce fighting skills, she preferred the peaceful way in dealing with Prophet Solomon's proposal of submitting to his power.

Despite the fact that women were considered as passive agents of culture in many nations, the women mentioned above are the example of the active role played by women in preserving and developing the culture. Very often, these women saved their kingdoms and people when men were unable or absent.

Yet, and despite all these major contributions of women throughout history, women were still marginalized. In English it was until 1912 that women were allowed to cast a vote, and not until the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century

that emerged these feminist movements to call for the liberation of women. The question which raises itself here is: where did all those women's contributions go in history? Did the woman really cease to be an active agent of culture? Or was she simply overwhelmed by the male chauvinism and her contributions were deliberately stifled?

Despite it being mostly narrated by male historians, yet history preserves some of the major contributions of women in promoting their cultures. It was the males who meant to erase the contributions of women in preserving the culture. Yet, uneasily the woman kept moving forward fighting to regain her rights. These women who fought hard for their rights taught themselves how to read and write; they became journalists and writers and then decided to make everyone hear their loud voices.

Z'hour Ounissi (1937-) is considered the first Algerian woman to be assigned as a minister of Social Affairs in 1982 and then minister of National Education in 1986. Earlier Z'hour Ounissi was a journalist and a writer; she wrote about the Algerian people and the holy war of independence. In her writings she defended the Algerian woman and her contributions in the war of revolution. But before all that she was a fighter, she bravely fought against the French colonists.

Moreover, the name Z'hour Ounissi is but one voice out of many Algerian female voices that fought for their rights with the pen. The Algerian woman was a concrete issue for the French colonizer; her strong connection with her culture made her the primal target. In fact, the Algerian woman was not only strongly connected with her culture but also she helped in preserving and promoting it. That is why the French colonial authorities strongly recommended penetrating the Algerian woman if they were to fully invade Algeria.

Four years after Algeria was invaded in 1830 by France, Delacroix jumped to portrait the Algerian woman as he imagined her inside the *harem*. Delacroix, the great French painter did not portray any other part of Algeria except Algerian women; other than the political and colonial endeavors he realized that studying and penetrating the Algerian woman, meant the penetration of the Algerian culture.

A hundred-twenty years later another European attempt was made to portrait the Algerian woman, this time it was the Spanish painter Picasso whose colonial-oriental fantasy brought him to portray the Algerian woman stripping her down of her clothes. Such artists came to realize the importance of the connection between the woman and her culture; that penetrating the woman meant penetrating her culture.

Moreover, in the world of art it should be noted that the most expensive painting which has been sold in an auction is Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* for about 179\$ million as of 2015. Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa is considered to be the most famous painting in the world so far. All these artists chose the woman to be their subject of artistic study, as these artists are concerned primarily with the study of culture, they did understand that in unveiling the woman her culture would be automatically decoded and thus controlled.

Lalla N'Soumer (1830-1833) who was an Algerian Berber lady is the major figure of Algerian popular resistance at the beginning of the French conquest of Algeria. Lalla N'Soumer refused to get married only to devote her entire time to further her knowledge. She killed about ten French generals while fighting with Echerif Boubaghla, and she caused massive losses for the French armies.

Later general Randon¹ sent forty-five thousand troops to capture her, while she had only seven thousand volunteers under her command, many of which were women. Lalla N'Soumer was captured and imprisoned in 1957; she died several years later in 1963 at the age of thirty-three.

In the Algerian culture the title Lalla is usually given to those who are revered and who are older of age. Despite her young age N'Soumer was labelled Lalla because of her wisdom and abundant knowledge. In all descriptions of her, Lalla Fatma N'Soumer is usually depicted in her Berber traditional robes with her silver jewelry.

Whether the woman was Arab, Berber or Western she was always an active agent in preserving and promoting the culture and national identity of her people, this was

¹ **Jacques Louis Randon (1795-1871):** Was a French military and political leader, also Marshal of France and governor of Algeria after colonizing it.

manifested in both Assia Djebar and Oksana Zabuzhko's writings who are essentially concerned with the current study.

The two women brilliantly depicted their women as active cultural agents denouncing the patriarchal strict rules, yet in doing so their women did not seek refuge to the colonizer; rather they were sometimes even more anti-colonial than their male compatriots.

3.3. Women and the Written Discourse

Since the dawn of history women were undermined and never considered as equal as men in seeking knowledge, as a result it was widely believed that women were not educated and could never aspire to reach men's level of knowledge. Since then, the woman has become the subject of writing.

The woman has been the raw material for the written discourse, there is hardly any written discourse not dealing with women and even this is considered by some as contributing to the passiveness of women, that they are not studying themselves rather they are being studied. However, facts have proven that women were not only studied by men; women also offered significant contributions to the written discourse.

In the male interests, the woman shifted between being a thing at times and a subject of study at others. It is true that the woman still remains the main subject of modern rhetoric; most of the modern political speeches are inaugurated with speaking about the importance of the woman, in most of the movements of change the woman has always been at the core of all the speeches.

Most of the women who strongly held liberating ideas were either writers or called women to write. In writing women kept a record of their experiences as well as contributions and in writing their experiences these women disclaimed the colonial discourse which ascribed them the role of passive agents regarding their culture; these women were often made to be the others to themselves.

Writing women's experiences and their contributions to their culture is as relevant as writing history itself. Both Djébar and Zabuzhko considered writing a very important if not the only means of keeping record. The two authors also urged the postcolonial woman to write for it is the only way for her to be seen and acknowledged.

In writing Djébar and Zabuzhko not only made their voice heard in the world, but also helped a great deal in making the voices of many voiceless women heard beyond borders. In her novel *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* Djébar exhibits the cultural diversity Algerian women possessed both during and after colonial times.

The written discourse of the Algerian woman had to come face to face with the French colonial model of gendered discourse. One can notice the hard job which was appointed to Djébar in defending the Algerian woman. It took an Algerian woman to answer Delacroix's oriental painting a hundred-fifty two years.

In 1980 Djébar decided to write a novel holding the same title of Delacroix's painting; *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*. In her novel Djébar repudiated Delacroix's claim of the Algerian woman as a naked woman available for the European man to exploit her. Djébar demonstrated how the Algerian woman belonged to a very complex societal system that this woman does not come from the brothel rather she comes from a long-standing civilization back before the coming of the French.

The written discourse was so important for the Algerian woman as long as the latter never ceased to experience different trials; starting with the French long colonial rule and ending with the civil war during the 1990s. These trials which the Algerian woman had undergone were hell-bent to break her down and keep her in permanent oblivion, and in order to shed light on her; the Algerian woman had to write her physical existence.

Similarly, the Ukrainian woman had undergone similar trials and experiences. The Ukrainian woman also had to be shoved through the tight tunnel of colonialism, when she finally emerged out of the dark tunnel she was thrown in the middle of a weary yet strict postcolonial society.

In her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* Zabuzhko examines the shredded body of the Ukrainian woman allowing her to feel once again her body which has long been confiscated from her. In her article "The Laugh of the Medusa" Hélène Cixous insists that women must interpret their physical experiences into a written discourse, she states:

By writing herself, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display—the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time." (880)

Cixous clarifies that only by writing their bodies that women can leave a mark in this world; when writing herself the woman is no longer passive and silent. It is thus a pressing matter for women to write. Every woman is concerned with the written discourse, even when it seems to some women that they are not concerned they must associate themselves with the written discourse. Writing women's experiences is considered a common matter, and any woman who considers herself not concerned is dumb, blind and likely to be submissive.

3.3.1. Women as a Source of Inspiration

Women were always the source of inspiration for many writers and poets, the woman symbolized the aesthetics of art. Writers would often choose women as their protagonists. In Gustave Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* (1856) the author became so obsessed with his female protagonist that he later declared: "Madame Bovary is me."

Back in the glorious days of the Arabic literature especially in the pre-Islamic era, the woman was the main source of inspiration especially in poetry. The Arab poet Imru' al-Qais who lived around the sixth century AD is famous for his prolific production in poetry, where he wrote thousands of remarkable poems enchanting his love to his cousin Fatima. Even though Imru' al-Qais was profligate both in his lifestyle and in his writing, yet his obsession with Fatima and regarding the woman as his source of inspiration made him a renowned poet until modern day.

Antarah ibn Shaddad is also another famous Arab poet who lived around the sixth century AD. His fierce skills in battle and poetry set him apart from his peers of his

time. Ibn Shaddad admired himself greatly and considered himself one of the most glorious men despite his darker complexion. His poems are one of the famous seven *Mu'allaqāt* (seven odes) which are greatly revered in the Arabic literature until modern day.

Ibn Shaddad did not only consider himself a free glorious man, but also he declared his love to his cousin Abla even when that seemed impossible due to the inequality in both race and social rank. Abla constituted the main source of inspiration in most of his remarkable poems.

Nizar Qabbani is often labelled "the poet of the Arab woman." The graduate of the law school of the University of Syria, Qabbani published his first collection of poems while studying at the law school. Later, he earned himself the reputation of a womanizer poet, yet and despite his somewhat obscene style of describing the woman he still remains one of the best Arab poets who knew well how to enchant the beauty and perfection of the Arab woman.

His first collection of poems where he erotically described the woman's body did not receive much of acclaim and was thus harshly criticized. Yet, thanks to the support of the Syrian minister of education then and who was a friend to his merchant father that Qabbani could finally publish his collection of poems. It can be safely claimed that no one could describe the woman better than Qabbani, the woman was his muse and without her he would not probably have succeeded the way he did.

Moreover, it can be said that while writing about the Arab woman Qabbani was injecting love inside of her, through him the Arab woman felt the romantic side of her man. Most of his contemporary women became very fond of reading poetry; he revived their sense of belonging to the great Arab culture.

Many authors and poets have sought the love of the woman while writing about her, yet it can never be said that these writers have attained their objective. There are plenty of widely popular stories written by renowned authors who described the woman in the most beautiful ways, yet still many other stories and poems and even songs are being produced in favor of the love for the woman. Take for instance the famous play of

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare which described the love story of two lovers, and even when the two ended up committing a suicide the story has become a legend understood by any lover.

In fact, revering the woman dates way back to the emergence of Islam, the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) has given the whole population of the world lessons of how to properly treat the woman. By the time the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was assigned the biggest responsibility ever, the woman in the whole world at that time was going through terrible treatments; she was sold, bought, killed for no reason and deprived of the least of her rights.

But, with the coming of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) he taught the whole humanity how to love the woman. That the woman is a very sensitive and delicate creature who needs our intensive care, and any attempt to change this fact by inappropriate treatment would definitely end up by breaking her.

Being a very special creature, the woman was not only the source of inspiration or love. The woman contributed a great deal in the causes of liberation of her people. The woman was a writer, she was also a fighter and she was the backbone of all the struggles which affected her and her people.

The man did not neglect her massive contributions, he wrote about her brave sacrifices, and her unconditional support to the struggle of the nation such as; the Palestinian woman. Take for example the great Palestinian woman writer May Ziade (1886-1941) who wrote prolifically about the just cause of her people against the unjust Israeli oppressive occupation.

Waciny Laredj's latest novel *The Nights of Isis Copia* (2018) tackles the very personal life of May Ziade, especially the long period she had spent in the psychiatric hospital in Beirut, Lebanon. May Ziade who never ceased to defend the Palestinian just cause of liberation, and who insisted on freeing the Arab woman, wrote before she died: "I hope that someone will come after me and who will treat me fairly."

The Algerian novelist Waciny Laredj gave his share of writing his fascination of the great Arab woman. In his novel Laredj went to the very house where Ziade had once lived in Palestine and talked to everyone who knew her. Laredj then visited the psychiatric hospital in Beirut where Ziade was falsely and dishonestly kept for three-hundred and three days, only because she was not afraid to tell the truth. In his novel *The Nights of Isis Copia* Laredj wished to be that someone that Ziade had hoped to come after her and treat her fairly.

The reader to Laredj's novel at first is made to believe that the narrator is speaking from the personal memoirs of May Ziade herself. Yet, later and towards the end of the novel the reader is suddenly revealed the secret that the narrator was only filling in missed parts in Ziade's life. In fact, Laredj wrote almost the whole novel out of his imagination of how Ziade had lived her life especially inside the psychiatric hospital.

Laredj later explained that while he was searching for the personal memoirs of Ziade, he later found out that they were burnt by a hidden part whose interest was in disposing of them. Yet, Laredj did not give up and his obsession and admiration of the woman writer embodied in Ziade made him pursue the technique of imagining her life, through the testimonies of her acquaintances and family members.

Nonetheless, Laredj is not considered the only one who defended the creativity of the Arab woman and who called for her freedom. The Egyptian writer Qasim Amin (1865-1908) is regarded as one of the first few Arab feminists. Being also a social reformer, Amin was one of the founders of the Egyptian national movement and Cairo University. Earlier in his life Amin strongly called the Arab people to follow the western model in "freeing" their women, by tearing apart the *hijab*.

Later in his life, Amin regretted and drew back the principles he once advocated; explaining that tearing apart the *hijab* did never do any good to the Arab woman, and instead of attaining the desired freedom he noticed that women who followed his call were harassed more than ever. In trying to free the Arab woman in the western model, Amin came to the conclusion that he only plucked the Arab woman from her natural environment like a fresh water fish putting her in salt water.

The woman had a strong connection with the national struggle especially in the Arab world. One cannot speak about the national struggle of women in the Arab world without speaking about the Algerian Djamilia Bouhired, who is regarded as the icon of women's national struggle in the Arab world. There is hardly any free Arab thinker who did not write about Bouhired; Qabbani wrote a whole poem on her entitled Djamilia Bouhired.

In the poem Qabbani described how Bouhired was captured at the age of twenty-two by the French colonial authorities, and how she was sexually and physically abused until finally sentenced to death. Yet, Bouhired's abusive trial was leaked to the human rights movements and was instead sentenced to life in prison.

As a result to her long and brave struggle against the French colonizer, Bouhired became the symbol of the woman's struggle in the whole world. The name Djamilia means the beautiful, thus Algerian women who bravely took part in liberating their country were often referred to as *el-djamilat*, plural of Djamilia (beautiful).

Bouhired is way too big than to be confined in this research study, she is the exclusive symbol of the free woman who refuses injustice not only in the Arab world, but also in the whole world. The deep scars engraved in her body, remind the French colonizer of how inhumane and barbaric he is, but more importantly that she was not broken; rather she is stronger and still able to fight.

Finally, writing the woman cannot in any way be sufficiently tackled in this research study, many renowned authors and poets have used the woman as their primary source of writing in their objective to reach the aesthetics of art. To these authors and poets the woman resembled the source of inspiration; she was the lover, the home, the culture, and whenever they lost faith and power she was always there to revive their courage.

3.3.2. The Woman's Portrayal of Herself

Reacting to the common belief that the woman was but only a subject of study, she bravely fought for her earned rights. Thus, did the woman only write to prove that she was not what the man considered her to be? Or was she even a more complex human being and had her own views in the matters. Did the woman choose to write only to break free of the shackles designed by men?

Fighting for her rights the woman has come to believe that writing is not restricted to men, rather regardless of the sexes there are two minds; one which is creative and one which is not. To the woman writing was not only a way to achieve a certain degree of freedom; it was a mission to make her voice heard.

Through writing, the woman was reborn with a whole new identity. In her collection of letters *Letters Home* Sylvia Plath declares: "I write only because there is a voice within me that will not be still." Sylvia Plath did not find but writing to make her voice heard, by writing she did not only represent herself rather she represented a wider range of women's voices.

Earlier women writers did not have the atmosphere convenient for their creative writing. Very often women had to hide while writing, it is reported that while Jane Austen (1775-1817) was writing she would hide her notebook if she heard someone approaching. Moreover, Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) insisted that a woman must have her own private room to practice her writing; Woolf also recommends that the woman writer should have her own independent source of income in order for her writing not to be tarnished or affected in any way.

Despite the naysayers and the doubters the woman managed to produce competing high-quality literary texts, and the woman developed her own style to the point where she created what is called women's writing. Anne Bradstreet for example is exclusively the woman who expressed her love the best to her husband. Bradstreet not only dared to write remarkable texts, but also she did not hesitate to write about love

which was considered a taboo even to a husband. Moreover, Jane Austen was not afraid to write about the long-lived caste system in the English society where most of the young girls fiercely competed to win the heart of a young rich gentleman to get married.

Virginia Woolf grew up in a family where boys were sent to college while girls received their schooling at home. She is considered one of the founders of the famous writing technique of the stream of consciousness. In her novel *Mrs. Dalloway* Woolf responded to James Joyce's *Ulysses* where he presented a day in the life of his hero Leopold Bloom, she also presented in her novel a day in the life of her heroine Clarissa Dalloway.

Yet, the reader to Woolf's novel notices that not much happened in the day of Mrs. Dalloway rather she is presented as someone who is weary of the daily trivial routine. Mrs. Dalloway's day is a normal one, at the break of the day she sets off to buy flowers for her friend who is a successful poet and who is gravely sick. When finally her friend committed a suicide jumping off the window of his apartment, Mrs. Dalloway attempts to follow his steps.

Many critics believe that Woolf met herself in the character of Septimus Warren Smith who finally succumbs to the society he hates and commits suicide. Sixteen years after writing *Mrs. Dalloway* Virginia Woolf committed suicide, finally revealing her secret message that the world was too small a place for her big creative mind, and the only way to relief herself the woman must commit suicide.

Virginia Woolf is regarded a feminist writer par excellence. In fact, she did not promote the importance of the woman in fiction, rather she defended the woman in every possible way she could find; she wrote academic articles and led conferences in colleges defending the importance of the woman. In her extended essay "A Room of One's Own" Woolf stresses on the importance of providing the woman writer with a private space in order for her creativity to thrive.

In addition, and in answer to the doubters who tend to ascribe to women the role of passive agents, one cannot possibly ignore the formidable writing style and the prolific works of Agatha Christie (1890-1976). Born in England, Christie is considered

the third most published author after Shakespeare and the Bible breaking the Guinness record of selling more than two billion copies.

Christie is also considered to be the most translated author so far, her works have been translated in a hundred and three languages. Christie has also written the longest play so far. Her novel *And Then There Were None* is the best-selling mystery novel in the world so far.

At the age of eighty-five Christie had published exactly eighty-five books, her prolific literary production has placed her not only on top of the women writers but on top of all writers in the world so far. Christie's massive contributions to the world of literature cannot be denied and her numerous literary productions are enough proof to silence any doubter.

In fact, detective fiction did not start with Agatha Christie; rather it dates back to the ancient Arab literature in *The Three Apples* which is a story of the famous *Arabian Nights*. Yet, the period between the two major world wars is often labeled the golden age of detective fiction. In this period detective stories witnessed the most prolific and creative literary productions, where many especially British women writers had taken part in the most prolific literary period of detective fiction.

Women writers such as; Margery Allingham (1904-1966), Dorothy Leigh Sayers (1893-1957), Josephine Tey (1896-1952), Anne Hocking (1889-1966), Ngaio Marsh (1895-1982) and many more whose massive contributions to the literary world cannot be marginalized. Yet, Christie remains on top of them all in terms of her prolific productions as well as her unique writing style which is characterized as twisting yet simple for the common people to fathom.

Christie died in 1976 yet she is still considered as the "queen of crime," where most of her literary works have been adapted into cinema films and television shows. Agatha Christie cannot be briefed in one or two paragraphs; she is too great to be confined in one chapter.

Western women writers' major contributions to the written discourse do not exclude in any way the major contributions of the Arab women writers. The latter had always fought against the Arabian ancient fossil oriental mentality through her creative writing skills.

The Arab woman writer fiercely criticized the man's unfair treatment to her because he only considered her as a body. Such women writers is Ahlam Mosteghanemi whose controversial novel *Passerby* provoked a lot of criticism both in Algeria and the Arab world where she boldly trespassed the taboos of sexuality and suppressing one's emotions.

Moreover, Nawal el Saadawi who is an Egyptian writer is considered a literary icon in Egypt and the Arab world. She was famous for her straightforwardness in dealing with the taboos of sex and the body, as a result she was sent to prison and when she got out she had received numerous death threats from religious radical groups like Ikhwan².

Another famous Arab woman writer is the Syrian Ghada al-samman who did not hesitate to broach the topics of sex and the body. To these Arab women writers the challenge was doubled, on the one hand they had to overcome the challenge of writing, and on the other they were facing a daily threat of trying to break the long sacred taboos by writing about sexuality and the female body.

The modern Arab woman writer is definitely way freer than her ascendants. It should not be mistaken that the modern Arab woman writer can write about whatever she wants, sexuality and the female body are still considered taboos, yet there are more women writers emerging in the Arab world and their only obstacle is to face the male chauvinism rooting in the Arab countries.

However, the Arab woman writer was not always writing about sexuality and the female body. Born a short period before the emergence of Islam Al-Khansa is considered as one of the best Arab women poets, some critics consider her as a major

² **Ikhwān al-Muslimīn (Muslim Brotherhood)**: is a transnational Islamist organization founded in Egypt by Islamic scholar and schoolteacher Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949) in 1928.

contribution to the Arabic poetry genre of Rithā' which corresponds with elegy in English.

Al-Khansa composed great poems lamenting her brother Sakhr who was killed in battlefield. Even when Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) visited her while at the tomb of her brother lamenting him, did not order her to stop what she was doing because in Islam lamenting the dead is usually three days long.

To the critics who claim that Islam came to even further confine the freedom of women, empirical facts remain that Islam came to support the woman; even when Al-Khansa did shave her hair in an oath to never mind her beauty after the death of her brother, the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) did not criticize her in any way, rather he kindly understood what she was going through.

Moreover, Wallada bint al-Mustakfi who was an Andalusian female poet was quite a controversial princess. After the death of her father Muhammad III³ of Córdoba, she turned his royal palace into a literary club which is considered the first club in Europe and not until six hundred years later that Europeans knew the meaning of what is a literary club.

Wallada bint al-Mustakfi was not any kind of woman writer; she was the symbol of breaking rules; while in her palace she would often go out without wearing her *hijab*⁴, often she would wear clothes with her poetry embroidered on. She is also probably famous for her love story with the famous Arab historian Ibn Khaldoun, their love relationship was not hidden from the public, and the two continued exchanging poems while separated by the long distances. Wallada's fame was further extended by her remarkable beauty; many poets wrote about her fair beauty and her blue eyes.

In addition, the Arab woman did not only write about expressing her freedom, or about breaking free of the taboos imposed by men. Rather the Arab woman wrote prolifically about the culture and identity of her country, and bravely defended the cause

³ **Muhammad III:** One of the last Umayyad Córdoba caliphs (1024-1025).

⁴ **Hijab:** A veil worn by Muslim women in the presence of any male outside of their immediate family, which usually covers the head and chest.

of her people such as; the Palestinian Fadwa Tuqan who was famous for her brave resistance to the Israeli occupation of her country.

After being dropped out of school because of sickness, Tuqan was forced to receive her schooling at home mainly by her brother Ahmad Tuqan who is also a famous poet. Later Tuqan studied in Oxford University pursuing the major of English and literature. She published eight poetry collections all defending the Palestinian cause. In 2003, bedridden Tuqan published one of her last poems "Longing: Inspired by the Law of Gravity" where she bravely defended the Palestinian cause and their right for an occupation-free country.

Fadwa Tuqan is one of many Arab women writers who never ceased to defend the cultures and identities of their countries. In Algeria the best example of a woman writer is Assia Djébar. The latter even when she had received her primary schooling in French colonial schools, she never hesitated to defend her culture and identity.

Djébar is considered as one of the few Algerian feminist voices who defended the Algerian woman from both the patriarchal rules as well as the French colonizer. In her article "Assia Djébar: In Dialogue with Feminisms," Jane Hiddleston argues that Djébar "is frequently associated with women's writing movements, her novels are clearly focused on the creation of a 'genealogy' of Algerian women, and her political stance is virulently anti-patriarchal as much as it is anti-colonial" (248).

Djébar is considered as one of many Algerian female voices who defended the Algerian woman's culture throughout the hard times Algeria has undergone. During the Algerian civil war in the 1990s many Algerian writers attempted to write the suffering of the Algerian people especially the women. Fadhila El Farouk who is an Algerian writer moved to Beirut, Lebanon and joined the newspaper of *Al Kifah Al Arabi*.

In 1997 she attempted to publish her novel *The Feminine Shame* which was immediately turned down by most of the publishing houses. The novel dealt with the themes of rape and murder especially against Algerian women during the Algerian bloody years. It was not until two years later that the publishing house of Riad El-Rayyes in Beirut accepted to publish her novel.

Similarly, the restrictions of writing about the rape and murder against postcolonial women are found in Oksana Zabuzhko's novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*. Out of the fear of segregation Zabuzhko migrated to the United States of America in 1996 where she published her novel.

Postcolonial women writers were not free to talk about the experiences of rape and violence practiced against the women, rather their lives were endangered on a daily basis. These women writers often chose exile in order to make their voices heard. Finally, women's written discourse can in no way be confined in one research study. Despite the fact that most of their writings touched upon the themes of rape and murder, Women's writings differed according to their different cultural backgrounds.

3.4. Language Choice

When both Algerian and Ukrainian women were discriminated against both by the colonizer and the colonized, someone had to say something in regard of the deliberate injustices which were practiced against these women. Assia Djébar and Oksana Zabuzhko as two postcolonial female writers realized that it was time for them to move and say something instead of being passive watching others to decide their own matters.

Choosing the language with which to write grew to become a challenge for both Djébar and Zabuzhko. The two authors were often misunderstood and criticized for their chosen language of writing. Djébar and like many other Francophone writers in Algeria was crucified for her language choice.

Being it the language of the colonizer, Djébar's adoption of the French tongue in her writings was not blessed by the majority of Algerians. She was often accused of not being a nationalistic writer. As a result, Djébar was exiled together with many other Francophone writers who sought refuge in France where they could not be criticized for writing in French.

Zabuzhko on the other hand, despite that she writes in the Ukrainian national language was even more criticized than Djébar was. Zabuzhko and in her point of view regarding the Ukrainian national situation chose a somewhat harsh language. In doing

so, she believes that the only way to describe the Ukrainian situation is by adopting a harsh language in order to recreate the horrible practices those were enforced on her ancestors.

Moreover, Zabuzhko wrote about themes of sexuality and physical trials of the Ukrainian people during the colonial rule of the former Soviet Union. In doing so, Zabuzhko not only broke the sacred taboo of the body and its sexuality, but also she chose to write it in the national language of the people. Judging her title *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, Zabuzhko has often been criticized and accused of being "a pornographic writer⁵."

In his book *Decolonizing the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o⁶ explains the difficulties most of African writers were facing in choosing the language. He further explains that for these writers writing in their mother tongue languages means to go to prison or even get assassinated.

Therefore, these writers according to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o did not have much of a choice in writing; they found themselves obliged to write in European languages, such as; English, French and Portuguese. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o states in his book that "the physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom" (9).

Therefore, since the European colonial dominating powers considered the African local languages as inferior, that Africa had no culture. Consequently, they imposed their "superior" European languages banning at the same time any type of the use of the local languages, starting from schools.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o was in a constant conflict with the English language which he started writing in, and which brought him to be known at the international level wherein he was nominated three times for the Nobel Prize in literature. However, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o never reconciled with the English language; deep inside it was always the

⁵ A Conversation with Oksana Zabuzhko.

⁶ Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1938-):Is an award-winning, world-renown Kenyan writer and academic who writes primarily in Gikuyu. His work includes novels, plays, short stories, and essays, ranging from literary and social criticism to children's literature.

language of the colonizer and often raised the following question;"how did we; as African writers; come to be so feeble towards the claims of our languages on us and so aggressive in our claims on other languages, particularly the languages of our colonization?" (*ibid*)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o had always felt that the color of his head was not in the same color of his hands; meaning that as an African he found himself having the culture of the colonizer while in reality he was a colonized African man, that is why he finally chose to write in his native language of Kenya known as Gikuyu to be once again reunited with his native culture.

Thus, the Kenyan writer combines Djébar's adoption of the language of the colonizer to transmit her native traditions and culture, fearless of the discomfort she would face, with Oksana Zabuzhko's choice of her national language which was condemned by its own speakers.

3.4.1. Assia Djébar's Compulsory Choice and its Ramifications

In defining herself, Djébar states that "je suis bien une femme francophone dans mon activité intellectuelle et critique" (Djébar 26), [*"I am surely a francophone woman in my intellectual and critical activity"*]. Djébar's statement regarding her linguistic status, and basically her full awareness that she was a francophone woman, opened wide open the door of criticism upon her.

France invaded Algeria on the pretext that the Algerians were ignorant and illiterate. Yet, the truth remains that Algerians had a lot of scholarly institutions, many of which were sophisticated especially in major cities like Oran, Algiers and Annaba. Even in small towns of Algeria learning was sacred, often kids were sent to mosques to receive their primary learning.

When France invaded Algeria forty-five percent of the French army was illiterate, while only twenty-five percent of the Algerian people at that time were considered illiterate. Moreover, like any other invader France considered learning and enlightenment as a threat, as a result France shut down most of the Algerian schools and

weakened the Algerian teaching system. Duval⁷ states that in 1888 the European children who studied in Algerian schools were much more than those in Europe.

France shut down the Algerian schools and replaced them with French ones; even when schooling in French was compulsory, not all Algerians had the privilege to go to those schools. France came to Algeria to literate her children. Below is a chart explaining the phases of illiteracy Algerians had to undergo from 1830 till 2015.

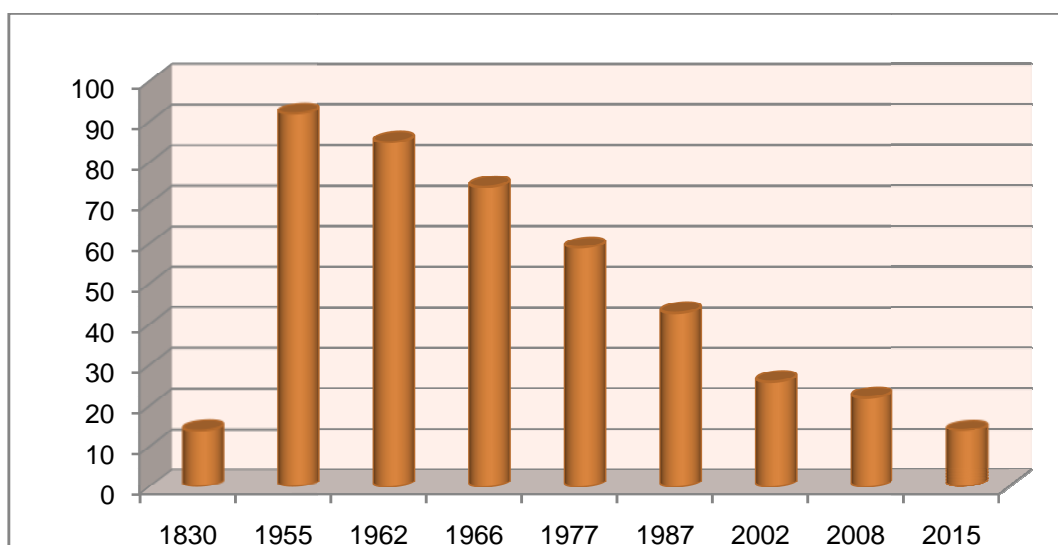


Figure 03: Illiteracy toll in Algeria between 1830-2015.

Source: Algerian National Office of Literacy.

According to the Algerian National Office of Literacy, the chart above explains the toll of illiteracy in Algeria starting from the French invasion to Algeria in 1830 and ending in 2015. In the chart it is clear that starting from 1830 it took the Algerian people a hundred-ninety years just to go back to the first rate of illiteracy by the time France invaded Algeria which is fourteen percent (14%). If France did not adopt the systematic practice of spreading ignorance and illiteracy among Algerians, one could only ask the question: how would Algerians be today?

After the systematic spreading of illiteracy among the Algerian population, Algerians did not have much of learning options. France made sure to shut down any

⁷ **Duval(1894-1955):** Was a colonial French general who participated in both the world wars, and was the superior commander of the French colonial troops in Tunisia and Morocco. Duval had participated in the massacres of May 08th, 1945 wherein more than forty-five (45000) thousand innocent Algerians were brutally killed in peaceful marches demanding their freedom.

source of learning which could enlighten people and which could cause a grave threat for the French dark colonial power. As it has been mentioned before that by opening a colonial school France shut down more Algerian schools.

In order to appease the Algerian population, and in order not to appear as the villain who was hell-bent on erasing the Algerian identity completely, France adopted the method of luring the Algerians by offering them the chance to learn in colonial schools; only these schools were the only option Algerians had, and the access to these colonial schools was restricted to a very little minority of Algerians.

Therefore, the very small minority of Algerians who were allowed to send their children to these schools had to have certain conditions; one of which they did not have to be "Muslim fanatics" as they were called. Assia Djébar was one of the lucky few to have ever received their schooling, even if in a French school.

In approaching the writings of postcolonial women of North Africa, it becomes necessary to focus on the personal traumas of these women. What haunts these women is the fact that they have been torn apart by two tragedies; the tragedy of colonization and its legacy, and the tragedy of patriarchy. The two poisons of colonization and patriarchy, though painful, yet have led to the liberty of women, followed by the possibility of writing.

Assia Djébar is undisputedly the only Algerian postcolonial female voice. As a woman who taught herself the practice of the French language, Djébar could finally overcome the various restrictions imposed by the colonizer as well as the patriarchal rules which had both ruled over her country for a long time.

Djébar in her writing in the French language could not only give her women a voice with which to speak, but also carried it worldwide where the major issues are discussed. Narrating the female side of the events which had happened in Algeria, Djébar did not find it easy to reach the fame she does today. In her writing, Djébar tried to prove that the Algerian woman did remain a mere spectator especially during the Algerian war of independence. Earlier, Djébar's career was as complicated as the colonial situation of Algeria itself.

Charles Forsdick and David Murphy explain this situation in their book *Francophone Postcolonial Studies* as complicated and ongoing. Forsdick and Murphy contend that both Algeria and France remained postcolonial in their relationship with each other; fuel was added to the postcolonial situation between Algeria and France by the pressure of the neocolonial politics imposed by the latter and the heavy legacy of the French language, not to forget the long repression history of France and the threat to return. (3)

Moreover, in spite of the unforgiveable atrocities committed by the French against the Algerian people, the latter were ready for a new start in the relationships of the two countries even though with a lot of pain inside. Yet, history has proven that the French side has been reluctant to give up the same old colonial practices and always trying to play the role of the colonizer with Algeria.

The Algerian culture has always added to the French one, take for example the famous football player Zinedine Zidane who is of Algerian origins, and whose great talent helped France to win its first world cup championship in 1998. Then Zidane was considered as a French citizen, yet in 2006 in the final football match of the world cup championship, Zidane and as a result of Materazzi's (Italian football star) insult hits him with a head blow in the chest, France then reminded the whole world of Zidane's Algerian origins.

France has not been quite diplomatic in its relations with Algeria; rather it created and reinforced Francophonie to finally be able to cause a serious fraction in the Algerian national identity which it is still suffering from today. Through this fraction France has been trying to get back to the narrow tunnel of colonialism once again.

The struggle in the Algerian identity created a disorder in the Algerian sense of nationalism. Algeria and like most colonized countries has inherited this complex situation of identity. When trying to write, Algerian writers were always faced with the question; write in what language?

As a result, Francophone writers found it hard to write in French being it the language of the colonizer, as well as writers of Arabic found it hard to write in Arabic

because it would be too "Islamic" and "Middle-Eastern", not to mention the fact that a great majority of Algerians did not speak or write in classical Arabic, and so other national languages like Tamazight with all its multi-ethnic groups had to be taken into consideration. In either ways, the Algerian national identity was at the crossroad of defining itself or fading away.

The complex in the chosen language of writing, whether Arabic or French resulted in a dilemma-like situation where many Algerian writers could write in neither Arabic nor French. What made it even harder for these writers is that the only language they mastered was French, the language of the colonizer; this only prolonged their stay in exile.

It should be noted that for a hundred and thirty two years France prohibited the use of the Arabic language, in December 24th, 1904 the French general-governor of Algeria issued an order prohibiting any Algerian teacher to open an Arabic teaching school without having the permission from French authorities. In 1938, the French Prime Minister Camille Chautemps issued an act where Arabic was officially banned from any type of school and considered a foreign language.

The truth of the matter is that Algerians did not have much of a choice in choosing their language of writing. Total confusion took over the Algerian writer, should he keep writing in the language of the colonizer who obliterated the Algerian national language and replaced it with a foreign one? Or should he go back and fetch the long forgotten roots and adopt the Arabic national language?

Jacques Derrida in his book *Le monolinguisme de l'autre* explains the confusing linguistic situation in Algeria; he wonders: "Dans quelle langue écrire des mémoires dès lors qu'il n'y a pas eu de langue maternelle autorisée? Comment dire un « je me rappelle » qui vaille quand il faut inventer et sa langue et son *je*, les inventer *en même temps*, par-delà ce déferlement d'amnésie qu'a déchaîné le *double interdit*?" (57).

The Algerian linguistic dilemma was described by Derrida as "double forbidden;" that is to say that Algerian writers, particularly francophone writers could neither write

in French without their national memory, nor could they adopt once again their native language.

Djebar's choice of the French language was somehow imposed on her. As it has been mentioned before that after the Camille Chautemps Act (1938), Arabic became officially prohibited to be taught or learned and was thus considered a foreign language. Djebar and many other Algerian francophone writers were forced to study in the French schools where they were taught in French only.

As in most African countries that were colonized by France, illiteracy became a very serious problem in post-independent Algeria. In 1962 eighty-five percent (85%) of the Algerian people could neither speak, read and write in French, nor write and read in Arabic.

This situation was the result of the long tradition of the French in planning to erase the Algerian national identity; in the end they belonged neither to the French nor to their native land. As a result to the struggle in the Algerian identity, Djebar therefore was obliged to turn to the French language to attain the greater number of readability.

After the break out of the Algerian revolution in 1954, Djebar wrote two novels; *La Soif* (1957) and *Les Impatients* (1958). The two novels did not meet Djebar's expectations and thus did not get much of an acclaim by the Algerian audience. Consequently, Djebar was accused of not being patriotic in her works. After the Algerian independence in 1962, Djebar made an attempt to regain her people's confidence where she tackled the Algerian national cause by publishing her third novel *Les Enfants du nouveau monde* in 1962.

While writing Djebar and many other Algerian Francophone writers had faced the issue of religion. On the one hand, according to most francophone writers Islam resembled a challenge; a strict set of rules and principles which could confine their space of writing.

On the other hand, these writers were accused of taking a stance against Islam. However, Djebar's view towards Islam was not quite opposing; in her novel *Loin*

deMédine (1991) Djébar better demonstrates her stance regarding Islam, rather she stressed on the importance given to women by Islam, claiming that these Muslim women were not given enough credit and acknowledgement even by those renowned Muslim historians such as Tabari⁸.

In their stance, seemingly against Islam, Djébar and many other francophone writers like Kateb Yacine and Tahar Djaout were compelled to seek refuge in France. This small conflict was aggravated especially during the Algerian civil war during the 1990s, where all who were considered a source of enlightenment were targeted, especially those who had decided to stay in their country like Djillali Liabes⁹, Abdelkader Alloula¹⁰ and many others.

In homage to some of the brave Algerians who were assassinated because they resembled a source of hope to the Algerian people, Djébar states that the novelist Tahar Djaout, the poet Youssef Sebti and the dramatist and playwright Abdelkader Alloula, all three were assassinated in 1993 and 1994. (17-8¹¹)

It is arguable that francophone writers were compelled to be exiled due to their use of the French language. Very often these writers were accused of being agents of France; the former colonizer. In his article "The Phantom Mediators: Reflections on the Nature of the Violence in Algeria" Réda Bensmaïa explains the systematic persecution against the Algerian intellectuals, he states that: "for three decades after independence, [Algerian] intellectuals were put in prison, exiled, killed, or forced to quit being advocates of political freedom, the rights of the person, and a transparent society" (qtd. in Briggs¹² 20).

This despicable struggle to destroy the Algerian national identity has resulted in an ongoing disagreeable violence among the Algerian people, often wondering what language to adopt? And can they express themselves well enough in this language? One

⁸**Al-Tabarī (839-923):** was an influential Persian scholar, historian and exegete of the holy Qur'an, who composed all his works in Arabic,

⁹**Djillali Liabes (1948-1993):** Was an Algerian scholar in humanities. He was the minister of higher education in Algeria during the 90s. Djillali Liabes was born in Sidi Bel Abbas, a North-Western province of Algeria, whose university holds his name nowadays.

¹⁰**Abdelkader Alloula(1939-1994):** Was an Algerian famous dramatist, playwright and film writer. His plays are famous for being written in colloquial Algerian Arabic.

¹¹**Assia Djébar:** Idiome de l'exil et langue de l'irréductibilité.

¹²**Carina Lynn Briggs:** Language, Identity, and Literary Expression in Algeria.

can hardly not notice that France the sole responsible for the aggravated complicated Algerian situation of national identity, being it clearly the only benefited side.

Assia Djébar was not very far from this complicated situation, she too found herself alienated from both French, the language she adopted in her writing and Arabic, her mother tongue. In her article "Ces voix qui m'assiègent" Djébar calls the French language as the "language of the other" (44). Djébar confesses that writing in French at the beginning was not her choice; rather the French language was imposed on her. Writing in French drew her away from writing in Arabic; her mother tongue.

Djébar states: "écrire se fait aujourd'hui, pour moi, dans une langue, au départ, non choisie, dans un écrit français qui a éloigné de fait l'écrit arabe de la langue maternelle" (28), [*Nowadays writing, for me, in a language, at the beginning, not chosen, in a French writing which has rendered distant writing in Arabic, the mother tongue*]. Djébar's early writing was marked by an internal conflict, a struggle between writing in the language of the persecutor, and the threat of exile.

During the eighties Djébar suddenly chose to finally write in French. In describing her new feeling of the French language, Djébar confesses that: "le français est en train de me devenir vraiment maison d'accueil, peut-être même lieu de permanence" (44), [*the French language is really becoming for me a welcoming house; it may even become a place of permanence for me*].

In doing so, Djébar finally chose to live in exile and adopt the language of the colonizer in her writing, only to defend her mother tongue and her culture, and whatever happens Djébar could never forget that the French language no matter how fancy it is, it will always be the language of the colonizer who, one day, must pay the price for the atrocities he has committed.

Moreover, the French colonizer too was targeting those Algerians who were considered the hope to the Algerian people. After the Evian Accords of the cease fire, the French terrorist organization (Organisation de l'Armée Secrète [OAS]) who assassinated thousands of Algerians till the very last minute of France's departure from Algeria, assassinated Mouloud Feraoun in 1962. The French terrorist organization killed

thousands of Algerian innocent people in order to blow away de Gaulle's ultimate recognition of an independent Algeria.

In the end, it is evident the important role of Djébar as an Algerian female writer. In her narrative Djébar has successfully managed to allow the Algerian woman to express her own side of the story, denying by that the supremacy of the French colonial discourse. Thus, equipping her with the ability to challenge once and for all the iron hands of colonialism as well as patriarchy which have ruled over her for a long time.

3.4.2. Zabuzhko's Offensive Ukrainian Language

In her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, Zabuzhko declares and through her protagonist's tongue (Oksana) the joy and the need to use the Ukrainian language. Zabuzhko and her protagonist the poet resembled the need to hear the intonation of their language and to talk in it, the same as the need for food and fresh water in a dry desert. Zabuzhko describes her native language as her home, her shelter where she finds the best words for her ideas and feelings.

In describing her protagonist's passion for the Ukrainian language, Zabuzhko says; "she was so famished without it, physically hungry and thirsty: as if in a dry desert, longing for water; if I could only hear the intonations of my native language, at least once, oh, they sound like a fresh creek...I swear, I would right away feel stronger" (22).

As mentioned before, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o shifted from the English language which gained international fame, to his native language understood only by his people. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o felt strongly connected with his mother land, his culture and above all words, stating that; "writing in the native tongue means to come back to one's own values and one's own culture" (12).

The same strong connection was felt by Oksana Zabuzhko, not only did she find the connection with her native land, but also she considered the Ukrainian language as a delicious food which the body enjoys devouring. The Ukrainian language was like fresh water for Zabuzhko, a cozy home which she could carry anywhere. Zabuzhko's

nativelanguage provided her with the pleasure and love which she could not find anywhere else.

In her novel Zabuzhko has strongly defended her use of the Ukrainian language as well as its culture, to show that there exists an independent country called Ukraine with a whole set of traditions, culture and language, denying the claim that Ukraine is but an extension of the Russian empire. Also, that the Ukrainian language is only one of the Russian many dialects. While, in fact the Ukrainian language is a separate language of its own alike the Russian, despite the similarities between them.

Moreover, Zabuzhko connected the language with the concept of home, of the feeling of belonging to one's identity. In her novel, Zabuzhko illustrates how her protagonist (Oksana) found herself at ease when being with her boyfriend (Mykola). The latter was not only Oksana's boyfriend, she considered him as a brother, someone whom she had shared the same language (the same home). She did not have to teach him her language, on the contrary the two had their own coded language, and where they would often use words only the two of them would understand. With Mykola the hope of constituting a family and having children became once again possible.

Zabuzhko's choice to write in the Ukrainian language was not easy, it was risky. Fortunately, Zabuzhko managed to write the novel in 1996 after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Probably, Zabuzhko would not have been able to complete her novel and publish it if she were not residing in America. Were it not for these somewhat convenient conditions, Zabuzhko's anticolonial language would be considered as a threat to the Russian regime where she would face serious consequences.

Besides choosing to write in the Ukrainian language, Zabuzhko further chose a harsh language where she dared to tackle themes of sex and sexuality; those were not common in the Ukrainian literature. Zabuzhko strongly admits that the body of the Ukrainian woman got used to the pain and the scars resulting from the sexual abuse.

Moreover, Zabuzhko regrets Mykola's language of inferiority which was resulted from the policy of russification, and the absence of the language of hope and

freedom. When Oksana wanted to have children in order to guarantee the continuity of the nation, Mykola replies that slaves should not have children.

Mykola's last confession that he is a slave, and that he has no right to have children destroyed Oksana's hope for breaking free one last time. At the end of the novel Oksana bitterly confesses that "maybe this is true, and the slaves should not have children...without love children and poems and paintings become pregnant with death" (56).

In the end of the novel, Zabuzhko explains the first and the last source of pleasure for her protagonist (Oksana) which is the language and writing poems, because she could not find the language of romance with Mykola who already shared with her the same language and culture, but not the same ambition to be free and eventually being able to move on.

The language of romance which any woman longs for was nearly absent with Mykola, instead Oksana had experienced the romance from one side. Oksana unsatisfied with Mykola's backwardness which he had inherited from the Soviets declares that, "in the language there was much more than there was in bed" (13). Indicating that Oksana was connecting with Mykola, only through the common bond of language.

3.5. Decolonizing and Conceptualizing the Culture

Both Algeria and Ukraine were ruled by two different colonial powers, with different ideologies and under different circumstances. Yet, both countries had suffered from similar postcolonial disasters, especially in terms of the local language and its association to the national culture.

The sheer length in time both France and the Soviet Union remained in Algeria and Ukraine ultimately left a heavy linguistic legacy which was not easy to shake off; the first postcolonial generations suffered the most since they were taught in the colonial institutions with the total absence of any traces of their own culture.

What makes the Algerian linguistic crisis really hard to solve is the fact that the French were not in any way ready to let go of Algeria. Even when de Gaulle had officially declared Algeria independent, the French could never accept that. Consequently, the French terrorist organization (OAS) had carried on many assassinations against countless innocent people even after the cease fire was officially announced between the two countries.

Starting with the eighteenth century, colonialism was feeding off the competition between the colonial powers. France on the one hand was always in competition with the British colonial empire, when the British reached the Far-East to India and Southern China (Hong Kong) the French followed the steps also reaching the Far-East to Vietnam and even to the Polynesian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

In the south of the Mediterranean France wanted no competition especially from the British; as a result it controlled the majority of Africa. However, by the second half of the twentieth century colonialism was already heading towards its downfall. Following the tracks of most of the colonial powers France commenced in giving up many of its colonies, because staying further meant more expenditure. During the 1950s France gave up all of its colonies in North Africa except Algeria. To the French, Algeria was never a colony; Algeria was French.

After long eight years of fighting for their freedom, Algerian men and women finally snatched their freedom in 1962. Yet, regaining their independence after a hard fight was nothing compared to the legacy left by the colonizer. Way more daring challenges were awaiting the millions of Algerians who decided to take up arms and kick out the French intruders; yet what they did not know was the French were far too cunning and left serious issues related to the national identity of Algerians which still remain in modern Algeria.

France did not succeed in crushing the Algerian revolution but it well succeeded in leaving a linguistic crisis that Algerians are still suffering from. In order to guarantee its presence even after independence, France made sure that all Algerians must study in French schools.

The Algerians did not have much of a choice in the matter; there were only French schools especially after the Camille Chautemps Act in 1938 which prohibited the use of the Arabic language and which was thus declared a foreign language. Yet, France did not want to push very hard since it knew that the Algerians would never let their daughters go to French schools.

As a result, France encouraged separate gender schools, this way the Algerian girl would easily go and grasp the French European ideals. In her book *Remnants of Empire in Algeria and Vietnam: Women, Words and War*, Pamela A. Pears explains the confusing linguistic situation bequeathed to the Algerians, she states that: "future [Algerian] writers learned to read, write, and speak in an adopted tongue [French] that they did not forget with independence. When the French left...Algeria, these writers began the process of negotiating the coexistence of two cultures: their own and their former oppressor's" (10).

In Ukraine the Soviet Union adopted the same strategies to guarantee the maximum of its presence in the colonized culture. Even after Ukraine got its independence in 1991, Ukrainians are still worshipping the Russian language. Due to the grave risk for a Ukrainian writer to write in Ukrainian language, Zabuzhko wrote and published her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* in the United States of America in 1996. If she were to write it in Ukraine Zabuzhko might have been put in jail in Siberia, or even assassinated for causing such a threat to the national security of Russia.

The segregation which the Soviet Union had practiced against the Ukrainians made the Ukrainian culture merge into the Russian one to the point that Ukrainians themselves believed they were part of the big Russian empire and that their language is but a dialect of the Russian superior language. That is why Zabuzhko at the beginning of her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* related the concept of language with the concept of home to show that there exists a country called Ukraine with its own language called Ukrainian.

But, at the same time Zabuzhko laments the Ukrainian submission to the Russian culture after all the atrocities practiced against them. In her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, Zabuzhko dreams about an independent Ukraine with its own

independent language and culture, however towards the end of her novel, she regrets that the dream is too far to be realized.

3.5.1. Decolonizing the Culture in the Language of the Enemy

Decolonizing the culture in the national language for Zabuzhko was hard and she was even criticized by her own people more than anyone else. However, writing in the language of the enemy to decolonize the Algerian culture was a growing menace Djébar had to live with her whole life. Not only she was criticized and accused of being non-patriotic by many of her compatriots, but also she was often reminded by the French people that she did not belong.

In her book *Ces voix qui m'assiègent* Djébar states that while in France she was often asked the question, why do you write? And then why do you write in French? Then, Djébar declares that these types of questions remind her of her Algerian origins, that she comes from abroad. She states: "l'écrivain est parfois interrogé comme en justice: « Pourquoi écrivez-vous? » A cette première question banale, une seconde souvent succède : « Pourquoi écrivez-vous en français? » Si vous êtes ainsi interpellée, c'est, bien sûr, pour rappeler que vous venez d'ailleurs" (7).

As most of people, Assia Djébar owes her education in French schools to her father. Thanks to her father she could escape the fate of many women in her village of being uneducated, and probably would end up like many in a *harem*. However, studying at French schools was not always a blessing; Djébar got out of those schools with a gift and a curse at the same time.

The French language was a chance for Djébar to rediscover her potentials and a means with which she carried her voice together with many other voices of her female compatriots outside her country Algeria. For Djébar the French language was both a gift and a burden, it liberated her in one way and put her into exile in another.

Moreover, Djébar states in her novel *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* that her father; "the school teacher" was responsible for "deliver[ing]... [her] into the enemy camp" (213). However, in his own defense, Djébar's father did send her to receive her

schooling in French schools out of fear; the fear of the real enemy to human beings which is ignorance.

Djebar's father realized that by fighting ignorance, his daughter could easily fight any kind of enemy. Indeed, thanks to her father Djebar has become one of the most renowned authors in the whole world. Eventually, she did not only liberate herself but also she helped in liberating especially the female subjects of her country.

Towards the end of her career Djebar willingly chose the French expression to be her writing language. Djebar frequently stated that she was a francophone woman, that she had the knack when writing in French. These types of statements by Djebar and her living a long time until she passed away in France made her the subject of criticism. Yet, deep inside Djebar was always an Algerian. In her book *Ces voix qui m'assiègent* she confesses that she is an Arab-Berber Algerian woman who chose to be writing in French (42).

Djebar's final statement of her being of Algerian, Arab-Berber origins is considered the ultimate answer to those who have questioned her loyalty and patriotism. Djebar was exiled by force, francophone by choice and Algerian by love. In her own way, she not only adopted the French language; the language of the oppressor, but also she wielded it and forged it to fit her culture. In other words, Djebar turned the French language from the language of the former conqueror into a conquered language.

Djebar added words to the French language, expanded its syntax and vocabulary; while it was a weapon against the Algerian people, the French language was turned a weapon against the French in the hands of Djebar. Thus, she remarkably reversed the influence of the French language and turned it into a language of opportunities where her voice would be heard by a wider audience worldwide.

Djebar and her relationship to the term francophone is a special one. In fact, the term francophone alone is intriguing. At first, the reader's attention is immediately drawn to the fact that the term is applied to all French-speaking countries outside France. Yet, the truth remains that many French-speaking countries outside France are not

included in the circle of Francophonie; these countries are either European (Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg) or North American (Canada).

Thus, Francophonie is a term exclusively restricted to those countries which were once colonized by France; the Great Maghreb, Lebanon, Madagascar, Polynesian Islands, and many African countries. Countries which resembled an unexplored, uninhabited greater area for the French to conquer, and whose people by far remain in an unexplainable constant subordination to their former executioner.

Being both Arab-Berber and African at the same time, one can imagine that Assia Djébar's position within the radius of Francophonie was not an easy matter. Being the sole feminist postcolonial female writer she was often gendered and discriminated against. Yet, despite all the hardships she faced in her career, Djébar remains attached to her country Algeria, she especially keeps a closer eye on her country as it moves through one of its difficult times which is the civil war.

The bloody civil war which took place from 1989-2000 drained a lot of ink. In her book *Ces voix qui m'assiègent* Djébar states that she was often surrounded by voices which were besieging her, amidst these voices her own voice was always present to defend the Algerian culture which was in danger, especially during the tumultuous and tragic years (civil war).

Despite the voices which were 'besieging' Djébar, often telling her that she was inapt to defend the Algerian culture in the language of the colonizer, Djébar insisted to prove otherwise. Writing in French, she never ceased to write about her country Algeria, most of her literary works center around events which happened in Algeria one way or another.

Moreover, in most of her stories her characters bear Algerian names, such as Arbia, L'Arbi, and Toumi. Such names are considered to be purely Algerian which one confronts in the first story of Djébar's collection (*La nuit du récit du Fatima*). Other words which belong to the great Algerian culture and which Djébar did not miss to use are; Khôl, Kanoun, L'Aïd es Séghir, Gandoura, Burnous and Douar.

In her stories Djébar used such Algerian words without explaining them into French, by this Djébar made it clear that her text and despite it being written in French was designated in the first place for the Algerian reader, or even more she was writing in an Algerian tongue in the first place, and this is what Djébar had declared earlier in her book.

In *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, and right in the opening Djébar declares that: " je pourrais dire «nouvelles traduites de...», mais de quelle langue? De l'arabe? D'un arabe populaire, ou d'un arabe feminine; autant dire d'un arabe souterrain" (1). [*I could say «short stories translated from...», but from which language? from Arabic? From a popular Arabic, or from a feminine Arabic; in other words from an underground Arabic.*"]

Djébar's declaration at the beginning of her book explains a lot the type of language she chose to adopt. There is no doubt that she was writing in the French language, but was it the same as the language of the enemy? or was it a type of French which had long been used by the Algerian people. In fact, not only did Djébar write in the French language, but also she enriched it with a lot of Algerian words. The result was an interesting language which the majority of the Algerian people understood; this language Djébar labelled popular Arabic.

In *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and in the eighth story *Jour de Ramadan* (Day of Ramadan) Djébar demonstrates how all Algerians are united by this great month. In Day of Ramadan, Djébar starts with a pure Algerian dialogue between a group of women, these women chatter about Ramadan and how time passes fairly quickly. In the story one remembers how Ramadan has a very special taste to Muslims and especially to the Algerian people.

Moreover, Ramadan is not connected with one particular time of the year; it certainly is one special month of the year for Muslims. Yet, as the moon keeps moving and shifting its regular position around the earth, Ramadan and as all lunar months shifts every year passing through all four seasons. In their conversation, the women recollect their nostalgic memories of childhood, especially the first time when they tried to fast.

Furthermore, Djébar refers to something which most of the Algerian people have experienced, and that is relating the holy month of Ramadan to the fruits of the season. In their childhood, when the Algerian people tried to fast for the first time usually their memories are strongly connected to the fruits which existed in the season in which Ramadan came, and so when the Algerians are talking about their childhood in Ramadan they would usually say "I fasted during the season of oranges" for example which indicates that it was autumn or winter.

In addition, not only Ramadan unified the common memory of the Algerian people, but also the infamous Barbarous prison. Djébar brings the memory of Barbarous to the Algerian people. The memory was certainly hard on those Algerians who were once part of it, yet Djébar found a way to bring the Algerian people together one more time.

The Algerian people could never forget the amount of pain they had to go through in the prison of Barbarous; not only did they have to face the suffocating walls of the narrowing cells, but also the bitterness of welcoming Ramadan in a forcibly inappropriate way. As the women continue their chat over Ramadan in the past, Nfissa suddenly remembers the many Ramadans she spent in Barbarous.

In *Jour de Ramadan* Djébar states: "Hier, Nfissa se trouvait en prison...Le Ramadhan parmi de vraies séquestrées, cette prison de France ou on les avait groupées, six «rebelles», disait-on, qu'on allait juger" (219). [*Yesterday, Nfissa was in prison...Ramadan among sequestered truths, this prison of France where they have grouped them, six «rebels», as they say, in order to sentence them*"].

Djébar was a writer of the national memory par excellence, she successfully connected between the holy spirit of Ramadan and the prison of Barbarous; both as two conflicting forces in the memory of the Algerian people. Yet, a necessary combination which, to a great extent brought the Algerian national memory together.

After independence and every time Ramadan would come, the Algerian people would still feel nostalgic about the days of Ramadan in the past, and automatically

would still remember the hard days of Ramadan inside the dark prisons of the French colonizer.

In writing in the language of the enemy, Djébar had brilliantly used the French language to serve her cause well. Djébar showed the colonizer that he failed to wipe out the Algerian rooted culture; on the contrary the Algerian people have gained an additional language together with its culture. In addition, it can be said that France did the Algerian people a favor and most of the Algerians, literate and illiterate came to be familiar with the new acquired language of the enemy.

Finally, the bilingual and bicultural duality which Djébar had experienced with the French language placed her in a state of perplexity; it liberated her from the conventional limits of her society, at the same time it forced her to live in permanent exile away from her people. Moreover, it should be noted here that the strategy chosen by Assia Djébar in terms of her language contributes a great deal in decolonizing not only the culture of Algerians but also the consciousness of the French colonizers.

Djébar always declares that she writes against death, that she writes to revive the Algerian consciousness; in writing in the language of the enemy she wants to remind the Algerian reader that the colonizer still exists, that the Algerian national culture was not lost after all the miscellaneous attempts of the colonizer to wipe out the Algerian national identity during a hundred and thirty two years.

On the contrary, not only the Algerians could preserve their national identity, but also they gained a new language wherein the few educated ones could read and write in French while the majority of Algerians who did not have access to the French schools were able to understand and communicate it.

3.5.2. Preserving the National Language

Oksana Zabuzhko immediately wrote in her native language, first to demonstrate that the Ukrainian language was not only a variation of the Russian language; rather it was an independent language with its own set of grammatical rules. Second, to defy the policy of russification which the Russians continued adopting against Ukrainians even after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

By writing in her own language, Zabuzhko defies the totalitarian regime and screams out loud that Ukrainians do not belong to Russia, and in order to accomplish that Ukrainians themselves need to speak and write in their own native language, she feels compelled to set the example that the Ukrainian language is alive, and could well be a language of the national memory.

Moreover, the tsarist policy of russification prohibited the use of the Ukrainian language especially the written form; publications were only allowed in the Russian language, while the spoken Ukrainian language was considered as a mere variation to the Russian language and which did not cause any threat to the Russians. Theatrical performances were also not allowed in the Ukrainian language. This policy resulted in an acute deficiency in the use of the Ukrainian language at the official level, a crisis which modern Ukrainian is still suffering from today.

When Ukraine was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1921, immediately the Russian language was declared as the official language. Most of the native languages of the countries of the former Soviet bloc were considered by the Soviet Union as disqualified and therefore should be replaced by the superior Russian language. In order to attain the desired dominion, the Soviet Union worked on diminishing the languages and cultures of most of East European countries which constituted the Soviet bloc, this policy came to be known as the policy of russification.

As a result, only two outcomes would come out of that policy; those who accepted the policy of russification were embraced and not discriminated against, and those like Zabuzhko who defied the policy and chose to live in exile saving what is left of their language and culture, were criticized and their lives were threatened instead.

In her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, Zabuzhko explains the nature of the crisis Ukrainian people are still suffering from. According to her this crisis lies in the Ukrainian sense of nationalism where most of them have accepted the fact that they are inferior by using the Russian language in their daily practices.

In the novel the protagonist (Oksana) is considered to be anticolonial, Zabuzhko explains how Oksana was dying to hear someone speaking in her native language; this means that most of Ukrainians were using the Russian language instead of their mother tongue, and that is why Oksana immediately fell in love with Mykola, because he shared with her the same language and the same culture.

Furthermore, Zabuzhko demonstrates the inferiority of many Ukrainian people; when Oksana tells Mykola that she wanted to have children in an attempt from her to help in the regeneration of the Ukrainian population, Mykola immediately says no explaining that slaves (referring to himself) are not allowed to have children. Oksana then confirms that it is quite impossible to find someone who shares her anticolonial thoughts; current Ukraine does not know how to be free.

By being anticolonial Oksana was hoping to give birth to a new generation raised in the Ukrainian culture, only then it would be possible for Ukraine to be completely independent and free from russification. However, and to her dismay her only hope in Mykola was lost once and for all. Not only Mykola reminded Oksana of how weak the Ukrainian man grew to be, but also she realized that her dream of giving birth to a generation which would hold strong national beliefs was blown away to pieces.

In her novel Zabuzhko chose her protagonist (Oksana) to be a poet. According to Zabuzhko the poet is the most influential person whom can the future of the nation be entrusted to. Of all writers, the poet is the one who knows more words and their variations and how and where to use them.

It is also the poet who knows better how to promote his identity and culture to a greater population in the world. Furthermore, in choosing her protagonist to be a poet, Zabuzhko explains the sensitive role attributed to writers. In any crisis writers are the first ones to intervene and try to solve it. In Ukraine writers were persecuted and

harassed if they tried to write in Ukrainian because this would lead to enlightenment among Ukrainian people, which would eventually lead to a costly uprising which Russia could not afford.

In addition, when choosing her protagonist to be a poet, Zabuzhko attempts to emphasize on the importance of the poet and the writer in general. Beside the historians who are entrusted the responsibility of protecting a nation's history and heritage, writers and poets are entrusted the responsibility to preserve the language and culture of this nation; writers are considered to be the incubator of the nation's language and culture.

When Oksana fled to Pennsylvania she kept using the Ukrainian language because it reminded her of her home, and also the Ukrainian language was the most accessible language for Oksana. In her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* Zabuzhko says; "...of course, her native language was the most nutritious of all, the best for containing meanings" (22).

Some critics consider that *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* is Zabuzhko's autobiography. If this claim is considered to be true, then one can say that Zabuzhko also found solace and refuge in her Ukrainian language. Instead of staying home and accept the enforced fate of the majority to live in permanent subordination to the Russian persecutor, Zabuzhko chose the heavier cost and decided to live in exile for the sake of speaking the truth and remind her people of the abominations practiced against them by the Russians.

Zabuzhko wrote her novel in America and in Ukrainian, she did so to remain connected with her country; Ukrainian language resembled the home Zabuzhko had left, and like a snail she takes her home wherever she goes. Zabuzhko describes her protagonist's state concerning her language, she states that: "she has only one home in this world, her language" (6).

Oksana Zabuzhko chose to write her novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* in the Ukrainian language, first because this language resembled her far away home; only through the Ukrainian language that Oksana feels home even when she is far from it. Second, Zabuzhko's Ukrainian language defines her anticolonial stance by describing

the Gulag atrocities and the daily physical and psychological torture against Ukrainians. Moreover, there was a third dimension in Zabuzhko's Ukrainian language; through it she tackled the complex male and female issues in Ukraine.

In her novel Zabuzhko aimed at first to give the Ukrainian people a voice to their suffering and ill-treatment which they have long received by the Soviet Union, and second to give the Ukrainian woman a voice to write her body; her physical daily abuse and torture. In her novel Zabuzhko demonstrates how even love could not erase the physical violence.

Zabuzhko clarifies this also by the relationship of Oksana with her lover Mykola; even when the two were lovers, yet Mykola chose to abuse Oksana physically, Oksana then seeks refuge in her language which was far more generous than the language of the body spoken by Mykola.

In the novel *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*, the language of nationalism is chosen to be Ukrainian. When Oksana was trying to adopt her language in her daily life, Mykola rejected his girlfriend's stance accusing her of trying to be superior than him. When eventually the two part ways he tells her "so, do you feel like you are a winner? Oksana is surprised because in her mind she was not trying to win anything" (12).

Mykola could not possibly accept the fact that Oksana was his equal and also had rights as a Ukrainian free individual. According to Zabuzhko, Mykola resembled the dominating male-chauvinistic side of Ukraine which stressed on gender roles; that is men's job was to go to war and fetch glory whereas women's role was restricted only on breeding. While his girlfriend Oksana resembled the national minority who believed in the change to make a fully independent Ukraine.

Finally, Zabuzhko's language choice of the Ukrainian language is regarded as a means to break through the Russian colonial discourse. According to Zabuzhko the Ukrainian history is mostly written in the Russian language, the latter will always remind the Ukrainian people of the pain and violence they had long experienced.

Thus, in order to break free and constitute an independent Ukrainian identity, Ukrainians themselves must speak and write in their language, only then can they liberate themselves of the painful past. Therefore, in her text Zabuzhko finally breaks through the colonial discourse, she is finally able to present the Ukrainian point of view regarding its own history.

3.6. Conclusion

As a conclusion, the woman has successfully proven to herself and to everyone that she has truly earned her reputation of being the very important component of constituting the culture. Throughout history the woman kept fighting to earn her place among her people, she did not give up her culture and thus she never gave up her sense of belonging to her culture, and thanks to the woman of ancient times who raised the challenge of identity that the modern woman has had the chance to carry on the quest.

Women have successfully convinced everyone that they could write as well as men and sometimes even better. Denying women the right to write did nothing but fueling their desire to raise the challenge and reclaim what is already theirs. Indeed, the woman did finally manage to write and sometimes even better than men for instance Agatha Christie and the massive contributions she had offered in terms of the abundant literary production of about eight-five literary works.

Both Assia Djébar and Oksana Zabuzhko had to carry on the fight which their feminist ancestors had started. Djébar and Zabuzhko did not only have to fight for their identity as well as other women's, but also at the same time they had to fight the colonizer which in turn had deprived them of all their rights. As a result, both Djébar and Zabuzhko had to take certain decisions and make specific choices.

Djébar chose the French language, the language of the enemy to better express herself and to give a voice to the majority voiceless women of Algeria. In doing so, she has proven that she could fight back the colonizer using his language. Djébar's choice was a tough one, not only did she have to prove that the Algerian woman was an educated woman and could write in the language of the colonizer, but also she had to

prove that she could even exceed the colonizer using his own language; a challenge which she brilliantly accomplished.

Zabuzhko's choice of language on the other hand was less complicated in that she wrote in her mother tongue; the Ukrainian language. Yet, her quest was not as easier as it may seem; in writing in the Ukrainian language Zabuzhko attempted to prove to the Ukrainian people that their language is not a dead one as the Soviet Union once had claimed. When writing in the Ukrainian language, Zabuzhko's task became even harder than Djebbar's when she realized that the Ukrainian people themselves were not ready yet to give up the Russian language and embrace their own instead.

To convince the Ukrainian people that they were not inferior to the Russians and that their language was not a variant of the Russian language was even a bigger challenge than the challenge of writing for a woman. Not only did Zabuzhko choose to write in the Ukrainian language, but also she chose a harsh language to ascend to the harsh atrocities which were systematically practiced against not only Ukrainian women but men as well.

As a result to her language choice, Zabuzhko was often harshly criticized by her people more than anyone else. Yet, as a woman writer she has proven that she was up for the challenge, she believed in her choice; in that Ukrainians have their own language which is Ukrainian and not Russian.

Moreover, Zabuzhko's language choice even when it seemed to have pleased the nationalists, it angered a wide variety of Ukrainians who could not take her somewhat harsh language. Zabuzhko's language was often criticized and accused of being profane. In her defense Zabuzhko denies the profanity of her language saying that her language only ascends to the atrocities practiced against her people.

Therefore, Zabuzhko firmly believes that only by giving the Ukrainian language a new breath that she could finally contribute in decolonizing the Ukrainian culture. She believes that Ukrainian people have been sickened by the years under the rule of the former Soviet Union, that they have embraced the language and culture of their

executioner. Nonetheless, she defends her choice of language firmly believing that decolonizing the Ukrainian culture requires more than taking harsh criticism alone.

For her part, Djébar's choice of language in decolonizing the Algerian culture was a bit controversial as well. It is true that Djébar was not the first nor will she be the last Algerian author who would adopt the French tongue in their writing. Yet, in writing in the French language Djébar explored new ways to promote the Algerian culture, taking it far beyond its confined borders.

Djébar did not use the Algerian culture to promote the French language; rather she employed the French language to give a louder voice to the Algerian culture. In adopting the French tongue Djébar also wants the Algerians to be on constant vigilance that the French colonizer always exists through the French language.

General Conclusion

The sense of superiority which the global imperialism has been adopting against weaker nations like Algeria and Ukraine, and their constant view of inferiority towards such nations has finally resulted in the fact that these "inferior" nations have come to develop the same sense of inferiority regarding themselves.

The same sense of inferiority which has been bequeathed to the nations of the second and third world can be found in the unceasing struggles in the postcolonial era of these nations. These struggles are mainly embodied in the blurry quest of finding the national identity; when finally the colonizer had to give up the lost case of colonialism, the colonized and after having the chance to bring together and rebuild their nation, they unexpectedly found themselves in the middle of a crossroad, and did not know how to carry on their own.

The dilemma of recovering the long-lost national identity was nicely addressed by both Assia Djebar and Oksana Zabuzhko in their postcolonial novels; *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex*. In their works Djebar and Zabuzhko manifestly illustrated how the Algerian and Ukrainian men, especially, have found challenging difficulties in terms of adapting to their new state of independence.

In her novel Assia Djebar describes the Algerian individual as someone who witnessed two phases which were completely different; a phase of colonialism and another one of postcolonialism. In the first one, especially the Algerian man was described as someone who definitely knew how to find the way to regaining freedom. While, in the second phase the Algerian man was mainly captured in the nostalgic past of war and glory.

On the other hand, Oksana Zabuzhko in her novel portrays the Ukrainian man as someone who lost the way entirely after independence. This sense of loss, Zabuzhko illustrates, is due to the strong sense of inferiority which the Ukrainian man has strongly and willingly inherited from the Russian colonizer. The Ukrainian man has thus become someone who easily succumbed to being inferior to the colonizer, and even after

independence he still longs to be ruled again since cultural elements of the colonizer such as the Russian language are still being widely supported in Ukraine.

Furthermore, in her novel Zabuzhko deliberately meant to step against the social taboos, mainly those related to the body. Provoking the issue of the female body in Ukraine meant digging out deeply-buried secrets which the Ukrainian people have no intention to reveal. The Ukrainian men especially are too afraid to be exposed, and do not have the courage to face their women pointing fingers at them for not standing for them.

Even when Zabuzhko was fully aware of the terrible consequences her book might have brought her, she bravely chose to take her chance in finally revealing the truth which has long caused her people suffering and pain. Walking through the scars of the women's broken bodies in Ukraine was an attempt from Zabuzhko of giving solace to the Ukrainian women, and not as she was accused especially by the men of her country that she used profane language to denigrate the Ukrainian culture.

Similarly Assia Djebbar was fighting the good fight to reveal the immense pain and suffering, both which the Algerian woman equally and quite sufficiently had her share. Seeing the Algerian woman being wiped out of the history books, Djebbar felt the necessity to bring forward the voices of the silent majority of the Algerian women. Djebbar bravely defended the bold contributions of the Algerian women during the Algerian war of independence.

Djebbar defended the femininity of the Algerian woman; as some people prefer to claim that when the Algerian woman decided to take up arms and fight side by side with her male compatriots in the mountains, she automatically gave up her femininity. This claim Djebbar has criticized and falsified in many occasions; the Algerian woman knew well how to preserve her femininity even when she was in the mountains fighting for the freedom of her country.

Moreover, Djebbar has strongly defended the Algerian woman against the idea of putting her back in the harem. During the Algerian war of independence, the Algerian woman had to step out of the harem to join her male brothers in liberating her country.

Yet, after Algeria regained its independence in 1962 many Algerian men called the Algerian woman to go back to the harem, the fact which the Algerian woman refused to accept. After having to leave the harem during the war, the Algerian woman aspired to live the glory of the freedom she helped regain, the same as men.

In her writings, Djébar had always defended the Algerian woman both against the foreign, especially western portrait of orientaling her and the domestic patriarchal rules which before independence called for her contribution, while after independence sought to imprison her.

Thus, from the very start Djébar corrected the misguided portrait of the Algerian woman by Eugene Delacroix, by explaining that the Algerian woman would never be confined in the oriental gaze in Delacroix's painting. Rather the Algerian woman has always proved that she was born to be free.

In addition both Assia Djébar and Oksana Zabuzhko, as two postcolonial females, bravely raised the challenge of proving that a woman can also write, and sometimes even better than men. Not only did the two female authors successfully write to prove that they could, but also to transmit their own view of the story, thus making a prominent turnabout in viewing the entire industry of making history; the latter was no longer male-controlled, rather women now have their say in it.

Not only the task of writing was challenging for both Djébar and Zabuzhko both being female writers, but also their language choice was an even bigger challenge. We have seen in the third chapter how both authors were not greatly supported in terms of choosing the language with which they wrote; Djébar was often misunderstood and accused of writing in the French language, the language of the enemy, while Zabuzhko was accused of meddling the Ukrainian national language by adding profanity into it.

Being a francophone writer, Djébar was often accused of not playing her role in decolonizing the Algerian culture by "supporting" the language of the enemy. Writing in French, Djébar later confessed brought her the necessary easiness which any writer with a message at hand requires.

As a postcolonial writer, Djébar had survived colonialism; as a young girl she received her elementary education in French colonial schools. Therefore, adopting the French tongue in her writing was not a choice more than it was a natural flow of the events.

Furthermore, instead of viewing the French as the language of the enemy, Djébar considered it as part of the spoils of war. Certainly, Djébar wrote in French yet when comparing her texts with the texts of any French writer, say Victor Hugo, one can definitely notice that she was writing in a foreign tongue. That is to say, Djébar was writing in the French language only to promote the Algerian culture; this can only be explained by her heavy use of Algerian words, names of characters and countless folk stories.

Whereas, as her language choice may appear a lot easier Zabuzhko had her share of the harsh criticism by her people as well. Even when she patriotically chose to write in the Ukrainian language, which was long declared a dead language during the times of the Soviet Union.

Zabuzhko was not given a break, and her critics immediately jumped to the conclusion that her attempt to write in the Ukrainian language was never a way to restore the national identity; rather she was accused of denigrating the Ukrainian national identity by using profane language.

As she later defends her language choice, Zabuzhko challenges her critics to prove that she used profane language, and that she deliberately attempted to disparage the Ukrainian national identity. Rather, she justified her using a language which was considered profane, as the only way to represent the unspeakable, dangerous atrocities which have long haunted the Ukrainian woman. And no matter how the language seem to be harsh and profane, it will never make the scars on the bodies of Ukrainian women go away; rather Zabuzhko attempts to sooth their pain.

Therefore, as the two colonial situations may differ in both Algeria and Ukraine, Djébar and Zabuzhko experienced different reactions from their own people. Yet, the fact remains that the two authors did not find their path full of welcoming roses. Rather,

their fight to restore their national identity after independence can be sometimes considered as a mere continuation of the preceding fight against the colonizer, and that no matter how tense the fight can get both female authors were up for the task.

Added to their cruel practices against the Algerian people, the French had shamelessly found the pleasure in torturing thousands of Algerian women. After being captured, these women were imprisoned without a trial, mistreated, raped, thrown high up from helicopters while alive with their hands cuffed behind their backs, as we have seen in the second chapter with Zoulikha Oudai whom Djébar wrote a whole book about and which was entitled *The Woman without a Sepulcher* (2002).

In addition, Djébar managed to raise the issue of thousands of Algerian women whom France kidnapped and imprisoned without legal trials, and if there happened to be a trial it would certainly be military and not civil, which is something against the promotion of human civil rights which France had rhetorically endorsed.

It should also be noted that these Algerian women were often murdered as a result of the heavy torture they had received from the French colonizer, yet the French authorities have always adhered to the same story that these women somehow magically disappeared, in order to escape international prosecution for committing unspeakable war crimes and even with the countless concrete evidence to incriminate the French authorities, the international criminal court remains but a huge building.

The contributions of both Djébar and Zabuzhko are extremely relevant to the postcolonial critique, were it not for their brave writings the ruthless practices of the French and Russian colonizer would probably not have been properly introduced. As a result to their feminist writings, the two authors have explored further techniques of forcing the colonizer to confess the horrible crimes of war committed, especially against women of Algeria and Ukraine.

To sum up, both Djébar and Zabuzhko succeeded in their long journey of writing to raise many challenging issues which were facing the Algerian and Ukrainian women, and even when the two authors reacted to those challenges under variant

circumstances, they remain faithful to their cause of defending especially their women who have often been denigrated and considered to be the weaker sex.

Appendix

Picture 01: Doumergue's statue uncovered during his visit to Algiers in 1930.



Source: http://martin.michel47.free.fr/genealogie/documents/armee_d_afrique.htm

Picture 02: America depicted as a naked woman awakened by the clothed Vespucci.



Source: <https://eng320b001.tumblr.com/>

Picture 03:Muzzled European women during the seventeenth century.



Source:<https://allthatsinteresting.com/scolds-bridle>

Picture 04:German women's bodies scattered in the streets after being gang-raped by the soldiers of the Allies.



Source:<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2018/03/11/PICTURES-The-largest-mass-rape-in-history.html>

Picture 05: Femme d'Alger (Version O) by Pablo Picasso (1955).



Source: <http://www.exponaute.com/magazine/2015/05/12/les-femmes-dalger-de-picasso-vaut-il-ses-161-millions-deuros/>

Picture 06: Women of Algiers in their Apartment by Eugène Delacroix (1834).



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_of_Algers

Picture 07: Yamina Echaib, known as Zoulikha Oudai.



Source:https://www.google.dz/search?q=zoulikha+echaib&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwimxbnf09TcAhUqyYUKHdmSAP8QsAR6BAgDEAE#imgrc=fJ9IssouEd_u3M

Picture 08: Zoulikha Oudai (born Yamina Echaib) executed by the French by throwing her up from a helicopter in October 1957.



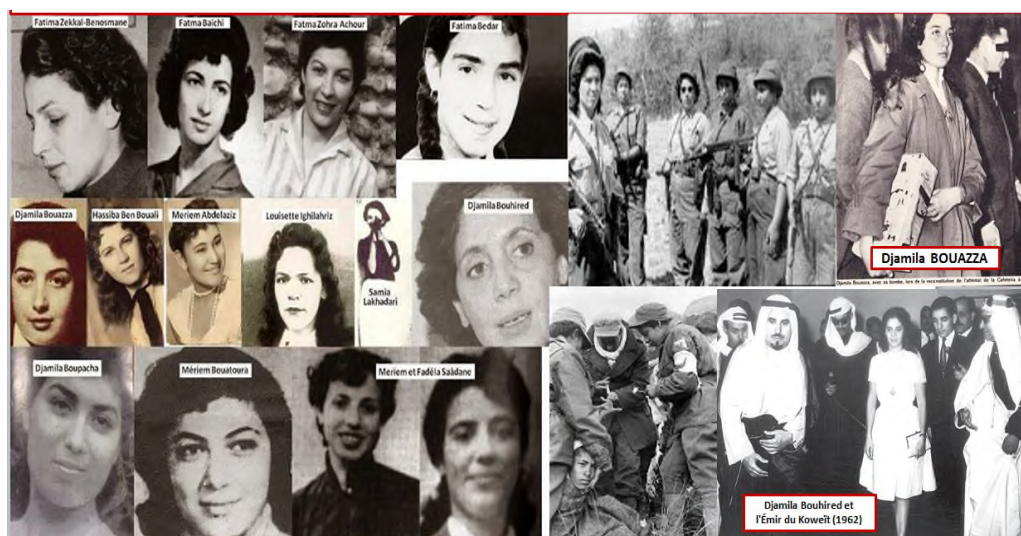
Source:https://www.google.dz/search?q=zoulikha+echaib&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwimxbnf09TcAhUqyYUKHdmSAP8QsAR6BAgDEAE#imgrc=fJ9IssouEd_u3M

Picture 09: Khadija Chellali, a brave martyr who died in June 1957 in Sidi Bel Abbes.



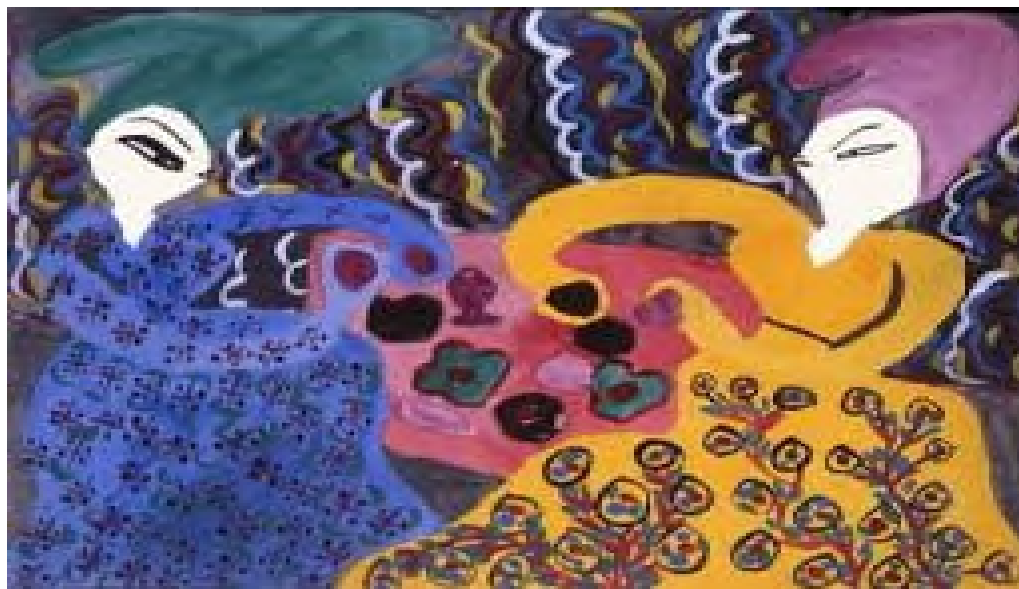
Source: https://www.google.dz/search?biw=1600&bih=773&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=UvRIW8_rLtKalwTknbvACQ&q=%D8%B4%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A+%D8%AE%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AC%D8%A9&oq=%D8%B4%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A+%D8%AE%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AC%D8%A9&gs_l=img.3

Picture10: A group of great Algerian female militants and martyrs.



Source:<https://www.google.dz/search?q=zoulikha+echaib&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwimxbnf09TcAhUqyYUKHdmSAP8QsAR6BAgDEAE&biw=1600&bih=773#imgdii=HBJ9G3RBghCWWM:&imgcr=5NMw5PYz5nHFdM:>

Picture 11: Baya Mahieddine painting showing Algerian women taking care of their beauty.



Source:https://www.google.dz/search?q=baya+mahieddine&sa=X&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=2ahUKEwjnu8_kxcrfAhULVywKHRvOCVQQiR56BAgGEA8&biw=1600&bih=719#imgcr=L04OLcLYqGZK3M:

Picture 12: Baya Mahieddine painting showing Algerian women taking care of plants.



Source:https://www.google.dz/search?q=baya+mahieddine&sa=X&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=2ahUKEwjnu8_kxcrfAhULVywKHRvOCVQQiR56BAgGEA8&biw=1600&bih=719#imgcr=L04OLcLYqGZK3M:

Picture 13: Baya Mahieddine painting showing Algerian women playing music.



Source: https://www.google.dz/search?q=baya+mahieddine&sa=X&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=2ahUKEwjnu8_kxcrfAhULVywKHRvOCVQQiR56BAgGEA8&biw=1600&bih=719#imgrc=L04OLcLYqGZK3M:

Picture 14: Disturbing photos of hundreds of dead bodies after being brutally murdered by the Soviets.



Source: https://www.google.dz/search?biw=1600&bih=768&tbn=isch&sa=1&ei=w04qXNX9L4aesgHbsLjwCw&q=women+and+the+horrible+gulag&oq=women+and+the+horrible+gulag&gs_l=img.3...20054.24760..25255...0.0..0.0.0...0....1..gws-wiz-img.8KuSUatuTns#imgrc=-MHccUb5byUMbM:

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الملخص:

يتناول هذا المشروع مقارنة أدبية بين روايتين لروائيتين متخصصتين في أدب ما بعد الكولونيالية؛ نساء الجزائر في شقتهن للكاتبة الجزائرية آسيا جبار وكذا العمل الميداني في الجنس الأوكراني للكاتبة الأوكرانية أوكسانا زابوذكو. يتلخص البحث حول ماهية الإستعمار الفرنسي و الروسي و كذا تأثيرهما على الشعبين الجزائري و الأوكراني و بالخصوص على المرأة الجزائرية والمرأة الأوكرانية. هذا و يتطرق البحث إلى مسألة معاناة الجسد الأنثوي بالنسبة للمرأة الجزائرية و الأوكرانية من طرف المستعمر و حتى المستعمر. في الأخير يتناول المشروع كيفية استخدام كلتا الروائيتين للغتين مختلفتين و هذا من أجل تخلص الذاكرة الوطنية من آثار الإستعمار، لينتهي البحث في الأخير إلى أن كلتا الروائيتين أنجزتا مهمة تخلص الذاكرة الوطنية من آثار الإستعمار بامتياز.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الأنثوية-ما بعد الكولونيالية- استعمار-الذاكرة الوطنية.

Summary:

This project is a literary comparative study between two novels written by two post-colonial authors; *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* by the Algerian Assia Djebar and *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex* by the Ukrainian Oksana Zabuzhko. The present research mainly tackles the issue of the French as well as Russian colonizer and to what extent their impact has been on both the Algerian and Ukrainian people in general, and women in particular. This research also tackles the issue of the Algerian and Ukrainian female body's suffering both by the colonizer and colonized. In the end, this project studies the language chosen by both authors in order to decolonize their national memory, where they were successful in decolonizing their national memory par excellence.

Les mots clés : Feminisme-Postcolonialisme-Colonialisme-Mémoire Nationale

Résumé:

Ce projet est une étude en littérature comparée entre deux romans écrits par deux écrivaines postcoloniales *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* par l'Algérienne Assia Djebar et *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex* par l'Ukrainienne Oksana Zabuzhko. L'étude actuelle s'occupe de la colonisation Française et Russe et quel est l'impact sur le peuple Algérien et Ukrainien ; en particulier la femme. L'étude actuelle s'occupe aussi de la souffrance physique de la femme Algérienne et Ukrainienne causé par le colonisateur et le colonisé. A la fin ; ce projet étudie la langue choisie par les deux écrivaines afin qu'elles puissent décoloniser leur mémoire nationale ; qui ont réussi dans leur mission.

Keywords: Feminism- Post-colonialism-Colonialism-National Memory.