



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and
Scientific Research
University of Djillali Liabès of Sidi-Bel-
Abbès
Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts
Department of English



**The Role of Creative Writing in Asserting a National Identity amid
Ideologies of Mimicry, Neocolonialism and Displacement in Wright's
Native Son, Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, Ngugi's *Matigari*,
and Mosteghanemi's *The Bridges of Constantine***

**Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy for the Degree
of a *Doctorat* in English Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by Mr. Mohammed GOUFFI

Supervised by Prof. Fatiha KAÏD
BERRAHAL

Panel of Examiners

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Dedication

In loving memory of my **Father AISSA**,

To my beloved **Mother**,

In loving memory of the late Rachid HANNACHI ...May Allah rest his purified
soul

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, all my praises and thanks are to Allah, who granted me light, inspiration, patience, and stamina to lead this research:

“My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favors which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.” (Surat An-Naml ‘The Ants’ 19)

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Abstract

The present thesis scrutinizes the crucial role that creative writing– the postcolonial novel in particular– plays in asserting national identities in post-emancipation African America and post-independent Sudan, Kenya and Algeria through analysing four works of fiction: *Native Son*, *Season of Migration to the North*, *Matigari*, and *The Bridges of Constantine*, written respectively by Richard Wright, Tayeb Salih, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, and Ahlem Mosteghanemi. Amid the tremendously sweeping currents of subversive discourses of mimicry, neocolonialism and displacement that circulate and collide with the challenges of nationhood, the postcolonial individuals were, and still are, cautious when it comes to the authenticity of independence. While the theme of nationhood, which against the post-emancipatory exigencies and expectations, receives less attention in postcolonial critical studies of Wright, Ngugi, Salih and Mosteghanemi, this research calls into question the overarching role of the postcolonial novel and novelist in the national construction, throwing lights on the cultural vestiges of mimetic discourse. This paper traces the ways in which the works under scrutiny interrogate the neocolonial discourse and its detrimental effect on the individual and the nation. The work also delves into the concept of displacement as one major national preoccupation of the postcolonial novel in the erstwhile colonies. The study shows how the authors engage with displacement in such a way the characters’ personal displacement echo and mediate powerfully and artistically with the nation’s sense of political, cultural and the national estrangement. By opening the four novels to a rigorous comparative study, the work aims, within the contemporary galvanizing issues of postcolonialism to discuss language politics that is symbiotically linked to the harmony existing between nationalism, culture, literature. Centered mainly on postcolonial frameworks –borrowed from Bhabha, Fanon, Nkrumah, Ngugi– the study settles on a

consistently eclectic approach. It combines multiple theories and sociological concepts such as Benedict Anderson's most influential paradigm of nationalism that, when grouped together, can generate a richer understanding of the novels in question. The findings argue that Wright, Salih, Ngugi, and Mosteghanemi are not merely creative authors, they are rather national soldiers of a sort in the frontlines of national resistance. They steer their literary trajectory towards crystalizing national consciousness, decolonizing the mind to establish imagined communities.

Keywords: creative writing; postcolonialism; identity construction; nationalism; mimicry; neocolonialism; displacement; national consciousness; language politics

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General Introduction

It may seem, at first glance, like an overstatement if not an aberration, to juxtapose *Native Son* (1940), *Season of Migration to the North* (1966), *Matigari* (1986), and *The Bridges of Constantine*¹(2000), written respectively by Richard Wright (1908-1959), Tayeb Salih (1929-2008), Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1938- present day), and Ahlem Mosteghanemi (1953-present day). On many counts, the four are disparate authors to hold within one study; their respective oeuvres and historical conditions could hardly be more similar. However, despite all their palpable distinctions in terms of the cultural mores, social experiences, and historical moments, the authors' essential sense of engagement with the representation of national identity allows readers and critics to draw parallels and counterpoints between them.

Taken together, the selected novels for discussion: *Native Son*, *Season of Migration to the North* (henceforth *Season*), *Matigari*, *The Bridges of Constantine* (hereafter *The Bridges*), constitute a promising site for research. The present study reads the afore-mentioned works of fiction as being motivated by the pertinent question of what it means to be a postcolonial writer in communities contested to long-lasting struggle to attain national identity. In this respect and within subversive discourses of mimicry, neocolonialism and displacement, the work seeks to show the seminal role of creative writing – the postcolonial novel in particular – in setting the

¹ *Dhakhirat al Jasad* (1993) was translated for the first time into English as “*Memory in the Flesh*” by Baria Ahmar Sreih and revised by Peter Clark in 2000. Nonetheless, the latest translation, conducted by Raphael Cohen and published by the Bloomsbury in 2013 as *The Bridges of Constantine*, is deemed more original and creative. The study will mainly depend on the latest translation.

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national pillars of the newly emancipated or decolonized lands. The authorial and imaginative representation in this regard is a crucial component in a complex process of nation construction.

Given the intersection of national identity with dynamics of decolonization, nationalism is deemed a very indispensable aspect in the modern history of Africa as it had a sweeping influence on the continent's intellectual history. Albeit most of the African colonized territories championed independence in the wake of the Third Wave of Decolonization, but throwing off the shackles of colonialism, flying national flags, and singing national anthems did not crown decolonization. The anti-colonial nationalist enthusiasm was soon disappointed by the sad truth that decolonization did not bring about a radical rupture with the colonial condition. These states had been besieged by national identity crisis and hence found themselves in the urgency to come to terms with the discursive ravages of mimicry, neocolonialism, and displacement.

Historically speaking, abolishing slavery after a bloody Civil War was nothing but a bitter transition from a community, where discrimination pervaded, to segregatory nation. The Afro-American expectations for an egalitarian nation eventually went with the wind as soon as regulations such as the Black Codes and Jim Crow laws had been enacted. In the context of decolonization on the other hand, although, the Sudan, Kenya and Algeria had overthrown their colonial masters: Britain and France, but they were left with the imposing tasks of nation construction.

By virtue of their sharp understanding of the deceptiveness of any break with the colonial tradition and of the historically cruel realities that have been buried under the western delineations and tropes of colonialism, creative authors employed the power of the pen to speak to the homeland's predicaments. More specifically, in a context replete with ideological constraints, tracing dynamics of nationhood through creative writing becomes a much-needed idiom in the postcolonial cultural imagination. In interpreting critically the indigenous populations' aspiration to transcend the corollaries of colonialism and found modern nation-

states, there is far more to experience with the authors such as Wright, Salih, Ngugi, and Mosteghanemi. Their respective works *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges* form overarching tropes of national identity in a globalized world of ever-shifting borders and sweeping ideologies.

Richard Wright is beyond doubt the first Afro-American author to acquire an international reputation. The body of his fictional works marks a noteworthy breakthrough in the literary representation and examination of race relations, psychology as well as the sociology of black life in twentieth century America. Perhaps Wright's unique tendency to follow the road not taken by his fellow Negro authors and artists all made a difference to establish him "a universally acknowledged starting point for black literature in contemporary America" (Bloom *Bloom's Modern Critical Views* 2). Subsequently, his *Native Son* signaled a threshold moment in the protest tradition of American literature. Through *Native Son*, Wright "had gained a hearing, claimed a territory, challenged the conscience of a nation" (Bone 10). Although conventionally read as a typical American tale, Nicholas T Rinehart, insists that "*Native Son* should be understood on its own terms: as a work of world literature" (165). Whichever way one approaches *Native Son*, the novel opens up a set of intricate questions and vast areas of interrogations linked to Wright's aesthetic ideology and the African-American novelistic tradition.

"The genius of the Arabic novel" (Hassan ix) is the description of the Sudanese full-fledged writer Tayeb Salih by a set of leading Arab critics who hailed his authorial insight, literary sensitivity and eye-catching originality. Salih's *Season* represented such an exceptional event in the history of the Arabic novel that it foregrounded a new departure toward new horizons in the Arab culture at its delivery. *The Guardian* has picked Salih's *Season*, published originally in Arabic as *Mawsim al-Hijrah ilâ al-Shamâl*, in 2002, among the top 100 books of

all time. After more than fifty years of its emergence, the novel is as fresh as the day it first came out, as it is one of the most widely read novels across the world.

Along a similar line, “Ngugi is a polyrhythmic writer” (Nazareth 13), whose entry into the edifice of African letters was such a momentous instant that it altered not only the trajectory of the Kenyan fiction, but went further to place him a pole of multi-faceted influence in third world thought. His legacy: novels, essays and political oeuvres earned him a place, as one of Africa’s leading figures and a notable addition to Africa’s long-standing battle of liberation. Ngugi’s *Matigari*, in specific, displays a mature artistry and showcases Ngugi’s creative genius, which lies in recognizing that what the postcolonial community really wants is an author who exorcises the ghost of colonialism and its historically chronic scars.

On the other hand, “[Ahlem Mosteghanemi] is an Algerian sun illuminating Arabic literature. With her [creative] production, she has raised Algerian literature to a stature worthy of the history of our struggle. We take pride in her Arabic pen, our pride as Algerians in our Arabness” (qtd in Holt 125). These are the eloquent words of the first President of independent Algeria Ahmed Ben Bella in appreciation of Mosteghanemi’s talent. By the 1990s, literary and intellectual circles in Algeria and the Arab world as well were quick to acclaim Ahlem Mosteghanemi a quintessential Algerian genius. She is a multifaceted intellectual: a novelist, poet and essayist, whose appearance to the Algerian literary scene was a point of inflection par excellence. Since its publication in 1993, Mosteghanemi’s first novel, *Dhakirat al-jasad* has rung out and echoed in nearly all centers of arts and letters across the Arab world. Thus, it may not seem to be an exaggeration that many critics view *The Bridges* as “the most successful Algerian novel in the Arab world and one of the most profound and original creations of contemporary Algerian culture in any language” (McDougall “Social Memories” 36).

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While it often appears that concepts of nationalism and discourse are at odds with creative writing, the innovative spirit of this thesis lies in its capacity to combine four works of fiction, written by internationally acclaimed novelists that may result in intriguing intersections between discourses of nationalism, literature and identity. This is indeed a tremendous challenge. Hence, it offers an opportunity to approach the theme of nationhood, which against the post-emancipatory exigencies and expectations, receives less attention in postcolonial critical studies of Wright, Ngugi, Salih's and Mosteghanemi and their works.

This work also generates its significance from the complex interplay between the issues that populate it. In this sense, the thesis probes into questions that are timely and their scholarly treatment goes a long way to enable the creation of a cross-cultural idiom for a host of ideological and historical circumstances whose criticality we are only now starting to truly consider: nationalism, identity, mimicry, neocolonialism, and displacement. Coupling four disparate authors is perhaps one provocative attempt to establish a cross-cultural comparative dialogue between Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi since I believe there is a valid reason to channel the heteroglossically emergent voices of *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges* together in a meaningful negotiation.

The research is equally important in the sense it sets to negate the feeling of some readers and literary scholars that *Native Son* and *Season* are extensively saturated and exhausted material of research. But precisely because of that, the study tends to argue that these novels still maintain canonical status to the present day. It is true that *Native Son* was the center of much attention in America literary and cultural circles, but to this day, "readers are still impressed by the tremendous revelatory power", the novel holds (Brivic 231). Never has it been more pressing and important to reread the novel in order to prompt re-assessments concerning race and racism and national belonging than during this uncertain time that witnessed a heinous killing of George Floyd. Mary Dalton was smothered in fiction Floyd was killed in reality. In

order for the reader to glean an understanding of the campaigns called “*Black Lives Matter*”, it is suggestive to envisage the moments in the text where the novel weaves itself into an Afro-American cruel experience.

Given the inter-relatedness of literature and life, it has become incontestably clear that understanding the complex context of the contemporary politics sometimes entails a return to Salih’s masterpiece *Season*. In this regard, the text retains vibrant relevance within the waves of Arab refugees and immigrants flooding into Europe and America following what came to be known as ‘Arab Spring’. Putting under analytical microscope Mustafa Sa’eed’s enthralling experience of diaspora allows us to decode the impact of migration on contemporary notion of national and cultural identity in the light of the xenophobic and rejectionist stances of European countries to the massive migrations. From the vantage point of artists who themselves experienced racism in the metropole, a conscious re-reading *Native Son* and *Season* gives readers and researchers the opportunity to consider the alarming rise of the radical right-wings in the West from beyond their own perspectives. In a western landscape where the white man’s supremacy is witnessing a breakneck increase, *Native Son* and *Season* acquire new meanings and implications.

In another dimension, language is the soul of nationalism. Therefore, the study is important and timely in its engagement with the deepest politics of language in the postcolonial context. Never has it been more important for the Algerians to reconsider the burning issues of language politics than during this time. They need to be more aware than ever of the words of Said Saadi –former leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy Party (RCD) –concerning his position toward the Arabic language: “If the learning of the Arabic language was not imposed, only a few Algerians would learn it, especially in the Kabylie region” (Walid. A. " Saadi shows hostility"). In Algeria’s uncertain times, analyzing Mosteghanemi’s *The Bridges* and the drama of national language is highly suggestive. The point is that, for historical reasons

which may include more important developments in the Algerian *Hirak* (Movement of February 22), language has resurfaced to the collective consciousness as a point of contention between Algeria's Francophiles and pro-Arabo-Islamic independence from France. In Algeria, the argument over the national language has raged ever since the first days of independence. The topic, against what some think, never died; it rather refuses to die. Nowadays, Algeria's more recent movement (*Hirak* of February 22) revived the issue of Algeria's continuing relations with the French colonizer whose most important aspect is the widespread of the French language in every sector. The study is a good chance to judge the wisdom of putting on critical papers the burning issues of identity's sameness and continuity in so far language is concerned.

Although one may choose to argue that Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi are different in a hundred ways, the research goes somewhere toward the elaboration of parallels between the moments in which *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges* overlap and interconnect to provide relevance to the struggle against the subversive ideological situations that the authors effectively reflect. Globally, this work traces lines of influence across significant literary works and situates individual writers and texts in their historical context.

By opening the four novels to more rigorous comparative study, the work aims, within the contemporary galvanizing issues of postcolonialism, to furnish the ground for finding harmony between nationalism, culture, literature and language. Culture, it goes without saying, is a paramount parameter to define the power of nations, to achieve supremacy in every aspect of life. Language on the other hand constructs culture and simultaneously is constructed by it. Literature is a repository of culture and culture is the best enrichment of literature. There is a complex interplay between all these elements of which culture is a common divisor. Seen in this light, the research aspires to achieve a set of objectives. First of all, it intends to show up the role of creative writing, whose most elevated form is the postcolonial novel, in creating a unified sense of national belonging. The focus is increasingly centered on the role of the

postcolonial novelist as being soldiers of a sort in the frontlines of resistance to detrimental discourses.

Secondly, the work endeavors to reflect on the novels' representation of cultural ravages of mimicry with a special focus on the way the mimetic discourse hinders the construction of national identity. In adopting a comparative approach, the study aims to explain how the novels under study –as works of modernity, postmodernity and post-colonialism –call readers to question the relationship between personal identities and nation-formation in such way the collective is mediated and lived through the personal.

Thirdly, the research sheds significant new light on the continuities of colonial condition under what would be called 'neocolonialism'. It should be noted that the neocolonial discourse deserves an in-depth analysis in view to understanding the effect of cultural estrangement of the nation and the drastic changes of the colonized's way of life.

Furthermore, owing to assumption that "place is intimately connected with notions of identity [...] both for individuals [...] and for groups" (Lochtefeld 04), the study's purpose is to engage with fictional renditions of Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi of the displacement condition and the facture it bears on the assertion of national identities. Correspondingly, in several countries that are engulfed in a dilemma about identity, the examination of postcolonial literature can offer critical insights into the role of space and environment in national constructions of identity. In this regard, giving more attention to *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges* as displacement narratives permits to map out visions of the lingering anxieties of national belonging in America, the Sudan, Kenya and Algeria.

This work additionally intends to focus on writing in Arabic, African-American English and Gĩkũyũ and the corresponding nationalisms steeped in these languages. The study thus bespeaks how linguistic decolonization of the word leads to cultural decolonization of the mind

in a continent that had already found itself baptized in European languages. Against the agenda of assimilationist authors, the study seeks to present Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi as emerging from under linguistic debris of the empire to bring back to centre of consciousness the African literature and African history that have come to be essentially molded and identified with the languages and tempers of colonial masters.

Finally, the research intends to issue an articulate interpretation of the way the postcolonial novel affords profound sources of national identity in the light of Benedict Anderson's perspective. In placing the novels, under scrutiny, in a dialogue with the Andersonian groundbreaking view of the nation as 'an imagined community', the study endeavors to show how the historical rise of the novel, ontologically speaking, did not merely coincide, but interestingly enough, contributed to the rise of the nation as well.

Under the pressures of globalization and shades of colonialism, constructing independent national identity turns not an easy task. Amid excessive identity pressure, conflict over visions of history and interpretations of identity in the postcolonial state has created opposing versions of nationalism. Subsequently, creative writing— the postcolonial novel in particular —finds itself confronting the urgency to take a leading role in the construction of national identity. In asserting this connection, the postcolonial novelist has either to invest much in creativity in order to speak, with an artistic sense of responsibility, to the nation otherwise his/her writings would run an increasingly serious risk of remaining unknown, unnoticed, unheralded or unread. In this context, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi are taken on centrality in order to gauge the national charge that their *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges* hold amid subversive discourses.

Departing from the postmodern notion that identity is fashioned and constructed rather than being innate or given, the study seeks to fill in a certain gap, finding plausible answers to the following set of main questions:

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- In *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges*, what is the role of creative writing—the postcolonial novel and the postcolonial novelist in particular – in the assertion of national identity amid subversive discourses of mimicry, neocolonialism and displacement?
- How do these works of fiction delineate the cultural ravages of mimetic discourse?
- How do *Native Son*, *Matigari*, *Season* and *The Bridges* present a critique to the neocolonial reality, bringing to view the perpetuation of colonial exploitation and the deceptiveness of any rupture with the colonial condition?
- As displacement narratives, how do the novels mediate the personal experience of the characters through the collective ones to stage the drama of ‘nations in displacement’?

On the other hand, in the process of analysis and explanation, the study responds to sub-questions that are pertinent and helpful in deconstructing the study’s main questions:

- What is creative writing?
- What is the relationship between literary texts and ideology? And how has this relation developed over the course of their interaction?
- What is identity? What are its ontological and historical roots?
- How can the individual sustain a seamless movement from personal identity to collective identity?
- What is nationalism and how does it relate to European Colonialism?
- Historically speaking, what characterizes the rise of anti-colonial nationalism in Black America, the Sudan, Algeria and Kenya and how was Decolonization achieved?
- What are the most relevant aspects of postcolonial theory that the study styles itself upon?
- How does mimetic discourse prescribe the indigenous subjects to perform colonial tasks?
- How does mimetic discourse give birth to colonial subjects, whose lethal germ of violence was harmful on the colonizer and the colonized as well?

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- How, in neocolonial communities, do the texts portray a cultural change in the colonized's way of life? How does socio-economic exploitation of the colonized resonate with the exploitation of the collective autonomy?
- How does cultural displacement, be it physical or psychological, affect the national fabric?
- Departing from Anderson's view of the nation, how can the postcolonial novel help reterritorialize or map the nation through imagination?
- In what way can the postcolonial novel be an efficient tool of national consciousness?
- In what way can national literature written in native languages be a best reflection of the cultural particularity of the nation?
- In writing back to the colonizer, to what extent can a national language be a marker of national identity and a point of departure toward African renaissance?

Much has been effectively said and written about Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi and simultaneously there is a considerable body of criticism of their novels: the study's corpus. Yet, I have never come across a study, which juxtaposes the four books and writers in a single study. While on the other hand, considerable research also exists on creative writing, national identities, narratives of displacement, there is nonetheless, limited understanding to how the postcolonial novelist and the postcolonial novel affects the foundation of the nation.

Michael Fabre, James Baldwin, Harold Boom, Joyce Ann Joyce, Robert Bone, Ana María Fraile-Marcos and Robert Felgar wrote about Richard Wright's life and literature. They mainly focused on his *Native Son* from manifold perspectives. Sexual diversity, naturalistic urbanism, ideology of form, biblical imagery, misogyny and appropriation, black womanhood, the dynamics of place, racial oppression, the escape motif and poetics of African-American modernism were explored. Against the views that the novel is now outdated, scholarly attention to *Native Son* has never ceased. Interestingly enough, in 2018 the American scholar Nicholas

T. Rinehart wrote an important article entitled: “Native Sons; Or, How “Bigger” Was Born Again, in which Wright’s protagonist Bigger Thomas is portrayed as “an icon of global class conflict rather than a national figure of racial tension” (164), by comparing the published novel and an earlier typeset manuscript. The Spanish researcher Josep M. Armengol’s “Blacks as “America’s Jews”? Revisiting Black–Jewish Relations in Richard Wright’s Native Son” (2017), revisits Wright’s portraiture of black–Jewish relations in connection with race but also class and gender with a view to illustrating their multiple, complex, and often even contradictory interactions in the novel. A seminal book edited by Alice Mikal Craven and William E. Dow under title, *Richard Wright: New Readings in the 21st Century* has been published in 2011. The collection of articles gives quite innovative reading of Wright in the turn of the new millennium. However, the present thesis will transcend the racially coded, the dogmatically communist and the ideologically (anti)-feminist discourses to translate the novel into a postcolonial reading, where the elaboration of national identity is always at fore. The study ponders how the character’s individual lives, restricted by neocolonialism, blurred by mimetic discourse and overburdened by displacement, intersect with the collective national consciousness of Negroes in America.

On the other hand, a torrent of books, articles, reviews, essay collections, in Arabic and English overwhelms the reader of *Season*. In Arabic, significant researches may include the recent work by Yemeni critic and researcher Hisham Ali: “The Problemic of Intellectuals and the West in the Arabic Novel in *Season of Migration to the North*” (2009). The Egyptian scholar Ahmed Karim Bilal in his *Dialectics of Symbolism and Reality: A Critical Study of Season Migration to the North* (2011) presents a fresh study of the novel. In English, Wail Hassan, Mona Takieddine-Amyuni, Saree S. Makdisi, Byron Caminero-Santangelo, Wisam Khalid Abdul Jabbar, Sofia Samatar, Patricia Geesey have pursued critical lines premised mainly on the Conradian legacy in *Season*, aesthetics of intertextuality, the African intellectual’s

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migration, mimicry and contamination, the empire, the impact of Freudian ideas, cultural hybridity, myth, imagery and selfhood, images of Arab women. More recent studies include Rimun Murad's "Emotional Distance: Transnational Pleasure in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*" (2018) and the Canadian researcher Apala Das' "The revaluation of hybridity in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*" (2019). However, Andrew Hammond's "Tayeb Salih and the Postcolonial nation" (2007), and Yahya Ali Abdullah Idriss' "*Season of Migration to the North* and the Story of the Sudanese Nation: Hopes and Impediments" (2012), are highly pertinent to the context of the present research.

Idriss' article explores the relationship between *Season* and the Sudanese nation in response to the way the Sudanese people conceive of themselves as a nation in terms of regional binarism: north and south. In different line with Idriss, the present work takes a perspective to uncover the role of the novel in disparaging mimetic discourse and denouncing neocolonial practice, as overriding steps in asserting the Sudanese nation. Excavating in the Arab novelistic archive is meant for forging new outlooks about old themes. More specifically, the study's novelty lies in the author's emphasis that the construction of national identity requires exclusion of otherness. As far as displacement is concerned the research contends not only that Mustafa's migratory impulses may help illuminate our understanding of *Season* in new and profound ways, but also that rereading the novel for what it has to say about migration in time of Arab Spring.

Scholarship on Ngugi's legacy has considerably developed, spanning a large array of contexts and locations. Notably Simon Gikandi, James Ogude, Peter Nazareth, Fidelis Odun Balogun, Oliver Lovesey, Charles Cantalupo, Patrick Williams, Lewis Nkosi among so many scrutinized in a plethora of perspectives and meanings: politics of language, reassessment of independence dynamics, woman representation, the neocolonial state, exile, fiction and African history, the poetics of cultural production, Marxist discourse and the postcolonial

intellectualism in Ngugi's fiction. While few have probed into national interests of *Matigari*, the story has captured less analytical attention as a trope of the nation. In attempt to fill in this observable gap, the study investigates with due attention to the ways in which postcolonial and cultural theories of Bhabha, Fanon, and Anderson can all contribute to an interpretation of *Matigari*. The examination opens new critical horizons to grasp the highly charged questions of national Gikũyũ identity. This is possible through showing the fresh mood Gikũyũ language provides especially when mimetic yokes produce parratological sense. The study's sense of newness lies in its attempt to evince that indigenous language does not only celebrate identity but responds with brilliance to the artistic standards whose fresh metaphors and tropes denounce imperialism. Important to note, the study, unlike the previous studies, throws light on creative writing as means of resistance to the protagonist's excruciating experience of displacement. Given the fact that the nation as a narrative, the research will deal with *Matigari* as an architectural space as a home for the displaced.

In fact, material analyzing *The Bridges* abounds both in Arabic and in French, but scarce in English, in view of the novel and the novelist's importance. The bulk of the researches on Mosteghanemi in Arabic—conducted by Algerian scholars like Hassina Falah, Nassima Kribaa, Souad Charif, Abdelkadder Missoum, Zahra Touil and Lakhdar Bin Sayeh—have undertaken analysis of textual interaction, narrative language, intertextuality and poetic imagery, Mosteghanemi's ideal reader, the pragmatic dimension of the Algerian dialect in Mosteghanemi's trilogy and so on and so forth. On the other hand, scholarly research in English by critics such as Aida A. Bamia, Ferial J. Ghazoul, Shaden M. Tageldin, Tanja Stampfl, Ellen McLarney, Anastasia Valassopoulos, Nuha Baaqueel among others—have addressed questions linked to vestiges of colonialism, politics of language, the novel's masculinist narrative voice, exile, woman's writing, meaning of body, crossing borders and gendered memory. However, the research here tries to offer a wide-ranging exploration of the Algerian nation through

narration. In other words, the study gauges the novel, more in terms of Algeria-ness rather than the standards of its aesthetic excellence. The study gives a ground-breaking reading for the way a novel is an indictment for Algeria's deviation from revolutionary glory, following the contours of neocolonialism and mimicry that broke the spirit of the Algerian deep and horizontal comradeship.

To achieve the objectives set so far, the study settles on a consistently eclectic approach. In other words, the scrutiny hinges on no one critical school or a monolithic theory. Conversely, it combines multiple theories and sociological frameworks that, when grouped together, can generate a richer understanding of the novels in question. From a variety of locations and socio-political contexts, the present work delves into the cultural ravages of neocolonial, mimetic and displacement strategies, throwing analytical lights on the distinguished role creative writing plays in the assertion of national identities. Given the points shown above, the postcolonial paradigm provides a conceptual umbrella under which I will attempt to consider the African and African-American experience of nation building.

One reason why the postcolonial theory is extremely needed here is its capability to respond, with high applicability and pertinence, to the questions regarding national identity construction that have escalated to a state of urgency in the postcolonial context. Perhaps, the most extraordinary power of postcolonial theory is its unparalleled ability to make its practitioners see, perceive, and then interlink seemingly disparate connections that they never imagine they exist before. In order to see this more clearly, the application of postcolonial theory is not exclusively conducted within the contexts of external colonization. It can be employed even within states where a minority exploits the majority or vice versa. This study therefore approaches *Native Son* from a postcolonial perspective, wherein the white oppressor is the colonizer; the black oppressed is the colonized; and black America is the colony within.

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In a word, whereas some readers and literary critics tended to view *Native Son* as cliché, the novel was reborn with its translation into postcolonial contexts.

Therefore, the study resorts to Homi K. Bhabha's concept of mimicry in order to decode its reflection on cultural contamination that delayed nation-formation. It should be underlined that mimicry works in harmony with Du Boisian 'double consciousness' theory. Both mimicry and double consciousness involve a logic of 'the two-ness'. This is largely due to the colonial subject's exposure to two inconsistent cultures or experiencing life in two or more uncommon environments. Frantz Fanon's views on inferiority complex, his view of national culture and his standpoint *vis a vis* violence help significantly expound why the colonized internalizes feeling of inferiority and lack and responds through a germ of violence. In another dimension, the work takes insights from Kwame Nkrumah's concept of Neocolonialism. Nkrumah argues that some third world countries, though independent formally, are still very much colonial countries, in terms of their ethics and conducts. This stems from plans orchestrated by the crumbling empires to keep their ex-colonies under control. This control corresponds with new patterns of economic, political, cultural, and ideological hegemony in which the indigenous elites are major players.

As far as the focus in the research is on the complex nature of nationalism, the analysis makes recourse to Ngugi's theory of language: *Decolonizing the Mind*. In view of the symbiotic connection between national language and national identity, the work investigates the construction and restoration national identities as being primordially embedded in the dismissal of the colonial language, as a mode of literary expression, and the indigenization of the mother tongue in return. In this respect, decolonizing literature requires language decolonization, and in consequence decolonizing national identities in African-America, Algeria, Sudan and Kenya.

Having established the specifically postcolonial context and the orientation to Bhabha, Fanon, Nkrumah and Ngugi, the meditative nature of the research opens the novels to new layers of meaning and then requires an interdisciplinary outlook that helps bridge the gaps between the four disparate authors and novels. In other words, the work builds on the American sociologist George Herbert Mead's approach to the self that is crucial here to explain the construction of personal identity from reflective to reflexive situation. He postulates that the self can achieve a remarkable progress via three activities of which language is the most important. Mead's theory gains significance when coupled with Ngugi's views of language as this helps understand the primacy of language in social interaction. Apart from this, Alberto Melucci's theory of identity is also useful in explaining collective identity. In other part, entwined with Homi K. Bhabha's conception of texts as national narratives, the study equally backs up and anchors the analysis within Benedict Anderson's most influential and systematic approach of nationalism. The Andersonian view stipulates that the creation of a nation is the narration of a nation. Important to note, Edward Said's *Reflections on Exile*, Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination* and Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* are occasionally quoted by means of providing theoretical underpinning to textual analysis.

Structurally speaking, this research is organized into two main parts and each part includes chapters. The first part is composed of two main chapters. Chapter I entitled **Creative Writing, Ideology and Identity: Historical and Theoretical Frameworks** deals theoretically and historically with the study's keywords, affording a clear perception to the key concepts of the study. To begin with, it brings to light creative writing, its relation to the notion of imagination as well as expressiveness and originality. This chapter also conceptualizes and traces back the historical and theoretical roots of ideology. Further and more importantly, it brings to the surface the connection of creative writing or literature to ideology. At the end, the chapter throws epistemic lights on the manifold axes of identity. This includes addressing the

ontological and historical origins of identity, construction of the self, personal identity, and collective identity construction.

Chapter II under the heading: **Nationalism, Decolonization and Postcolonial Theory: Theoretical and Socio-Historical Contexts** is mainly concerned with embedding the novels under study within socio-historical and theoretical contexts. This chapter will sketch the evolution of nationalism, providing conceptual and theoretical discussion of the historical inception of nationalism, nationalism's main paradigms, and its connection with European colonialism. On the other hand, it considers the rise of anti-colonial nationalism in African America, Sudan, Algeria and Kenya that was the cornerstone of long journeys toward decolonization. Furthermore, within an intellectual and historical framework, the chapter traces the emergence of postcolonial studies as one of the most dynamic theoretical trajectories, whose critical reassessments of colonization and its aftermath from the colonized's perspective constitutes a decisive moment in literary studies. More specifically, the chapter focuses closely on the dimensions, which sound especially pertinent to context of the research whereby Homi Bhabha's *Mimicry*, Kwame Nkrumah's *Neocolonialism* and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's theory of language: *Decolonizing the Mind* are placed to fore.

The second part comprises of three main chapters. Chapter III under the title **Cultural Ravages of Mimetic Discourse** is divided into two main sections. The first one: *Indigenous Skins, Mimetic Masks and Colonial Tasks* traces the impact of mimetic discourse on the postcolonial individual and explains how it produces uncertainties when it comes to national identity construction. The second section: **The Empire Strikes Back: Mimicry and Lethal Germ of Violence** discusses the impact of violence on the colonized.

Chapter IV under the heading: **Neocolonial Discourse and Cultural Displacement** focuses on cultural implications of neocolonialism and displacement on the elaboration of

national identities. It discusses the mediation of the exploitation of the collective autonomy with individual's repression of personal socio-economic exploitation.

The final chapter entitled **Reterritorializing the Nation through N(arr)ation** throws light on the role of creative writing– the postcolonial novel in specific–in the assertion of national identities. From Benedict Andersonian lens, the focus will be centered on the role postcolonial novelist in constructing imagined communities through *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*. In addition, it shows the way the postcolonial novel allows for the emergence of a national consciousness paving the ground for the national belonging to arise. Finally yet importantly, engaging with Ngugi's theory of language, the last section examines the construction and restoration national identity that is embedded in the rejection of the colonizer's language and the indigenization of the mother tongue.

Part I

**Chapter I: Creative Writing,
Ideology and Identity: Historical
and Theoretical Frameworks**

“The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude”

George Orwell

Introduction

Civilizations are more frequently celebrated by the lives and the works of their creative writers. There is, however, something essentially momentous about colonialism, post-colonialism in one part and literature in another part. In some senses, creative writing or literature turns out to be one of the focal points of postcolonial discourse as theorists of postcolonial studies pervasively questioned the role of literary writings produced in countries that recently attained independence. Those countries commenced coming to terms with the legacy of colonialism with the hope of asserting national identities. Nonetheless, the process of constructing identities was, and still is, being restrained by the fact that we dwell a globalized world of fluid borders, of rapidly moving conceptions and inevitably prevailing ideologies.

It is not, nonetheless, sufficient merely to recognize the extent to which identity construction is notoriously affected by postcolonial ideologies, but these national identities should be maintained through cultural demarcating lines. However, before carrying forward such assertions, it is indispensable to approach theoretically and historically the study's keywords. In light of this and for the purposes of research, chapter I entitled “Creative Writing, Ideology and Identity: Historical and Theoretical Frameworks” endeavors at affording a clear perception to the key concepts of the study. To begin with, it brings to light creative writing, its relation to the notion of imagination as well as expressiveness and originality. This chapter likewise conceptualizes and traces back the historical and theoretical

roots of ideology. Further and more importantly, it brings to the surface the connection of creative Writing (literature) to ideology. The chapter at the end, approaches manifold axes of identity. This includes addressing the ontological and historical origins of identity, construction of the self, personal identity, and collective identity construction.

1. Creative Writing: Theoretical Groundings

Writing is a medium of human communication, which holds an extremely special and significant role in man's life. It evolved throughout time to shift from prehistoric paintings in caves that served primary purposes like hunting and worshipping to the inscription and recording of signs and symbols with the aim of entertaining and sharing human experience, charting the outset of creative delineation. In a sense, writing met the human need to leave behind a trace of oneself through creative expression. Writing, therefore, turned out to be an 'aesthetic' or an 'artistic' vehicle, which implemented the human wish to outlast its creator.

The term 'Creative Writing' started to acquire a paramount importance over the last decades. Although many scholars suggested definitions for the term, the term is still subjective, and therefore difficult to define. This difficulty is mainly due to a vagueness characterizing the usage of the term and a lack of substance in so far the definition is concerned. In this regard, it is sometimes intricate to distinguish between creative and non-creative writing. Hence, many scholars questioned the criteria of stratification in order to group writings into academic or technical in one part and creative writings in other part.

a. Defining Creative Writing

For centuries, people have largely been struggling to define art albeit without a full success. For many, 'creative writing' is an art and then is hard to define. One can determine what creative writing is for what he sees, but others may see things quite otherwise. This means, it depends much on the readers' judgments.

For many scholars, ‘creative writing’ is a vexed and loaded term and at that juncture it is synonymous to literature. Correspondingly, the two terms may be interchangeably used as both of them involve the craft of making things up and certainly, “literature nowadays [is] often referred to as ‘creative writing’” (Throsby 58).

Many theorists maintain that all the written works of a permanent artistic value whether short or voluminous materials can be categorized as ‘Creative Writing’. It essentially encompasses a broad spectrum of writing genres that are assessed as works of art, particularly novels, short stories, plays, and poems with the restriction that not every written document can be classified among the works of creativity. Paul Dawson suggests that “‘creative writing’ operates as a synonym for literature; for published works of fiction, poetry and drama” (21). Nonetheless, critical books and newspapers, magazines, and literary journals for instance do not fall into this category.

Owing to its elusiveness, no one is fully able to suggest an authoritative or a neat definition for creative writing. However, the concept is thought of as “a form of writing that expresses the writer’s feelings, emotions, experiences, ideas, or thoughts obtained at a conscious or subconscious level. It is more driven by the writer’s need to “express”, and is generally articulated in the most unique, inventive, and poetic way” (“Definition of Creative Writing”).¹ In another situation, Laurie Rozakis describes creative writing as “a kind of writing that uses language in imaginative and bold ways” (06).

b. Forms of Creative Writing: Fiction

Creative writing falls into two main categories: fiction and nonfiction. Fiction is writing about imaginary characters and events that are not based on real people and facts or actual happenings. In fiction, novels, short stories and plays are the dominant literary sub-genres. Broadly speaking, the classification of literary works into different genres has been a

¹ <http://www.writeawriting.com/creative/definition-creative-writing/>

major concern of literary theory. Literary theorists have since then produced a number of divergent and sometimes even contradictory divisions. Fiction for instance refers to prose, poetry, and even drama. Yet, some critics use the term exclusively to refer to prose or other times the term is used as a synonym with the novel. Meyer Howard Abrams in this context writes:

Fiction is any literary narrative, whether in prose or verse, which is invented instead of being an account of events that in fact happened. In a narrower sense, however, fiction denotes only narratives that are written in prose (the novel and short story), and sometimes is used simply as a synonym for the novel. (94)

Due to the incongruous nature of fiction, a blurring line between what really occurs and what is imagined emerged. Depending much on the stances taken by theorists of fiction, a further problematic about the relation between the author, the reader and the fictional text rose to complicate things. In one part, John Anthony Cuddon in his endeavor to explore the nature of fiction, he draws the attention to the opaqueness enveloping the term and the broad scope that usually characterizes its usage remarkably when it comes to stratifying the literary works. He moreover suggests that poetry and drama do not fall under fiction. On the contrary to Abram's assumption, Cuddon restricts fiction only to imaginative work, usually in prose. He states: "at any rate, it [fiction] does not normally cover poetry and drama though both are a form of fiction in that they are molded and contrived - or feigned. Fiction is now used in general of the novel, the short story the novella and related genres" (320).

The broad responses fiction generates usually create readers in an endless pursuit for pleasure informed by texts. Albeit the emergence of new literary genres such as nonfiction genre tends to preempt the value of literary fiction, but the fiction remains "the backbone of the creative writing industry" (Starkey and Bishop 89). Fiction kept, and still keeps, its popularity on the top regardless of the socioeconomic or political influences. Creative writers of fiction seem to have the most legitimate chance of achieving renown and fortune rather

than any other sort of writers. Fiction continues to draw the highest percentage of researchers in the world of academia or among general readers. Namely, literary theorists, critics, students, men and women feel always keen to be updated with new publications in the world of fiction. Fictitious works are luminous, protean and more often sharpen the readers' intuitions through offering pleasure. Readers in other words, immerse themselves in reading fiction books with the hope to be engaged in them, that they get caught up in their plots, that they feel penetratingly concerned for their characters, what they do and what is done to them (Currie 182). For reasons, these sorts of writings permit language to live and operate entirely different from other types, where language is tamed, ossified, drained of life. Language sometimes gets flattened by people, mostly those who do not much care about diversity or brilliance of the literary composed narrative. Therefore, authors excelling fiction are ranked on the lists top compared to any other authors of literary prosaic genres.

c. Creativity: Imagination and Expressiveness

In fact, creative writing is the manifestation of the writer's ideas and thoughts by employing imagination rather than presenting facts in a routinely mundane way. Imagination much helps the author reveal his feelings and emotions in a decent way that responds to the sensibility of wide range of readers. Hence, imagination is one of the primordial spices that a writer needs to embellish his narrative and communicate his messages.

Writers generally attempt to get at truths about humanity through poetics and storytelling. All authors who would like to try their hand at creative writing have to bear in mind that their writings may not strike the readers as creative in nature if they do not express the expectations or the thoughts of that society. In so doing, expressing society's prospects in canonical works of fiction, imagination turns an ostensibly first necessary step toward leaving impressions within readers. In a similar context, Ruth McDaniel claims that creative writing "is the ability to tap into your imagination and write works that make an impact on peoples'

lives, including your own” (v). Canonical authors are not merely of potent influence, but they are also influenced the circumstances of their nations and societies.

It is conventional, for example, to suppose that writers as artists express society’s culture including values, beliefs, customs, and rituals and their works, in turn, constitute a mirror to reflect the complexity of the society in question. Explicitly, the literary constructions reveal the authors’ outlooks, aspirations, and disillusionments. Operating within the boundaries of this particular mutual influence, there is a reciprocal relationship between societies and the artistic responses of creative writing in which a complex interplay between imagination and expressiveness imposes itself.

In addition to the aesthetic impact that it makes on its readers, fiction has a supplementary practical function. In a search for a truer form of art, fiction turned out to be a distinguished window that permits readers to explore one’s transcendent journey via inspiration that is translated on space of white papers. In this sense, inspiration illuminates authors allowing them to engage with layers of literary imagination in such a way that enables his reader see vivid sketches. The implication of imagination and the ability to transfer it to the audience is that there is more than the eye can see. This is to say, regardless of their degree of sensitivity towards literature, readers “are especially sensitive to the affective connotations of words, those meanings that exceed literal definitions” (Ward and Lawson 122) and thus they find themselves, not necessarily consciously, emotionally engaged in the literary experience. Authorial imagination offers readers an opportunity to experience life from beyond their own perspectives. More importantly, critical readers, in order to fathom the connotative expressiveness of words, may go beyond the surface structure of the letters.

In fiction, writers usually tell stories in which imaginary ideas and characters are creatively woven together. The narrative may revolve around fiercely painful situations, autobiographical contexts or the narrative may be a mere reflection of the author’s flights of

imagination. It is all about “bringing a specific problem to the pen and the paper can enable the situation to be seen more from different angles and as if through fresh eyes” (Bolton 113). Strong narratives allow writers to deal with life differently, to cope with the foggy scenes, to see the world more obviously and to act in the knowledge of that clarity.

For one thing, imagination and expressiveness arouse sensation and awaken the readers’ sense of taste. Interestingly enough, the act of creative writing underlies a mental activity in minds of talented writers. This powerfully justifies the detail that the focus in ‘creative writing’ goes beyond matters of recruitment or profession free choices. Precisely this belief became central to a number of theorists, who argued that ‘creative writing’ implicates “neurological activity that is independent of such choice” (Harper 91). Creative writing is thought of as a mental process that manifests itself in the nice interaction of words and ideas in the mind of the author. Hence, imagination helps author yield works sounding in peoples’ sensibilities as being discerning. A humanistic rather than a merely artistic, the reason why creative fictional writing is a worthwhile mode for human expression is that it serves as an instrument to enable mankind of self-discovery and then self-display.

Creative writers, as seekers of a universal truth, are more capable than any other type of creating or recreating a sense of wholeness. Throughout their imaginative journeys, they go beyond the rigid truth the commonplace people know. Through a laborious effort of supportive structures together with the essential ingredients of imagination, writers of fiction can achieve an authentic approach of life. Forming different perspectives, whose corrective spirit, can tweak major pitfalls that seem impossible to fix in real life. The writer hence undertakes the role of an artist, who responds, with high sense of responsibility, to literary hunger by providing a special kind of dwelling that no other forms of writing can nurture. A creative author suggests a diagnostic assessment for the events surrounding him/her, but it is rather the imagination that aptly acts it all:

Fiction can be enormous fun. Since it is a creation, you can let your imagination go and write what you want to write. [...] Fictional writing can help us to look in from the outside and it can enable us to try out all sorts of things which are impossible in life. It can enable us to see events from different angles and in different lights. Events in life can too often seem immutable, unchangeable. We can't change things which have happened, clearly, but we can change our story of them. And, often, it is our story which is at fault rather than the actual incident. (Bolton 111)

In order to voice personal experiences, fantasies, and sentiments, creative writers' sense of commitment entails a creative and innovative fiction. In so doing, they can produce seminal texts and it is at this precise moment that they can be celebrated as authors of original craft.

d. Creative Writing and Originality

It is believed that creative writing can help generate a personal world that is parallel to the truly existing world. This, it seems, can be done through narratives that tantalize readers with vivid images that are fashioned in the author's imagination. When communicating their innermost thoughts, creative writers should give something different from what has already been read. But more importantly, they can fascinate readers when their works sound original. In a preface of her book entitled "*Creative Writing How to unlock", your imagination, develop your writing skills- and get published*", Adele Ramet conceptualizes "creative writing" as: "having the power to create an imaginative, original literary production or composition and can be applied to a very broad spectrum of writing genres" (XI). That being said, literary production has to be original and self-expressive. *Chambers Dictionary* describes "creative writing" as "having the power to create, that creates, showing, pertaining to, imagination, originality" and writing as 'The act of one who writes, that which is written, literary production or composition' (*Chambers Dictionary*).

Actually, a major share of attention has been recently placed on the notion of originality in creative writing. With the evolution of literature, originality has become the

pinnacle of creativity. This increasingly growing importance of originality turned out to be the aesthetic creed in the literary cultural consciousness.

Literary originality, as a matter of fact, caused a hotly disputed controversy between literary theorists, mainly due to the ontological difficulties which characterized its emergence. Yet historically speaking, the idea of originality came with Romanticism and it is often referred to as 'romantic originality'. Ever since Edward Young had published his book *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), a dialectical fashion emerged to the epistemological scene. Young is held to be the heresiarch of originality for his views revolutionized the eighteenth century thought. His book especially constituted a departure point for a plethora of genealogies of originality that stand sometimes in convergent and other times in divergent stances. Young worked to indoctrinate originilization of literature worldwide.

Theorists began to question whether the creative writer is a creator or an inventor, whether his role is to rework ideas already existing through repackaging them or he is entailed to create something from nothing. By definition, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary states that originality is "the quality of being new and interesting in a way that is different from anything that has existed before" ("Originality" Oxford). Creative writing concerns only compelling authors who produce novels and fascinating things. Hence, newness and thought-provoking inspiration are both a way to generate moments of afflatus and thus genuine writings make their existence.

An original work "may be said to possess this quality if, as a result of the author's invention, he innovates a new form or mode; or, perhaps, uses hitherto undiscovered or unexploited themes and subjects" (Cuddon 623). Accordingly, for a writer to be qualified as being original he/she has to possess an authorial ability to display the power of mind for invention and innovation. In this respect, creative writers are the ones who originate new

styles, methods, unique combinations, thematic juxtapositions, groundbreaking thoughts, undone literary complexities, or uninvestigated literary subjects.

In sharp contrast with the Shakespearian times when the success of a literary work was measured in terms of its similarity and relatedness to other successful works, Edward Young framed what he described as natural and spontaneous originality. He made an analogy between a natural creation wherein tree for instance naturally grows and an original genius that sprouts the writer's talent. The latter generates a wide spectrum of products and ideas, which are first of their kind: inimitable, uncommon, or unexpected. He writes

an original may be said to be a vegetable nature; it rises spontaneously from the vital root of Genius; it grows, it grows it is not made: imitations are often a sort of Manufacture wrought up by those Mechanics, art and Labor, out of pre-existent materials not their own. (Young 07)

In its broadest terms, originality is the crux of creative writing, where the most valuable works are formed. To be accredited as original, authors have to fulfill the requirements of originality that creative work should be pure and substantial. This purity makes it even easier to distinguish between original and unoriginal projects. In particular, Peter Childs and Roger Fowler set three senses of originality. These senses express an intricate interplay between psychology and aesthetics together with the role of art in society. They are a triumvirate of “a psychological theory about the creative act; a theory concerning the proper function of art in society; an aesthetic theory” (Childs and Fowler 164). For many critics, the three senses are distinct but almost conflated.

It goes without saying, literary writings commonly generate manifold influences on authors and readers alike, that is “writing can have an impact on a broad range of physiological, physical, and mental states across many types of people (Sexton and Pennebaker 264). While it is commonly believed that literature is about psychology, the most profound impact that originality bears on authors and readers of creative writing is perhaps

one way psychological. In other part, José Jiménez Justiniano and Elsa Luciano Feal in the introduction to their book, *Art and the Artist in Society* accentuate the importance of an original self in producing an original work of an artistic value. The creative writer is therefore regarded as a representative of a social group and the writings are not meant only for approaching an individual self, but its utmost purpose is to communicate messages and to address the community's common affairs. Important note, one has to grasp that at the heart of individual art lies a desire to write the community. Otherly said, "The collective could participate in the act of creation, becoming, in this way, "the artist". Art became more than an individual expression; it became a means to present a social group" (Justiniano and Feal 13). Of course, creative writers assume the task of being the mouthpiece of the community's collective psyche.

In responding to high standards of originality, creative writers can aesthetically overwhelm their readers. The artistic power considerably changes aesthetic manifestations into a process of inventing things of tremendous quality. Theodor W. Adorno points out: "originality is in the process of being transformed into the act of inventing types, a transformation in which originality is changed qualitatively without, however, disappearing in the process" (173). By using the power of artistic expression, creative authors can be original by investing an existing energy into a high quality work without losing the traits in the process.

Creative writing adequately enforces into practice the author's multitude of intentions to thrill the readers with things of sublime. Originality is extremely connected to aesthetics, as it is the output of the author's self-awareness. In this context, George Bailey considers that originality "is relevant to artistic or aesthetic value [...] originality is an aesthetic value when what is novel in the work is its giving creative expression to a new power of the artist's mind"

(458). For one thing, writers originally express their homeland's mores, and in doing so they forge an original identity of their own.

In creative writing, two theories are held by many western thinkers to have been framed and evolved to institute poles for literary production: the theory of invention and the theory of creation.

Since antiquity, literary and namely poetic production had been a matter of imitation. Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for poetry writing which was referred to as *mimesis*. *Mimesis* accentuates that poetry is an art of imitation; consequently, invention was the most common form of writing. Notwithstanding the earlier efforts, a new urgency arose to renovate literary traditions. It has become incontestably clear that invention was desirable to play key roles in the formation of creative texts. Invention in fact is working upon the re-arrangement, derivation or re-derivation, or recombination of items and things already existing. In this regard, inventing writers artistically permute pre-existing material into utterly novel narrative combinations.

Again, the invention theory paved the way for people possessing extraordinarily creative capacities to blaze passages into the world of original creative writings. Creative power much depends on genius, which has high orders and endowment that ordinary people do not have. Creative authors thus have the ability to generate things, which do not exist in nature. If they do exist, creative authors recombine not as beforehand.

In creative writing, the invention means moving from one point of unknown to the point of knowledge. Perhaps the most demanding aspect of the creative act is to map frontiers of awareness on paper. In similar framework, Michael Carter in his book entitled *Where Writing Begins: A Postmodern Reconstruction* asserts that "invention denotes the threshold event of beginnings, the borderline between known and unknown, the point of openness at

which the known is placed against the unknown and the unknown against the known” (141). Creative writing in short marks a threshold that engages the creator in invention of much vitality.

However, in their attempt to understand when is something said to be an original invention, others assume that originality in creative writing is to construct something that has not been copied before. Rather than closing down the questions of invention, however, originality compels a sort of mimetic legitimacy with imitation in order to allow combining or assembling diverse parts to come up with something of aesthetic quality. Edward Shils argues that “invention was the finding of something in nature which had hitherto been known and which hadn’t been previously copied or, if it had been copied hadn’t been copied in the same way” (152). That what makes invention in first hand conceived as intrinsic to creativity.

The literary permutation results in a creative montage of words to obtain original discovery. Originality in invention entails a skillfulness whereby the author plays with words in the same way a conjurer plays magic tricks to impress the audience. Writers as inventors enthrall the reading public with the richness and beauty that their publications seem to promise. Writers, to wit; “invent or re-invent words as well as select them; they play with words as jugglers play with properties of their art and in the process of manipulation they instill new meanings and discover original contexts” (Holbrook 131) Simply put, originality maintains the readers’ interest through novel expression not to speak of the powerful emotional appeal.

Invention in art generally and in artistic writing in specific is something significant. Yet, for many theorists many, it is no more satisfactory in that they feel it inconvenient to repackage words through combining the pre-existing. More often, they deal with writings operating in this system as benighted and inadequate. Hence, the word ‘create’ was introduced

to substitute 'invent'. Along similar viewpoint, it has been lamented that "the concept of invention as finding of something already existent in nature did not satisfy the new conception of powers of men and their privileges with regard to what existed outside and before them. The words "Create" took place" (Shils 152). Under aesthetic pressures, a desperate need for reconsidering the architecture of literary expression was significantly more imperative than ever.

In a more groundbreaking sense, Renaissance arose to spark revolutionary ideas regarding poetry writing. From the idea of imitation has sprung the most enduring opposition against imitated invention. Originality, in other words, originated to entail the newness of the subject matter. Poetry like literature undertakes the task of representing universal truths. This universal truth cannot be attained unless authors create something newfangled. Consequently, the theory of creation came to explain how literary novelty operates. The 'creation' marked a shift from a metaphoric sense to gain an etymological connotation. The theory, this is to say, draws an "analogy, if not an equality, with divine creation, whereby the literary work is created from beyond the material or phenomenal context." (Macfarlane 1)

In broader framework, the conception of the poet as 'creator' was presented to Elizabethan England by Sir Philip Sidney in his "*An Apology for Poetry*" (1595). Paul Dawson expounds the notion of creation as an intellectual process in which an articulate vision is molded inside the poet's mind. He maintains that "the Renaissance introduced the idea of poetry as creation. The creation of a world in the poet's mind, of a heterocosm, was considered analogous to the divine act of creation by God" (Dawson 25). The hyperbolic alignment of poets' ability to yield original texts to God's heavenly act of creation, thus closely connects literature to creative originality. Sidney's philosophies *vis a vis* literary creation became the vital starting point in the radicalization of literary criticism. Henceforth, a poet was perceived to have a faculty of creation so that he could give birth to original things

just in the same way God has the ability to create. An artist grows into a creator and thus, the internalization of divinity in creative writing engenders a native power of imagination:

To 'create' meant being like the Deity in making something which had no prior counterpart to the act of creating it. Thus, the main meaning of originality shifted from the world outside the acting human being to the world within him. The artist became a "creator" and thereby assumed a god-like lineament. By the latter part of the eighteenth the adjective "creative" to qualify power or imagination had become well-established in the usage of literary criticism. (Shils 152-3)

In another dimension, Derek Attridge assumes that writings can be original suppose they do not literally break the norms of the cultural matrix, where they are brought into being. Along a similar line, Attridge states: "to be original, [...] is to create something that marks a significant departure from the norms of the cultural matrix within which it is produced and received, a much rarer achievement" (35). In this sense, authors create a general taste by means of frequent returns to earlier writings and hence are valued as highly original in reference to the wide range of cultural parameters operating within a given geographical and ideological context.

From the explanation stated earlier, it can be safely said that invention and creation are two faces for one coin. Hitherto, creators produce material fully groundbreaking, whereas inventors permute things existing beforehand into innovative arrangements. Robert Macfarlane localizes the borderline between the two terms arguing that "according to one paradigm the work of art is an addition to what exists; according to the other, it is an edition of it" (01). In its fullest sense, originality in creative writing either invention and or creation

Paradoxically enough to what has been expounded, there emerged a question that resulted in stormy set of theses and anti-theses in so far the idea of pure originality is concerned: is there something ever original since an original project is the one not thought up

or exploited previously? It goes without saying, sometimes we happen to notice that two or more people can come up with the same idea unconventionally. However, people can voice original thoughts and ideas by employing the language otherwise.

Language is used for a thousand different purposes and nevertheless the words are privatized by individuals. Talented authors creatively use language in such a way that it can express several meaningful patterns. They mold their thoughts, feelings and emotions in an individual view of the world. Words on a page of literature give the most powerful impetus for writers to convey a penumbra of feelings and moods in entirely different ways. Holbrook Jackson highlights the difference between great writers of words and ordinary users of words. He announces: “great writers recharge ordinary words with fuller and richer meaning so that a new light is thrown upon common things, rather than a new word into the melting pot of common speech” (131). It is the sensibility of the authors which helps produce a highly heteroglossic Bakhtinian dialogue between words that seem ordinary in the eyes of readers.

There is no absolutely dividing line that can clearly mark the boundaries of legalized repetition, permitted recurrence and resemblance. Inasmuch as it is not entirely clear, a dispute namely arose, emanating reflective implications about the insightful understanding of originality. To bridge up the gap between the reuse and resemblance in literary texts, a rich literature rose. Critics such as Roland Barthes, Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, Harold Bloom and Jackson Bate have extensively written about the concept of originality and subsequently many theories were articulated in the direction of elucidating the notion that the nature of the texts are not the original product of one author. Julia Kristeva formulated the theory “Intertextuality” and later French literary critic Gerard Genette took Kristeva’s idea and insightfully expanded it to introduce his theory “Transtextuality”.

In fact, “Intertextuality” ushered in a new understanding of the relationships between texts regarding originality. In addressing the way that texts are mutually informed, it was

implied: “the fact that intertextuality and allusion thus raises questions about originality: how far literary texts originate in an author’s mind and how far are they composed out of other literature” (Montgomery and Durant 164). On the other hand, Harold Bloom and Jackson Bate formalized a premise called “Anxiety of Influence”. Bloom claims that everyone is vulnerable to be influenced by the external world, ever since he or she comes to life. i.e. there is a reciprocal effect between the world and creative writers; they impact upon other writers and they relentlessly get influenced. Bloom questions the extent to which originality is refined: “there is all this talk about originality, but what does it amount to? As soon as we are born the world begins to influence us, and this goes on till we die” (52). Bloom’s theory was primarily applied on poetry and then generalized to all literary genres like the novel. The notion of ‘anxiety of influence’ stipulates that all poems, indeed all texts, must inevitably be responses to previous works and precursors, that authors, readers, and critics alike cannot distinct themselves from relationships of textual influence (Gordon 717). Creative authors work hard to write original texts lest their writings may sound interactive with others. Despite the fact that all that texts may aesthetically or ideologically co-exist, but in the same way they can bear conflicting ideologies.

2. Ideology: Historical and Theoretical Foundations

a. Conceptualizing Ideology

Ideology is an overarching term in sociology as well as in cultural and literary studies. It is presumed that no cultural creations including literature can escape being affected by ideology. Studying creative writing or literature has always been characterized by the presence of a component called ideology, which seems particularly significant to literary analysis.

Literary critics and theorists are growing keenly interested in decoding the esoteric nature that envelops the relationship between literature and ideology. Though ideology as a

concept was primarily used to refer to dogmas, which are meant for dealing with specific political and economic contexts, it witnessed a crucial extension that ushered in new insights of the term to probe into other fields. Literary critics and theorists assume a responsibility for unveiling and decoding the dimensions of ideology and its manifold bearings upon literature. In the case of literature, a closer look at the historical development of the term 'ideology' holds especially important as it can effectively facilitate the task of identifying the relationship between the novel as a form of creative writing and ideology.

Like many other terms, ideology is elusive and ambivalent to define. There is a lack of clear definitions owing to intellectual or epistemological reluctance to endeavor definitions to the term. That is no surprise that none assumes to come up with a neat and adequate definition of ideology. Although the notion of ideology is very often used by students, politicians, newspapers and the like, but none knows exactly what the term exactly denotes. What is more, most of the time people are very cautious when it comes to deal with ideology and accordingly they do not usually employ it in a positive sense.

The resulting dissonance in so far the definition is concerned is expected and justifiable because some suggested definitions go in bald contrasts with one another, producing a state of confusion. From the set of definitions that circulate, the study would choose the ones that are convenient to the study. The suggested definitions would not be compressed into a single definition to resolve the problematic. Rather, it will endeavor to approach ideology regarding creative writing and later regarding identity.

Ideology, by definition, is "a theory, or set of beliefs or principles, especially one on which a political system, party or organization is based" (Cambridge Ideology 1). In similar context, "*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition*" suggests two definitions for the term. First, ideology is "the body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, a group, a class, or a culture" (Ideology 2). Second, the conception ideology means "a set of doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of a political,

economic, or other system” (Ideology 3). Raymond Boudon and François Bourricaud assert that

ideology is used to describe a system of values, or more usually beliefs, which makes on the one hand no appeal to ideas of the sacred or transcendent, and on the other hand deals with some particular aspect of the political and social organization, of societies, or, more generally, of their destiny. (208)

On the other hand, Theodor W. Adorno in his book *The Authoritarian Personality*” defines ideology as being

an organization of opinions, attitudes, and values—a way of thinking about man and society. We may speak of an individual’s total ideology or of his ideology with respect to different areas of social life: politics, economics, religion, minority groups, and so forth (02).

From the definitions proposed earlier, ideology can be identified as a set of precepts, dogmas or doctrines which constitute the basis for political, economic, or social systems and these systems in turn reflect social needs and expectations of an individual, a group, a class, or a culture. Taken as a whole, ideology radiates the impression that owing to its resonant association with politics, ‘ideology’ for many people holds a negative or undesirable significance.

While the previous section epistemologically conceptualized the concept of ideology, it has become more important than ever to apprehend the various voices of critics literary or men of letters about the connection of literature with ideology. The question wrestled with by readers, audiences and scholars is this: Where is literature placed in the schema of ideological –political to be exact –debate? A long-running debate about the role of ideology in shaping the form and content of literary works and the role of the literary works in transplanting and indoctrinating the ideological thought has come to exist. First of all, before spotting light on the connection of literature with ideology, the latter has to be placed within a historical context. Inasmuch as it is situated within historical, philosophical and social perspectives, this

will precisely show us how the notion of ideology became central to subsequent theorists of literary criticism.

b. Antoine Destutt and Ideology Coinage

The genesis of ideology, it goes without saying, is said to have roots in the highly dialectical, philosophical, political and social debates and struggles characterizing history of the French Revolution. The concept of ‘ideology’ must be then subjected to a precise historical examination as it had no literal inherent ontological implication. This is to say, the term’s connotations shifted across time and situating it within its historical background plays ostensibly a visible role in understanding the development of ideology over the past and reaching modern times.

Indeed, the French Revolution was the outcome of Enlightenment, which exposed people to particular rational thoughts. The revolutionary ideologies were based on human reason and then became a source of authority and have kept on to be a primordial part of modern society.

The word ‘ideology’ was effectively coined by Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1754- 1836) in 1796 and from the early decades to present day, the term developed to gain manifold connotations and significances. De Tracy and the so called ‘ideologues’ or ideologists were adherents of a philosophical group in France, who were esteemed for their morality and the new way through which ideas were scientifically generated.

Indeed, the endeavors at studying the way in which thoughts are constructed and connected with epistemology, ontology and social practices antedate de Tracy’s coinage of the term ideology, in 1796. To illustrate the point, figures as Francis Bacon (1561- 1626), John Locke (1632- 1704), David Hume (1711- 1776), or Étienne de Condillac (1715- 1780) were such key intellectual predecessors to the discipline of ideology studies that their contribution is undeniable. Yet beyond doubt, it was de Tracy who laid the critical foundations of the ideology study.

By introducing the term ‘ideology’, Destutt de Tracy presented groundbreaking thoughts whereby ideas are stimulated by the physical environment as a reliable source of knowledge. It is by other means the internalization of new standards for the creation of ideas by discarding spiritual, mystical or supernatural nature of the process. The ideologues’ empiricist creed drew the conclusion that they had to defy the spiritual agency and diminish its potent influence. John Daniel Cash explicitly expounds that “the ideologues challenged the concept of God because it lacked corresponding sensations” (*Identity, Ideology and Conflict* 28). By contract, as an anti-metaphysical philosopher, de Tracy upheld that all knowledge derives from only sensation and thus “ideological certitude replaced Christian dogma, and Europe’s intellectuals became the new priests” (Cassels 01).

Specifically this notion became fundamental to subsequent theorists of that epoch that ideology was the process through which ideas came into being. Thus, De Tracy “like other thinkers of this time [...] believed that people could use science to improve social and political condition [...] To him, ideology was a study of the process of forming ideas, a science of ideas if you will” (Baradat 08). Since then, one might arguably maintain that the history of ideology marked the evolution of intellectual thought from metaphysical area to a materialized empiricist terrain.

Furthermore, with de Tracy ideology attained a critical tone for he was the first to give voice to the assumption that some groups, namely the religious ones, were deliberately involved in the distortion of reality for sake of serving their own interests. To purify the process of forming ideas, there had to be, according to de Tracy, a secular educational system that limited and mitigated the profound impact of spiritual dogmas that were meant for serving the benefits of a minority of hegemonic group at the expense of the oppressed majority by the religious agency. Tracy’s secular and laic views constituted an opposing resistance to the Napoleonic project of using the Catholic Church as a key means for extending domination. Patrick Heinrich, in similar vein, assumes:

[Ideology] dismissed contradictory ideas as unscientific or non-sensical. Such ideas, de Tracy argued, should be discredited, overcome and replaced, and he argued strongly in favor of secular mass education towards achieving this end, which he believed would prevent the intentional distortion of facts by members of elite seeking to sustain their own privileges. [...] Tracy's atheism and laic beliefs, as well as his affiliation to republicans presented a latent threat to the autocratic ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte [...] following the re-establishment of the Catholic Church in France in 1801. (Heinrich 9)

In spite of the vitality and the sensation it bore upon the political and cultural scene, the study of ideology did not, as it was expected, proliferate. No major importance has been placed on the reading as well analyzing of the writings of de Tracy and his disciples, for they were often regarded as having initiated nothing original beyond what had already been contributed by their illustrious predecessors. Moreover, though were venerated for their morality, yet ideologues' rejection of metaphysics sparked a wide opposition of the French government. In fact, idéologues' heyday was short-lived as they were not so popular that "they were taken to have posited a highly reductionist and materialist philosophy of sensations, in which human thought and action could hardly be distinguished from those of other animals, and where moral and religious experiences were dismissed as illusory." (Head 02) Moreover, the 1790s have been deemed notable mainly for its men of politics and military leaders, rather than philosophers.

It is thus self-evident that the modern and the most appealing implication of the conception ideology bears the imprint of the position and the standpoint of those who devised it, namely, the political men of action. The political sphere, in other words, was a pivotal basis for politicians to ideologize their political experience.

Ideology as a thought or reflection of an epistemological and ontological nature proved futile qua the chief purpose of knowledge was a universal reality, a reality that can be attained only by means of enforcing the thought into a practical activity.

Keenly aware of the necessity of a practical conduct, ideology cannot secure a reliable access to political and social reality. In this context, Karl Mannheim, one of the most leading voices in sociology of knowledge, maintains that “the new word [ideology] gives sanction to the specific experience of the politician with reality, and it lends support to that practical irrationality which has so little appreciation for thought as an instrument for grasping reality” (64). Mannheim believes that ideology came into existence due to the widely growing gulf between the political thought and its practical effect. This political theory speaks instantaneously and entirely against the testable evidence in ideologies.

c. Ideology from Napoleonic Deriding Connotation to Marx’s Interpretation

The historical reconstruction of the shifts in the meaning of ideology points out that the modern meaning of the word originated when Napoleon Bonaparte politically used it in a contemptuous way to hurl criticism at his political adversaries or the so called ‘the ideologues’. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Napoleon condemned the ideologues considering their thought as negative and destructive. The danger, in Napoleon’s standpoint, lay in their wholly elimination of metaphysical aspects of life. With their thought rooted in the tradition of Condillac², they hankered for founding the cultural sciences on Enlightenment tenets of empiricism, anthropological and psychological basics. However, what seems somewhat ambivalent and to some extent confusing is that Napoleon Bonaparte himself was a member of that intellectually rebellious group. Historians argue that Napoleon was an enlightened zealot and a staunch supporter of the ideologues’ ideas. However, he got around the ideologues’ manifesto as soon as he had been elevated to emperor.

² Étienne Bonnot, Abbé de Condillac is the major exponent of a radically empiricist account of the workings of the mind that has since come to be referred to as “sensationalism”. On his version of empiricism, experience not only provides us with “ideas” or the raw materials for knowledge, it also teaches us how to allocate attention, remember, imagine, abstract, judge, and reason.

Ultimately, philosophers belonging to that defiant group opposed Napoleon's imperial ambitions, and thenceforth he abusively labeled them ideologists. The word took on a derogatory meaning that it has retained to the present day. In another sense, Napoleon's intentional deriding criticism to his opponents and qualifying them as daydreaming and visionaries was based on his denunciation to ideology as an obscure and foggy doctrine misleading people and invalidating the law rule. The term accordingly acquired a pejorative connotation. The French diplomat Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne, who is well-known for his *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, certifies the Napoleonic judgmental use of the word:

The word ideologue was often in Napoleon's mouth; and in using it he endeavored to throw ridicule on those men who he fancied to have a tendency towards the doctrine of definite perfectibility. [...] he looked on them as dreamers, seeking for the type of a universal constitution, and considering the character of man in the abstract only. (205)

- **German View of Ideology**

While the Napoleonic negative coding of the term was employed in a pejorative sense with the objective of deriding his intellectual rivals, in Germany a group of thinkers sought to invest in the French accumulations. In another words, drawing on French criticism of religion and religious institutions, German theorists laid the foundation for ideology studies. Ludwig Feuerbach (1804- 1872) is so prominent in approaching ideology and its connection to spiritual realm. His objective does not fall far from that of de Tracy. Feuerbach's book *The Essence of Christianity* provided a critique of Christianity, which defined religion as an oppressive power over humankind. Feuerbach contended that the only means worth to liberate humankind from religious fetters was reason. Feuerbach vigorously influenced generations of later thinkers and contribution gave impetus for subsequent studies of ideology in Germany, most notably Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

From the beginning, ideology had been closely associated with politics. In a sense, it came almost entirely from political extremes, which are constantly opposed to the status quo.

Nonetheless, it is proposed that ideology also brings to mind the conflicting set of ‘isms’: classicism, capitalism, communism, colonialism, fascism, modernism, and the like. All those incompatible ideologies fought for political, economic and social supremacy throughout the twentieth century. Political ideology took the lion’s share and no one can deny the political dominating color of ideology because “politics is the “home turf” of ideology and remains its referent current” (Gerring 968). Political ideologies recommend abrupt and radical changes in the existing order, and it is usually fueled by rational motivations. Putting it even more to the point, Baradat confirms that “*ideology exists whenever politics are motivated by intellectual impulses*” (09 emphasis added). However, new ideological meanings were generated according to the contexts in which it was produced and in the situations in which it operated.

When time went on, ideology began to shift from Napoleonic political pejorative employment of the term to extend to other spheres. In this sense, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels took on the epistemological accumulations of the Napoleonic epoch to propound an explicit system of thought that was critiqued and expanded to adjust to the profound and sweeping upheavals that nineteenth century societies underwent. Ideology consequently has gained a sense of neutrality in the analysis of differing political opinions and views of social groups. This means, this transition brought about displacement of ideological contents, but the only thing that has been maintained was approaching reality from the same political standards. At the most basic level, Marxists to some extent drew upon the materialized nature of reality to introduce their views on ideology. Hence, it is believed that “the history of the concept of ideology from Napoleon to Marxism, despite changes in content, has retained the same political criterion of reality” (Mannheim 65). The movement from Napoleonic to Marxist interpretation of ideology was a far-reaching watershed. It was sweeping in the sense that it triggered a change from deriding thinkers and bearers of enlightenment (*ideologues*) ideas to deriding the ideas themselves. Similarly, Joel Krieger argues: “thus the meaning of the term began to change: ideology ceased to refer only to the science of ideas and began to

refer also to the ideas themselves, this is, a body of ideas that were alleged to be erroneous and divorced from the practical realities of practical life” (Krieger 381). In an inclusive sense, the change was inevitably dictated by the tumultuous times, when politicians and intellectuals traded criticism about the dissemination of new thoughts.

Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) developed a further interpretation of the nature and significance of ideology. Albeit Marx and Engels promulgated an innovative theoretical context of ideology, which laid the foundations for a potent school thought, but this seemed to have been somewhat less brilliant and penetrative than the critique they issued on the relationship between individuals and society and between markets and the state. Jan Rehmann, for instance, postulates that “Marx and Engels certainly did not elaborate an explicit and systematic ideology- theory in a way comparable to the rigor and coherence of their critique of political economy” (21). In short, although Marx and Engels did not define the term ideology in their writings, and in spite of the fact that they did not use in a clearly and consistently informative way, their contribution was by no means deniable.

- **Criticizing Young Germans**

Karl Marx’s *The German Ideology*, co-authored with Friedrich Engels, was so seminal that it helped in conceptualizing the term ideology. Marxist theory was the first to achieve a fusion of the particular and total conceptions of ideology. It has been demonstrated that Napoleon’s derogatory outlook on ideology was carried forward by Marx and Engels, who “developed the pejorative Napoleonic view of ideology into a theoretical framework, and from there into a critical political program” (Heinrich10). Hence, Marx and Engels go further to controvert de Tracy’s assumption that ideology is not merely a science of ideas. They furthermore regarded de Tracy’s views as intangible as well as disconnected from the lives of ordinary people.

In another Dimension, Marx and Engels inveighed on the interpretations of the so called ‘Young Hegelians’ such as Ludwig Feuerbach, and Bruno Bauer. The Young Hegelians were branded as superficial and unimportant thinkers, sharing the precepts of French *ideologues*. The comparison was valid in the sense that their views were much pretty the same as those of de Tracy and his associates. More specifically, those views were held to be fully theoretical and thus they had contributed nothing to account for the material circumstances of social and political contexts of life. This is why the title of *The German Ideology* seems an overtly expressive as Marx opens with a bitter attack on the Young Hegelians idealism (Löwy 110).

- **Cultural Materialism**

Marx and Engels highlighted the idea that history is of a materialist dimension. The materialist notion of history and society thus opposed the beliefs articulated by Feuerbach. Marx’s criticism stemmed from the fact that ideology is the distorted side of history and history must be materialized to rid oneself of oppression. Marx and Engels wrote,

We will have to examine the history of men, since almost the whole ideology amounts either to a distorted conception of this history or to a complete abstraction from it. Ideology is itself only one of the aspects of this history. (35)

More frequently, however, Marx and Engels propounded dichotomous differentiation between ideas and ideology in one part and the human activity and the practice of that activity in other part. At the most basic level, historical materialism places emphasis in first hand upon production and reproduction of material experience rather than accentuating importance of consciousness. Of course, Marx and Engels’ *The German Ideology* “developed Marx’s materialist conception of history by playing out some implications of the distinction between consciousness, ideas and ideology on the one hand and sensuous human activity or practice on the other” (Cash *Ideology and Social and Cultural Theory* 115). It can be understood that when humans mentally practice their experiences; they produce conceptions of the world.

In setting forth his views on history, the prominent theorist of cultural studies the French Marxist Louis Althusser recapitulates Marx's notion that ideology has no history by opposing it with the concrete history of concrete material individuals. He claims that ideology is a pure and empty dream. It is imaginarily constructed and accordingly it denotes the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real circumstances of existence. He mentions that ideology is perceived

as a pure illusion, a pure dream, i.e. as nothingness. All its reality is external to it. Ideology is thus thought as an imaginary construction whose status is exactly like the theoretical status of the dream among writers before Freud. [...] Ideology is a 'representation ' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. (Althusser *Ideological State Apparatuses* 254-56)

Along similar context, the call for such materialist reading of history was a necessity. Ideology according to Ivan Sitak "*is not a conscious lie, but an illusion of the epoch*" (46 my emphasis), it is rather as an integral component of a new theoretical Marxist system, which goes beyond confines of delusion to deal with people's daily life.

- Ideology of Classes: False Consciousness

As a critical tool, ideology in the Marxist tradition attained a novel status in which societies, broadly speaking, are divided into classes. Ideology in this sense may play a significant part in addressing the contradictory objectives and interests of various social classes. Marx and Engels maintain that ideology is a fabrication used by a certain group of people to rationalize themselves and defend their privileges that are based on incorrect interpretations of the nature of politics. Marx and Engels placed due emphasis on the role of class position and class interests in thought and consequently situated the term within class struggle and domination. They assert that "the ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas; hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance" (Marx and Engels 67). Furthermore, ideology was believed it may contribute in moulding the perception

of the social world and the way they operate within it. As regards Marx's views, "ideology comes to mean any cultural form or system of representation, or any form of consciousness, which at once, captures and distorts class interests which are the natural attributes of a properly ordered society" (Cash *Ideology and Social and Cultural Theory* 115).

In their view, dealing with the circumstances, which had given rise to the ideology, was the only means to liberate mankind of oppression for they assumed ideological thought to be socially determined. The same thought hides, at the same time, the interests that ideology serves. What is more, Marx and Engels accentuated the importance of material internalization of consciousness as an indispensable tool for struggling social oppression. Marx and Engels "claimed that consciousness³ is materially conditioned, and therefore that is impossible for classes through ideology to successfully contest oppressive ideology and achieve emancipation" (Heinrich10). Consciousness in this framework inescapably came as an opposition to what Marx and Engels came to call "false consciousnesses". False consciousness epitomizes a situation where things are supposed to function separately and independently of material constraint, whereas they do not operate in isolation from modes of thinking socially constructed (Decker 01). Further and more importantly, Marx disapproved of the Darwinist ideology, which also played a key role in the formation of social classes:

Ideology was false consciousness because the dominant class was able to dominate the majority of people in society by explaining that the existing relations of domination were natural order of things and have such an explanation accepted by the dominated majority. (Fourie 315)

The social Darwinist principle: 'survival for the fittest' is then thought of as a false consciousness precept, which was internalized to justify economic and social exploitation of the dominated working class.

³ Marx argues that "*Morality, religion, metaphysics, and all the rest of ideology as well as the forms of consciousness corresponding to these, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. [...] It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness.*" (Marx 42)

In addressing the dissonance that ideology created Marx and Engels suggested that man needed a historical materialist consciousness combined together with development. His thesis proceeds on the basis that in that without the development realized in manifold areas of technology, slavery as an ideology could never end. In a sense, man is the producer of conceptions and conceptions are devoid phrases; hence, phrases could not emancipate man. The improvement of circumstances is the very means to come to terms with ideology:

We shall, of course, not take the trouble to explain to our wise philosophers that the "liberation" of "man" is not advanced a single step by reducing philosophy, theology, substance and all the rubbish to "self-consciousness" and by "Liberation" is a historical and not a mental act, and it is brought about by historical conditions, the level of industry, commerce, agriculture, intercourse. (43-44)

In short, ideology continuously transformed to grow into a fundamental component of a cultural system. Given the fact that creative writing's relationship with literature is at once so improbable and so necessary, what follows then is an attempt to respond to the question wrestled with by critics, researchers and critical readers: What is at the heart of the connection between ideology and literature? What governs this relationship?

3. Literature at the Crossroads of Ideology

In the previous section, ideology was thoroughly covered: its nature, its coming into being and its development from political context to social one. However, the questions that every critic or every literary man finds himself in urgency to raise are: What is the connection between literature and politics? Where is literature exactly placed in the schema of ideological debate? Such central questions have produced major literary controversies among theorists and critics in the few previous decades, who lament that the relationship between art and ideology is notoriously complicated and tough. However, this disputably mounting storm within that context gave rise to two radical assumptions that were carried forward by their exponents. Putting it even more to the point, Terry Eagleton, points out that "literature is

nothing but ideology in a certain artistic form – that works of literature are just expressions of the ideologies of their time” (*Marxism and Literary Criticism* 16). In other part, literature is regarded as pervasive defiance to ideological influences. Faced with this inevitability, “literature challenges the ideology it confronts, and makes this part of the definition of literary art itself” (16). Between the two hypotheses of whether literature is a ground for various dogmas or in resistance to them many outlooks surfaced.

Whereas many do not arguably admit that ideology found access to literature, many others take an extreme stance of the issue. Albeit some theorists of literary studies imposed a gap between creative writing as an artistic expression on the one hand and ideology as a storage space of conflicting thoughts, ideas, concepts, and imaginations on the other, but this was viewed to a certain degree as ideological itself. Still, some may go further to argue that literature sometimes goes far beyond ideology. Irena Makaryk contends: “While critics concerned with ideology and literature argue that the latter is inevitably ideological, they nevertheless tend to assume a privileged epistemology for literature to the extent that they think of it as simultaneously marked by the ideology and transcending it” (559). Those claims have not gone, however, unenforced into practice as theorists tried their hand at laying the foundations of an epistemology that addresses the way ideology informs literary texts.

Literature and namely the novel is a reflection of its writer’s ideas. The focus here is placed on the novel since the novel is increasingly becoming the most popular literary sub-genre in the twentieth century. Novelists cannot detach themselves from their political environment. The act of writing is not a process to be conducted with a deliberate isolation of the creative writer from national, political, economic, social, cultural and even psychological influences. The author may equally be impressed by continental influences imported from abroad.

This vulnerability of influence can be justified by the fact that not all novelists and poets merely keep the academic occupation of writing. In other words, most of them pursued successful parallel careers beside their academic ones. Some politicians could not have been notables if they had never written a line of literature. For instance, many readers may indeed be surprised to find Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) discussed in a series devoted to American literary authors. He has been far more politically active on many issues and his writings were so persuasive. Apart from Franklin, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), the third President of the United States, was also a literary figure as well. He wrote much political prose and many letters that helped shape the American revolutionary and post-revolutionary interests. These documents are nowadays analyzed as creative works. In other part, Washington Irving (1783-1859), who mapped the American literature, on the international cartography, had many interests, including, architecture, landscape design, traveling, and diplomacy next to writing.

Not surprisingly, almost everyone among the aforementioned names betook himself to a heated area of creative writing, whereby he mingled stands on specific political issues with the working of aesthetics. It is generally believed that ideology and creative writing go inseparable in the sense that “the ideological dimension of literary works has emerged, therefore as integral to their entire composition” (Jehlen 01). Basically, many authors find it badly difficult to distance themselves from the social polemics, religious teachings they embrace or philosophical motivations that constitute a system of ideological power. The novelists denounce or promote social, political, economic, cultural or linguistic conditions through the power of the pen. In so doing, the novel became an increasingly effective arm for getting one’s voice heard and one’s invisible challenges and ordeals seen.

a. From Ideological Aberrations to Ideology's Smuggling

It has become indisputably clear that ideology found its way to literature and critics of literary studies proved that ideologies could not be separated from politics, economics, history and dogmas. In fact, many novelists deliberately endeavor to undertake 'ideological self-distanciation', yet this attempt seemed impossible because "ideology slides into all human activity, that it is identical with the 'lived' experience of human existence itself" (Louis Althusser *A Letter on Art* 222). Ideology, along with discourse, turned out to be two focal notions in the comprehension of the cultural transmission of concepts, values, and assumptions.

Novelists, as artists, work upon implanting ideology into their novels by means delineating reality. This can passible through fusing the word with natural reality in order to obtain an esthetized experience. To some extent, the novel is conceived as a matrix, where ideologies are prevalent and subsequently "the novel [...] shows us what it is like to live within the ideologies within which it was written" (Ferretter 96). Once it does so, the novel becomes a seminal too for ideological identification of status quo.

Louis Althusser, a Marxist theoretician of enormous influence has elaborated a theoretical framework on which he backed up his assumptions as regards the place of ideology in the landscape of art. He set out one of the most important accounts of the correlation between art and ideology. In his essay significantly entitled "*A Letter on Art in Reply to Andre Daspre*", Althusser states that the role of art is to allow man to perceive reality. He illustrates through novels written by Honoré de Balzac and Alexandre Soljenitsyne, who owned an exceptionally potent ability to make their readers recognize reality. Althusser proclaims: "What art makes us see, and therefore gives to us in the form of 'seeing', 'perceiving' and 'feeling' (which is not the form of knowing), is the ideology from which it is born, in which it bathes, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it

alludes” (*A Letter on Art* 222). However, reality in this perspective does not mean that fictional narratives are out of consideration. Fiction, for most of the time, leaves a long lasting impact on its readers more than non-fiction can do. For one thing, the novel as an aspect of creative writing contains a complex interplay between language and ideology. The Belgian theorist and literary critic Paul De Man, in his turn, confirms the point:

This does not mean that fictional narratives are not part of the world and of reality; their impact upon the world may well be all too strong for comfort. What we call ideology is precisely the confusion of linguistic with natural reality, of reference with phenomenism.⁴ (De Man ‘*The Resistance to Theory*’ 11)

Ultimately, the process of inserting those ideologies was not explicit. At the beginning, it was about authorial allusions or what came to be known as ‘ideological aberrations’. In fact, the term ‘aberrations’ refers to the words, which disguise deep unexpressed meanings. In setting forth their interpretations, Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle in their co-written book entitled “*An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*”, illustrate the political and ideological aberrations of the President of the United States George W. Bush when he said, in a speech: “*I know the human being and fish can coexist peacefully.*” (171) Bennett and Royle questioned, “*What does President George W. Bush’s hallucinatory assertion tell us about literature and ideology* (171)? The answer to this question according to both of them can be found in Paul De Man essay “*The Resistance to Theory*”. Thanks to what De Man calls ‘the linguistics of literariness’, the ideological aberrations can be debunked and all the circumstances determining its occurrence can be unveiled. Paul De Man argues: “It follows that, more than any other mode of inquiry, including economics, the linguistics of literariness

⁴ Phenomenalism is a philosophical theory of perception and the external world. Its essential tenet is that propositions about material objects are reducible to propositions about actual and possible sensations. (Britannica Encyclopedia)

is a powerful and indispensable tool in the unmasking of ideological aberrations, as well as a determining factor in accounting for their occurrence” (De Man 11). More frequently then, a tremendous deviation in ideology has left its mark on literary texts.

The ideologies are the output of an unconscious tradition imposed by some institutions on their individuals. Bush’s ideology, for instance, was predetermined by his position of the USA and then his ideological aberrations linked up with the linguistic aberrations of his speech. In one word, the language itself is bound up with a certain view of the world, of a certain ideology.

With time, the prohibited ideology began to slide into literature in an implicit way. It was not very often accepted by the ensemble of critics and the reading public to find ideology in creative writing. Therefore, novelists were very cautious in smuggling ideology into literature. This process would pave the ground for a powerful penetration of ideology in the future. James T. Farrell in newspaper article entitled “*Literature and Ideology*”, published in “*The New International*”, published May 1942, asserts:

Today, as then, literary men are trying to smuggle ideology into literature. "Smuggle" is here an excellent word. They seek to consider, to discuss and to educate people in an indirect, oblique, yes, even casual, manner concerning the most serious problems which the human race faces. Instead of discussing questions such as socialism and communism, democracy and fascism, in terms of the relevant problems raised by those issues, they want to smuggle a discussion of such issues into novels. (616)

Smugglers of ideology into literary texts had ulterior motives stimulating them to entangle their readers in clandestine nets of ideology. They permeated their thoughts and creeds via literary forms such as novels, short stories and plays in the direction of gaining more exponents of their ideas. What is more, they believed that aesthetics had turned out to be a handmaiden of ideology’s hegemony. This idea proceeds on the basis that ideology is the representation of social fantasies through the practical function of ideology which should by

no means be isolated from the artistic dimension: “While ideology is seen as a radical expression of the social imaginary in modern society, it can only manifest itself through the ideological function, which does not necessarily destruct the aesthetic experience” (Potocco 01). Readers are largely invited to explore the tension between ideologies conveyed through novels as products aesthetic involvement.

At times, ideological writers decided to be more practical with their ideological commitments. This can only be done by smuggling ideology into fiction, poetry, plays, book reviews, banquet speeches and books labeled as literary criticism. Tempted by achieving ideological conquests, ideological writers risked undermining their readers, offending their sensibilities, as there were no critical legislations to expound and approach ideological dogma by simple elucidations.

b. From Ideology’s Smuggling to Ideological Permissiveness

In a world torn by the greatest convulsions of politics, politicians tended to put a term to ideology’s smuggling into literary texts and this is only possible through officializing or institutionalizing literature. They accentuated the importance of making novelists wear the uniform of ideology and those who refused to allow the penetration of ideology to their novels were regarded as skeptics and cynics. Therefore, there emerged a bond of critical legislators with the aim of theorizing for ideological permissiveness. Novelists assume ideological commitments and circulation of books with ideology started to penetrate the novelistic landscape in particular. Furthermore, many authors were politically oriented towards the implementation of specific ideological projects and hence their writings took their motivation from certain political programs. Ideology was then profoundly implanted into the novel either for promoting or subverting the dominant discourse.

Following the time when ideology was being smuggled into literature, critical legislators appeared to the scene in order to guide literary men who dared to overstep the borders and got access into the periphery of ideological politics. Those legislators were two kinds: pro literary inclusion of political and social ideology and against. They state that aesthetics and politics are dialectically engaged and therefore political ideology becomes inherent in any textual expression. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of the aesthetic politics is that “the divided and shifting ground upon which matters of beauty, perception, taste, and the sublime stand stems from elemental fissures between art and politics” (Castronovo *Aesthetics* 10). Hence, the political conduct of literary men in politics would take two tendencies to reflect the social crisis and the historic convulsion of the day.

When a critic deals with the question of ideology and its presence in creative writing in general and in the in novel specific, his attention may be directly focused on the articulation of some ideological dogmas via deviations of language. Nonetheless, a key point of contention in this developing concept is how much ordinary readers of ideologist fiction can struggle, negotiate, or adjust ideology on their own. Indeed, the reading public was not equipped with the necessary tools to grasp the formal ideological characteristics associated with narratives. And then, readers were not ready and were not able to consume the text loaded with ideology and deal appropriately with multiple ideological interpretations. On the contrary, it was only cultural critics armed with necessary analytical apparatuses for decoding the normalizing functions of ideology and discourse, who can successfully assume this role.

Intensely aware of the ideological leaks into literature, the task of deciphering the masked messages and identifying ideology’s trajectories fell to the cultural critics. In a sense, the contested connection of creative writing to ideology gave an impetus to the creation of what came to be called Ideological Literary Criticism. It goes without saying, criticism is perceived as a handmaiden to literature. Then, ideological literary criticism emerged as a

method whereby the ideological critic explicates dogmas operating within literature, unmask literature challenge of ideologies, not to speak about the way people read and respond to ideologies. Accordingly, Sonja Foss, “the primary goal of the ideological critic is to discover and make visible the dominant ideology or ideologies embedded in an artifact and the ideologies that are being muted in it” (595-96). The conjectural background initiated such criticism turned out to be a leading force that opens new conceptual horizons for theoretical schools of thought, as such Marxism, Structuralism, Cultural Studies, and Postmodernism to enrich the debate.

Given this somewhat challenging job, the task of deciphering the ideological meaning was very intricate due to the relational nature of ideological analysis. Ideology is usually defined in terms of the relation between one domain considered to be the expression of the ideology such as consciousness, art, or fiction on the one hand and another domain considered as the source a certain reality. And yet, their utmost preoccupation is to construct a worth juncture, where the inclusion of ideologies comes across a rigorous analysis of the dogmatic implications. Of course, this proves possible only through a foundation of convenient modes of criticism. A criticism that efficiently attends on the impact of ideology, as “criticism belongs to the aesthetic region of ideology, a region with its proper degree of autonomy of the whole” (Eagleton *Criticism and Ideology* 20). Nonetheless, others accentuate the importance of criticism not merely as a part of literature, but it as a force that constitutes both of them literature and ideology.

In a clearly and consistent way, when analyzing a literary text, ideology theory can be invested in the sense of decoding or interpreting the masked ideological connotations within a text, alongside a better grasp of the author’s philosophical motivation and intentions, or to elicit the effect of texts’ ideologies and its performances on an audience. Thus in order to come up with a reliable interpretation of the literary text and in so doing to conceptualize the

relationship between the ideology and fiction, cultural and ideological criticism came, for most part, with a presumed role of smoothing the troubled passage between the text and the reader. In effect, either ordinary readers or critics regard

works of art are worth reading only to discover that ideology. It is implied that writers are not and should not be capable of independent, oppositionist imagination, unless they belong to a part of society that stands in opposition to the whole” (Clowes 166)

Readers consequently would become abler to bring together pieces of ideology embedded within fiction. In addition, critics of ideology undertake the task of continually evolving the definition of ideology theory, which proved extremely congenial to literary critical in a broader sense.

c. Colossal Penetration of Ideology in Totalitarian Literatures

It has irrefutably become self-evident that many modern writers have been enormously influenced by political environmentalism. Drawing on ideologies of political radicalism opens an approach to literary texts that simultaneously register their rich specificity and affiliation to ideological extremism. This, surely, one of the strongest exponent figures was Archibald MacLeish, who wrote an article suggestively entitled “*The Irresponsibles: A Declaration*” (1940). In this article, he qualified modern writers as lacking human responsibility for their writings come out of abhorrence and a drive toward death and that is why some become fascist and Nazi writers.

It is conventional, for example, to suppose that ideology began to slip into novels and with time writers’ construction of politics in the novels turned operative and systematic. Inasmuch as Hitler and Mussolini had come to power in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, they grew acutely aware of the power of authors on both local and international levels. Those totalitarian countries engaged in big efforts to politicalize the institution of literature. The politicization of literature would result in obtaining an official or state literature.

In their attempt to produce literature, totalitarian regimes were confronted by the necessity to draw the attention of wide range of readers with various tastes and ideological orientations. Eagleton proclaims that “the unreadability of Literature is precisely its radicalism” (*Criticism and Ideology* 165), the thing which fostered authors to oscillate between extreme radical thought and aesthetics. Often entwined, creative writers managed to avoid much unreadably leaden propaganda through a marriage between aesthetics and ideology that helped disseminate dogma and please readers at once.

Against the context of writing a literally propagandist fiction, there emerged an authorial intelligentsia that emphasized the combination of fiction with political dogmas. They did not restrict themselves and went further to identify themes, characters, behavior patterns, symbols and even language with ideological anxieties. While literature is not purely an ideological discourse, and if it is compared to other prevailing discourses, it has to enjoy a unique sense of sublime. Cindy Weinstein and Christopher Looby assert: “if literature is one discourse among many, without exceptional status, and if the author is a function of those discourses without the pedigree of creativity, it would seem that the category of the aesthetic has been fatally wounded” (16-17). In doing so, fundamentalist novelists of radical backgrounds positioned the novel within dimensions of political dialectics. More specifically, the novel was used as an efficient weapon to permeate in the regime’s propaganda combat.

Hitler and Mussolini accordingly curbed anti-Nazi and anti-fascist literary men and praised radical writers, who defended the radical ideology as producers of the highest form of literature. More importantly, the novel was employed as an instrument to promote Nazi ideology. For them, the text cannot stand alone to be isolated from political, socio-economic and biographical contexts. For example, Hans Grimm (1875-1959) as a nationalist writer authored a novel *Volk ohne Raum* (*A People without Space*) which is purely Nazi novel since it was employed by the Germans to justify the conquest and the tremendous territorial

expansion in WWII. In this context, it is postulated that “Grimm contributes to Nazi-ideology: the master-race ideas of the "efficient Nordic man" destined to exploit inferior races to the point of destruction were also used by the Nazis to justify the genocide they committed” (Graebner 244). Given the fact that Hans Grimm was a supporter and promoter of the ultimate dominance of Nazi ideology, he internalized it his novels, handling race as an integral part in the strength of German national identity. In similar vein, Matthias Konzett maintains that “Grimm, although never a party member, came close to the Nazi ideology through his treatment of race, his thoughts about the Jews, and the significance he gives to Nordic man” (Konzett 273). Grimm’s thoughts about the Jews proved that the novel became more and more an essential vehicle for indoctrinating political ideology. On the other hand, the Italian author Gabriele D'Annunzio’s (1863-1938), writings and political activities were so important to the rise of Fascism. Many scholars debated the support of that great propagandist to the fascist cause.

After the downfall of totalitarian states, many critics of ideological studies were definitely convinced that literature was ideologized. Therefore, the art of creative expression was placed at the center of political or social reform by other means ‘ideological’ debate. For them, democracy was developing and literature must follow the track and exponent of that strand suggested that “literature be politicalized in the name of democracy” (Farrell 611). The aim was to give literature more freedom to provide truth beyond ideology.

d. Marxist View of Ideology in Literature

Among the manifold views that approached the relationship between creative writing and ideology was Marxist Literary Criticism. It elaborated a comprehensive and consistent theory of ideology and its connection to art and literature in which theories of class struggle, politics and economics intersect. Marxism considers ideology as the basis for the production and formation of literature. Marxist literary critics consider literary works as reflections of the

social institutions from which they originate. They even assume that literature itself is a social institution as the contents of literary texts have the potential to compromise dogmas based on the experience and ideology of the author along with aesthetic qualities.

In fact, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels had an immense knowledge of art. Both truly admired literature as they grew up acquainted with classical literature. During their formative years, both Marx and Engels wrote poetry. This literary background was very helpful in the sense that it aided them to elaborate genuinely scientific aesthetic principles that ranked literature in an advanced place in society.

From a Marxist token, literature has been increasingly concerned with two basic problems. To begin with, Marxist theory endeavored at explaining the “specific ideological mode for ‘art’ and the ‘aesthetic’ effect”. Moreover, it attempted to respond more materially to the ‘literary text’ within the ideological class struggle.

Literature assumes the role of advancing the political and economic interests of groups or social classes. In doing so, it has to respond to the eventful environment, where many ideologies quarrel to produce ideological contradictions. Terry Eagleton, when commenting on Denys Turner’s standpoint, wrote: “he [Denys Turner] claims that ideology consists in a ‘performative contradiction’, in which what is said is at odds with the situation or act of utterance itself” (Eagleton *Ideology An Introduction* 24). These contradictions are indeed an ideological terrain within literary texts.

The ideological contradictions seem at first literary but they bear political, religious, racial, national effects on the readers. They provoke other ideological discourses to achieve the objectives of the dominant ideology. Those contradictions cannot be resolved in the same matrix and that is how the battle would be transposed to a new terrain: the literary one, so to speak. Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey in their importantly co-authored and essay, “On

Literature as an Ideological Form” argue that “literature is the product of one or more ideological contradictions precisely because these contradictions cannot be solved within the ideology” (Balibar and Macherey 43). In similar context, Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle take us somewhere towards an understanding the question of ideological contradictions. They expound that literary texts produce the illusion of ‘unity’; a far-reaching unity that is itself ideological. They contend saying, “indeed, literature begins with ‘the imaginary solution of implacable ideological contradictions’: literature is there because ‘such a solution is impossible’” (173-74). In fact, Marxist critics rooted their thoughts in the tensions pertaining to ideology and thus the literary text appears to be a hotbed of ideological contradictions. The literary text, in other words, is an answer to ideology’s contradictions at several levels. At the most basic level, “literature becomes internally dissonant because of its relationship to social process, actual historical struggle and ideological contradiction” (Dollimore 68). Still, the quest for solution of these contradictions within literature seems speculatively impossible to find.

On the other hand, the thought behind Marxist Criticism is that works of literature are mere products of history that can be analyzed by looking at the social and material conditions in which they were constructed and there has been said before that ideology for Marx and Engels revolves mainly around the materialization of history. Pierre Macherey in his important essay “Lenin, Critic of Tolstoy” emphasizes the importance of the author as a dramatizing recorder of history that spans: “The role of the writer, you might say, is to dramatize (*faire vivre*) the historical structure by narrating it. Though a point of view may be politically confused, it retains a certain literary value. [...] A writer's appeal depends on his conveying certain knowledge of his age.” (113) Accordingly Balibar and Macherey argue that ideology has the capacity to implement a system of real social practices materially related to

the concept of history. Literature for them has a materially close connection to history. They wrote:

The Marxist conception thus inscribes literature in its place in the unevenly determined system of real social practices: one of several ideological forms within the ideological superstructures, corresponding to a base of social relations of production which are historically determined and transformed, and historically linked to other ideological forms. [...] Literature and history are not external to each other (not even as the history of literature versus social and political history) but are in an intricate and connected relationship [...] This internal relationship is what constitutes the definition of literature as an ideological form. (37-38)

Literary Text and False Consciousness

Literary works are pervaded by ideology, whose potential is extremely able to change lives. Hence, literature is one of the arts that creates or re-creates the consciousness and the conscience of societies. However, despite the early attempts to vindicate the fact that consciousness and ideology develop hand in hand, Louis Althusser's standpoint, goes in bald contrast to this claim, maintaining that ideology is of 'false consciousness'. It is false in the sense that it stands in opposition with obvious reality of economic and class relations. Marx suggests that false consciousness actually consists in the contradiction between two schools of thought. The school of idealism, which denounces the materialists' assumption, while thinkers of the materialistic thought declare idealism as the source of illusion (Hawkes 91). From that insight, literature is the outcome of a collision between idealism and materialism. It was inevitably an expression of ideological "false consciousness" supporting oppressive political and economic relations. In his essay entitled "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", Althusser wrote: "Ideology is a 'representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (256). Owing to the fact that literature is the expression of the lived experience, ideology threatens to give a distorted reality of that experience. In some senses, writers do not write utterly free of ideology's fetters. Sometimes they are, to some extent, the prisoners of that ideology. Eagleton evokes the Marxist concept of false

consciousness. He postulates: “they are prisoners of ‘false consciousness’, unable to reach beyond it to arrive at the truth. It is a position characteristic of much ‘vulgar Marxist’ criticism, which tends to see literary works merely as reflections of dominant ideologies” (*Marxism and Literary Criticism* 16). In another dimension, for Marxists ideology is unrealistic escapism from the lived experience. Authors submerge their readers in philosophical reveries. In so doing, ideology becomes an ill-understanding of reality.

Further and more importantly, Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey established a relationship between literature and the struggles of classes where ideology would work analogous to Marx’ and Engels’ model to maintain the existing power relations. Thus, literature became a weapon in the class struggle. It emerged crystal clear that literature is ideological matrix where ideology is produced and literature itself is producing ideology in its texts. For example “in capitalist society, literature itself is an ‘ideological form’, both produced by and producing ideology. The task of the critic would be to look beyond the unity that the literary text strives to present, and forcefully to explore the contradictions embedded within it” (Bennett and Royle 174). The domination of the ruling class, as a case in a point, the bourgeois would employ literature to transport their ideology and produce the aesthetic effect. Therefore, “the aesthetic effect also inevitably an effect of domination: the subjection of individuals to the dominant ideology the dominance of the ideology of the ruling class” (Balibar and Macherey 51) One of the vibrant points for the Marxist criticism seems therefore to be the attitude which considers literature a field of ideological accusations leveled against classes.

Ideological literary criticism came effectively to confirm that literature and namely the novel cannot distance itself from an ideological critique of society and the novel cannot dissolve by its unavoidable engagement in social and political critique to the context where it is being written. When anyone begins to think about the workings of ideology in literary texts,

he/she may be shocked by a lapse of judgment that ideology is distorted by discourses. Ideology, by contrast, is something that gets in the way of dealing with literature via probing into the political or ideological dimensions of a literary text. This results in a reductive simplification of its true value. In other part, literature is similar to ideology in terms of dream-quality, fancy and figments of imagination that characterize literature. All in all, the previous account demonstrates that the enigmatic connection between literature and ideology saw an unmatched shift starting from ideologizing literature to literatizing or esthetizing ideology.

4. Identity: Historical and Theoretical Basics

In the past couple of decades, a great deal of attention has been paid to the conception of ‘identity’ that has become a buzzword to academics of all sorts. In a sense, western societies seem to have become more preoccupied with topical issues of identity and then scholars have accordingly taken an intense interest. Researchers working in a remarkable array of contemporary study of culture and humanities disciplines submitted⁵ and still do, the term to scrutiny in order to outline convenient approaches to the analysis and critique of identity. It grew more and more necessary and this enormously growing importance stems from the fact that societies clamor for recognition and stability in a range of political, social, economic, and cultural spaces grew more aware than ever of their belonging. The implication is that they began to give prominence to identity from different perspectives and from manifold locations. It goes without saying, the most stable societies are the ones, which placed a central focus on a vigorous construction of identity to invest the potential of its individuals in highly productive enterprises.

Unfortunately, identity’s sudden rise has also brought with it a series of somewhat obscure assertions, disconcerting inconsistencies and at times puzzling contradictions. Although, everyone more or less knows how to employ the term identity appropriately in

everyday's discourse, yet the concept remains fairly complicated and vague. It is especially equivocal and elusive due to the plurality of ways wherein the term is used. To pursue the argument further, the Franco-Lebanese author Amin Maalouf affirms in his hallmark book *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* that there are words that one has to be wary when dealing with. He seems to caution against words with treacherous quality like false friends. Maalouf considers "Identity is one of those false friends. We all think we know what the word means and go on trusting it, even when it's slyly starting to say the opposite" (9). The whole range of useful meanings indeed plays a central role in ongoing debates in psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and literature. Therefore, there is no adequate or perfect definition for the term.

a. Defining Identity

Ultimately, numerous efforts were done to throw light on the significance of the concept. It is defined as "the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known" (Identity 1). In other words, a set of qualities must be in place to decide the nature or the category of a certain person or a given thing. A second definition however, stipulates that identity is "the set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group" (Identity 2). In a sense, the qualities of personality and conduct are so imperative that they attribute individuals to specific groups rather than others. Nonetheless, a third definition suggests that identity is "who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group which make them different from others" (Identity 3). Important to note, other definition emphasize the centrality of raising question to identify the "who" and "what" of an individual or a thing: "the fact of being who or what a person or thing I" (Identity 04). Along similar vein, some theorists maintain that identity of things and people is somewhat determined by specific features of the belonging to a given cluster: "the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is" (Identity 05).

Another aspect of identity's definition is the sameness of a person or of a social group at all times and in all conditions and the ability to persist being the same person belonging to the same group. According to Kevin Robins, identity maintains a kind of unity in a globalized world where there are no disciplinary dividing borders between entities. Identity therefore conserves the particularities of individuals and social groups against the waves of changes and upheavals. Kevin Robins gave an almost the insightful and tactful definition of identity:

Identity is to do with the imagined sameness of a person or of a social group at all times and in all circumstances; about a person or a group being, and being able to continue to be, itself and not someone or something else. Identity may be regarded as a fiction, intended to put an orderly pattern and narrative on the actual complexity and multitudinous nature of both psychological and social worlds. The question of identity centers on the assertion of principles of unity, as opposed to pluralism and diversity, and of continuity, as opposed to change and transformation. (172)

Richard Jenkins on the other hand proposes a definition: "Identity is the human capacity – rooted in language – to know 'who's who' (and hence 'what's what'). This involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we are, us knowing who they think we are, and so on: a multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities" (5).

b. Ontological and Historical Roots of Identity

At the most basic level, the word identity arose in epistemological scene only in the second half of the twentieth century and was not discoursed at all within contexts of politics, scientism and culture prior to this. Long before that, it was no longer possible for identity to be addressed with the same degree of enthusiasm that animates its political and cultural presence today. The development of selfhood and identity was more than ever triggered by a set of historical implications as the self's features cannot be independent of historically changing ways associated to it.

Identity was notably elaborated and labeled as a new conception that inaugurated a new arena of debate in the western thought. The word, in fact, rose and flourished to produce relevance in prevalent, political, scientific and cultural discourses of everyday life. Prior to this, identity had not been discussed or approached in these contexts, until the 1950s, or even the 1960s and 1970s when issues connected to sexuality, gender, ethnicity, class, politics, nationalism, religion, brand and subcultures began to gain wide currency among the intellectual circles. Identity then triggered heated debates, which threw new lights on the precarious relationship of belonging to other disciplines and concepts. Consequently, experts and even common people can hardly do without identity.

The study of identity therefore has followed separate paths in each discipline. However, the multidisciplinary conceptual ownership of the term among the disciplines reflected a proliferation of numerous and diverse references of identity. Therefore, writing a historical account on identity construction in the West is especially a risky task. The profusion of literature on identity and multidisciplinary tokens through which identity was tackled make it even more complicated for any researcher to assign a massive task that can take numerous different angles. Accordingly, it makes sense to begin a discussion of the ontology of identity before moving to undertake the process of constructing identity regarding the study at hand.

Ontologically speaking, the fundamental concepts that constitute the corner stone of self and identity have distant historical roots. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the origins of this usage to the late sixteenth century. In other words, the modern Western sense of identity as constituted by the possession of an ‘inner self’ predates to Greco-Roman ideas of *persona*. Sociologist Ian Burkitt in his article “Identity Construction in Sociohistorical Context” throws analytical lights on the way *persona* indicated both self as mask or public presentation and self

as the true nature of the individual. Then, this notion was expanded with the Stoic⁵ idea of self-mastery through moderation as a route to self-improvement. Burkitt expounds: “the roots of many of the current notions of self in the West began in Greco Roman society, and also because I believe that in the Greco-Roman philosophy known as Stoicism we find the seeds of the notion of self that are reinterpreted in other historical epochs” (“Identity Construction in Sociohistorical Context” 268-69). On this point, the self’s origins are rooted in ancient times. However, it is thought that the tension between self as public persona and self as a private possession decisively grew in the sixteenth century under the influence of the Humanist Movement.

In an inclusive sense, the civilizational accumulations of ancient Greco-Roman society and culture enabled the contemporary West to inherit cultural mores, which underline the significance of an individual’s public persona by range of their social position, reputation, class, and the like. Charles Lemert indicates that one of the most acclaimed achievements of the Greeks is their engagement in Self-identification. He wrote: “the major Greek philosophies had, at best, a feeble sense of what today we call a Self and certainly of a Self able to engaging in Self-identifications” (Lemert 06).

At the same time, though individuals enjoy a collective persona, there was an emergent awareness that humans can likewise be identified by something exceptionally personal. A private self that is inner to human existence grants people a distinctive image that places them in categorization, differentiating them of others.

⁵ Stoicism: is a systematic philosophy created at Athens by Zeno of Citium and reached its peaks in Greek the Roman antiquity. It retains importance even to present day. John Sellars argues that Stoicism “was not only one of the most popular schools of philosophy in antiquity but has also remained a constant presence throughout the history of Western philosophy” (03). The stoic thought is based on the idea that value may be found but not quite in the way it is found in virtue. Stoics believe that “virtue should shape all human actions, including the most minute and seemingly trivial ones” (Jedan 62).

A wide range of authors on the other hand claimed that after the Roman Empire had collapsed, the sense of private 'internal selfhood' had developed stronger and matured, from the Anglo-Saxon tradition in Britain. In deciding to produce a distinctive meaning for the self through the history of the West, the Anglo-Saxons undertook a task of religious identifications of the individual selves within a larger matrix of culturally spiritual parameters. Hence, the history of the Anglo-Saxon nation witnessed the foundation of new national identities along linguistic and religious lines and therefore a cultural reconstruction of the idea of selfhood was accomplished.

The Anglo-Saxon legacy as regards the construction of identity after the fall Roman Empire is predominantly important. It can be traced through the literary archeology which proved to be a crucially formative stage. In her analysis of texts produced in the eleventh century phases, Catherine A. M. Clarke assumes that literary texts as such *Encomium Emmae Reginae* and *Vita Aedwardi Regis* are very reflective of that way identity was formed and the way it was managed. The underlying assumption that literary texts were a power in setting the foundation of Anglo-Saxon England's identity gave evidence that the controversial assertions proclaiming 'identity' is not as new to the modern thought as it is claimed is to a greater extent valid. Clarke postulates: "the text's attention to issues of performance in general shows an acute awareness of the ways in which identities are fashioned and maintained through the use of recognizable cultural signifiers and markers" (135). For all intents and purposes, identity was an integral component of in the construction of different selves and dissimilar identities which distinguished a given group from another.

In another dimension, the Western history of the self was traced by sociologists beginning with the sixteenth century in England along the medieval period that witnessed the rise of puritanism. Through delving into the influence of Puritanism in sixteenth-century Europe, it is obvious to notice the establishment of an 'individual self' in relationship to God. The impact of new Christian faith on selfhood was so immense that it allowed people to

believe that Divinity resided in the individual, and the mediation of a church was burdensome and meaningless to attain spiritual enlightenment. Equally, creating the self became one of the most demanding aspects of the puritan creed. In this respect, it lent the spiritual identity a shape and structure and helped gain an appropriate understanding of the inner self by means of perceiving an inner unity with Jesus Christ. Pursuant to this, it was argued that:

The construction of identity in early modern England was complex and based around a number of factors. For puritans, this came primarily through an understanding of the “self” in Christ. The Christian life was often read in dichotomous terms, as a battle between the “old” self [...] and Christ’s nature living within the believer. (Crome 118)

While the puritan framework emphasizes the way identity run directly up against a catholic claim and its treatment of the relation between the individual and God which entailed a mediation, another key historical account of identity places identity at the heart of the Romantic Movement. Romanticism saw the light in the eighteenth century and it underscored the split between society and the individual. Romantics glorified the expression of individuality above all else, especially in the creative arts. The development and unification of the human individual self was considered as the highest achievement of the era, because Romanticism tends to see the individual at the center of all life. Romanticism in some senses praises a transcendental autonomy that displays awareness about the strength characterizing human nature, to wit: strength that is derived from divinity. In this regard, Romanticism is a mode of self-perception and to a large degree, “the Romantic sees the self as inexhaustible in potential and possible because, ultimately, the human identity is essentially divine” (Stern 10). Through individualizing the self, Romanticism succeeded in producing a shift from socialized experience of the individual to the individual’s personal experience in the world and one’s particular understanding of that experience.

Simultaneously, in the eighteenth century the Scottish Enlightenment emerged and initiated a specific perspective concerning the meaning of the self. It made substantial

contributions to the science of man by fostering the demand that people think for themselves. People should not take ideas on faith and instead they had to inquire and observe for themselves. In a sense, “this observation was, however, private and introspective.” (Danziger 143) In the same framework, Thomas Ahnert and Susan Manning in their book “*Character, Self, and Sociability in the Scottish Enlightenment*” proclaim: “the science of man in Scotland was centrally preoccupied with the formation of the personality or self. This self could only be judged by observing its interactions with others, that is, in society” (6). In other part, Kurt Danziger in his article, “*The Historical Formation of Selves*” also has stressed the role of the Scottish Enlightenment in the work of John Locke and Adam Smith as being importantly decisive in creating the modern sense of self. He states: “In the course of the eighteenth century, the Lockean conception of the ‘self’ replaced the older notions and provided the basis for a new, empiricist, tradition that is still powerful” (142).

c. Constructing the Self

The ‘Self’ is among the most mysterious and ubiquitous concepts in social sciences and yet its appropriate understanding seems to promise so much. It is assumed here that the self is peculiarly difficult to define and Bernadette Roberts laments that “*no one knows THE TRUE NATURE as long as he is living it, or is it*” (Roberts 03). Indeed, the task can be a little bit possible if the user annexes some other words to the term such as ‘Myself’ or ‘Yourself’.

On the view the self is taxing, everyone seems to come across difficulties to identify the nature of the ‘self’. This was exactly the case for most of sociologists, who tend to theorize about the ‘self’ and brain researchers, who eventually come up with a finding that self is a mere illusion though everyone among them can say exactly what it is; an illusion that “arises from nothing more than an improper use of language” (Galen Strawson 336). Therefore, ‘self’ remains ambivalent to identify the nature of the self. In this respect, Roy F. Baumeister and Brad J. Bushman state that

some brain researchers have begun to say that the self is an illusion, mainly because they cannot find any specific spot in the brain that seems to correspond to the self, but in their everyday lives these researchers act as if they know exactly what the self is, and it is not an illusion (*Social Psychology* 59).

Against such assumptions and in sharp contrast to what has been stated by brain researchers, Daphna Oysterman Kristen in an essay entitled, “Self, Self-concept, and identity” upholds that in common discourse, the term self often refers “to a warm sense or a warm feeling that something is “about me” or “about us.” Reflecting on oneself is both a common activity and a mental feat. It requires that there is an “I” that can consider an object that is “me” (71). Precisely, this conception turned out to be fundamental to a subsequent theorist of identity.

Ultimately, the self is set of someone's characteristics, such as personality and ability. Those features are not physical they rather indicate the mental construct of a person, by that person. They place that person on a map of difference from other people. Therefore, if we take for granted that the self were merely an illusion, there would be no genuine difference between me and you. There would be interlocking and overlapping personalities within different bodies. Constructing selfhood is not a matter of option because “not having a self is not really an option! Everyone has a separate body, and selves begin with bodies, so there is no way for a human being to be completely without a self” (Baumeister 59). In a sense, constructing a self is a voluntary action with lingering effects upon the bearer of that personality.

- **Dimensions of the self**

In spite of the fact that diverse premises were theorized in the Western culture to elucidate particular aspects of the self, almost no theory tackles it without having to take into discussion the three scopes of the self or what Jerrold Seigel came to call “the bodily or material, the relational, and the reflective dimensions of the self” (05). This includes

embodiment, social relationships and reflection. In essence, most theories of the ‘self’ should essentially address either explicitly or implicitly, all three aspects. They are essential and then can by no means be ignored, owing to the fact that they maintain a kind of equilibrium and coherence and they provide an inexhaustible depth to the construction of the self.

Inevitably, any attempt to put any talk on theory of selfhood will have to attend to three components. First of all, the material dimension of the discourse of the self is evidently the body as recognition of the self is determined by the peculiar physical characteristics of the individual. This includes the corporeal aspect, where the things about human nature make of them palpable creatures driven by biological needs, urges, and inclinations. On this view, embodiment “involves the physical, corporeal existence of individuals [...] Our selves on this level, are housed in our bodies, and are shaped by the body’s needs.” (Seigel 05) Recently, sociology has insisted that the self involves an embodied subjectivity towards the world.

However, Corey Anton has argued that embodiment does not refer only to the corporeal tangible bodies with biological needs and urges. It rather refers to somebody that is there existent in the world. The body must be placed in a world that is manifested through spatiality and temporality. He writes: “to exist as a lived-body is always already to be-in-the-world, it is to be cast out from non-existent Earth; it is to be a worlding. In a word, to be embodied is to be outside one’s flesh both in space and time; it is to be more than a here and now.” (Anton 17)

Second, the self is equally defined by a relational dimension. In a sense, the self is not a free-floating body and it is not literally based on biological factors and inherited traits, because the self is equally situated within social relationships and is thus a historical product of society. Most of sociological theories of the ‘self’ endeavor to expound the way social processes such as socialization impact the development of the self. In the same context, Jerrold Seigel again, argues:

Relational dimension arises from social and cultural interaction, the common connections and involvements that give us collective identities and shared orientations and values, making us people able to use a specific language or idiom and marking us with its particular styles of description, categorization, and expression. In this perspective our selves are what our relations with society and with others shape or allow us to be. (5)

In setting forth his views on the ontological sociality of selfhood, John D. Baldwin underscores that the self is a gift to the individual from societal setting. He claims that “the self can come into existence only in terms of society and interaction with other selves, therefore it owes its existence to the micro and macro social environment” (106). Within that context, society and culture are somewhat integral elements in giving birth to the self.

Third, the self requires a reflective dimension. This is to say, perception of the self is dependent on self-consciousness that is anyone must have an ability to reflect upon his/her identity, actions, and relationships with others. This consciousness indeed involves language and memory. Selfhood must have a capacity for continuous self-assessment and monitoring. The act of reflectivity “derives from the human capacity to make both the world and our own existence objects of our active regard, to turn a kind of mirror not only on phenomena in the world, including our own bodies and our social relations, but on our consciousness to” (Seigel 05-06). On the whole, however, it is not about placing more emphasis on one dimension at the expense of another. Much vitality comes out of a fruitful interaction of all the three at once to lead to a vigorous foundation of personal identity.

d. Constructing Personal Identity: Mead's Theory of "I" and the "Me" from Reflective to Reflexive Situations

The construction of personal identity, it goes without saying, is the cornerstone of identity studies. Essentially, this construction is the fruition of a permanent cultivation, refinement and evaluation of the individual's self with a special emphasis on the extent to which it enjoys sameness and continuity. The foundation of a personal identity has to do with the perception of selfhood. In fact, many people get confused when dealing with selfhood and identity. Consequently, setting the difference is a first necessary step towards a deep understanding of identity issues and problems. The main difference between selfhood and identity is that selfhood is principally a matter of distinctiveness .i.e. selfhood is the state of holding a distinct identity, or being an individual distinct from others. Whereas, identity is the sameness some individuals share to make up the same kind they belong to. Sameness is so fundamental that "the kind of entity a person is cannot be separated from the issue of sameness" (Santos and Sia 02). One simple way of demonstrating the effect of sameness and continuity, identity involves a dynamic sense of balance between sameness and change, whereby the individual feels a sense of stability within the group.

In effect, one of the most overarching sociological approaches to the self was advanced by the American sociologist George Herbert Mead. Mead wrote extensively on the 'self' and personal identity. In fact, he divided the self into two distinctive parts: the "I" and the "me." The "I" is the subject that is the doer of the action and the active aspect of the person; the "me" is the object or the socialized aspect of the person. In other words, the "I" is the self that acts; the "me" is the self that we see as an object when we observe our self from the role of the other. Meads suggests that the self must progress through the idea of twofold poles; the physiological pole and institutional one. Steve Odin, to the point, notes: "Mead's social self model and I-Me dialectic therefore represents a biosocial theory of man as having two poles, the I or biological pole and the Me or the social pole" (201).

Mead advocates the notion that the self emerges and develops from social interaction with the others. This reciprocal interaction of the self and society results in responding to the images that we believe others have of us and by internalizing external attitudes and internal feelings about oneself. Harter Susan, in equally stated argument, mentions that “the personal self is crafted through the incorporation of attitudes that significant others appear to hold about one's self” (Harter 81). Thus, the others’ views on us hold much importance in enabling us to form a clear image about of personal selfhood.

In some ways, human identities develop out of a three-way conversation between the “I,” “Me”, and generalized “Other”. Mead indicates that “the “I” reacts to the self which arises through the taking of the attitudes of others. Through taking those attitudes, we have introduced the “me” and we react to it as an “I” (Mead 174). For instance, when we talk with someone, it is the “I” who does or performs the talk. As soon as we hear our own words, we recognize our response to our self as an object of observation; it is hence the “me”.

Against this more commonplace understanding of the self, many scholars state that addressing the notion of personal identity does not necessarily entail addressing the private ‘self’ only as an individual persona. Jakob Filtvedt namely declares that “the key feature of personal identity [...] has nothing to do with privacy, it has to do with that specific indicia are related to specific person. Personal identity could be related to “public” aspects of a specific person’s identity” (31). It is all about a socializing process.

The two terms personal selfhood and social identity should by no means be considered in opposition to each other. Instead, “the personal self is very much embedded within multiple social contexts” (Harter 81). Mead points out that responding to a social situation that is within the experience of the individual constitutes the answer, which the individual makes to the attitude that others take toward him when he/she assumes an attitude toward them. In so doing, the individual moves from a reflective process, where he interacts

with himself to a reflexive one, wherein he interacts with people around him. Forming an identity necessitates the internalization of a complex interplay between the crucial individual and society. Consequently, it is “by taking the attitude of the other that we learn reflexively to monitor our identities and present them to others. Identity is formed out of the constant ebb and flow of conversation between ourselves and others” (Turner 277). In one word, elaborating an intact personal identity must, for all intents and purposes, involve a socialization of the personal experiences, where the individual learns from interaction with his or her counterparts. It is not, however, sufficient merely to recognize the importance of this process, but it compels a close attention as any failure in the process may cause neurological disorders and therefore social disintegration.

In so far the development of self is concerned. Mead confirms that the Self can achieve a remarkable progress via three activities: language, play, and games. And since the study as a whole will focus on the impacts of colonialist ravages upon language, it is necessary to shed more lights on language. In fact, language develops self by allowing individuals to respond to one another through symbols, gestures, words, and sounds. Language as a vehicle, that transports knowledge, thought and heritage, allows conveying others’ attitudes and views toward a certain subject or a given person. That is why “Mead viewed language as a neutral means for symbolically communicating with others” (Edles and Appelrouth 400). Moreover, the individual is viewed as repository of culture through the transmission medium of language .i.e. he or she can express feelings and values through language.

Mead accentuated the significance of language as a social medium dictating our thought. Essentially, the self is formed through an interaction between symbolic communication and social contexts and by means of language, we internalize society within which we live. Paul Ransome reveals: “symbolic communication is the medium through

which we receive feedback from others about our sense of self, and also the medium through which we conduct our internal dialogue between ‘I’ and ‘Me’” (Ransome 172). It has become incontestably clear that the construction of selfhood is a crucial process towards an immense attempt to internalize the values of the collective personhood that plays an equally central role in maintaining the beliefs, mores and aspirations of collective groups in a rapidly changing world operating within dictations of globalization.

e. Collective Identity Construction

Given the multidimensional nature of concept identity on the one hand, and order to comprehend conveniently the ways it operates, notably in an environment prevailed by a crippling legacy of colonial influence on the other, the term must be situated within a broader framework than a narrowed down view of the concept will be of a paramount importance.

The formation of individual selfhood is a keystone of identity studies, as neither individuals nor communities can do much well without it. Faced with this inevitability, this process is primordial in the sense it fulfills a continuous enhancement, consideration and assessment of the personal self with some special stress on the sameness and continuity.

However, through the twentieth century, the notion of the individual’s sameness has been attenuated by the rise of a new tendency to transcend the personal and autobiographical self to a wider sense of culture. This implies a shift from self-centeredness towards a collective dimension of identity that is pinpointed on a variety of other cultural forms such as character, personality, experience, social position, or lifestyle.

Identity does not only express private personhood, but also involves the construction of a sense of social and group belonging, where several theorists foregrounded the principles of unity and continuity. It is commonly believed that the logic of identity has operated in favor of reliability and consistency with reference to what came to be figured as the collective personhood.

Collective identity refers to process of defining a certain group and this process originates primarily from the common preoccupations, mutual understanding, experiences, and potent solidarities of its adherents. The term ‘collective identity’ may be defined as the “shared definition of a group that derives from members’ common interests, experiences, and solidarity” (Rupp and Taylor 365). More frequently, however, the pivot of collective identity lies in the strength of its members interacting harmoniously and solidly.

Beyond the confines of personal selfhood preoccupations, collective identity can be founded in response to calls of backing up community actions, reactions and events that strengthen the sense of belonging to a single group. It is a negotiated process through which the ‘We’ gets involved in collective action to acquire a meaning. Hence, collective identity “is a sense of “we-ness” or “oneness” that derives from perceived shared attributes or experiences among those who comprise a group, often in contrast to one or more perceived sets of others” (Sherrod 320).

In fact, a person's sense of belonging to a group is neither static nor innate, but rather arises from a serious struggle to identify who we are or who they are. As an outcome, the group’s identity that is collective turns to be a part of the person’s individual identity. Personal and social identities may interlock and overlap in the sense that the way an individual perceives himself or herself can be consistent with what and how others look at him or her. Collective identity harmoniously combines the personal characteristics along with group’s aims, creeds...and so on. Collective identity accordingly “becomes an individual resource, whereby group membership is utilized by individuals as a variable for the boosting of their self-esteem” (Karolewski 33).

Alberto Melucci is one of the leading figures of identity studies. He is an Italian sociologist, whose academic contribution brought the question of collective identity to the fore in the study of contemporary new social movements. In his book “*Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*”, he expounds the configuration of collective

identity in terms of three dimensions. This involves the individual's cognitive, moral and emotional connection with a broader group. He contends:

Collective identity as a process involves *cognitive definitions* concerning the ends, means, and the field of action [.....] Collective identity as a process refers thus to a network of *active relationships* between actors who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions [.....] a certain degree of *emotional investment* is required in the definition of a collective identity, which enables individuals to feel themselves part of a common unity. (Melucci 70-71)

The question of identity –be it individual or collective– has turned out ever more salient over the last decades as an outcome of the social, cultural and dominant ideological alterations associated with globalization. The world, otherly said, is witnessing new and fierce mobilizations of ethnic, cultural, and religious identities. In the eyes of certain observers, settled and established identities seemed to have been shaken and destabilized by the proliferation of transnational cultural flows of people, of multiplied brands, of media and overabundance information. Globalization then prefigured an identity crisis, distinctions between self and other; we and they are not made. As Amin Maalouf emphasizes

... in the age of globalization and of the ever-accelerating intermingling of elements in which we are all caught up, a new concept of identity is needed, and needed urgently. We cannot be satisfied with forcing billions of bewildered human beings to choose between excessive assertion of their identity and the loss of their identity altogether, between fundamentalism and disintegration. But that is the logical consequence of the prevailing attitude on the subject. If our contemporaries are not encouraged to accept their multiple affiliations and allegiances; if they cannot reconcile their need for identity with an open and unprejudiced tolerance of other cultures; if they feel they have to choose between denial of the self and denial of the other—then we shall be bringing into being legions of the lost and hordes of bloodthirsty madmen. (*In the Name of Identity* 35)

In a globalized world, the sense of belonging goes beyond the boundaries of personhood. It can become so compelling that it takes over other aspects of the person's identity. Collective

identity in other words comes as a response to bridge up rifts caused and increasingly widened by the perpetual discourses of mobilization and political process that aim at protecting the group's probity and ideological tendencies from other groups' influences. In this vein, Lonnie R. Sherrod postulates that "a collective identity is more likely to occur when there is contestation between two or more groups or when there are threats to the integrity or viability of a group" (320). In some aspect, strength of a particular collective identity is measured by putting it to jeopardy. This means, if this identity were constructed within a convenient context, it would endure variables challenging its continuity.

At whatever time individuals develop new identities, they are compelled to fulfill the task of aligning these identities with the ones they already have. A new collective identity must essentially be constructed to fit with other personal and social identities that one by now has. This identity configuration can transpire through the widening of the individual's personal identity so that it embraces the pertinent collective identity as part of their integral whole that is definition of self. Indeed, enlarging one's personal identity entails a thoughtful engagement in identity construction, a critical process that allows the alignment of personal and collective identities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, creative writing refers to all the written works of a perpetually lasting artistic value. It possesses the capacity of bolstering the mores, traditions, values, rituals and prospects of a given group. The novel as one of the most potently renowned modes of literary expression emerged to maintain interests amid tension of ideologies with its powerful emotional appeal. However, the creative manifestation of ideas and thoughts entails employing imagination. For one thing, imagination considerably helps the author reveal his feelings and emotions. One further dynamic point for this kind of writing seems to be seen through a complex interplay between imagination and expressiveness. In a sense, creative writing goes beyond the confines of personal choice to implicate the expression of a mental or

neurological state. Still, what follows is an examination of society's heritage including values, beliefs, customs, and rituals and their works.

However, creativity in writing, for all intents and purposes, requires originality. With the evolution of literature, originality has become the pinnacle of literary cultural consciousness. It encompasses three senses: psychology, aesthetics and the role of art in society. This is the reason why the theorists devised two premises to approach originality: invention and creation.

Notwithstanding the previous assumptions, ideology is an overarching concept in sociology as well as in cultural and literary studies. Ideology is remarkably significant as it is believed that all levels of discourse are more or less susceptible to being affected by ideology. Ideology is the bulk of philosophies that reflect the social essentials and ambitions of individuals, groups, classes, or cultures. In fact, the term ideology was coined by the French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy and later on it was employed by Napoleon Bonaparte in a pejoratively deriding sense to throw ridicule on his political opponents. The historical development of the term from Young Germans view to the Marx's interpretation made it more vexed and less obvious.

Inevitably, any attempt to escape the influence of ideology on literature would doom to failure. Althusserian and Eagletonian criticism mapped literature at heart the ideology's landscape. The chapter in its endeavor to spotlight on the lingering marks ideology left, and still leaves, on literature, revealed that the first found avenues to literature through some crucial phases. To a large degree, ideology marked its presence through linguistic aberrations and then it was smuggled by ideologically-oriented authors. What follows, however, ideology's smuggling started to be canonized and accordingly heralded what I call 'ideological permissiveness.' Once again, however, Marxist's view of the connection of ideology to literature has provoked much of the dialectics that dominate today's literary

polemics. Marxist literary critics consider literary works as reflections of the social institutions from which they originate. Within that context, literature pertains to the ideological class struggle and literary authors are thus the prisoners of their false consciousness. Further and more significantly, the study attends on the aestheticization of ideology. In other words, ideology in literature is seen as an aesthetic expression of the radical experience: “it is an aesthetic flowering of an ideology adopted from the start precisely for its capacity to transmute radicalism of all form of all forms, from religious protest to revolutionary war, into forms of cultural consensus” (Bercovitch 436). In short, the matter will be understood in terms of coming from the opposite direction: moving from ideologizing literature to literatizing ideology, so to speak.

In another dimension, identity as a topical issue seemed to have produced more preoccupations in the world. Historically speaking, identity and the self are not new to the twentieth century’s epistemological scene. Its roots date primarily back to the Greco-Roman legacy, and then to the Anglo-Saxons tradition, which produced a new meaning of the self through religious identifications. Yet despite this, others argue that the influence of Puritanism in sixteenth-century Europe lent a new shape and structure to the construction of the self. The third key claim, however, stipulates that the Scottish Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement significantly contributed to the creation of a modern sense of self.

Throughout the analysis conducted in chapter one, it can be said with certainty that the construction of selfhood is not a matter of option. Inserting a personal selfhood is especially vital to make us distinct from others. In Mead’s view, asserting a selfhood entails an interaction of the physiological pole with social one, whereby the “I” or the self that acts; interacts with the “me”, the self that is acted upon. Once it does so, the self can achieve a notable evolution via three activities of whose language is an imperative activator.

Still, with the mounting tension of ideologies, entwined together with fierce mobilizations of ethnic, cultural, and religious identities, collective identity emerged as a

fundamental tool for preserving the groups' belonging from identity crisis. This is the case of some states notably prevailed by a crippling legacy of colonial influence. Given the fact that collective identities are neither static nor innate, nations such as Algeria, the Sudan, Kenya and African America rather engaged through a seriously enthusiastic struggle to configure who they are. Correspondingly, the negotiation of a unified sense of national belonging that is distorted by ideological fragmentation becomes a priority. This, in some senses, coincided with the emergence of a postcolonial intelligentsia, whose creative novelists are assigned with a certain role and a certain contribution to the assertion of national identities amid cultural ravages of mimicry, neocolonialism, displacement, a key point to be investigated throughout this thesis.

**Chapter II: Nationalism,
Decolonization and Postcolonial
Theory: Theoretical and Socio-
Historical Contexts**

Introduction

It has been argued earlier that literature turned out to be a site of struggle for manifold ideological discourses. Nationalism is, for all intents and purposes, a phenomenal feature of modern societies and one of these ideological discourses. Inasmuch as the connection between literature and the process of elaborating a nation-state identity raises the timely concerns of scholars and researchers, it has become very urgent to conceptualize the term nationalism, briefly, chart its origins and its development throughout history in chapter II. On the other hand, urgencies such as this open up necessity to delve into nationalism's main paradigms and the way nationalism fosters European colonialism.

As long as the research scrutinizes the role creative writing plays in the assertion of national identities in four works of fiction, it is indisputably central to embed the novels under study in their socio-historical and theoretical context. For the very good reason, Chapter II devotes a room of conceptual and theoretical discussion to the historical inception of nationalism in African America, Sudan, Algeria and Kenya. Indeed, the rise of national consciousness in the aforementioned territories laid the ground for armed as well as peaceful anti-colonial struggles to renounce oppression. Albeit the four had succeeded in achieving decolonization, but they found themselves in a decisive stage to rise to the challenge of coming to terms with the crippling legacy of colonialism and racial oppression. At the center of these, much argument on a wide range of delicate issues regarding nationhood, identity, culture, and the like marked the post-independence era, so to speak. Hence, within an intellectual and historical framework, the chapter examines the emergence of postcolonial studies as one of those active theoretical trajectories following decolonization. More

Chapter II Nationalism, Decolonization and Postcolonial Theory: Theoretical and Socio-Historical Contexts

specifically, it attempts to be as much relevant, suggestive and precise as possible by focusing closely on the dimensions that sound especially pertinent to context of the research. Otherwise speaking, the study reduces its scope to include Homi Bhabha's Mimicry, Kwame Nkrumah's Neocolonialism and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's theory of language: Decolonizing the Mind.

1. Nationalism: Dynamics of the Nation

a. Conceptualizing Nationalism

Nationalism is a dominating power in contemporary world. In one dimension, it binds up aspirations of the majority of its adherents for having a politically independent nation. In another dimension, it emotionally mobilizes them through symbolic cultural texts, images, myths, and history, either for conservative or liberal purposes. Although it is intricately hard to define, nationalism can be understood as "loyalty and devotion to a nation; especially a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups" (Nationalism1). In another sense, however, the term nationalism is a modern phenomenon associated with a great love of a particular nation. Anthony D. Smith, one of the most prominent theorists of nationalism, accentuates the importance of the 'nation' as focal theme, when dealing with nationalism. He thinks that nationalism "is an ideology that places the nation at the center of its concerns and seeks at promoting its well-being" (*Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* 05). In similar vein, Benedict Anderson as one of the most conspicuous theorists argues that nationalism is an assimilative imaginative practice that lays the ground for the individuals of the same community to sense "*a deep, horizontal comradeship*" (07 My emphasis) with people unfamiliar to them, yet they proudly share the same philosophies, tenets, ideals and the like. For the most part, Anderson conceives the nation as "imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (06). It is imagined limited in the sense it has clear borders defining and

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distinguishing it from other nations, and sovereign as the religious agency lost its potent influence with the rise of Enlightenment and Revolution and freedom coming from such upheavals entailed sovereign states.

Anthony D. Smith goes further to argue that nationalism historically originated to serve the three main objectives: autonomy, national unity, and national identity. For him, Nationalism is a multifaceted political ideology that is preoccupied with the attainment and the preservation of a collective autonomy and territorial as well historical sovereignty of the group over a geographical space or a historical accumulation. Nationalism in this respect is created and manipulated toward the foundation of identities that are centered on communal features comprising of homeland, culture, language, race, religion, political agenda and a deep belief in a common ancestral rootedness. Nationalism is such a basic tool of national identification that national identities are valid sources of personal identity. Consequently, a person's nationalistic commitment alongside loyalty and attachment to his/her cultural heritage would evoke a high sense of pride and self-esteem.

Although societies have been emotionally committed to their native soil, to the mores of their ancestors, and to established territorial institutions and its laws, but it was not until the end of the 18th Century that nationalism began to acquire prominence as power shaping public and private life. For instance, it is believed that nationalism historical roots can be traced throughout history the ancient Hebrews, who perceived themselves as God's chosen people; a people of a common cultural history highly superior to all other races and ethnicities. In other part, the ancient Greeks conceived of themselves as having a cultural superiority that placed them at the top of culturally exceptional nations and therefore felt much devotion and commitment to their political entity.

However, many historians estimate that the first roots of modern nationalism can probably be found in the American and French Revolutions that exercised a long lasting

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intellectual impact on a local level and more importantly on nationalisms of neighboring nations such as Germany and Italy.

Theorists of the French Revolution based their nationalist ideology on the premise that people ought to form governments that guarantee equality and liberty for everybody. For them, the nation was inseparable from the people that is an unprecedented moment in history for a people to establish a government in accordance with the nation's common will. The implication is that there is more than the eye can see when nationalism found its first political manifestation.

Apart from the influence exercised by French Revolution, by the nineteenth century, nationalism grew vividly to become one of the most momentous political and social forces in Europe's of modern times. By means of its consolidation, a ferocious competition between European nations for gaining the struggle of national self-imposition started and resulted in the outbreak of the devastating WWI.

b. Nationalism Main Paradigms

Prior to 1960s, no much interest was put on the concept of nationalism in spite of the political vitality it merited. However, with the 1960s, scholars commenced to commit a good deal of systematic attempts in the direction of approaching the nature, causes and effects of nations and nationalisms. The outcome was then, four main theoretical paradigms: Primordialism, Perennialism, Ethnosymbolism, and Modernism.

The Primordialist paradigm suggests that nationalism is a natural phenomenon with a prior influence on people's lives. Despite the fact that nationalism as politics is also very modern, the notion of the concept nationhood and nationalism are not a new invention. John Breuilly argues that "one can trace back its history over centuries. There were earlier periods when the nation knew greatness; earlier heroes and golden ages which can inspire members of the nation in the present" (Breuilly *Approaches to Nationalism* 149). The Perennialist

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paradigm like Primordial accentuates “the ubiquity and longevity of nation, but it drops the naturalist foundations” (Osterud 1135). In this sense, nationalism is a frequent historical phenomenon as historical evidence shows that some nations were characterized by the length and continuity of history. As a matter of illustration, the Ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek, Indus, Chinese civilizations saw the establishment of nations.

There is no doubt, nonetheless, that Modernist paradigm is the most overriding paradigm as it accomplished a triumph over the other approaches. Hence, the discourse had broadened and diversified and therefore a good number of modernist theories were devised to deal with it. Ernest Gellner one of the leading theorists of nationalism labels the latter as a modern phenomenon on both sociological as well as historical levels. For Gellner, modernity forms the matrix of nations. On that basis, he proposed that history is divided into three distinct phases: the pre-agrarian, the agrarian and the industrial. Nations are recent social constructions of the modern period as modernism involves the structural conditions of modern society for occurring. This modernist paradigm came as opprobrium against the perennialist assumptions that nations can be read in terms of what Anthony D. Smith came to call ‘retrospective nationalism’ (Smith *Nationalism and Modernism A Critical Survey* 19) which distortedly relates modern communities to ancient civilizations, and so may risk giving a distorted understanding. Nations and nationalisms rose in the eighteenth with the tide of modernizing philosophies and developments of human societies from agrarian states to industrialized nations. It has been argued that “nations were not the product of natural, or deep rooted, historical forces, but rather of recent historical developments and of the rational, planned activity made possible and necessary by the conditions of the modern era” (Smith *Nationalism and Modernism A Critical Survey* 19). The origins of nationalism and nationhood in earlier times were challenged by the potent influence of modern concepts as such capitalism, industrialization, secularism...etc on the formation of nations.

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Apart from this, Ethno-symbolism is a complex phenomenological and historical perception that explains nationalism by underscoring the significance of the myths, symbols, rituals, traditions and memories of the nation in the construction and endurance of the modern nation. Again, Anthony D. Smith points out that “for ethno-symbolism, what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular living past has been and can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias” (qtd in Spencer and Wollman 20). Arising as a critical theory of modernism, the ethno-symbolic approach helps identify the ongoing power of myth and memory in the definition of people and their destinies and national and ethnic mobilizations as well. According to Ethno-symbolist, “ethnicity [...] provides a more fruitful basis for explaining key elements of the distinctive shape and character of nations and nationalisms” (Smith *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* 18). This paradigm correspondingly stresses the way traditions, symbols of ethnic attachments and heritages shape peoples’ identities and reveal the diversity and durability of these identities. It is noteworthy that those who were not satisfied with the modernist and Ethno-symbolist theories of nationalism developed a postmodernist paradigm that emphasizes the ‘inventedness of nations’. This theory demonstrates that a clearer conceptualization of globalization, hybridization, culture and everyday nation enhances one’s understanding of nationalism. In view of the difficulties arising from the fact that nationalism is not one theoretical or historical contour, all those paradigms came to help scholars and researchers focus on nationalism studies. Not very far from this, the study will attempt, in some amount of detail, to reveal the connection of nationalism with European Colonialism.

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c. Aligning Nationalism with European Colonialism

Nationalism and colonialism as ideologies hold somewhat a close bond in such a way Nationalism is the subject matter that laid the ground for colonialism to find avenues towards an actual embodiment. It goes without saying, nationalism is among the greatest determining dynamics of modern history. Nationalism and colonialism were both very powerful motives in the early 19th Century, and yet nationalism gave a strong impetus to imperialist projects. Hence, Africa and Asia had largely been a subject to Western colonialism. Imperial greed spurred on the Europeans to subdue these continents and plunder their wealth on nationalistic grounds. The major European powers effectively manipulated and oriented the nationalist ambitions to foster their own imperialist intentions.

At the most basic level, European nationalists thought that their nations were superior to other nations and correspondingly they deserved to rule the whole world and submit other races to their nationalist superiority. That means to say, nationalist rulers felt the need to further their colonialist projects in order to be effectively great in the eyes of others by expanding their geographical scope and therefore went out into the world to grab whatever land, territory, or nation seemed convenient to overtake. If anything marks the colonial phase, it is that “imperialism now became an extension into the wider world of the ideology of a ‘national’ formation based on the unifying signifiers of language and race” (Griffiths et al *Post-colonial Studies* 153). Colonialism, to some extent, is predicated on nationalist reasons. Dean E. Robinson, affirms that “colonialism as a system of governance grew out of the logic of European nationalism, ethnocentrism, and economic expansion” (Robinson 81). Not only the territorial expansion was a nationalist motive, but expanding the colonizers’ cluster of culture, language and lifestyle was another basis of nationalism. In this sense, nationalism fueled the rivalry of European nations as such France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Russia, Portugal, and Belgium for dominion. The picture of the relation between nationalism and

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colonialism has become incontestably clearer with the clashes erupting between European powers to take control of the Balkan territories recently parting with the Ottoman rule. Russia, Germany, England, Austro-Hungary Empire were enthusiastic to extend their control over the area. However, in fulfilling imperialism, it is very important for imperialist countries to have the support of their people. That is why they made of nationalism an operative practice for getting support to maintain colonies and then benefitting the colonized nations. The Sociologist Jyoti Puri in her book entitled *Encountering Nationalism* writes: “patriotism became the expression of loyalty to state, and colonial expansion as a nationalist endeavor, was supported” (Puri 87). People were consequently moved by nationalism to show loyalty to the homeland and even the colonial extension was maintained as a national interest and a nationalist endeavor.

At a point of time, the European nationalist states became increasingly fanatical and intolerant of one another and were ever ready to go to war to settle down their conflicts. In a similar vein, David West points out: “the territorial aims of nationalism often lead to wars with other states” (West 34). The pictures looked much darker with WWI and WWII that stand as an excruciating historical testimony for the tragedy of massive violence emanating from the competing European nationalisms.

Practically, theoretical nationalism was backed up by ideologies such as the notion of the White Man’s Burden. As stated earlier, ideology has the power to erect high feelings of solidarity among a certain group. The White Man’s Burden principle had generated pride and vanity among its embracers and believers and subsequently nationalism took stronger roots to accomplish ulterior imperial prospects under the catchy mottos of civilizing and christianizing what was regarded as heathen, dark, primitive and backward continents. In so doing, nationalism turned out to be pretext that morally legitimized territorial expansion and to justify ethnic cleansing.

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However there is a certain sense in which, the reverse also applies. This is to say, it is believed that colonialism also has an impact on the rise and growth of nationalism. In so many occupied nations, colonization became a catalyst that fostered the rise of anti-colonial nationalism. This nationalism made them feel connected to one another and thus gave them a potent aspiration to throw out the colonizing masters. Hence, though the emergence of nationalist tendencies, many colonized peoples had come to feel a sense of unity that developed to give a will for gaining independence from colonial rule. This is the case of Black America, Sudan, Kenya and Algeria in their long and bitter struggle to part with colonial rule.

2. The Rise of Nationalism and Decolonization in Black America, Sudan, Algeria and Kenya

a. From Shackles of Slavery to Afrocentrism: The Rise of Black Nationalism

“American Black Nationalism” refers to an entirety of social thought, stances, and activities ranging from the very simple expressions of ethnic pluralism and racial cohesion to the more vigorous and advanced ideologies of Pan-Negroism to Pan-Africanism. By means of conceptualizing the term, Black Nationalism is a “*master ideology*” in *African-American thought and politics, having the capacity to encompass integration, contemporary liberalism conservatism and radicalism*” (Smith 39). Unity and self-determination, separation, or independence, from the American society, in other words, are the cornerstone of Black Nationalism with the purpose of practicing a political autonomy over a black nation-state of known geographical frontiers.

One of the vital starting points for sketching the historical evolution of Black Nationalism seems to embed it within a precise temporal scope, as certain notions, philosophies and movements are conventionally shaped in tone and substance by a host of historical influences of their eras. Hence, Wilson Jeremiah Moses, in his important book

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entitled *Classical Black Nationalism: From the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey*, suggests that Black Nationalism as an ideology can be approached from three distinct phases.

a.1. The First Phase: Pre-Classical Black Nationalism

This first phase is called “Proto-nationalistic” or Pre-Classical Black Nationalism. It dates as far back as the arrival of first African slaves to the New World and to the progression of slavery institution and then ends with the Revolutionary War of Independence. In fact, the history of slavery in the New World has its origins back to the sixteenth century. It began around 1526 and lasted to almost 1867, during which black Africans were being brought to the Caribbean by the Spanish and the Portuguese, who were pioneers of slavery industry. Santo Domingo, accordingly, became the first international slave port in the Americas. Brought against their will, African slaves –either kidnapped or purchased from Africa – made extremely perilous trips through the Atlantic Ocean weathering storms, resisting fatal diseases and inhuman treatment on board the ships transporting them to join a land completely unknown to them. In the summer of 1619, when some English men were striving to survive the Jamestown colony, one significant change occurred that would have a long lasting influence on shaping the destiny of the future nation. This far-reaching development was the arrival of the first African slaves in British America. Historically speaking, a small Dutch warship anchored at Jamestown, carrying on board some twenty enslaved black Africans. In fact, historians record that those slaves had been shipped from Angola to Veracruz, Mexico by Portuguese slave merchants. And while the Portuguese ship was sailing across the West Indies, it was attacked and intercepted by a Dutch man of war. Taking an advantage of Virginia's revolutionized economy that entailed more workers, the ship's captain sold the twenty African slaves to the settlers as indentured servants.

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In actual practice, those blacks experienced a land of geographical wilderness and even the New World human landscape was of peerless wilderness. They went through one of the most dramatic episodes of the American history. With time going on, more and more blacks were being brought to British America. In a sense, Virginia's settlers planted the first seeds of a slave system that evolved into a peculiar institution producing all sorts of abuse and cruelty.

In spite of the fact that the arrival of first blacks to Virginia had been in 1619, but slavery did not start until 1660s, because they were considered as indentured servants. As a system, slavery saw a gradual process, which marked the transition of an enslaved African from an indentured servant into a lifelong slave.

Ever since Blacks had had their footholds on the soil of the New World, they soon recognized that they had to encounter an Anglo-Saxon Exceptionalism placing them from the very beginning according to the bodily difference and the complex of superiority that promoted the conviction that the enslaved blacks were an inferior race with a primitive and heathen culture. Consequently, this made it easier for whites to vindicate black slavery. So, defying the brutal circumstances of slavery was a cause for the emergence of Black Nationalism and a catalyst for its development and its first imperative step was defining national goals as racial ones.

Owing to the fact that they were regarded as pieces of property as they were purchased, blacks were compellingly sent to large plantations of the South to do the most toiling work of lucratively agricultural system. In this respect, their employment supplied the agricultural back up of European mercantile capitalism. African-Americans, in other words, were subjugated to every sort of economic exploitation and dehumanization. That being said, slaveholders exercised all their power against their slaves.

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Black Nationalism in the time preceding the American Revolutionary War cannot be considered regardless of the slaves' incessant struggle for ending the increasingly harsh conditions of slavery based on color of skin. Most of the enslaved Africans brought to British America had lived long before in States and kingdoms, which enjoyed the foundational constituents of national identities. Hence, Black Nationalism is ingrained in the history of African nation-states and empires and their first attempts at establishing national identities that were distinct from the ones of those who enslaved them entailed a rebellion against slavery itself. Settlers soon after understood that the rebellions were mainly due to the recently imported Africans, who were forcefully subjugated to slavery.

Settlers never thought that their theoretical dominion over blacks would go challenged. However, it was audaciously defied by some free literate blacks since not all the blacks were slaves. Their resistance to the status quo assumed a number of forms. For instance, they established familial relationships and traditions and set up efficient networks for disseminating information. They equally developed survival techniques to eschew white violence. But, above all, they advanced violent tactics; this included marshaling array of people and weapons in order to resist their condition and struggle oppression.

In so doing, colonial America witnessed a series of sporadic rebellions led by people of African ancestry with the end of putting a term to the legalized practice of enslaving blacks throughout the colonies. Historically speaking, the Gloucester County, Virginia Revolt (1663) New York Slave Revolt of (1712) Samba Rebellion (1731) are underlined as remarkable events in the history of blacks' rebellions. One of the most notably known of all these, however, was The Stono Rebellion (Wood 63). Also referred to as Cato's Conspiracy or Cato's Rebellion, it erupted in September 1739 in South Carolina's Colony and it was the bloodiest slave mutiny. It was the first of its kind in the British mainland colonies as it resulted in the death of 75 people between whites and blacks. The insurrection was carried out

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by African natives who planned to terminate the act of enslaving the Africans in the New World through joining Spanish Florida as “in 1733, the King of Spain issued a decree that officially granted freedom to all fugitive slaves from English territory” (69). The insurgency inspired and fueled further African American uprisings. That’s how Colonial officials instigated new measures to abort any future movement of blacks to undermine the legitimized slave system. Essentially, the chances of bringing these uprisings into success were very slim and marginal in the time from the seventeenth century to the outbreak the Revolutionary War, and therefore, the dream for forging a black nationalism was delayed.

a.2. Second Phase “Classical Black Nationalism

Second Phase is usually referred to as Classical Black Nationalism. It arose during the era lasting from Revolutionary War to Reconstruction. Essentially, following the American War for independence which resulted in victory of the thirteen colonies to become the United States of America, the situation of black slaves remained pretty much the same. On this point, slaves were prohibited from a fair education, prevented from living peacefully the real sense of the family, black women suffered from the sexual abuses and furthermore black children were being sold in auctions.

The newly drafted U.S. Constitution as a philosophy of human freedom was not a dynamic force to put a term to the Black ordeal. It implicitly acknowledged the institution as blacks were excluded from the human and natural rights clearly stated in Declaration of Independence. This stirred fierce resentment throughout America.

Keenly aware of the inhuman subjugation, some educated African Americans started a form of everyday resistance notably after the construction a sense of solidarity among the oppressed blacks to start an insurgency on a larger scale. A national black consciousness was crystalized by a set of black intellectuals, who were motivated by ideas of Enlightenment. As

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a matter of fact, Enlightenment universalized some values and ideals into a framework of natural rights of all humankind. Enlightened Blacks thought if they continued their submission under a tyrannical system denying them of their natural rights, they would never operate a radical change. They believed that they had had the right to dissolve the social contract with a government and a system that oppressed them physically and morally. At the same time, the peril of slave owners' brutalities escalated to add more tragedies to the accumulation of torture. Subsequently, this crippling legacy of slavery gave an impetus to Afro-Americans to start a rebellious vein against the status quo.

Notwithstanding the previous claims, any rupture with acts of brutality required a unification of the blacks and this gave birth to what came to be known as Classical Black Nationalism. It is "an ideology whose goal was the creation of an autonomous black nation-state, with definite geographical boundaries- usually in Africa" (Moses 01). In order to give a concrete form to the theoretical nationalist expectations blacks formed organizations to stand up for themselves through bringing together thousands of black voices and assisting them sophisticating their communities. As a matter of illustration, figures such as; Prince Hall, Richard Allen, and Absalom Jones, James Forten, Cyrus Bustill, William Gray found it very vital to form certain organizations to vehicle the black hope for freedom into practice. Societies such as African Masonic lodges, the Free African Society, and Church Institutions such as the St. Thomas African Episcopal Church held an especially important role in spreading awareness among the blacks to help crystallize a valid argument for struggling enslavement in one part and gaining sympathy of anti-slavery moralistic Whites. Within the context of this conceptual dynamism, a small yet effective portion of Whites in America appeared to denounce oppression of blacks. In opposition to the Anglo-Saxon supremacist tradition, some religious whites began to draw analogies between the subjugation of black slaves and their own oppression by the British. Slavery became new form colonialism and

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accordingly they called for the abolition of the slavery. Hence, the Rising influence of Abolitionist Movement uplifted the sense of Black Nationalism.

Indeed, Martin Robison Delany (1812–1885) was the grandfather and the most leading proponent of Black Nationalism .i.e. he was an Afro-American abolitionist, and his firm stand against slavery impressed many people. But, he was also a staunch supporter to advocate and bolster the repatriation of African-American slaves to a substitute nation. The period witnessed a return of thousands of blacks to their homeland Africa: to Liberia or Sierra Leone. In other part, among those who carried particular nationalist weight for fueling the antislavery cause in this time was Harriet Tubman. She is a well-preserved name in the black collective psyche. As a conductor on the Underground Railroad during the turbulent 1850s, she played a significant part in leading hundreds of other runaway slaves to freedom.

The efforts to better the lives of millions of Negroes through abolishing slavery gave rise to nationalist project which intended at granting blacks a voice as a persecuted ethnic minority. Black Nationalism emerged to effectively promote a racial definition or redefinition of African Americans with a national identity that distinguishes them from other racial groups. Accordingly, ending the peculiar institution of slavery became the abominable seed of discord which widened the gulf of sectional conflict between the pro-slavery South and the anti-slavery North. The tension developed like snowball to spark the American Civil War.

Many grinding battles decided the final outcome of this brutal war that the North bitterly won. However, the year 1863 was a hallmark in the history of blacks' struggle for gaining freedom. President Lincoln issued a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, whereby all the blacks living in Confederate states were freed. The proclamation was centered on the destruction of an unprecedented slave society in the modern world. Likewise, it authorized thousands of the newly emancipated blacks to be recruited into the Union army

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and then ostensibly inspired a stronger enthusiasm for the antislavery cause. Further and more importantly, this historic decision helped lay the groundwork for their nationalist dream to be achieved.

In war's aftermath, the ex-slaves were eager to grasp the significance of being free under a biracial democratic government, established on the ashes of slavery. During the era of Reconstruction, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was the first of the three important Reconstruction Amendments to be adopted. It had stipulated that slavery shall not so forth exist in the USA and officially ended the institution of slavery. Another law played also a key role in the consolidation of the blacks' rights was the Fourteenth Amendment. It broadened the definition of citizenship, granting former slaves equal protection of the Constitution. However, Fifteenth Amendment adopted in 1870- lent a shape and structure to the future of Black Nationalism as it guaranteed that a citizen's right to vote would not be denied on any account of race, color, or earlier circumstances of servitude.

In fact, the breakneck growth of Black Nationalism at this period of time was hindered by the reactions of racist Whites, who saw that the entire legislature following the civil war should not entitle their former slaves to social or political equality with the whites. In reply, they got around laws passed by Congress and began to pass the Black Codes, preventing black people from voting and denying them access to many public facilities as such going to school, owning land, serving on juries, giving evidence in courts against whites, and even getting jobs.

Pursuant to this, hate and terror societies and organizations as such the Ku Klux Klan employed terror in pursuit of their white supremacist agenda and their segregation knew no signs of abating. It killed freedmen and this confirmed one assumption; hatred against the blacks had minimized following the Civil War, but did not disappear and this hampered the

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blacks to enjoy the high ideals of freedom they had gained. The country saw a shift from discrimination to escalating segregation. On the whole, Reconstruction was a failure and therefore deferred the struggle for equality for African Americans until the 20th century, when Black Nationalism would become a dynamic black power.

a.3. Third Phase: Revival of Black Nationalism

The third period of Black Nationalism had originated during the post-Reconstruction era and played ever since a central role in American political and intellectual life. In fact, the end of slavery after a bloody Civil War was nothing but a new beginning for a bitter transition for a black nation deeply overwhelmed by a plague of slavery and intimidation, as the only deprived portion of the American society was undisputedly the Blacks. The civil war was fought with a supposition to achieve great expectations to the blacks, but eventually no actual embodiment of their prospects took place. They were promised since Reconstruction Era, but the end of slavery in form was by no mean a rupture with inequality in Post-Reconstruction era. For the blacks, discrimination is instilled in the mind of the Whites and therefore could not be dismissed by an enactment of law, let alone walls of segregation which rose to make it even more impossible for blacks to hope for equality with whites. Unwillingly, the blacks were still subject to segregation and inhuman livelihood. Through racial regulations as such Jim Crow laws, Blacks were segregated in public services such schools, hospitals, buses, and restaurants...etc.

A serious discontent was felt among both segregated Negroes and pro-blacks integration whites. Blacks subsequently had turned fervent and took a bold nationalist move incorporated in a series of activities nationwide. The lingering effect of religion on the development of modern Black Nationalism is undeniable. The first ignite was the Black churches involvement in an anti-segregation resistance. This proved particularly true among a

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number of African-American clergy circles. Their Sermons helped further the existence of the movement to draw the attention to predicament emanating from injustices.

Clerical separated circles were previously founded for the reason that Afro-Americans would struggle the subjugation of slavery and endure Jim Crowism in the United States. The clerical phenomenon catalyzed the inception of a modern Black nationalism that accentuated the need to set distinct boundaries separating blacks from non-blacks and to construct black communal groups to uphold national pride and to collectivize resources of racial identity.

Marcus Garvey is among the iconic figures with the largest and most enduring reputation as an exponent of Black Nationalism. In fact, the nature of the nationalism he advocated is said to be classical as its utmost goal was to secure a black separate nation with a political autonomy. However, his formation of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1918 was an emblematic event. With anti-racial segregation rhetoric, Garvey succeeded in creating the most prevalent and operative Black Nationalist movement in the history of the United States. The association arose in Harlem, New York, and it echoed the social, economic, and political experience of Blacks. In other words, it emerged to revive their struggle to validate the rights enshrined in US constitution. As mentioned earlier, the clerical circles played an effective role in the collectivization of religious tenets in the direction of emancipating the blacks from worshipping a White God and then keeping submissive to white dominion. In this context, the critic Alphonso Pinkey wrote: “the religious component of the UNIA was the African Orthodox Church, founded in New York in 1921. [...] Garvey believed that for blacks to worship a white God meant that they would have to remain subservient to white people” (52). The leaders of that nationalist movement sought to make of Harlem a “*black mecca*” (Jones 01 Emphasis added), an extraordinary destination for migratory groups of blacks in quest for national recognition and equality.

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Modern Black Nationalism was similarly fueled by earlier art and literature of the 20's Harlem Renaissance. Harlem Renaissance which included clerical, artistic and literary circles strived for articulating, social, economic, artistic, and cultural prospects, with the aim of consolidating a black sense of national belonging. This Negro movement originated to kindle the expectations already championed by the Reconstruction Era, and which gave the freed blacks some basic rights, but were impeded to be enforced into real practice.

Harlem was very important herald in the sense that it proceeded upon the reconceptualization of the blacks' distorted identity through the construction of a new black cultural identity; an identity that was an obstructive handicap that plagued black life. It was to some extent a cultural awakening, which presented the black heritage in the best way possible. In some senses, the Afro-American Folklore, theatre, music, literature, painting of Harlem created a tremendous enthrallment among the whites with the black exotic world they recently explored. In other words, "black creative artists of the 1920s worked to create a national network of playwrights, poets and painters who could capture the essence of 'what it means to be colored in America'" (Van Deburg 51). In so doing, many talented intellectuals such as Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, Jessie Redmon Fauset, Wallace Thurman, Countee Cullen, Rudolf Fisher and others appeared to the American cultural scene in order to emphasize their blackness and refute the white racial supremacy. They contributed to crystalize a black American nationalist consciousness so as to aptly transfer the blacks' disenchantment into a national pride.

In fact, the transformation and nationalist dynamism following the Harlem Renaissance cannot be sketched in few pages. Black Nationalism developed to grow new spectrums and tendencies. For instance, by 1930, Wallace Fard Muhammad had instituted the Nation of Islam (NOI) or what is sometimes referred to as the Black Muslims. He followed new alternative strategies to gain equality. Later on, Elijah Muhammad assumed a seminal

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part in leading the Nation of Islam to become a more radical mouthpiece of suppressed blacks. Elijah Muhammad “*set the stage for black nationalism in the post–World War II era*” (Robinson 35). However, much of the vitality within the Nation of Islam came from new adhering Figures like Malcolm X, who undisputedly had been influential on radical politics. Moreover, his efforts fostered a heightened Black Nationalism that led the promotion of Pan-Africanism or Afrocentrism.

America during the 1960s saw political, religious as well as cultural engagements and the peaceful militancy seemed to have been its most striking feature. The Civil Rights Movement was a turning point in the history of Black Nationalism as the blacks were devotedly involved in a fundamental struggle against the residues of segregation legacy. Led by prolific activists such as Martin Luther King, Jesse Louis Jackson and others, the movement inspired, motivating and mobilized the entire nation to support their cause. The Civil Rights Movement succeeded to a greater extent in sentimentalizing the Black Nationalism through redressing what had been regressed in the minds and hearts of all Americans. In spite of the opprobrium, that has been heaped on Black Nationalism, but it kept being an integral part of the American experience and the American collective consciousness. Nonetheless, on another part of the globe other subjugated peoples were struggling to gain their natural rights of self-determination. The Sudan was not an exception of the global dynamism of decolonization sweeping the world.

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b. The Dawn of The Sudanese Nationalism and the Attainment of Independence

Before tackling modern European colonialism to Sudan, it seems appropriate to suggest a brief view of the Sudan before colonization. Pre-colonial Sudan saw the rise of the Funj and Darfur kingdoms and Ottoman Egypt was interested in the gold and slaves that Sudan could afford. Between 1820 and 1821, the Ottomans successfully conquered and unified the northern portion of the country. The Sudan was ruled by the Turks, who had founded a new government there. However, the Turks and Egyptians were discouraged to further their expansion into the deeper south of the country by the hard geography of swamps and equatorial forests. That's what made the Turks and Egyptians unable to establish effective control over the area. Thus, south Sudan was less affected by the Turkish way of life.

On January 1885, the Sudan saw the rise of the Mahdist state. It was founded by Muhammad Ahmad Ibn Abdullah, who declared himself Mahdi of the nation. Mahdi means an expected holy divine leader, whose coming was meant for reawakening Muslims of the Sudan to eject the Turks and reclaim Islam to its primitive purity and break Egyptian rule in the Sudan as well. His success was chiefly due to an extraordinary oscillation between personal magnetism with religious zealotry. Ibn Abdullah's religious and nationalist dogma forged a nationalist awareness among the Sudanese to resist the Turko-Egyptian colonization with armed struggle. The motives for revolting were essentially "brutal slave raiding, corruption, and economic exploitation, [that], characterized the period of Turko-Egyptian rule in the Sudan" (Idriss 31). Therefore, in context of resistance, Muhammad Ahmad succeeded in expelling the imperial forces that had been occupying the Nilotic Sudan since 1821 and accordingly he set the pillars of the Mahdist State that would last for some years before Anglo-Egyptian occupation of the Sudan.

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On January 1899, Anglo-Egyptian agreement led to the invasion of the Sudan, which became part of a condominium, jointly administered by England and Egypt. The Sudan had been subject to that combined colonialism for more than half a century before the emergence of Sudanese nationalism. In fact, the inception and development of the Sudanese anti-colonial nationalism, one may assume, roots back to the history of Anglo-Egyptian occupation, when Sudan had been jointly colonized by England and Egypt. In the first half of the twentieth century –the end World War I to be exact –winds of consciousness for decolonization started to blow.

Between 1900 and 1918, the Sudanese nationalism was analogous to other nationalist movements in the African continent. It developed throughout crucial stages and “each of these phases was characterized by a different set of political dynamics corresponding to the then-prevailing, political, economic, and social conditions” (Tareq 02). In fact, nationalism in Sudan took Arab and Muslim orientations and it was chiefly in the Northern provinces. It was a tribal and religious opposition to the British occupation. This religiously motivated movement was inspired by the Mahdist legacy. The Mahdist-inspired reformist movement applied for a return to the authentic teachings of early Islam and challenged this British colonial rule.

By the end of WWI a wave of political unrest swept through the colonial world. The time witnessed the rise of a nationalist consciousness in explosive force. Indeed, social forces were catalysts for the construction of colonial nationalism. After all this, it is not surprising that it came as a consequence of the discontent of the Sudanese people with the administrative marginalization and corrupt colonial practices. It is abundantly clear that “nationalism in the Sudan was unique; it sought to remove joint Anglo-Egyptian authority” (Okoth 204), since nationalists rejected indirect rule and applied for a centralized national government in Khartoum. Their growing resistance was equally an outcome of the British southern policy.

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The latter implemented division of Sudan and hindered its unification under an Arabized and Islamic ruling system.

The newly emerging consciousness was mirrored in several leagues, clubs and societies that were established across the Sudan during the twenties. In 1921 Ali Abd al Latif, a Muslim Dinka and former army officer, is said to have been a prominent voice that stimulated the commencement of nationalism in Sudan. He created the United Tribes Society that agitated for the Sudan's independence as he felt one time that he had been treated in a racial arrogance by a British official. He advocated a Sudan in which power would be shared by tribal and religious leaders. Three years later, Ali Abd al Latif was arrested at the aftermath of demonstrations he organized in Khartoum and consequently he was sent to exile in Egypt.

One characteristic feature of the onset of the Sudanese nationalism is the 1924 Revolution. It was the first anti-colonial insurgency to embrace a nationalist discourse and was one of the most significant episodes of the modern history of Sudan. The political activists who instigated the rebellion attempted to overthrow the British colonial government in the name of unity with Egypt. Some twenty officers from a Sudanese battalion started suspicious political activities in connection with the 'White Flag League' and British officials found solid evidence for dissent among other battalions. The British in response annihilated the Sudanese battalion that mutinied in support of the Egyptians. Albeit insurgents from the 'White Flag League' put great efforts to implement a unitary ideology with Egypt, but the British colonialism succeeded in thwarting it through "a separatist policy, based on British colonial wisdom 'divide and rule' [which] started to be applied, not only between Egypt and Sudan, but inside Sudan itself- between the north and south"(Kurita 29). The final upshot of that unaccomplished revolution brought disappointment since it was not able to produce radical rupture with the status quo. What is more, a number of historians argue that 1924 Revolution was not merely an antagonism to Britain's colonial rule, but it was rather a

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struggle among internal social movements over the nationalist group which was entitled to speak on the behalf of the Sudanese people.

Nationalism waned for the six coming years not for so long time educated Sudanese began to encourage nationalist sentiments by soliciting a more operative Sudanese participation in the Council's deliberations. This could only be possible with the restriction of the general governor's power. The mounting demands for reforms brought Britain and Egypt around a table to negotiate the future of Sudan. Britain was skeptical towards the Egyptians' desire to annex Sudan and Sudanese nationalists were afraid that friction between the condominium powers would result in the division of Sudan with the annexation of northern Sudan to Egypt and the attachment southern Sudan to neighboring Uganda and Kenya.

Decolonization the Road for Independent Sudan

The next heated debate among the Sudanese nationalists was Sudan's future status whether to be based on independence or unification with Egypt. The first attitude was represented by Abd ar Rahman al Mahdi who advocated independence. The second stance was that of the Democratic Unionist Party; a nationalist wing in favor of unity with Egypt. Ismail al-Azharī headed the party. In contrast to the matrixes of Algerian, Kenyan and Afro-American nationalisms, the argument among nationalists about Sudan's postcolonial identity was approached by some scholars and historians such as Amir H. Idriss, Professor of African History and Politics, as being more imperative than struggling European colonialism. He assumes: "the history of nationalism in the Sudan has been the history of competing political claims over the identity of the postcolonial state rather than the struggle against European colonialism" (44).

In 1942, a quasi-nationalist movement founded by a group of high educated Sudanese called the Graduates' General Conference, submitted to the government a memorandum,

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which constituted a road map for decolonization process. That memorandum required “a pledge of self-determination after the war to be preceded by abolition of the "closed door" ordinances, an end to the separate curriculum in southern schools, and an increase in the number of Sudanese in the civil service” (Fadlalla 36). The governor general rejected the memorandum, but decided to start reforms including a government supervised transformation of indirect rule into a modernized system of local government with effective participation of the Sudanese.

In 1952 leaders of the pro-independence National Umma Party which dominated legislature negotiated the Self-determination Agreement with Britain. The legislators then validated a constitution that provided for a prime minister and council of ministers responsible to a bicameral parliament. The new Sudanese government had responsibility in all areas but for military and foreign affairs, which had been kept in hands of the British governor general. As a reaction to the new events accelerating Sudan’s independence, Egypt demanded recognition of Egyptian sovereignty over Sudan and abrogated the condominium agreement in protest and declared its sovereignty over Sudan.

However, a far-reaching event speeded up decolonization. The Egyptian Revolution of 1952 with a *coup d'état* seizing power and ousting King Farouk declared Egypt a republic. The first president of Egypt Colonel Muhammad Naguib accepted the right of Sudanese self-determination. In February 1953, London and Cairo signed an accord, which arranged for a three-year transitional period to help Sudan achieve a smooth passage from condominium rule to self-government. During the transition phase, British and Egyptian troops retrieved from Sudan. By the end of this period, the Sudanese would decide their future status in a referendum conducted under international supervision.

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Although it achieved independence without bloody conflict, Sudan inherited a legacy of serious problems from the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. In Sudan, traditions prevailed more pervasively than the liberalism imported from the West via British education and lifestyle and adopted by the Sudanese intelligentsia. Around the same time, somewhere in North Africa, another struggle of decolonization was being led by the Algerians, who stood out against the colonizers of their homeland.

c. The Roots and Genesis of Algerian Nationalism

Algeria had been colonized by France for more than a century and thirty years that came to conclude three centuries of Ottoman rule. Yet, the crippling legacy of colonialism threatened to keep the Algerians submissive and then to accept western dominion. Therefore, Self-renewal and preservation of the Algerian identity from colonial influence were the germane of Algerian nationalism. As a Muslim community of Arabic rootedness, Algerian intellectuals and politicians grew especially concerned about the form and the content of their identity in the light of intellectual and ideological upheavals. Debates were animated, taking into account the inclusion of certain philosophies and the exclusion of other dogmatic discourses, which proved especially weird to be components of an Algerian identity. Nonetheless, the first roots of Algerian nationalism emerged from a spectrum of political and dogmatic orientations. Those orientations differ from one current to another one in terms of the magnitude of influence and the success in achieving nationalist goals.

The Algerian nationalist movement emerged and progressed at the aftermath of the WWI. It triggered the Algerian people's conviction that the geographically sporadic armed resistance was futile as France succeeded in putting a term for its scattered spots across the country. Resistance remarkable deficiency was its failure to coordinate, synchronize, and unify the efforts to struggle colonialism.

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The beginning of the twentieth century saw the formation of civic organizations, societies and clubs in Algeria. Many important figures presented petitions and demands which broadly reflected the interests and aspirations of the Algerian people for creating a new Algeria. They refused and denounced the colonial policy based on oppression and discrimination between the indigenous peoples and the French settlers.

As soon as WWI had ended with more disillusionment and despair resultant from the French persisting discriminative strategy, the Algerians took a crucial step forward. Great efforts were put on creating political parties as more effective means for combating colonialism. In this sense, four tendencies marked the elaboration of political parties.

The first tendency was the one propounded by the egalitarian reformist current led by Emir Khalid. He is the one of the most influential Muslim leaders in Algeria after the war; a grandson of Emir Abd AlKadir and a member of the Young Algerians.¹ Pro-assimilationist Emir Khalid represented in the settlers' propaganda as "a champion of Islam nationalism" (Abun-Nasr 331) supported a harmonious coexistence between Muslim natives and European settlers in a common French fatherland. He formed the so-called "*Movement pour l'égalité et la Reforme*", which called for an absolute equality between Algerian natives and European ruling minority in terms of duties and rights. Khalid's view took much popularity after he had sent a petition to the American president Woodrow Wilson - whilst leaders of the allied powers were drafting Versailles Treaty- emphasizing the rights of colonized peoples for self-determination. His political activism was focal in the sense that it helped crystalize an Algerian national awareness, remarkably his appeal for a free education for all Algerians in

¹ Founded shortly before World War I, Young Algerians is an Algerian nationalist group whose members were assimilationist group of workers with French-education background. The Young Algerians were ready to start an enduring union with France on the condition that Algerian natives be granted the full rights of French citizens. Still, they withered in the years following the war, with the rise of radical nationalism refusing assimilationist tendencies.

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both French and Arabic languages. The movement could not escape harassment and colonial influences and soon thereafter it faded away.

The second propensity is represented by the so called ‘assimilationists’. Having a French cultural background, they advocated egalitarianism that would result in integration or merger of Algerian locals into the thread of the French nation. Its adherents were drawn from liberal elite of well-educated families, who sought to indoctrinate a liberal equality and then assimilation. Ferhat Abbas is one of the central figures who adopted a liberal integrationist philosophy which antagonized the claims that Algeria had a distinct identity. Abbas argues that he had found no trace in history of an Algerian nation and accordingly announced as France his fatherland. Henceforward, assimilationists demanded equal political representation and full rights of citizenship. Ferhat Abbas went further to emphatically advocate that “the fastest way to bring about equality for all Algerians was to seek the transformation of Algeria from a colony into a fully integrated province of France with all the political rights and educational opportunities enjoyed by the French.” (Birmingham 13) Abbas maintained that only an end of discrimination could allow Muslims an entry to the French nation. Still, his dependency on political lobbying rather than mass action combined with disillusionment from the absence of French commitment for assimilation thwarted his project and unsurprisingly he had to change radically his convictions, loyalties and tactics.

The third strand is independence nationalist movement that utterly opposed to French rule. Militants of that trend formed a political party named *Star of North Africa* (1926). This party worked on territorial scale as it emphasized the liberation of North Africa- Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco- from the colonial presence. In fact, *The Star of North Africa* was founded by a pro-independence Messali Elhadj in 1926. Messali Elhadj “one of the main leaders of the Algerian nationalist movement” (Abed Jabri 66) had a nationalist proletarian and anti-imperialist radical program, calling for revolt against their colonial rule, withdrawal

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of French troops, and creation of a national army and the nationalization of large estates. It is noteworthy that this party was the first to openly call for Algerian independence. It was affiliated with the French Communist Party and supported by Algerian workers in France. This resulted in the creation of a new party of a highly symbolic prominence *Algerian People's Party* in 1937. The PPA was dissolved by the French authorities after sending its founding father Messali Hadj to exile and arresting its active leaders. On October 1946, the PPA was reconstructed under the name Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (*Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Democratiques*).

The fourth tendency of the Algerian nationalism was purely an Islamic Reformist Program. It came to oppose the integrationist demands for assimilation into France. It set its heart upon reviving and promoting the Algerians' faith by referring to purity of early Islam. Correspondingly, Muslim Algeria had to reawaken through a return to the fundamentals of early Islam, emphasizing the importance of knowledge quest, protecting Islam from unending forms of secularist attack emanating from the colonial cultural practices and assimilationist ideologies, emancipating the Algerian colonized mind from superstitions and unorthodoxies that were acutely ingrained in popular culture. Further and more importantly, the Islamic Reformist movement intended at declaring independence whenever circumstances had been opportune. Among its leading and emblematic voices Sheikh Abd el-Hamid Ben Badis who founded "*the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema*". He was elected as its first president and worked with his assistant Sheikh Mohammed Bashir Elibrahimi. The association fought for free education for all the Algerians, freedom of speech, the separation of religion from the state and reforming the Algerian society by rehabilitating its Islamic values. In similar vein, Martin Evans in his book "*Algeria: France's Undeclared War*" states that "drawing upon concepts such as people (*cha'b*), nation (*watan*), and nationality (*qawmiyya*), the Ulema underlined the existence of a separate Algerian nation based on Muslim and Arab values and

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intimately connected to the world Islamic community (*umma*)” (52). These principles proved to be an integral part of the Algerian personality that France tried relentlessly to spoil.

To carry out this religious and political platform of reforms, the association published a monthly journal named the *Al-Chihab* to be the mouthpiece of the reformist thought. Such journals heralded a new approach to challenge to the colonial narrative “French Algeria”; knowledge was as effective mode of resistance as the armed one. In doing so, the association founded a network of independent schools, scouting movements, and institutions to enlighten Algerians of their belonging.

The Islamic Reform movement had a long lasting considerate impact on the future of Algerian nationalism. By contract to the assimilationist appeals for integration, The Islamic Reform Movement vigorously accentuated the cultural and historical distinctiveness of an Algerian identity, affirming the Algerian Islamic extension and Arab sense of belonging. In most of his famous writings, Sheikh Ben Badis speaks eloquently about the everlasting Islam of the Algerian people and its Arabic roots. Ben Badis maintained: “Islam is our religion, Arabic our language, Algeria our fatherland” (qtd in Goodman 97).

Ben Badis nationalistic views bore considerable political significance and hence ‘French Algeria’ began to fade away in the mind of the French officials who worked for more than one century and thirty years upon the implementation of “*l’algerie Françoise*”. In Basheer Nafi’s view, Sheikh Ben Badis turned out to be an obstruction towards the realization of that project. He states: “the Algerian People are Muslim and to Arabism they belong” became the motto of Algerian nationalism, it was the threat of Francophonization to the Arab-Islamic identity which underlined the reformists’ contribution to the development of Algerian nationalist movement” (Nafi 97). The rise Algerian nationalism seemed to frighten the European colonists as to the settlers “Islam and Arabism became symbols of the nationalism that threatened their wellbeing, which depended on the plentiful supply of cheap Arab

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laborers” (Birmingham 13). For one thing, the French grew determined to thwart and abort the Algerian nationalism at its earlier stages.

Ben Badis’ death caused the Algerian nationalism to wane as, entwined with the potent censorship of the French authorities, it lacked a dynamic leadership. Nevertheless, it reclaimed its enthusiasm with the outbreak of WWII. In wartime, Algerian nationalism was further heightened by promises of decolonization. Eventually, France broke its promises which created a widespread sense of grievance among Algerians. Moreover, French troops opened fire on demonstrators celebrating the defeat Nazi Germany. The French brutality claimed more than 45.000 deaths. Then Algerians were deeply persuaded that salvation can only be accomplished through an armed war of independence.

The Crystallization of Algerian Consciousness to Decolonization

Historically speaking, Algeria’s war of independence came to put an end to colonization since 1830 during which France worked upon turning Algeria an integral part of France. Hence, the French government allowed waves of migrations to settle and about a million had flocked to Algeria. Most of the fertile lands suitable for were granted to French settlers whilst Algerian peasants were pushed into the dry highlands.

The jubilation of the settlers in 1930, at the centenary of their conquest, had by then speeded up alienation of the Algerians and stirred up the rise of anti-colonial nationalism that specifically heightened anticolonial consciousness. France in fact tried at isolating the educated elite which animated the political scene during the 1930’s through legislations such as the Blum-Viollette proposal². This would have allowed a very small

² Named for the French premier and the former governor-general of Algeria Léon Blum and Maurice Viollette, the Blum-Viollette proposal was announced during the Popular Front government in France (1936–1937). It would have permitted a very small portion of Algerians to enjoy full French citizenship without compelling them to abandon their right to be judged by Muslim law on matters of personal status such as marriage, inheritance, divorce, and child custody and the like. Nevertheless, that the project was aborted and never saw the light.

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portion of Algerians to acquire full French citizenship without being forced to renounce the right to be judged by Muslim law on matters of personal or social issues. Integrationists at the beginning were optimistic and both Hadj and Abbas “were thrilled when the Front Populaire under Léon Blum formed the government in France in 1936. But they were soon disappointed by the plan of that government to grant full rights of citizenship to only 21,000 Algerians” (Dietmar 179).. Soon thereafter their high hopes were disappointed, when this law had been aborted under the pressure of French settlers. Otherwise speaking, militaristic and racist France was by no means ready to relinquish its imperial superiority for the sake of containing Muslim and Arab ethnicities to its racial pot. The failure to enforce the proposal made many assimilated Algerians change the integrationist discourse to a set of rational convictions. Subsequently, they joined people who longed for more radical action.

In the national discourse, historians consider the efforts of Ben Badis and his disciples as the cornerstone in forging a distinct Arab and Muslim Algerian nation that remained a static constituent in the Algerian collective consciousness that Algerian population were so distinctive that they were not imbued with European civilization.

After the massacres of 8th of May 1945 in Setif and Guelma, the Algerians became aware that freedom could only be attained through military means. They started readying for an armed war for gaining full independence from France. Repudiating the colonial rule Algeria was anything but favorable to change. i.e. Europeanized Algerians or assimilationist radically reassessed their thought and decided to join the newly formed Revolutionary Committee of Unity and Action (CRUA) which would change into the FLN or the National Liberation Front (*Front de Libération Nationale*). The FLN came to life out of Messali Hadj’s Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties on the one hand and the absorption of

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several nationalist adherents on the other hand. The FLN played a significant part in sparking the revolutionary war for liberation.

On the 1st of November 1954 the first shots of the Algerian revolution were fired in Aures Mountains. Encouraged by French defeat in Dien Bien Phu, FLN fighters carried out attacks on French sites. Shortly thereafter, armed fighting began in the capital Algiers. France responded with massive force to crush the rebellion in its first instances. The French brutalized the Algerian revolutionaries and condoned torture.

The Algerian revolutionaries emphasized more coordination and organization so that the revolution would achieve the goals set at the beginning. On August 20, 1956, the revolution leaders met secretly near the Soummam Valley Kabylia in what came to be called “The Soummam Congress”. It was held to give in the most challenging times of the revolution such as the martyrdom of historic leaders Didouche Mourad, Badji Mokhtar and others. The congress gave a new vigor to deal with French plans to seal off the country in order to block arms shipments to the revolution from neighboring Tunisia and Morocco.

February 1955 was a landmark in the Algerian war for independence. The FLN sent representatives to take part in the Bandung Conference, which was a first necessary step towards the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. This enabled the revolution to have an international echo. By August 1955, the FLN began following new tactics making French civilians targets for the ALN fires and through planting bombs in public sites. This provoked rage of French *pied-noirs* who practiced pressure on the French government.

Despite the iron curtain that the French had constructed along the border, Algerians strife for independence was reinvigorated when the revolution echoes were heard by the international community. On 24 September 1957 the battle of Algiers was a momentum breakthrough. Though France won the battle, this heroic combat drew an international

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attention to the Algerian Cause. Accordingly, months later, the American president John F. Kennedy, in a speech, legitimized Algeria's right independence.

In a desperate need to contain FLN mounting success, France De Gaulle is made Governor- General of Algiers on May 1958. Through taking such a step France attempted at winning the Muslim Algerian hearts and minds by providing social reforms and giving them access to services. However, their subjugation to torture and other forms of violence made it even harder to accept this seduction. Recognizing the difficulty of keeping grip over revolutionary Algeria, De Gaulle announced that France would accept a political solution to the war based on Algerian self-determination. For that reason, in September 1959, De Gaulle declared that Algerians could choose in a referendum whether or not to become independent. The outraged settlers formed the anti-independent *Organisation Armée Secrète* (OAS) to terrorize Algerians and constrain any process of decolonization. The military atrocities of that secret society tarnished through and through international reputation of France.

In the course of events following the announcement of the referendum, first round of negotiations at Evian had started by March 1961 without achieving much progress. One year later, second round of negotiations at Evian took place and crowned by a declaration of ceasefire. But this did not go far enough to satisfy Algerian opinion unless a referendum was officially held to approve the Evian Agreements in 1 July 1962, where 6 million voted for independence. On 3 July 1962, Algeria was declared an independent nation. In fact, Britain was not immune from sense of nationalist movement preceding decolonization, nevertheless it had no profound philosophical problematic with their decolonization. In spite of the fact that Kenya had been some spot of violent resistance, it did not constitute as serious and intricate challenge to the British as Algeria had been to the French. In what follows, the story Kenyan nationalism and decolonization will be handled from a socio-historical perspective.

d. The Emergence of A Kenyan Anti- Colonial Nationalism

In that inflamed context of struggle for decolonization, the Kenyan history is a further excruciating testimony for another imperial power 'Britain' which had to face another colonial resistance on their doorstep. For oppressed Kenyans that marked the point of non-return. But, let's first take a briefer and closer look of Kenya's historical background of colonialism.

Broadly speaking, as many other African regions, Kenya went through colonialism. In fact, the roots of the Kenya's colonial history go as far back as to the Berlin Conference in 1885, when East Africa was mainly divided into areas of influence by the European powers. Hence, the British Government instituted the East African Protectorate in 1895 that bound the region between the East Coast of Africa and Uganda in order to champion a commercial penetration. And soon after, Britain opened the fertile highlands to white settlers. By the time economy was thriving, the British government started to encourage white Brits to settle in the Kenyan colony in order to foster further expansion of the railroad. Even before it was officially declared a British colony in 1920, these settlers were granted a voice in government, while the Africans and the Asians were excluded from taking part in political process (A Brief History on Kenya).³

In 1901, Britain completed the railroad connecting Uganda to the Indian Ocean which connected Lake Victoria to Mombasa and this helped trigger its imperial motive. This allowed the extraction of commercial goods such as tea and coffee from the land for trade. Consequently, in 1920 East African Protectorate became known as crown colony of Kenya administered by United Kingdom. Administration was conducted through Africans appointed to such posts as paramount chief. By 1910 this was known as the Native Authority system.

³ http://www.kenyarep-jp.com/kenya/history_e.html

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The Crystallization of Kenyan Consciousness: the *Mau Mau* Revolt

Colonialism had negative effects on the Kenyan society. Like in Algeria, most of the fertile lands were possessed by whites and the bulk of natives worked as wage laborers. Kenya grew more and more cosmopolitan and population doubled. But, its people never had chance for adequate education. Most of its literate individuals were Christianized by the mission schools and churches which were founded throughout the colony to enlighten Kenyans with Christian faith. These changes however had big effect upon kikuyu⁴ the major language group. Therefore, those Christianized Kenyan elite members were in the forefront of political opposition which formally started against the colonial rule.

The project of Kenyan Nationalism dates back to the early 1920s, when a kikuyu Harry Thuku formed the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). The KCA had a nationalist agenda of advocating the rights of kikuyu for a fair representation on the legislative Council and denounced alienation of African from their lands. The KCA sensitized for oath-taking campaign which “was a response the growing consciousness that a greater measure of solidarity was essential for the future of squatter community” (Furedi 104) However, the KCA success was limited in scope and Thuku was put to jail. Although the KCA had been banned in 1938, its effect in fueling kikuyu solidarity through the 30s was the departing point of a rebellion of greater extent.

With WWII, the Kenya witnessed an economic boom and European settlers were given more political and economic concessions, contrary to Kenyans who were marginalized. This led to the growth of a nationalist awareness as “after the war a more aware African population ran up against all sorts of obstacles to their advancement” (Breuille Nationalism and the State 184). Just like in the Algerian case, the WWII international atmosphere was anything but favorable to change and therefore African demands for more rights seemed

⁴ Kikuyu or Gikūyū are interchangeably used throughout the work.

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legitimate. In a sense, “the post-World War period saw the rise of Nationalism in Kenya” (Cooper 38). In fact, thousands of Kenyans who fought in WWII and thousands who were enlisted in the British army in India returned back filled with enthusiasm ensuing from spirit of nationalism sweeping the colonial territories, where decolonization took steps in advance. Colonized Kenya was not immune to the wave of decolonization sweeping the world expressing open antagonism to western domination. Nationalism was ripening to harvest its overriding aim, independence.

After about half a century whites and Asians enjoyed administrative and judicial privileges at the expense of blacks. Moreover, grievances of Kikuyu locals heightened with segregation of white settlers through their permanent encroachment upon locals’ lands. Well-watered land in Kenya was exclusively reserved for occupation by Europeans. In consequence, segregation created rancor in Kenyan hearts and stirred up fury.

The accumulation of disillusionment pushed nationalist movement to take more extreme stances including militant options and violence to achieve nationalist ends. The year 1944, however, saw the formation of the Kenyan African Union (KAU) which campaigned for independence from colonial rule and radical nationalist Jomo Kenyatta was elected as KAU leader. Kenya embarked upon on a long hard path to National Sovereignty in one of most dramatic as well as glorious episodes of Kenya’s decolonization or what came to be named as ‘The Mau Mau’ Revolt.

The *Mau Mau* Revolt and Independence

Several historians argue that mystery surrounds the Mau Mau revolt. This stems from the fact that Mau Mau’s various factions lacked consensus over objectives and means of struggle, and that this lack of a consistent revolutionary ideology influenced the shape and destiny of the uprising. And yet, Mau Mau is a name given to militant African nationalist movement that rose in the 1950s among the kikuyu people of Kenya and reflected the

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aspiration of kikuyu nationalists for gaining “economic and social and political freedom from former colonial masters” (Maloba 12). The Mau Mau unrest almost entirely led by peasants was the largest and most efficacious decolonizing movement in British Africa.

In 1950, committees of militant activists were founded providing organizational foundation for more effective radical action. Government officials were not aware of the extent to which the Mau Mau uprising had grown threatening. However, the detection of a mass oath-taking campaign alarmed the government to recognize that the peril posed by the Mau Mau went way beyond the one posed by the KCA.

On August 1952, the Mau Mau Kikuyu anti-Western guerrilla fighters⁵ met secretly and discussed the ways of launching violent campaigns against white settlers. They also targeted African collaborators in the same way they targeted white settlers and British officials. Pursuant to the escalation of fierce attacks including a campaign of sabotage and assassination attributed to the Mau Mau radicals, the Kenyan government declared a state of emergency on October, 1952. Besides, it planned to undermine Mau Mau defenses wherein thousands of Kenyans were incarcerated in detention camps. This was effectively meant for “break[ing] hardcore cohesion by detaching the individual from the community and the persuadable from strongly resistant” (Clough 177-8). The governmental tactics proved especially efficient when diminishing the impact of the rebellious movement, but this was accompanied by a series of procedures.

The government responded by an upsurge in violence against Kikuyu discontented Kenyans. It incriminated the rebellion and on November 1952, Kenyatta was arrested and

⁵ the Mau Mau Kikuyu anti-Western guerrilla fighters was composed mainly of Kenyan nationalists, Jomo Kenyatta, Tom Mboya, Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, Ronald Ngala, Masinde Muliro, Martin Shikuku, Oginga Odinga, Jeane Seronney among others. The talks with British officials eventually culminated into Kenya’s independence in 1963

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accused of being a member of the Mau Mau manipulating and directing uprising and sentenced him to 7 years in jail. One year later, the governor-general Sir Evelyn Baring imposed death sentence on all those who had taken the Mau Mau oath. The government moreover spearheaded military action and by the end of 1956, more than 11,000 rebels had been exterminated in the fighting.

In its attempt to finish up the rebellion and confront its own racist reality the colonial government had begun halting steps toward pacifying the outraged rebels. In so doing, it increased African participation in the political process. By 1954, Europeans, Asians and Africans were admitted into the Kenya Legislative Council on a representative basis. The government also took up agrarian reforms that stripped white settlers of many of their former protections and granted them to blacks. In other part, the settlers continued its punitive terrorism and detained a symbolic liberty fighter Dedan Kimathi in 1956 for his role in the Mau Mau revolt as one of the persuasive leaders of the struggle for freedom and was afterwards executed.

By 1954 Mau Mau rebellion was gradually being squeezed by the British military. The uprising was regarded by Britain tribal Warfare and yet to Kenyans it was a war of deciding their future. In 1959 Kenyatta was released from jail and put under house arrest and by 1960 the government ended of state of emergency. The same year witnessed the formation of Foundation of Kenyan African Nation Union (KANU) and Kenyatta freed, assumes presidency of KANU.

After a long and bitter resistance, Kikuyu struggle overthrew of colonial domination and the attained Kenya's national independence. On 12 December 1963 Kenya was declared a sovereign kingdom with Jomo Kenyatta as prime minister. The following year, Kenya became a Republic and Kenyatta had been elected Kenya's first President.

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With independence achieved, many countries started to come to terms with the legacy colonialism and the challenges of the post-independence era. Many theorists devised views and elaborated strategies to re-assess the process of colonization and decolonization as well. Their contribution, however, heralded a new discipline; it is Postcolonial Theory and Criticism.

3. Postcolonial Theory: A New Stuff in the Literary Critical Toolbox

One has to bear in mind that postcolonial criticism embraces no specifically visible or engaging method or school. Although framed in terms of dealing with polemics of colonialism and its ramifications, postcolonialism alerts us to the absence of a homogenous and traceable sort of theory for its stretched scope of interest, and for its drawing upon multifarious schools of poststructuralist thought such as Marxism, deconstruction, feminism, and psychoanalysis. So, while recognizing these and other shortcomings and difficulties in what came to be labeled collectively as "postcolonial studies", the study will attempt to be as relevant, suggestive and precise as possible by focusing closely on the aspects which prove effective resonance to back up the context of the research.

a. Conceptualizing Postcolonialism, its Inception and Objectives

Though there is no absolute consensus about the term postcolonialism, it is defined as "a new academic field [...] that concentrates on the effects that Western European and American colonialism have had on the rest of the world. The area of the former British Empire is a particular focus" (Mikics 239). However, it has been assumed that postcolonialism is "the critical analysis of the history, culture, literature, and modes of discourse that are specific to the former colonies of England, Spain, France, and other European imperial powers" (Abrams 236). It has effectively become one of the most important areas of literary studies due to the exuberance characterizing its emergence and development.

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Broadly speaking, postcolonialism covers the period following colonialism, and hence postcolonial literature and criticism are marked by resisting stances to colonial rule and its residues as well. It had risen all through the early 1980s and culminated during 1990s to take the lead as a powerful force in literary studies. Notwithstanding the previous claims, some critics have maintained that any literature that voices a tone of resistance to colonialism may be regarded as postcolonial, in spite of the fact that it is produced during a colonial period. Not far from this, history of postcolonialism, said otherwise, is ingrained within the racial struggle of the minor groups of African-Americans to gain equality with the Whites. In this sense, African American critics had been busy to theorize about their own body of criticism on the cultural dimensions, historical accumulations, set of traditions, and interpretation of their own literature, long before Edward Saïd published his momentous work *Orientalism* in 1978.

As a matter of fact, race began gaining wide currency among literary studies following the rise of the Harlem Renaissance between the 1920s and the 1930s. There is no doubt, however, by introducing of the notion *négritude* during the 1930s the African-American aspiration for self-definition was reinforced. In this regard, French-speaking authors from Africa and the Caribbean repudiated to be defined by the culture of their White colonizer on the basis of race. And henceforth, they embarked upon defining themselves and their cultural ethos in their own terms.

During the fifties, Western-educated intellectuals from occupied territories, like Frantz Fanon and Cyril Lionel Robert James, Chinua Achebe and others became ever more attentive to the ramifications of Western racism on their own consciousness, and they desperately needed to contest this colonial influence. In 1961, Frantz Fanon published his foundational work *The Wretched of the Earth*, which provides a psychiatric and psychological examination of colonization dehumanizing implications upon the individual and the nation. In other part,

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literature started to play a noteworthy role in depicting the confusion of the postcolonial identity. One of the most substantial postcolonial novels to appear to the literary scene in this pivotal period was Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958).

Following the fifties, the project of cultural self-definition grew concurrently with the political creed of self-determination within the Civil Rights Movement. Coupled with this, many colonized territories in Africa, Asia and Caribbean increasingly claimed political independence and showed a strong desire for nationhood.

However, the end of first half of the twentieth century, most of the colonized territories had attained independence. Interestingly enough, literatures in the latterly independent colonies sprung up, remarkably during the 1960s and 1970s to express a desperate need for cultural autonomy, to wit: cultural independence. Of course, this generated one of the most profound dialectics of postcolonial discourse. Beyond the confines of personal choices, authors turned out to assume a serious national task. Literatures were by no means a lesser essential instrument in the strife for political liberation than the guns. Numerous works in fiction, poetry and drama were then written to lay the pivotal foundations of literary tradition that celebrates nationhood.

Though the term 'postcolonialism' did not come into use until 1980s, a torrent of books was produced in the former colonies by 1960s. This attracted a widespread notice of many English critics to the writings coming out of the former colonies to develop the idea of a 'Commonwealth Literature'. However, there was a tremendous problem of reception and perception among readers and critics of these literatures. To some extent, the challenges resided in the way to deal with multicultural and multiethnic nature of the contemporary writing. For all intents and purposes, there are differing ways in which culture shapes literature interpretations and colonialism was such an influential factor that it was not likely

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for Westerners to read non-Western literature, without taking part in the colonial experience. How can any critical response go uncontaminated by any sort of bias or prejudice, even if it is presented in a European tongue?

Commonwealth literary studies were still characterized by what would become known as 'Eurocentrism'. The Commonwealth Writers "always need to be understood in terms of a dependence upon the imperial center and a later movement towards independence" (Brahms 66). This universalism invokes continuation to the mainstream European literature. For the most part, it turned out to be the norm and the standard to which all other cultures are inferiorly juxtaposed with European culture.

It was a tricky task to consider or interpret non-Western literatures according to European and Anglo-American cultures, values and experiences. Furthermore, many critics started to question the pertinence, appropriateness and the relevancy of reading and critically analyzing non-Western literatures in Western-centric discourse even if they are written in European languages. Universalism marginalizes the distinctive cultural features non-Western literature. Charles Larson points out that the term "'universal' has been grossly misused when it has been applied to non-Western literature, because it has so often been used in a way that ignores the multiplicity of cultural experiences" (63). Language for them is just a common façade for a totally different body of written works. Even authors of the colonial diaspora assumed a metropolitan agenda without carrying the particular weight of their colonial past. By the same token, they contributed to the literature of the colonizer even if their writings tacitly represented the homeland ethos.

At no point in the Western modern history did Westerners give up monopolizing literary canon of both writing and criticism through their Universalist philosophy. And therefore, it was impractical for example to compare, analyze or judge literary products by

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authors of non-Western cultural backgrounds through the lenses of New Criticism, Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, Historicism or Cultural Materialism. The comparison and analysis, the interpretation or evaluation of these works of literature may risk denigrating the power of the text with predispositions emanating from European sense of exceptionalism.

Since then, critics- drawing on the more radical implications of poststructuralism- began to put greater efforts into blazing a trail in modern literary criticism with a vigorous discipline that can be invested so as to decode or interpret the masked connotations within a text, authored by non-Westerners. In this regard, the critique of the ‘Common Wealth Studies’ furnished the basis for an alternative account of literatures produced in formerly colonized lands. This is to say, by 1980s postcolonial studies emerged to encompass not only literary but a vast field of, cultural, political, sociological, psychological and historical considerations. Postcolonial literature and criticism actual inception could have been effectively considered with Edward Said’s landmark work *Orientalism* came out in 1978. *Orientalism* set the foundational pillars of postcolonial criticism that gave rise to a groundbreaking critical discourse which revolutionized the way Westerner scholars and critics in specific looked at depictions of non-Western subjects and cultures. In the process, postcolonial literary studies unlike the Commonwealth literary studies explicitly brought to the surface the history and the legacy of colonialism, which includes antagonism and antipathy of the former colonies, toward the foreign ruling powers.

Since its early stages, postcolonial project has been concerned with the task of making visible the history and legacy of European imperialism through a radically historical reassessment of colonialist institution from the colonized’s perspective and the determination of the political, economic, and cultural bearings of colonialism upon both the subject peoples and the colonizing powers. Otherwise speaking, it is aimed at mitigating the effects of

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othernizing ascendancy, which for a long time monopolized the definition of the subject people and kept distorting their experiences and realities.

As a discipline, it also pays a close attention to the role of texts, whether historical, literary, sociological or otherwise, in the colonial period. This comes especially to the fore when a text's aesthetic aspects set in motion a conscious process of accounting for inequities and oppression operating within the colonial enterprise. This of course includes the analysis of texts produced in the colonizing countries dealing with issues such as colonization and the colonized.

Furthermore, Postcolonial Literary Studies came to rehabilitate the value of the anticolonial and postcolonial literary text as a paramount document of resistance. In a formalist framework, literary texts were reviewed in terms of their aesthetic practices, whereas the historical and ideological dimensions were dismissed. Hence, Postcolonialism places large portion of emphasis on the literary and cultural canon in the Western institutions with a special focus on the colonized unending resistance to colonialism and neo-colonialism. Within specific cultural context, the prominence given to resisting texts heralded the rise of new national literatures.

One further focal point that postcolonial studies critically probes into is that it brings to the surface the traditional connection between colonizer and colonized, to wit; the metropolis and its colonial subjects from the very initial times of exploratory encounters and colonization to the last stage of imperialism and its aftermath. It addresses the way the first colonial encounters and the texts informed by these contacts construct the colonizer's sense of superiority and inscribe anxiety and inferiority in the colonized. This biased portrayal of the colonized backwardness in comparison to the western development sought to forge a pretext which legitimated colonization.

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Postcolonialism, additionally, works to give one of the most searing and provocative analyses of the decolonization process and taking a good position in bringing the goals of political independence to success. This embraces social justice, equal access to material resources, and the contestation of kinds of subjugation. In doing so, it can shed all forms of colonial practices such, exploitation, corruption class division and repression.

Postcolonial theory and criticism similarly establish intellectual spaces for debates over the articulation of postcolonial identity. Indeed, with decolonization more problems regarding belonging floated on the surface. Addressing political and cultural identity crises was prioritized on both sides the colonizer and the colonized. This era was such a terrain replete with ideologies that it has become incontestably palpable that constructing identity and reclaiming pre-colonial past made theorists all engaged in an argument for contributing to the issue of belonging. The main point to be made therefore is that, identities are much more fluid and the cultural and political lines were much more nuanced through acts of hybridization and mimicry.

b. Colonial Skin, White Mask: Bhabha's Mimicry

Not only has Bhabha been accredited as being one important line of the postcolonial discourse Holy Trinity, but the entirety of his of writings is regarded as one of the most visible and engaging cultural contributions within the context of empire. Mimicry hence is an increasingly overarching conception in the postcolonial theory and criticism. It was Homi K. Bhabha, who primarily introduced the term in his book "*The Location of Culture*". For certainly in the historical sense, the idea of mimicry is not new to modern time. In the Fourteenth Century for instance, The Islamic thinker Ibn Khaldūn raised the issue of mimicking the victors and adopting their beliefs, characteristics, etc. In His volume significantly entitled *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn wrote: "[the] defeated peoples always show

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a strong tendency towards imitating the customs of their conquerors in every detail" (853 emphasis added). However, interesting is the idea that Bhabha drew on the Lacanian conceptualization of mimicry, which views it as a camouflage that does not bring about a harmonization with the environmental background, but it is rather one sort of resemblance that aims at defensive purposes.

It seems appropriate then to start this section by conceptualizing the term Mimicry. When checking the Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, one finds the verb to 'mimic' defined as: "to copy or imitate the way in which a particular person usually speaks and moves, usually in order to amuse people" (mimic1). This involves copying something or somebody's voice, gesture or appearance to the end of entertaining or people amusing them.

For, it has been very common that postcolonial theory deals with notions related colonial interaction between the colonizer and the colonized, colonial mimicry came to firmly map itself on the shifting terrain of postcolonial ideology, and effectively started occupy a pivotal position among the postcolonial debates. To situate the colonial mimicry within clearly determined brackets, David Huddart, proclaims that "mimicry is not slavish imitation, and the colonized is not being assimilated into the supposedly dominant or even superior culture. In fact, mimicry [...] is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas (40). However, Bhabha's analysis of mimicry represents one of the ambivalences of colonial discourse. Which is to say, that ambivalence implies a persistent vacillation between hankering for one thing and hankering for its opposite. One simple way of demonstrating the working of mimicry is that the colonial master deploys strategies in intention of destabilizing the cultural boundaries. He impresses the colonized forcing him/her to internalize the western cultural mores, behavioral patterns, lifestyles, institutions and values. At the same time, nevertheless, the colonizer works to keep a distance between himself and the native.

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As a metonymic term, mimicry expresses colonial desire to elaborate power. One of its strategies is to dazzle the colonized in the direction of appropriating him to forge an absolute authenticity and to broaden control over the individuals of an occupied community. In such contexts, the task of visualizing power goes through a smooth process only when forcing millions under imperial governance to assume the European knowledge and culture. These western tenets can be inculcated and imparted by the mediation of native interpreters, who work upon the consolidation of this connection. Pursuant to emulating the colonizers' culture, mimicry as an ambivalent practice shakes colonizer's self-confidence and then undermining his power.

The underlying outcome, contrary to expectations, is certainly not a simple re-enuciation of colonial customs as mimicry repeatedly strikes at the foundations of the colonized's identity, when locating a fracture that through and through widens the cultural rift. This inevitably culminates in a somewhat distorted image of both the colonized and the colonizer. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin confirm that mimicry's "result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather, the result is a 'blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quite threatening" (Tiffin Key Concepts 139). This copy of blurred frontiers is especially threatening to colonizers, their civilizational heritage and images. In similar vein, Hans Bertens claims that: "in mimicry the colonizer sees himself in a mirror that slightly but effectively distorts his image – that subtly and unsettlingly 'others' his own identity" (182). Holding a blended mixture of concurrent fascination and repulsion, mimicry is a double-edged sword since, "it can be at once resemblance and menace" (Bhabha "Of Mimicry and Man" 86). The threat inherent in mimicry stems not from resistance that the colonized offers, but originates from the way in which mimicry as an imperially opportunistic pattern of conduct leads to the suppression of the colonized's personal and collective identities.

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In what follows, mimicry as a double articulation patronizes the native as being indelibly the negative, primitive other: the inverse of what the colonizer is and what his culture stands for. For Homi K Bhabha, mimicry is the procedure by which the colonized subject is reproduced as “a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (86). Bhabha, likewise, draws attention to the fact that “mimicry represents an ironic compromise” (86) between a synchronic inter-attraction amid two fluctuating tendencies: the colonizer’s growing desire for domination and the colonized’s aspiration for identity construction. It is an ironic negotiation because mimicry, behind its mask, suggests two stands at opposite ends: it disavows the pre-existing natural difference and produces a difference that maintains weakness and conformity. Sameness and difference are at once ironic since mimicry neither involves a presence nor does it allow or foster a unified sense of identity.

For the most part, a mimic man raised in western values infallibly repeats the colonizer’s ways and discourses. The colonized wants to be the colonizer, but he can never be so, just like the colored people can never change their skin to go white. The colonized wants to be an English and can never be. Yet, he is rather Anglicized by mimicry. Dynamics of mimicry, one could argue, set complex and contradictory contours which produce a “flawed identity imposed on colonized people who are obligated to mirror back an image of the colonials but in imperfect form” (McIntock 62).

However, willingly or unwillingly, the tendency to emulate the colonizer is one way to achieve the goal of being approved among the colonizer’s community. Changing one’s appearance has been taken, in other words, as an attempt in terms of securing inclusion and evading exclusion. On the other hand, the colonizer follows such elusive and effective tactics in order to guarantee dominance that allows the inclusion of what he regards as good natives and the systematic exclusion of what he sees as bad natives.

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As already mentioned, mimicry is such an ambivalent and multi-layered concept that it locates an area of extensive political and cultural uncertainty in the edifice of imperial ascendancy. This ambivalence producing excess or slippage considerably destabilizes the discourse, turning the colonial subject into a partial presence. Bhabha goes on to expound that by 'partial' he means 'incomplete' and 'virtual'. That's how many colonial systems resorted to gradual and partial diffusion of the western cultural values in fear that the colonized's internalization of all these values may sound fatal on western liberty. This partial reform- that is the foundation of mimicry- will generate a void form of imitation to keep the colonial subjects under control. This guarantees the partial presence of subjects indigenous in roots, non-white in skins, but western in tastes, values, lifestyles and orientations. In other quarters, mimicry articulates people "*almost the same but not white*" (Bhabha Bhabha Of mimicry and man 89). In stark contrast to the objective that is set for; the articulation of authority in colonial discourse, mimicry is claimed to hold the seeds of the subversion of the colonial power per se. After all this, it is not surprising that "empowered through the power of mimicry, the colonized is capable of resisting and reversing the subjugation," (Necati 140) to overthrow the ordering hierarchy.

c. Neocolonialism: From Coloniality to Neo-coloniality of Discourse

As soon as colonial powers had departed the colonies they formerly occupied, many subject nations thought that it was the beginning of the end of a long colonial era with its disappointing past going to the archives. Given the fact that the indigenous populations had dismantled the colonial rule, they aspired to transcend the inheritance of imperial corollaries and to found strong nations. However, that went unfounded since formal decolonization did not bring about a radical rupture with the colonial regimes. Colonial armies and forces, said differently, had practically left the ground, and yet the very causes that led to revolutions which expelled them from Africa were still standing. The main point to be made therefore is that, there is only little change in form not in substance. And then in lieu of direct military

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domination, new control corresponds with new patterns of economic, political, cultural, and ideological hegemony were orchestrated. Disillusionment of the status quo was growing like a snowball to yield more bitterness and sullenness. Freedom or true independence, social justice and economic prosperity, that decolonization seemed to promise, were a mere mirage. The worst was to come; the situation has become so pressing that the future was repeatedly giving signs of limbo, vacillating between hope and despair. Accordingly, this resulted in multifarious projections to go beyond the confines of what they came to be notably named “Neocolonialism”.

As a matter of fact, neocolonialism is “the control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means. The term *neocolonialism* was first used after World War II to refer to the continuing dependence of former colonies on foreign countries” (Britannica).⁶ Within that context, independence by no means implies the demise of colonialism; it rather signifies the beginning of a new struggle for combating new type of colonialism.

Neocolonialism’s coinage was during the 1960s, by the first President of independent Ghana Kwame Nkrumah in his *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965). In this critique, Nkrumah laments the fact that the retreat of colonial powers was not accompanied by a truthful assumption of sovereign power. Ghana, for instance, had attained a technical independence. However, the ex-colonial power- United Kingdom still keeps playing an influential role in the domestic affairs of Ghana and Africa. Many critics such as Ania Loomba pertinently interrogated the authenticity of the declaration of independence if ever the injustices of the colonial rule had not vanished. In the similar vein, she asserts: “if the inequities of colonial rule have not been erased, it is perhaps premature to proclaim the

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/neocolonialism>

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demise of colonialism” (Loomba 12). With hindsight, it has become incontestably requisite to deal with the newly created hegemony in Asia and Africa.

Since the early stages of the neo-imperialist project, the metropolitan governments were not interested in the formal systems of control as such the enactment of specific administrative laws, the presence of the government officials, who enforce those laws and the deployment of armed forces in their ex-colonies, they rather focused on sustaining an implicit method of control through, political, economic and cultural reliance.

This neocolonialist ideology proved especially perilous to the intact development of the newly independent nation-states as “Nkrumah argued that neo-colonialism was more insidious and more difficult to detect and resist than the older overt colonialism” (Tiffin et al 162/163 *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*). Hence, being hard to detect made it even harder to estimate the amount of danger that neocolonialism can constitute.

In his argument, Kwame Nkrumah drew upon Lenin’s explanation of imperialism as the last stage of capitalism. Pointing to this fact, Nkrumah maintained that neo-colonialism is a late stage of imperialism and he goes further to consider it, as “the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress” (ix). There is no responsibility to take, precisely this statement holds true because there is no actual presences of foreign forces. In other part, neocolonialism is exploitation and the neo-colonized states find no political or judicial channels enabling them to reclaim their compensation.

Among the theorists that have been perceived to offer a seminal critique of neocolonialism was Jean Paul Sartre. His *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* critiqued the reprehensible consequences of colonialist and neocolonialist discourses on the colonized.

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Sartre argues that the Western neocolonialist agenda in the once occupied territories disguises behind ideological masks, because:

if [neocolonialism] shows its cards to the excolonized, if they can perceive its intention to conceal the maintenance of an economy based on overexploitation behind a political farce, it knows perfectly well that the masses will unite against the politicians, its accomplices. (Sartre 112).

For one thing, sweeping under the carpet is the best way for imperial masters to evade the fury of the newly independent population against the neo-colonial policy. Neocolonialism is worse so to speak, as it lays the ground for the imperial powers and the newly emerging superpowers to perpetuate their domination over the subject nations “through international monetary bodies, through the fixing of prices on world markets, multinational corporations and cartels and a variety of educational and cultural institutions” (Tiffin et al *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* 162) rather than by means of direct rule.

Neocolonialism, put it differently, does not only dictate a dependency on the excolonized entities, but it also produces colonial nefarious forms of exploitation. In recognition of this new situation, the neo-colonialist practices hinder durable growth in the once-colonized countries and retain them as suppliers of low-cost raw materials, providers of cheap labor and immense external markets. In order to accomplish this, neocolonial systems elaborate economic, financial, and trade strategies, which maintain control over the colonials in one part and keeping them entirely in a state of dependency in other part. Robert Young a British postcolonial theorist, cultural critic, and historian argues that neocolonialism represents “a continuing economic hegemony that means that the postcolonial state remains in a situation of dependence on its former masters, and that the former masters continue to act in a colonialist manner towards formerly colonized states” (Young 45). Once the neo-colonial power structure is installed there, continuity between the present and past is well-founded to hamper the desire of asserting postcolonial identities. At

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the same time, one cannot dismiss the taxing pressures of globalization that contributed, and still, to enforcing the neo-colonialist agenda which precisely targets complex arenas of postcolonial identity.

Neo-colonializing Culture and Westernizing the Aboriginal

It is imperative to note, however, that one of all the most hazardous forms of neo-colonialism that Western metropole hankered for inserting is certainly cultural colonialism. Many postcolonial thinkers and critics have warned against “the biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb” (Ngugi *Decolonizing* 3). This bomb may result in a cultural mass destruction in the aftermath of its explosion. Against the more commonplace understanding of classical colonialism, however, the colonizer “employs distinctive cultural practices to stabilize and reproduce itself” (Meeha 28). Keenly mindful of the prime power and significance of culture as a weapon for implanting dominion anew, the neo-colonialists worked/work hard to instill the colonial system of government; to educate previously subjugated peoples in the metropolitan ideals, to permeate the colonial culture within the colonial environment, and to raise the post-independence generations within the metropolitan morals, and lifestyles. This neocolonial schema proceeds on the basis that “the imperial country is the ‘metropole’ from which power flows, and the colony or neo-colony is the place which it penetrates and controls” (Loomba 12). Otherly said, the great powers indirectly uphold or expand their cultural influence over their once-subordinated peoples and territories. One of the most demanding aspects of the cultural imperialism is that it squeezes out indigenous cultural behavioral patterns to replace them with expatriate ones. In similar context, Lois Tyson; a professor of English at Grand Valley State University, elucidates in some amount of detail, the process of cultural degradation:

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Cultural imperialism, a direct result of economic domination, consists of the “takeover” of one culture by another: the food, clothing, customs, recreation, and values of the economically dominant culture increasingly replace those of the economically vulnerable culture until the latter appears to be a kind of imitation of the former. (425)

This, of course, produces tenacious and taxing dissonance in the postcolonial nation-state and the resulting dissonance is expected mainly due the most pervasive form of recolonizing or neo-colonizing minds, which expresses an insatiable colonial appetite to reclaim the lost supremacy without the necessity of extending the territorial control. In so doing, cultural tactics will help propel economic growth within the crumbling empires.

These culturally neo-colonial procedures are held by many postcolonial thinkers and critics to have been inserted through executive political and intellectual entities. Cultural colonialist agenda, in other quarters, is carefully prepared in the metropolis and ruling native elites somehow compliant and complicit with Eurocentric academic environment. That being said, Robert Young underscores the suspect coordination with the neocolonialist with the collusion of forces inside the ex-colonies: “in the neocolonial situation, the ruling class constitutes an elite that operates in complicity with the needs of international capital for its own benefit” (Young 45). By the same token, the Western neocolonial nations make use of puppet regimes to back up their privileges. To all intents and purposes, the postcolonial elite that is composed of indigenous governors, is hired to construct hegemony that substitutes the exertion of direct control. To accomplish cultural neocolonial expectations, colonial cultural mores are still being imported from afar via instruments of ideological apparatuses. Besides, ideals, perceptions, heritage and values of the locals are labeled as inferior through cultural means as such, language, education and media. Over and above these criticisms, postcolonial writers started a struggle for gaining emancipation from the lingering cultural influences of the empire. Formal independence will remain an incomplete mission unless a process of decolonizing the minds is in due time.

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d. Politics of Language: Linguistic Wasteland VS Paradise of the Indigenous

As stated earlier, the third wave of decolonization had only granted a formal independence to African colonized territories. This, subsequently, engendered one of the most tremendous dialectics of postcolonial discourse. This long-running argument concerns the question of language politics that became a point of contention in Africa.

There is, in fact, an intricately complex interplay between language and culture. i.e. language is shaped by culture, whereas culture is highly influenced by language. Language is a primordial component of culture and at the same time, it is the vehicle that carries the knowledge, the values, the customs, the beliefs, the way of life, and the behavioral patterns of a certain group of people.

In fact, language has always been and it is still an ongoing political and cultural issue all across the world. Nevertheless, the linguistic dilemma, following decolonization, has provoked much of the confusion: whether using the colonizer's language or the indigenous language as modes of literary expression. In addressing the debate, two widely divergent stands emerged. Some postcolonial critics have gone so far as to argue that colonizer's language, to wit: English, French or Portuguese are far able to accommodate the weight and the texture of their African experience. Chinua Achebe was among the critics who firmly sat on this side of the argument. In his excellent essay entitled "The African Writer and the English Language", he proclaims that the espousal of English language is a matter of pragmatic necessity: "is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it" (433) In fact, Achebe's thesis proceeds on the basis that the merger of traditions, cultures and lifestyles alongside English is ostensibly a source of strength, diversity and vitality, not a sign of weakness and diminution of insight. In this vein, Bill Ashcroft argues that "mastering the master's language has been a key strategy of self-empowerment in all post-colonial societies" (*Post-Colonial*

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Transformation 58). At the same time, English is both a means for communicating messages and carrying culture; so within the theoretic ambits of the debate “the medium is non-native, but the message is not” (Kachru 294).

For one thing, the exponents of this view think that the colonial language is a necessary evil, an unsolicited gift, or a valuable inheritance from the colonizer and thus it has to be employed as an efficient mode of self-display. The Algerian writer Kateb Yacine, for instance, has rejected to cease writing in French and considers the "*French [as] one of the spoils of [Algerian] war*" (qtd in Messaoudi and Schemla 43)⁷. In this regard, language turns into a weapon against the colonizers; that's why Achebe had endeavored at Africanizing English in the sense it “be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings” (Achebe 433). This was only possible through refashioning new forms, in which Achebe revived the African cultural heritage into his literary works.

Those claims have not gone, however, unchallenged, authors and cultural critics such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o aver that the quest for African authenticity entails writing African literature only in indigenous languages. Keenly aware of the perils of cultural legacy of colonialism and neocolonialism, Ngugi claimed that the African culture and talent had been either stolen or tarnished by the imperial and neocolonial cultural conditions impinged upon the continent.

By way of explaining his antagonistic harshness towards the colonial languages, Ngugi pinpointed language at the heart of an African cultural renaissance. In order to achieve this, language has to give birth to revolutionary literature that carries the African anti-imperialist struggles of peasantry and working class societies so as to unfetter their prolific

⁷ The original statement in French is : “*La langue française est notre butin de guerre*”

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enterprises from overseas control. Africa, otherwise speaking, is in a sense of urgency to a literary resistance “to overwhelm the dominant imperialist mind occupying African thought” (Choudhury 58). Language, he emphasizes is an integral part and an essential parcel of the anti-neocolonialist combat the African peoples lead to accomplish decolonizing the land.

Ngugi repeatedly cautioned against the idea that language is one way for lingering the subjugation of peoples to keep Africa an extension of the west. He maintained that the emancipation from neo-colonial imposition was hampered by the same writers or the compradors, who notwithstanding their complaints, kept and keep writing in foreign languages:

The question is this: we as African writers have always complained about the neo-colonial economic and political relationship to Euro America. Right. But by our continuing to write in foreign languages, paying homage to them, are we not on the cultural level continuing that neo-colonial slavish and cringing spirit? What is the difference between a politician who says Africa cannot do without colonialism and the writer who says Africa cannot do without European languages.” (*Decolonizing* 26)

The neo-colonial thieving starts with viewing Africa’s history in terms of an enduringly permanent tribal clash and enmity. Africa is delineated as being in an endless need for the Occident. Even literature, in Ngugi’s vantage point, is at times assessed in terms of the tribal biased parameters and this has been misleadingly mediatized by the west to turn the African reality upside down and give a negative image of the continent.

Ngugi’s decolonizing project, however, was premised on a relentless resistance to emancipate the-still-colonized minds from imperialist and neocolonialist imposed ethos. Historically speaking, when the state of emergency was declared in 1952, the British authorities or the robbers of wealth as Ngugi usually calls them took control of schools in Kenya and imposed English as a language of instruction. Coupled with this, the colonial educational apparatus had prohibited teaching in local languages. More than this, Africa’s

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languages and literatures were systematically destroyed especially by means of linguistic invasion, which alienated the Kenyans through internalization of imperialist-imposed tradition and western values. Wittingly or unwittingly, the African mind was taken over through the linguistic oppression that equated the African languages with qualities such as primitiveness, backwardness, and underdevelopment with the objective of instilling into the Africans minds feelings of inferiority. In stark contrast with what has been claimed before, European tongues were praised for refined styles, prestige and development by way of indoctrinating the western superiority. Once “the robbers of wealth are able to instill images of defeat, unsureness, division, inferiority complex, helplessness, fawning, abject humility, slavishness in the minds of the robbed, then they can eat their loot in comfort and sleep in peace” (124-25 Ngugi *Writers in Politics*). This schema propels the western economies and forestalls the danger of popular fury against the colonial intrusion.

By the same token, however, the implantation of notoriously subversive culture after independence continued to operate with a more dangerous ulterior plan of neo-colonizing the Kenyan awareness. There is a neo-colonial arrangement of moving from the military colonialism which sustained physical subjugation, to a more nefarious sort of ideological ascendancy, it is the mental and spiritual subjugation. Neo-colonizing the African minds precariously produces self-distanciation from the African reality; an escapism from African self to a European self. In a complex sociolinguistic setting, Ngugi states that “*language was the means of the spiritual subjugation*” (*Decolonizing* 09 my emphasis). What furnished the basis for such kind of spiritual subjugation to arise was a postcolonial intelligentsia that was still under the effect of the traumatic transition from colonialism to independence. Most of them moved in ideological vacuum, which made it even easier for the neo-colonial cultural agenda to be activated, placing the maintenance of the conquistador language as its fundamental tool of suppression.

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Creative writers, more specifically, were thought to map trails out of their linguistically besieged continent, but they “came to be defined and to define themselves in terms of the languages of imperialist imposition” (Ngugi *Decolonizing the Mind* 05). In a climate of cultural uncertainty, writing in borrowed languages is to keep Africa in unending bondage to western imperialism. In this regard, the “use of the language of the colonizer is a form of self-inflicted neo-colonization” (Bertens 195) which places the colonizer at the center and pushes the native to the periphery. The matter at stake is when writing in imperially imposed European languages, Africans lose unity, coherence and harmony with their African nature, environment, culture and even with the human complexity. Any change in the African environment negatively bears upon “the nature of their struggle [...] alter their institutions and hence their mode of life and thought (Ngugi *Homecoming* 5).

Language in Ngugi’s argumentative logic is not “a mere string of words. It had suggestive power well beyond the immediate lexical meaning” (*Decolonizing the Mind* 11), language is rather a paramount medium of cultural transfer. And within a culturally neocolonial rhetoric, the continent should be presented in the linguistic fabric which reflects the African particularity. Africa is not Europe and can never be so. Some critics have situated the issue of linguistic inconsistency within clearly determined brackets and thus disapproved of “English language as a suitable vehicle for local expression, asserting the incompatibility of local thought and English words, English syntax, English style” (New 303). The Indigenous linguistic register vehemently delineates the rich and treasured repository of folklore, mythology and the oral traditions and it helps African writers smoothly transfer cultural idiom. In so doing, they manage to present the complex dynamics of African culture to the world in the liveliest and most truthful way possible.

Ngugi’s critiques, in other terms, attest to the fact that, Africa does not exist and live in the European languages. African writers ought to return to the mother tongues and cultures of the continent which nurtured their imagination, honed their talent and lent their literature an

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original African dress. He wrote: “we have languages but our keepers of memory feel that they cannot store knowledge, emotions, intellect, in African languages” (Ngugi *Consciousness and African Renaissance*). Further and more importantly, Ngugi points out that English is a language of education, whereas Gĩkũyũ is a language of culture. Thus, it is high time Writers, artists, musicians, and intellectuals- as the keepers of memory of a community- struggled for an autonomous linguistic consciousness. These theoretical assumptions attest to the fact that, it is unavoidable to indigenize the African literature languages whatever their shortcomings as the sovereign African language is the carrier of a sovereign African culture. Faced with this inevitability, teaching indigenous languages and the continual elevation of literatures in African tongues like Yoruba, Kiswahili, Swahili, 'Zulu, Yoruba, Arabic, Amharic and other languages, became, a first necessary step in a long and complicated “process of decolonizing the [possessed] mind” (Juang 1059).

Effectively, it was Ngugi, who pulled the rug from under the literary and the theoretic feet of those who attempted at pushing the African languages to the limits of extinction by bidding a farewell to English as a language of fiction in his book significantly entitled “*Decolonizing the Mind Politics of Language in African Literature*”. In this book, Ngugi provides an intelligible justification to explain the reason for which he has decided to no longer write in English and he suggested a host of fundamental arguments for empowering the indigenous tongues. Ngugi postulates that abandoning the English language can afford reaching the vast majority of ordinary Africans. Much of the postcolonial vitality comes from the peasants and workers as a progressive force in Africa. Writing in the local language renounces lingering colonial ties and constructs an authentic sense of Africanness.

So, against the context of this conceptual contention, Ngugi made his first qualitative contribution, when he had officially switched to the Gĩkũyũ. The outcome of his unwavering efforts and far-reaching conversion was a play entitled *Will Marry When I Want*, followed by

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his first novel *Devil on the Cross*, which was by far the most genuine expression of African identity. It was an African fruition. This achievement was so emblematic that it had not merely translated his theoretical reflections into practice, it rather set the pivotal foundations for an anti-neocolonial and an anti-canonical literature, affording the African novel originality and expressiveness. In sum, according to the Ngugian thesis language acts as a catalyst for attaining the greater expectations of Afrocentrism that black Diaspora scholars like Molefi Asante sought to realize. Hence, within politics of language, Ngugi stresses that Africa can only accomplish the goal of ‘decolonizing of the mind’ and negotiating an identity through an outgrowth of an African political ideology.

Conclusion

In summary, nationalism is an ideological philosophy that locates the nation at the heart of its concerns. With a sense of national consciousness, it produces loyalty and devotion to a nation among a given group of people inhabiting a given land of geographical borders. It likewise promotes the culture and interests of the group in question. Enjoying political vitality, nationalism rose to serve the three main objectives autonomy, national unity, and national identity according to Anthony Smith.

Prior to 1960s, nationalism did not receive much attention, however; by 1960s, scholars and writers began to devote a good deal of systematic attempts to deal with the nature, causes and effects of nations and nationalisms. The conclusion was then, four main theoretical paradigms: Primordialism, Perennialism, Ethnosymbolism, and Modernism.

Of course one may notice, however, that nationalism and colonialism hold a close connection in such a way that nationalism as an ideological motive laid the ground for colonialism. Otherwise speaking, nationalist rulers felt the need to further their colonialist projects in order compete with their rivals. Nationalism to some extent gave a strong impetus

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to imperialist projects by inspiring nationalist leaders to go out into the world to grab whatever land, territory, or nation seemed convenient to overtake. The main point to be made therefore is that the competing European nationalisms fostered imperial greed and clashes erupted between European powers resulted in tragedies.

In another dimension, the African-Americans, the Sudanese, the Algerians and the Kenyans were part of the western nationalist project and were subjugated to colonial control. Nonetheless, they crystallized a national consciousness, which was one necessary step towards decolonization. First of all, as an ideology, Black Nationalism developed through three distinct phases: Pre-Classical Black Nationalism, Classical Black Nationalism and Revival of Black Nationalism. The three phases witnessed many upheavals, many successes and failures. Secondly, nationalism in Sudan took Arab and Muslim orientations, to wit; a tribal and religious opposition to the British occupation and it was essentially in the Northern provinces. The fruition of this nationalist endeavor was an independence Sudan. Moreover, Algerian Nationalism involves four crucial tendencies that marked the elaboration of political parties. The first tendency was an egalitarian reformist current led by Emir Khalid; the second was assimilationist tendency, which encouraged egalitarianism that would result in integration of Algerians the French nation; the third strand is pro-independence nationalist movement that utterly opposed French rule and openly called for independence; and the fourth nationalist tendency was purely an Islamic Reformist agenda, and came to oppose Francophonization of the Arab Islamic identity of Algeria by rejecting the integrationist demands for assimilation into France. It sought to revive and promote the Algerians' faith by referring to the purity of early Islam. The formation of the FLN was such a crucial step that it accelerated the outbreak of war for independence. After seven bloody years, Algeria celebrated its independence from France in 1962. Furthermore, colonialism had negative effects on the Kenyan society and the alienation of Kenyans from their lands was a catalyst which fostered the project of Kenyan

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Nationalism. Namely, the early 1920s saw the formation of the KCA that had a nationalist schedule of advocating the rights of Kikuyu for a fair representation on the Legislative Council and denouncing oppression. The growing disillusionment obliged the nationalist movement to take militant options and violence to achieve nationalist ends. One of the most dramatic episodes of Kenya's decolonization history, however, is what came to be named as 'The Mau Mau' Revolt. After ebbs and flows, Kenya attained independence from Britain in 1963.

With independence achieved, several countries started to come to terms with the legacy of colonialism and the challenges of the post-independence era. Many theorists devised views and elaborated strategies to re-assess the process of colonization and decolonization as well. Their contribution, however, heralded a new discipline: Postcolonial Theory and Criticism.

Though the term 'postcolonialism' did not come into use until the 1980s, a great deal of books was produced in the former colonies by 1960s. There is no doubt, however, race began gaining wide currency among literary circles following the rise of the Harlem Renaissance between the 1920s and the 1930s. Nevertheless, of the notion *négritude* was introduced during the 1930s, the African-American aspiration for self-definition was reinforced, particularly with the relentless repudiation to be defined by the culture of their White colonizer on a racial basis. During the fifties, Western-educated minds from occupied territories, like Frantz Fanon and Cyril Lionel Robert James, Chinua Achebe and others became ever more attentive to the ramifications of Western racism on their own consciousness, and they badly needed to contest this colonial influence.

Following the fifties, the project of cultural self-definition grew in tandem with the political creed of self-determination adopted by the Civil Rights Movement. Coupled with this, many colonized territories in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean progressively claimed

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political independence and showed a strong aspiration for nationhood. Still, the end of first half of the twentieth century, most of the colonized territories had attained independence and literatures in the latterly independent colonies sprung up, remarkably during the 1960s and 1970s to articulate a need for cultural autonomy, to wit: cultural independence. This attracted a prevalent notice of many English critics to the writings coming out of the former crumbling empires. In consequence, the 'Commonwealth Literature' rose as a site of postcolonial argument. Nevertheless, there was a tremendous problem in the way to deal with multicultural and multiethnic nature of the contemporary writing in such a way that it was not likely for Westerners to read non-Western literature, without taking part in the excruciating experience of colonialism. So, in order to avoid critical responses to go uncontaminated by any type of Eurocentric prejudice, postcolonial studies came to life with Said's *Orientalism* (1979). Its primary objective was a radical reassessment of European colonialist legacy from the colonized's perspective.

Presumably, whereas postcolonialism alerts us to the absence of a homogenous and traceable sort of theory for its wide scope of interest, and for its drawing upon assorted schools of poststructuralist thought such as Marxism, deconstruction, feminism, and psychoanalysis, the study merely focuses thoroughly on three postcolonial facets. Homi Bhabha's Mimicry theory, Kwame Nkrumah's Neocolonialism and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's theory of language; *Decolonizing the Mind* are supposed to back up the context of the research.

In a climate of colonialism, mimicry emerged an increasingly overarching conception in the postcolonial theory and criticism. It represents one of the ambivalences of colonial discourse, implying a persistent vacillation between hankering for one thing and hankering for its opposite. In mimicry the colonial master deploys strategies in the intention of destabilizing the cultural boundaries, forcing the colonized to internalize the western cultural mores,

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behavioral patterns, lifestyles, institutions and values. At the same time, nevertheless, the colonizer works to keep a distance between himself and the native. Contrary to expectations, mimicry is not certainly a mere re-enunciation of colonial customs because it shakes the colonized's identity when locating a fracture in his certainty. The primary outcome is then what Helen Tiffin Farrah et al perceive as 'blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quite threatening; owing to the fact that the colonizer sees himself in a broken mirror that spoils his image. Otherwise said, mimicry according to Bhabha's articulates people almost the same, but not quite; almost the same but never white.

In view of the difficulties arising from achieving incomplete independence, some postcolonial theorists questioned the authenticity of independence and the postcolonial identity, as neocolonialism as a western project had come to bring with it a host of crucial forms of hegemony. Coined by Kwame Nkrumah, neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism, as the colonizer neither assumes responsibility for the misery of millions who suffer from it nor does he redress for the way he exploits them. This neocolonialist ideology made it very premature to proclaim the demise of the colonialist institution because the same inequities of revolutionary struggles were still standing. Colonialism reproduces itself without military presence through dictating the ex-colonized peoples' dependency on their colonizer.

Being attentive to the prime power and significance of culture as a weapon for implanting dominion anew, the neo-colonialists' focus was on one of all the most hazardous forms of neo-colonialism; cultural colonialism or what Ngugi came to call "the cultural bomb". In a narrower sense, this was done by a ruling elite that operates in complicity with the metropolitan powers.

In another dimension, language is an ultimately central location of struggle for post-colonial discourse as language remains the most persuasive tool of cultural neocolonialism. Following decolonization, the linguistic dilemma has provoked much of the confusion:

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whether using the colonizer's language or the indigenous language as modes of literary expression. In effect, the colonial process itself begins in language and the linguistic ecology of Africa demonstrated that the continent has already been baptized into the diverse languages of the European colonial powers. Pursuant to this, Ngugi wa Thiong'o among others claim that the search for African authenticity necessitates writing African literature only in aboriginal languages.

Keenly aware of the liabilities of the cultural legacy of colonialism and neocolonialism, Ngugi postulates that the African culture and talent had been either stolen or spoiled by the imperial and neocolonial cultural conditions impinged upon the continent. Ngugi moreover pinpointed language at the center of an African cultural renaissance that gives birth to revolutionary literature. The latter carries the African anti-imperialist struggles of the peasantry and working class societies to accomplish decolonizing the land. Ngugi constantly alerts to the idea that language is one way for lingering the subjugation of peoples to keep Africa in an interminable submission to the West in such a way the compradors keep writing in the colonizer's languages. In so doing, they colonize minds and contaminate of the African awareness. The emancipation from neo-colonial imposition hence will not assume a smooth path. When taking the Kenyan case for instance, the British educational apparatus had prohibited teaching in local languages and imposed English instead. This linguistic invasion results in the systematic annihilation Africa's languages and literatures, conversely to the promotion of the imperialist tradition and Western values are. The neo-colonizing powers accordingly shift from the physical subjugation to a more nefarious sort of ideological ascendancy; it is the mental and spiritual subjugation, where language is its more influential instrument.

Against neocolonial rhetoric, Ngugi states that the continent should be presented in the linguistic fabric which best reflects the African particularity. Put it otherwise, the indigenous linguistic register vehemently delineates the rich and treasured repository of folklore,

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mythology and the oral traditions and it helps African writers smoothly transfer the cultural idiom. Ngugi's critiques, in other words, attest to the fact that, Africa does not exist and live in the European languages and the African literature languages must be indigenized. African writers ought to return to their native tongues and cultures which nurtured their imagination, sharpened their talent and lent their literature an original African dress, so to speak. Effectively, Ngugi bid a farewell to English as a language of literary expression in his book significantly entitled "*Decolonizing the Mind Politics of Language in African Literature*" and switched to Gĩkũyũ. This is certainly one of the several counter-discursive approaches Ngugi employs by means of empowering the aboriginal culture and realizing the end of 'the mind decolonization'.

Part II

Chapter III: Cultural Ravages of Mimetic Discourse

Introduction

In fact, mimicry is one of the ideologies that has been continually hampering the postcolonial projects of elaborating national identities. The sense of nationalism has been and still being distorted by a hyperbolic copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas of the colonizer before and even after independence. Chapter three will focus on the manifestation of mimicry in the four books of fiction: *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, and *The Bridges*. Cultural self-identification within the bounds of the empire usually creates tumult of identity crisis due to the increasing effect of identity shift from being one's self to the stage of being the other. This identity confusion hinders the national consciousness of collectivizing the cultural mores to assert national identity. Mimicry is, for all intents and purposes, one of these ideological trajectories that Wright, Salih, Ngũgĩ and Mosteghanemi have –explicitly or implicitly– cautioned against. The above-mentioned authors grew especially aware that spotting these ideologies is a first indispensable step to decolonize national identities from the damaging influences that relentlessly daunted the national enthusiasm. This chapter is accordingly aimed to bring to the surface the workings of mimicry in the four works in question.

1. Indigenous Skins, Mimetic Masks and Colonial Tasks

As one may expect, postcolonial discourse deals widely with external colonizations led by Western nations against Third World countries. Accordingly, it sounds implausible to approach *Native Son* from a postcolonial perspective. The suitability of postcolonial theory to the American context has largely been the subject of a high-octane debate among the seasoned critics in the field of cultural studies. In underscoring the vagueness of the applicability of this discourse in the American framework, Malini Johar Schueller points out that the “postcolonial understanding of US literature and culture, the relevance of postcolonial analyses to American studies has not always been clear” (162). Against this position, however, many critics and postcolonial theory proponents such as Robert Young stretch the postcolonial scope to encompass an internal colonization exercised by the colonizing powers within their societies. Pursuing this further, practices of injustice and oppression do not only operate in colonized nations or in the tri-continent, but are likely to occur even within the Western nations. That is how postcolonial theory is perceived as a potent lens, which provides reliable interpretation of the multi-layered patterns of the workers’ exploitation, racism of the whites against the Afro-Americans or Amerindians, marginalization of women and the like. In similar vein, the Indian critic Rafey Habib claims that the “postcolonial discourse potentially embraces, and is intimately linked with, a broad range of dialogues within the colonizing powers, addressing various forms of “internal colonization” as treated by minority studies of various kinds such as African-American, Native American, Latin American, and women’s studies” (739).

On the other hand, the second chapter of this study obviously shows that the rise of postcolonial criticism is rooted in the Harlem Renaissance. It equally demonstrates that postcolonial criticism is triggered by the achievements already championed by the *négritude* movement. Given the points shown above, this research approaches *Native Son* from a

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postcolonial perspective, wherein the white oppressor is the colonizer; the black oppressed is the colonized; and Black America is the colony within.

The second chapter similarly narrates in details the story of enslaving the Africans bringing them from their birthplace to the New World. Although the Emancipation Proclamation, issued during Civil War, came to put a term to almost two centuries of slavery, but it was too premature to announce the demise serfdom in the USA. By the Reconstruction Era, a new pattern of colonialism rose to replicate racial oppression of the past. Many Afro-American authors thus found in literature a considerable space to tell authentic stories of black oppression and to aspire to a change of the status quo. Expectedly, Babacar M'Baye maintains that: "*Native Son* belongs in the intellectual tradition in which Richard Wright denounces the impact of slavery and colonization on African Americans" (75). In fact, *Native Son* eloquently dramatizes racial predisposition in the US through an unconventional hero Bigger Thomas, who experiences abhorrence and distrust of white people. Like millions of blacks, the eponymous Bigger Thomas has largely been subjected to a systematic segregation for his whole life.

Native Son is grounded in the experience of colonialism, where the ghetto is a de facto colony of White America. Hence, the concept of mimicry, in terms of similarities and dissimilarities between the west and the rest, the colonizer and the colonized, pervade the novel. Indeed, mimicry is a degree of ambivalence that constitutes the colonial discourse of subjugation. It is not surprising that Richard Wright, namely, offers his readers an opportunity to consider the black and white relationships from the oppressed point of view. In one scene, the self-proclaimed native Bigger Thomas and his friend Gus put on a white mask to "play white". The two, in other words, mimicked the whites at several levels. Though one may understand their play as one reason for having fun, nonetheless, this apparently embodies a tendency to assume a virtual persona with traits of white power. The following passage demonstrates evidently an Afro-American duplication for the colonizer departments:

“Let’s play ‘white,’ ” Bigger said, referring to a game of play-acting in which he and his friends imitated the ways and manners of white folks.

“I don’t feel like it,” Gus said.

“General!” Bigger pronounced in a sonorous tone, looking at Gus expectantly.

“Aw, hell! I don’t want to play,” Gus whined.

“You’ll be court-martialed,” Bigger said, snapping out his words with military precision.

“Nigger, you nuts!” Gus laughed.

“General!” Bigger tried again, determinedly.

Gus looked wearily at Bigger, then straightened, saluted and answered:

“Yessuh.”

“Send your men over the river at dawn and attack the enemy’s left flank,” Bigger ordered.

“Yessuh.”

“Send the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Regiments,” Bigger said, frowning. “And attack with tanks, gas, planes, and infantry.”

“Yessuh!” Gus said again, saluting and clicking his heels.

For a moment they were silent, facing each other, their shoulders thrown back, their lips compressed to hold down the mounting impulse to laugh. Then they guffawed, partly at themselves and partly at the vast white world that sprawled and towered in the sun before them (Wright *Native* 47-48).

This internal dialogue demonstrates Bigger’s complex of inferiority as shown by Frantz Fanon towards whites. In putting on a mimetic mask and in assuming a military role of general, Bigger Thomas enjoys a sense of superiority with orders he gave to start an attack against a presumed enemy with tanks, gas, planes, and infantry. Frantz Fanon in this regard negates any inherited superiority of whites over blacks. Blacks sometimes view whites as superior to them, because this inferiority is primarily generated by the act colonialism and subsequently coerced by the white man’s violence against colored people. The superiority and inferiority complexes “emerge because of the inequalities of the races in the colonial context. They emerge from the horrific economic, political and social contexts of the black man’s life under colonization” (Nayar *Frantz Fanon* 38). Although Bigger and Gus’ self-awareness of the comic nature of the imitation they act, the mimetic scene is loaded with the unspoken; the repressed; and far-achieved feelings of inclusion. The mimesis, otherly said, give Bigger and Gus a different window through which they can probe into the world of whites.

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Bigger and Gus's mimetic tendency expresses an Anglo-Saxon colonial desire to elaborate power over blacks. Wittingly or unwittingly, Bigger and Gus feel a sense of power in imitating the colonizer, whose strategies are not only able to influence the colonial subject, but it goes further to dazzle the colonized in the intention of appropriating him/her. On her comment on Bigger's mimicry, Farah Jasmine Griffin states:

The closest [Bigger] gets to holding the power of the white man is through this game, and yet inherent in the game is a critique of white people. In mimicking white people he parodies them. Here again, parody grants him a degree of verbal authority over whites. (125-126)

Although the verbal authority Bigger and Gus have over whites, the inescapable outcome of mimicry is the elaboration of an absolute authenticity and the enlargement of control over the individuals of the black occupied community.

Bigger and Gus carried in their mimesis and Gus play the role of a high-ranking official in the American department of economy. He ordered one of the employees – who is in that mimetic piece Bigger – to sell twenty thousand shares of United States Steel in the market. In Wright's words:

"Hello," Gus said.

"Hello," Bigger said. "'Who's this?'"

"This is Mr. J. P. Morgan speaking," Gus said.

"Yessuh, Mr, Morgan," Bigger said; his eyes filled with mock adulation and respect.

"I want you to sell twenty thousand shares of U. S. Steel in the market this morning," Gus said.

"At what price, suh?" Bigger asked.

"Aw, just dump 'em at any price," Gus said with casual irritation. "We're holding too much."

"Yessuh," Bigger said.

"And call me at my club at two this afternoon and tell me if the President telephoned," Gus said.

"Yessuh, Mr. Morgan," Bigger said.

Both of them made gestures signifying that they were (48) hanging up telephone receivers; then they bent double, laughing" (Wright *Native Son* 48-49).

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The dialogue applies to a deep sense of economic marginalization that the blacks lived during the twenties. In her important article entitled “Black American Literature and the Postcolonial Debate”, Christine MacLeod claims that

The economic structures of American society have already imbued Bigger with a sense of his own marginality and worthlessness. These feelings are exacerbated by direct contact with whites [...] we should recognize precisely that 'internalization -or, better, epidermalization of inferiority. (56)

Further and more importantly, although they virtually played white, Bigger and Gus's mimesis holds tremendous significance in so far their identity construction is concerned. The act of mimicry in this context attests that both niggers were overwhelmed to such a degree by the desire to go white. The wish to be white is therefore a virtual assumption of power. However, this can be seen as a “flawed mimesis” that “represents an ironic compromise” (“Of Mimicry” 86) according to Bhabha. What is ironic is the fact that both Bigger and Gus were aware of their imitation and Gus exclaimed about the sameness of his performance to the real conduct of whites: “I bet that's just the way they talk,” Gus said; whereas Bigger replied saying: “I wouldn't be surprised,” (49).

In what appears to be an act of trivial imitation, both Bigger and Gus's mimicry is perceived as a tactic to struggle an overwhelming sense of invisibility. In her insightful analysis of characters from the African-American literary landscape, Klara Szmańko proclaims that these characters seem to be utilizing mimicry “as a deliberate strategy in their struggle against invisibility. Ironically, invisibility enables them to reach for mimicry and mimicry in turn becomes a weapon in the battle against invisibility” (Szmańko 14). The colonizer imposes racial invisibility and herein lies the root of the ideological mimicry as “an act of imagination, [that can be seen both] as defense and as lure (Walcott 10). So this duality of defense and seduction, correspondingly, traps Bigger and Gus in a circle of fluctuating tendencies: the colonizer's growing desire for extending dominion over them and the their desired construction of an independent identity.

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Mimetically, Bigger and Gus as colonial subjects were at the crossroads of cultural confusion. Their cultural encounter with a dominantly superior culture shakes their identity, which is not likely to compromise the conflictual set of values. In such a context, they were in a desperate need for new sources of identification to avoid identity suppression. They reject the stereotyped compulsory identification within a white community on the one hand. On the other, however, they feel attracted to imitate the colonizers' manners, language, ethos, values and ideas. The quest for a sense of meaning and purpose, in a white community, whose superior culture prevents a complete assimilation, can play an assertive influence in breeding a radical otherness. Bigger was under the effect of the uncontrollable images and the racial categorization of the blacks, the thing that confined his perception of who he is and who are the whites. In her analysis of the pervasive reasons of that identification confusion, Kathleen Gallagher states:

Because of the false images or stereotypes that govern whites' perceptions of blacks, he is offered no acceptable image of who he is or what he might become. Because of his own partial image of whites, he lives in continual hate and fear. He fragments the reality of both worlds, keeping the painful truth of his own world at bay and creating a fantasy white world which he peoples with his own cast of stereotyped characters. (04)

Yet, in their attempt to domesticate Bigger and soften his otherness, the Dalton family receives him and offers him a job. Likewise, Mrs. Dalton suggests she would give him chance to have night school to further his education. However, it goes without saying that the colonial agenda of educating the Other was as a sign of authority. Perhaps, Mrs. Dalton thought that by inculcating western ideals, Bigger Thomas would be a good native interpreter, who would mediate between white wealthy people and the rest portion of less good colored people. Ultimately, the limited amount of education neither secured full inclusion, nor did it afford an "inner shield against the self-destructiveness of his own ferocity" (*Bloom's Guides: Native Son* 08). Thus on the shifting terrain of colonial or postcolonial discourse, mimicry arises as a compelling ideology that "conceals no presence or identity behind its mask"

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(Bhabha of Mimicry 89) and subsequently, the identityless Bigger and Gus imperil the colonizer with their far-reaching otherness.

In another dimension, Salih's *Season* (1964) –written within a generally exhilarating climate– is qualified as the pinnacle of modern Arabic postcolonial literature and “a forceful literary deconstruction of Nahda ideologies and east–west binaries” (Sellman 757). It chronicles the experiences of the two central characters – the unnamed narrator and Mustafa Sa'eed. More specifically, the novel displays Mustafa Sa'eed's uneasy strife for articulating an identity in such a way that enables the reader to delve into the complex course of selfhood construction in the empire context. The procedure is essentially informed by an overriding factor; to wit, dynamics of mimicry.

The mimetic tendency is clearly asserted with Mustafa's English-oriented educational upbringing. Fundamentally concerned with the enunciation of an imitated identity, the English colonizer utilized mimicry as a mode of interaction with the Other. Formally or informally, the British implemented an educational strategy that ensured the mental control of the colonized. Schools were set up in each place they reached so as to pick out promising native adolescents since the “educational policy, and formal schooling was primarily for the elite” (Parsons 37). The elitist figures would be prepared to act as what Homi Bhabha would call “interpreters” between the English colonizer and the native masses.

In the light of the colonial influence of education, Mustafa is conceived as “a child of colonialism, and a fruit of colonial education” (Smail Salhi 29). He was in fact was among very few in the Sudan, who voluntarily accepted to attend the British school. Mustafa is one of kind owing to his decision to join with the colonial education although the apathetic Sudanese thought of the government-run schools an evil coming with the white colonizer. More significantly, Zahia Smail Salhi argues that Mustafa “went to a colonial school at a time when the natives regarded them as a means of acculturation, and a great evil that had come with the armies of occupation (29). As demonstrated here, Salih wrote, “people would hide

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their sons—they thought of schools as being a great evil that had come to them with the armies of occupation” (Salih 20). As an outcome of this cycle of education, Mustafa was such an African prodigy that he excelled in all areas of learning and he “was brilliant in everything, nothing being too difficult for his amazing brain ... [which] was like a sharp knife, cutting with cold effectiveness” (20-52). His vertiginous progress stuns both his schoolmates and teachers in the college.

Mustafa’s unusual ability to learn quickly entwined with his exposure to the English language enormously influenced him to engage in self-Anglicization course. In his dialogue with the nameless narrator, Mustafa qualified his encounter with the English language as a discovery of a “mystery” (Salih 22). Empowered by a potent predisposition for mimicking the colonizer Mustafa loved the English language; he did great efforts to master it; and it became evident that Mustapha spoke the English as though he was a native speaker. Mustafa’s linguistic conversion is essentially a Eurocentric approach to what is labeled as “colonization of the consciousness”, which refers to the mental control of the colonized by the colonizer. Colonization of the mind occurs as a result of the domination of the colonizer’s language over the language of the colonized (Tsuda 448). Further than that, Mamur acknowledged, “in our day, the English language was the key to the future: no one had chance without it” (Salih 53). Pursuant to this highly performative faculty, many in the college envied Mustafa and admired his competence at once. He was believed to be “the spoiled child of the English” (Salih 52) and many would nickname him a “black Englishman” (53).

Language, it goes without saying, is a catalyst of identity construction and development. As one might expect, Mustafa’s gravity to the English language brings to the surface what Ngũgĩ has always been cautioning against the linguistic invasion of the African minds through linguistic subordination. In similar context, Ngũgĩ confirmed that “language was the means of the spiritual subjugation” (*Decolonizing* 09). Mustapha’s spiritual intimacy with the colonizer’s language was emboldened by the reaction of the white teachers of the

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English language what were said to give “the lesson to him alone and excluding the rest of the students” (Salih 52). While “the Europeanizing of the students had long been a goal of educators in East Africa” (Sicherman 25), the teachers looked as Mustapha as the one to fit the process which entailed reproducing what Homi K Bhabha would call “a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (“Of Mimicry” 86). Therefore, mimicry is the procedure in which the colonized subject is to westernize by means of guaranteeing the visualization of colonial power.

At the age of twelve, Mustapha’s mind was washed and taken over by transplanting western values. However, what came to trigger this self-engaged process of mimicry was the mimic uncanny that surrounded his personality. Mustafa evolved a kind of mysterious persona, which located an unfathomable gap between himself, his mother and his motherland. Mustafa admits the enigmatic nature of his personality saying, “I was an odd creature” (Salih 19). Furthermore, he is “neither like the other nor like the English” (Abdul Jabbar 131); he rather sees himself as though he were “cold as a field of ice, nothing in the world would shake [him]” (Salih 22). Mustafa is unlike the other boys, the thing that furnished the possibility to be westernized. This can be explicably read in his emotionless and cold character. His ambivalent relation to his mother signifies a sort of individualism that bred self-dependence within the outlandish world of Mustafa Sa’eed. With the progress Mustafa achieved, the English headmaster Mr. Stockwell advised him to migrate. In a sense, the village where he lived in Khartoum turned into an inconvenient matrix for his increasingly growing propensity for mimicry. For Mustafa, the “tropical climes, cruel suns and the purple horizons” (30) are pointless as his emotional sterility called for a land “whose fishes die of the cold” (Salih 01). A season of migration to the North was then essentially needed.

Owing to his yearning for cold horizons, Mustafa resolves to migrate north: to Cairo at first and then to London following the opposite direction taken by the double-colonization of the Sudan: the Egyptians and the English. On his way to join a secondary school in Cairo,

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Mustafa linguistically high competence surprises one of the Christian passengers in the train: “you speak English with astonishing fluency”, the man said (24). The ideological brain washing, one may see, is effectively re-affirming an Eastern boy within the ethics of the West.

Without being much aware of what Anouar Majid calls “the dangers of Westernization (87), Mustafa’s desired westernization moved to a different level, when the Robinson family embraces him in Cairo. Mr. Robinson and his wife give Mustafa a parental tenderness and “showered him with love” (Salih 26) that his cold mother fails to offer. In an utterly English matrix, Mustafa’s upbringing sharpens his mimic anxiety. The novel stresses Mrs. Robinson’s ability to play a central part, throwing her weight in favor of Mustafa’s westernization. His sensibility and temperament are especially nurtured by an open exposure to the Occident’s music and literature. Mustafa confesses Mrs. Robinson’s potent influence on his likes: “from her I learned to love Bach’s music, Keats’s poetry, and from her I heard for the first time of Mark Twain” (Salih 28). The Anglicist agenda here is not random. As mentioned earlier, the overarching objective of this mimic enlightenment is to breed generations of interpreters within the Empire, who would in turn assume clerical jobs of Anglicizing the indigenes. The Westernized Mustafa would certainly fall under the Lord Macaulay’s educational strategy in India. Macaulay emphatically declared:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect [...] to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population (qtd in Lovesey 43)

In such a context, domesticating Mustafa Sa’eed means manufacturing a category of colonial subjects, African in blood and color, but English in perception. It is on that basis that Mustafa sheds the colonized’s skin in exchange for the colonizer’s skin in such a way his identity reconfiguration within the parameters of the Empire was conducted.

Comparable to *Season* however, Khaled in *The Bridges* is pretty much the same product of a resilient cycle of mimicry as Mustafa, wherein western education was a

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preeminent mode. Historically, the French scramble for Algeria's territories had not only culminated into the usurpation of the land, but it went further to include reshaping and reconfiguring the Algerian identity within the French ideological lines. The French authorities conceived of the Algerian individual as illiterate and backward enough to adapt to the colonial type of government. That is how; schools were founded to manufacture elites of natives: indigenously Algerian in blood, but European in taste, French in shape and content. Remi Clignet states that the "French authorities promoted the emergence of a class of 'black Frenchmen', with values, aspirations, and cognitive styles analogous to those of European educational institution" (425).

The legacy of mimicry as a French colonial strategy is not so easy to erase. The reader of *The Bridges*, will not find it hard to identify Khaled as the product of an educational structure operated by the French colonizer. During the era of colonialism, school was conducted in French and achievement in learning French was the crucial test for educational progress. In this sense, the detrimental effect of colonial education was so influential that through a French-oriented background, Khaled was westernized to be a local interpreter and a mediator between the French colonizer and the indigenous masses. Khaled describes his return to classes after he had served one year in the colonial prison: "I went back to Constantine secondary school, having fallen a year behind. I found the same classes and the same works of philosophy and French literature waiting for me" (*The Bridges* 18). In this respect, Pramod Nayar opines:

through their cultural practices and modes such as literature, the white masters convinced the native subjects that they (natives) would be more civilized if they abandoned their native ways and adopted European ones. The result of this mimicry of Western cultural forms and manners by the colonized subjects was the construction of 'mimic men'" (*Postcolonial Studies* 104).

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It has become unquestionably evident that teaching the colonials philosophy and French literature was never a random choice. It was primarily meant for influencing the interpreters' taste to shape their sense of identity.

At the mimetic level, Khaled was among the promising North African brains that were selectively taken by the French system to be the appealing showcase of the French civilization. Gallicizing as many brilliant Algerians as possible was a serious attempt to create a competent set of intellectuals and civil servants, who would assume an effective role in a complex process of assimilating Algeria. However, most of anti-French schooling Algerians looked at the French education of the Algerians with suspicions. While In *Season*, the Sudanese considered education in the colonizer's langue as an evil coming with the British armies, the French-oriented education of the Algerian students caused them to be labeled as traitors to the white colonizer. Mosteghanemi's protagonist describes the Algerians' westernization:

Some schoolmates were absent, either in jail or shahids. Most of these were students in the top stream, which was supposed to produce the top rank of Gallicized Algerian intellectuals and civil servants. It was a matter of honor for them when some ventured to call them traitors simply for choosing French secondary schools and culture in a city where it was impossible to ignore the authority of Arabic and its esteemed place in people's hearts and memories (*The Bridges* 18-19)

In an inclusive sense, behind Khaled's Gallicization, the colonizer aimed at generating a copy of his own; a copy that is almost the same but not quite. Khaled's metonymic presence is manifested in his perfect mastery of French and his inability to communicate in his mother tongue Arabic. The colonial education molded most of his life and the pinnacle of his successful education could be seen in his literary sensibility and faculty to play with the words in French, which made many of his teachers foresee that he would be a renowned author. Khaled confessed: "my teachers had always predicted a glowing literary future for me – in French" (40). Khaled's talent was effectively triggered by his linguistic influence and

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increased somewhat in importance with the teachers' growing emphasis on the brilliance his young pen seemed to promise.

As an ambivalence of colonial discourse, mimicry locates a sort of belonging uncertainty between the native selves and their colonially constructed identities. A confusing zone, in other words, emerged along the mimetic interaction between the West and the Rest to destabilize the colonizer's main objective behind enacting mimicry. In a sense, the ambivalence of mimicry may, against the colonizer's expectations, "contaminate imperial discourse in the colonial space of its implementation and frustrate the European subject's need for confirmation by the colonized" (Hassan 50). Unexpectedly, visualizing power and widening subordination were thwarted by Khaled and his Gallicized compatriots, who "by virtue of their Western culture, they enjoyed an early political awareness and were full of nationalism and dreams (*The Bridges* 19). The Gallicized Algerians as mimic men, transmuted into figures of disruption undermining the colonizer's stability. The matter at stake, the Gallicized Algerians were among the first to take up arms in rebellion against the French. In the novel Khaled narrates how his nationalist consciousness was growing to culminate in his adherence to the National Liberation Front, the FLN. (19)

On the other hand, *Matigari* is regarded as one of Ngugi's greatest literary accomplishments and his "most ideologically committed novel" (Indangasi 194). Written in Gĩkũyũ and then translated into English, the novel marks Ngũgĩ's shift from his purely Fanonian and Marxist discourse to a new level of a utopian consciousness. The book is a picaresque novel in which the protagonist undertakes a strenuous journey. The eponymous Matigari encounters a series of adventures in a rhetorical search for truth and justice in an unnamed country, but obviously meant to be newly independent Kenya. Matigari ma Njirũngi is a "patriot who survived the bullets" (*Matigari* 20), once he took up the arm and joined the bush in response to the homeland's call to confront the colonial masters. Once

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independence is attained, Matigari buries his weapons under a *mugumo* fig tree and returns to retrieve what he was forced to cede to the white settlers; his family and his home. Mimicry is one of the ideological discourses, which subverted Matigari's homecoming and propelled him to begin the search de novo.

The mimetic discourse in *Matigari* manifests itself in Ngũgĩ's multi-layered renditions. On this basis, mimicry is the driving force in the development of the postcolonial identity that is a distorted image of the colonizer. John Boy Junior's western upbringing does not fall far from that of Bigger Thomas, Mustafa Sa'eed or Khaled. In *Matigari*, Boy is presented

as a cultivated product of the kind of colonial academic hothouse that, with local variations, the British built wherever they deemed there were among their imperial subjects a few whose intellects might be forced into something rather like a Western shape. (Sicherman 12)

It is in the light of such western milieu, Boy talked eloquently about his father whose thought and ability to foretell the future was ahead of time. Boy's father had the white man's wisdom that he had sent him to school in a time black Kenyans knew nothing of it. Boy's travel to England was a self-sought journey to westernize himself. Through the English-oriented education, he devoted himself to the English lifestyle. Boy's self-westernization is consolidated by his attendance of English schools, where he obtained diplomas. Moreover, the Anglicization process was accelerated with a fundamental change of the eating and dressing habits. In other words, he ate like as though he were an English and dressed like an English too. Upon their encounter, Boy narrates to Matigari some details of his father and staying in the metropole:

He was a man of class, an important man. He was very wise, and he had great foresight. He sent me to school, at a time when people here did not know the value of education. He put me on a ship and sent me to Fort Hare in South Africa. Then I went to England, where I studied

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at the London School of Economics, better known as LSE. There I got a number of diplomas in administration. I used to eat dinners in the Inns of Court, where I learned how to dress like a gentleman, and from where I was called to the bar. And just as I was about to return home and show my many degrees and certificates to my father, I received a letter informing me that he had gone to the forest with Major Howard Williams, to hunt down terrorists. (*Matigari* 47)

Mimetically speaking, Boy wittingly had distanced himself from his indigenous environment and melted in the colonizer's identity. What supports the idea that western education more often than not fosters self-alienation from the aboriginal community, Philip Altbach's claim that the "emerging elite groups were Western-oriented, in part as a result of their education. In some instances, in fact, individuals were even unfamiliar with their own indigenous language" (453). Armed with this new status of westernization, Boy's identity shift was reaching maturation and he was ready to come home to show his father the outcome of this cultural enlightenment and national transformation.

Indeed, mimicry is one strategy the colonizer deploys in the intention of destabilizing the cultural boundaries of the colonized. Boy and his father are so impressed that they internalized the western cultural mores. It goes without saying that mimicry is primarily a colonial discourse. It is of paramount importance, nonetheless, to underline that "in a postcolonial context, mimicry is a strategy by which people denied an autonomous cultural identity to seek legitimacy through imitating and interrogating Western models" (Kar-yan Chan 83). Imitating the western models had triggers a cultural alteration, which in turn, gives birth to new selfhood: Boy Kenyan in root, black in skin, but English in taste finally resolves to wear a white mask. In so doing, his return to postcolonial Kenya marks him par excellence an interpreter between the Kenyan masses and the white colonizer. Subsequently, the Kenyan cultural values of solidarity and unity are undermined by the borrowed values of colonizer. This can understandably be read in Boy's words: "my father knew this; that's why he sent me to school and ignored the idiots who were mumbling nonsense about sharing the last bean" (*Matigari* 49). In his view, the task of enlightening the idiot masses was/is a fatiguing one as

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the masses were/are not knowledgeable about individualism and were not open to the white *savoir-faire*.

In stark contrast to Bigger Thomas, Mustafa Sa'eed and Khaled, whose radicalized otherness imperiled the colonizers and destabilized their power, Boy's mimicry created a completely domesticated and reformed Other. In this regard, Boy and his father were obedient and only dangerous to the Kenyans. This danger stems from the ambivalent nature of mimicry that "emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal" (Bhabha "Of Mimicry" 126). Ultimately, as a converted and recognizable Other, Boy's identity is reconfigured to give a distorted image of Boy the native.

Undeniably, mimicry as an imperially opportunistic pattern of conduct obstructed the assertion of a genuine sense of a Kenyan nation. At a personal level, this fiasco begins with the falsification and the suppression of the colonized's personal and collective identities. All the attempts of elaborating an original sense of nationalist belonging is thwarted by mimicry. Mimicry erases the original and replaces it with an imitated sense of nationalism, whose cultural indigenous pillars had been substituted by the colonially forged ones.

In *Matigari*, mimicry once again proves especially fatal on the natives, especially with the postcolonial native agents' borrowing the colonial masters' tactics. Bhabha's thesis based on a mimic man: reformed identifiable Other, "as a subject of difference that is almost the same but not quite" ("Of Mimicry 86) illuminates the colonial subject's standing as an embodiment of hazardous ambivalence and slippage. A portion of the Kenyan colonial subject is so impressed that they blindingly put on a white mask. This colonial façade homogenized and totalized the particularity and complexity of the colonial and postcolonial experiences of the Kenyan individuals and societies instigating a set of "common denominators [that] could easily cut across language and culture lines in ways that blur familiar disciplinary boundaries" (Hutcheon 10). What supports the idea that mimicry blurs the cultural frontiers between the colonizer and the colonized is the fact that a Kenyan pushes another Kenyan to be sentenced

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to death and the reason is identical to the one declared by the white colonizer during colonialism. In similar vein, Guthera's father was a patriot in the Mau Mau revolt against the British. He was caught holding some bullets in his bible. The police found it opportune to blackmail his daughter Guthera; either to submit herself to them and the father would emerge safe, or her father would be hanged. The police officer's words addressing Guthera: "your father is among those who call themselves patriots. He has been assisting the terrorists with supplies of bullets. The crime of being found in possession of bullets without a licence carries a death sentence" (*Matigari* 36). The white colonizer had been using terrorism as a scare-crew or as an illusory monster to tarnish the reputation of their rival patriots, whose aims were dignity and freedom. Consequently, native sons mimicked the white colonizer through the internalization of harmful values, undermining the foundation of national identities.

What hampered and still the recently independent states from founding state-nation entities is the inability of the postcolonial native agents to distinguish between colonialism and independence. In a certain sense, John Boy is proud that his father was the first person in this country to advocate loyalism to the Crown at the beginning of the century. Perhaps, the Kenyans would inquire, Boy put it: "loyalty to whose law? The colonial law? Let me tell you: Law is law. Those who realized this from the beginning are the only people of any worth in this country today. Yes, we loyalists are the ones in power today. Long live loyalism!" (*Matigari* 102) Mimicry in this respect places loyalism to the colonial power as priority, no matter the colonial or neocolonial is the law. It is worth noting that Boy confused understanding of the perplexed nature of the law be it colonial or independent and thus affords a quintessential evidence to Bhabha's assumption that "mimicry rearticulates presence in terms of its "otherness" that which it disavows" ("Of Mimicry" 132).

In *Native Son*, the dramatic scene of mimicry, however, moves to a third level of consciousness that is the relegation of blacks from the world of politics. The policymaking procedure infallibly lay in the hands of whites ever since the United States had been founded.

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In the following passage, the reader is invited to take a profound insight into the tremendous political marginalization of Afro-Americans. No matter how absurd or hilarious is the mimetic performance of the two boys, what is overriding then, is to go instantaneously white to test the weight of experience:

“Hello.”

“Hello,” Gus answered. “Who’s this?”

“This is the President of the United States speaking,” Bigger said.

“Oh, yessuh, Mr. President,” Gus said.

“I’m calling a cabinet meeting this afternoon at four o’clock and you, as Secretary of State, *must* be there.”

“Well, now, Mr. President,” Gus said, “I’m pretty busy. They raising sand over there in Germany and I got to send ’em a note. . . .”

“But this is important,” Bigger said.

“What you going to take up at this cabinet meeting?” Gus asked.

“Well, you see, the niggers is raising sand all over the country,” Bigger said, struggling to keep back his laughter. “We’ve got to do something with these black folks. . . .”

“Oh, if it’s about the niggers. I’ll be right there, Mr. President,” Gus said.

They hung up imaginary receivers and leaned against the wall and laughed. A street car rattled by. Bigger sighed and swore. (49)

On this mimetic juncture, Bigger and Gus –virtual imitators– distance themselves from the world of the colonized and categorize themselves as completely white colonizers. Yet, this metamorphosis is eclipsed by the fact that Bigger “is claimed for his difference and then abandoned because of it” (Wu 1469). Expectedly, the moment Bigger perceives in himself the President of the US is the most heightened point of vanquishing his racial inferiority. Nonetheless, racial self-distanciation is robustly accelerated to furnish Bigger’s ego with an unprecedented sense of superiority. In the same scene namely, both Bigger and Gus repeat the colonizer’s ways and discourses of hatred against the blacks. They ironically threaten to take measures to put a term to blacks’ riots, who are seen as the reason for the tumult in the United States. Then, it is needless to say that the mimetic performance indicates the impossibility of assimilating the blacks into an American identity and the Afro-Americans’ failure to be themselves.

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Bigger and Gus's mimicry of the colonizer's ways such as going to cinema, playing billiard, reading magazines and the like made them unconsciously feel they had partially gone white. This undoubtedly goes somewhere towards filling up all negative space that identity articulation left. Here, mimicry is meant for realizing integration process and yet it pronounced Americans: "almost the same but not white" (Bhabha "Of Mimicry" 89). Mimicry, in other words, is described as "a trope of partial presence that masks a threatening racial difference" (Sharpe 100). On that basis, Bigger and Gus's partial presence confirmed the possibility of concealing a damaging side behind their various masks.

Always in *Native Son*, the dissemination of the white man's culture is translated into Mrs. Thomas adoption of Western standards of religion. In following such cultural tactics, the colonizer intended to "'appropriate' the Other" (Bhabha Of Mimicry 86). While doing her household, Mrs. Thomas sings:

Lord, I want to be a Christian,
In my heart, in my heart,
Lord, I want to be a Christian,
In my heart, in my heart, (*Native Son* 65)

Mrs. Thomas' Christian hymns, spirituals and her theological dependence pertains to one truth: as a colonial subject, she falls into the abyss of an ironic negotiation; behind her mimetic mask of religion, she conceals a reformed Other, whose otherness was successfully domesticated by religious faith. More specifically, spiritual mimicry only "permits the subaltern no more than rhetorical acts of resistance that do not threaten colonialism's material hold on the colonies" (Hassan 50). However, Bigger's awareness to the menace of theological mimicry intensified his antagonism to the white religion. For him, his mother's spiritual dogma and Bessie's addiction to whiskey are, at once, sedatives to mollify the black's pain and to negate their need for personal affirmation.

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In *Season*, Mustafa's mimicry-stimulated identity at a moment entails a search for a new matrix as Cairo represents not an eventful scene as nothing thought-provoking happens to Mustafa there. That is how "the arrow will shoot forth towards other unknown horizons" (Salih 28). London was the destination and Mustafa's journey to the metropole was response to a "mysterious call [...] like the mask on [his] mother's face" (27). On the whole, the journey is said to be informed by Mustafa's yearning to set foot on the colonizer's land. For him, the destination, sounds more imperative than the trip itself. On his fifteen, Mustafa's self-alienation starts to fade away as soon as he approaches the shores of the metropole: "I immediately felt an overwhelming intimacy with the sea", said Mustafa (Salih 27). The same secretive calls instigate feelings of assurance, familiarity, warmth and intimacy to give the perturbed colonial subject clues of the newly constructed identity.

At the mimetic level, Mustafa's cultural baptism was meant for forming a Sudanese intermediary: exotic in appearance, but western in taste. Mustafa becomes more Western, but simultaneously less Eastern. It is of paramount significance to stress that Mustafa seems "a little too similar to the colonizer, undermining ideologies of superiority" (Huddart 51). Consequently, once arriving in the metropole, Mustafa finds a well-adjusted character that he frequents the pubs of Chelsea, the clubs of Hampstead, and the gatherings of Bloomsbury and that he would read poetry, talk of religion and philosophy, discuss paintings, and say things about spirituality of the East (Salih 30). Self-identification, in this regard, was successfully and effortlessly actualized within the bounds of the empire.

Most important, however, Mustafa's further growth within the cultural boundaries of the Occident demands a shift from the colonized's to the colonizer's identity to accomplish cultural conversion. Amid the tumult of identity shift, Mustafa entered in the eye of an identity crisis. David Huddart in this frame assumes that the colonial subject comes to undermine his own self-identical authority, once drawn into this economy of resemblance and menace. (51)

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In the absence of concrete identity pronouncements, Mustafa's identity disturbance can be expounded through the East-West polarization. On the one hand, he was more widely accepted among the whites as one of them. Nonetheless, the same white community rejects his complete membership to their civilization. What seems of great importance to recognize is that an inconsistent identity is hence imposed on Mustafa who is compelled to mirror back an image of the colonizer, but in such a way that reflects his partial presence. Mustafa's complete or partial assimilation into the Western culture embodies his rejection of self-identification within the postcolonial community as opposed to a robust acceptance of the identity vacuum emanating from the belonging transformation.

The psychological disturbance characterizing Mustafa's identity can be discerned in a number of paradoxical views on his persona. For instance, the Robinsons gives him love and tenderness and Professor Maxwell Foster-Keen defends him confirming that Mustafa is "a noble person whose mind was able to absorb Western civilization" (Salih 33). In the same vein, Frantz Fanon accentuates the western rejectionist stances on the Negro exceptional minds despite their full mastery of the western civilization. Fanon argues: "the educated Negro suddenly discovers that he is rejected by a civilization which he has none the less assimilated" (*Black Skin* 93).

In sharp contrast to the previous claims, the reader may notice the racists keep uncompromisingly reminding Mustafa of his indigenous roots punctuating his new belonging with skepticism. Jean Morris, as a matter of illustration, said to Mustafa: "you're ugly [...] I've never seen an uglier face than yours" (Salih 30). In another situation, his girlfriend Sheila Greenwood told him: "My mother [...] would go mad and my father would kill me if they knew I was in love with a black man" (139). Mustafa was aware of the bogus image of humanism and ideals of equality that white man created with other races in such a way a non-English individual would not likely refuse to rent him a room in his house. But, all these superficially chanted ideals would sound meaningless if the daughter of same white man were

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to tell him “she was going to marry this African, he’d have felt that the world was collapsing under his feet” (Salih 94). Mustafa was impelled to sit on opposing sides of this divide: his mind was accepted, but his indigenous roots were rejected.

This contradiction echoes with Khaled: protagonist of *The Bridges*, whose mysterious assumptions and questions regarding belonging furnished his sense of loss. Khaled was stuck in the dilemma of belonging to France, which accepts his talent as an artist, but refuses to recognize his historical wounds. Then again, belonging to an Algerian nation that venerates his revolutionary wounds but refuses his talented mind. He laments,

I was confronted with a strange contradiction: I lived in a country that respected my talents but rejected my wounds, and belonged to a nation that respected my wounds but rejected me. Which one to choose when I was the person and the wound at the same time? When I was the disabled memory of which this disabled body was only a façade? (*The Bridges* 49)

However, what justifies this dismissal of the mimic natives is expectedly the non-availability of an adequate space for negotiation and inclusion. Critics such as Dorota Kolodziejczyk draw the attention to “what constitutes the core problem of *The Mimic Men*, and emerges today with a new resonance in discourses of cultural globalization, is the disappearance, indeed impossibility of the local in the colonial situation” (128). It is worth mentioning that Mustafa is primarily patronized in his homeland and his roots are relentlessly put to question by his fellow citizens of whom some say that his mother had been a slave from the south, from the tribes of Zandi or Baria (Salih 54). Mustafa in this context is the victim of double patronization: a native and western, to be precise.

The malaise originating from the racial polarization that Mustafa is subjected to can be explained in Bhabha’s argument that the whites only partially disseminate their values to the colonized in fear of the latter’s insurgence against their imperial masters. The troublesome effect of this kind of belonging is uncertainty that hinders the mimicker to accomplish westernization. Bhabha argues that “excess or slippage produced by the ambivalence of

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mimicry [...] does not merely 'rupture' the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a 'partial' presence" (Of Mimicry 86). Therefore, it is the colonial objective to have the colonized subject only partially similar to the colonizer. This what exactly happens to Mustafa Sa'eed, whose excess of mimicry leads to a westernization to the non-return point.

Mustafa, one may choose to argue, does not reduce his Anglicization to British nationality; he rather makes himself "the first Sudanese to marry an English woman, in fact he was the first to marry a European of any kind" (Salih 55). However Mustapha fails to grasp that marrying a white English woman would not give him a privileged access the whites' realm, nor would it be a green light to attain Englishness. Richard translated this saying:

though they wanted to say: Look how tolerant and liberal we are! This African is just like one of us! He has married a daughter of ours and works with us on an equal footing! If you only knew, this sort of European is no less evil than the madmen who believe in the supremacy of the white man in South African and in the Southern states of America. (Salih 59)

Precisely like Bigger Thomas, Mustafa's racial distancing presents him as a blurred copy of the colonizer. Bigger alienates himself from his folks and Mustafa's attempt to assimilate himself with the villagers of Wad Hamid also dooms to fiasco. The Iraqi critic Wisam Khalid Abdul Jabbar, in his article significantly entitled, "The Mimetic Discourse in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*," avers: "This is a man [Mustafa] who, stricken by the colonial discourse of mimicry as it translates itself in the emulative learning and practices, has strenuously striven to assimilate himself with the villagers and yet he remains an outsider" (132).

In another dimension, what was unrecognized by the French colonizer, nevertheless, was the point that mimicry constituted at once a resemblance and menace. In fact, Khaled was not a French; he was rather Gallicized by mimicry. Khaled's self-sought selfhood leads him to construct a net of relations with French women of whom Catherine was the most notably

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present in the novel. Like Mustafa Sa'eed in *Season*, Khaled in his love escapades is trying to get sexual gratification as a sedative to feelings of loss consequential from the identity vacuum. However, this mimetic sensual compensation did not bring him stability as the white French colonizer had already placed him as the opposing Other. The sense of sameness Khaled enacted through sexual intercourse is highly downplayed by the difference the French colonizer deliberately located in order to otherize Khaled from the French white community. Khaled's leaning to emulate the colonizer is one way to attain the objective of being widely accepted among the colonizer's community in a time he was denied this right in his motherland Algeria.

However, the French colonizer strategy to westernize Khaled was primarily to assure dominance through allowing the partial inclusion of what was regarded as good natives like Khaled and the systematic exclusion of what was perceived as bad natives. What seems nevertheless of a paramount weight is the fact that the metropole fails to maintain the discursive unity of the center by drawing a firm boundary of interaction with the mimic men. On the fluid site of identification, the notion of mimicry is viewed as rupture that brings ambivalence over the discursive coherence of the center. In doing so, it informs the discourse of the margins and makes it the responsibility of such marginalized identities to deform and displace the discriminatory discourses of authority, thereby relocating the center on the margins (Györi 151).

Mimicry's ironic compromise thrust Khaled into an identity crisis. In this regard, mimicry did not provide him with a presence nor did it foster a unified sense of identity. By way of textual illustration, Khaled's attempts to evade exclusion doomed to mess, as Catherine was apprehensive to be publically seen with the subaltern Khaled. She deliberately came late lest someone she knows would recognize her company with a one-armed Arab in the exhibition:

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Catherine lived in the southern suburbs, and at the end of the week the roads leading to the city centre would get busier as Parisians headed to the countryside for the weekend. But this wasn't the only reason she was late. I knew she disliked public gatherings or, I inferred, disliked being seen with me in public. Perhaps she was embarrassed at the thought that someone she knew would see her with a one-armed Arab ten years her senior. (*The Bridges* 25)

In mimicry, it is assumed that the colonizer usually sees himself in a mirror that somewhat but effectually distorts his real image. In fact, Khaled's otherization produces a foggy version of the French colonizer wherein the colonial subject Khaled is capable of resisting and even reversing the suppression. When Khaled lost his love Hayat, he admits that he engaged in a self-sought process of reconciliation with the self. Hayat is the homeland and through her marriage with an Algerian corrupt official she forces him to wipe out all his affinities with the motherland through self re-westernization. He reunites himself with the metropolitan environment, where the white French women's body grants a void pleasure. In this regard, "Khaled's relationship with Catherine, the French woman, demonstrates the encounter in flesh but not in spirit. She fulfills a physical need and offers Khaled sexual satisfaction, but there is no abandonment, no madness in this pleasure" (Ghazoul). As a pointer to the not white/ not quite Khaled's westernization, Shaden Tageldin points out that Catherine represents "the symbolic ex-colonizer whose body has filled his, [...] with nothing but the "ice" of the North and its legacies of colonial incomprehension of the Arab, the African, and the Muslim" (97). In this regard, the mimetic discourse turns out to be sexual resistance against the colonizer.

At another level, the mimetic discourse in *Matigari* is reinforced through a devastating culture of what Ngũgĩ calls "Parrotry" (*Matigari* 177). "Parrotry culture" is delineated as the predominant ritual, which governs relation of the government with its servers and the state's commonplace people.

It goes without saying, the parrot is among the few species with the ability to mimic the human voice. Matt Cameron confirms that "many parrot species have a well-deserved

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reputation for talking in captivity, with the utterances of some parrots indistinguishable from those of their owners. (70) Graham Huggan in his significant article “A Tale of Two Parrots: Walcott, Rhys, and the Uses of Colonial Mimicry”, proclaims that “parrots serve a crucial function several Caribbean texts as metaphors for the process of colonial mimicry” (643). African literature and Caribbean are categorized under the heading “Third World Literature and correspondingly, parrots in African literature allegorically function as representation to highlight the ravages of cultural mimicry.

In *Matigari*, Parrotry epitomizes that the ex-colonized is baffled and dazzled by their European masters to the extent the first’s distinctive identity traits were eliminated to produce an almost integral copy of the colonizer. Namely, this discourse turned especially subversive to the expectations of building a postcolonial nation-state of Kenya when the colonial agents indoctrinated Parrotry culture to make it an internal mode of interaction. In the novel, the government officials enacted Parrotry through a close focus on the sensitive nerves of the nation: journalism, history, and knowledge.

The novel’s reader will not find it hard to attend to the fact that journalists, historians, and knowledge bearers in the world of academia become nothing, but an echo to the discourse of the colonizer. The Chinese critic Shelby Kar-yan Chan, in similar vein, argues that “mimicry is usually a combination of “parrotry” and parody. Like the parrot, the “mimic men” copy their masters’ voice only to mock it (83). Parrotry discourse, otherly said, is encapsulated through the editor of the newspaper the *Daily Parrotry*, Professor of the History of Parrotry, and a university lecturer in the philosophy of Parrotology. The three held a hymn-book, *Songs of a Parrot* which had been composed by a group of specialists in the voices of parrots (*Matigari* 101).

Ngũgĩ’s groundbreaking notion of Parrotry is instigated to emphasize the crucial role, parrot-like officials, assume in the postcolonial state. In the text, people imitate the words or actions of the colonizer and the colonizers’ agents, without an adequate understanding of

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these words and actions. What supports this claim is the fact that “parrots are often considered mindless mimics, so much so that “parroting” has come to mean repeating another’s words without understanding their meaning” (Cameron 70). The result makes of mimicry undoubtedly empty of meaning and lacks a sense of purpose. The mimetic action is entirely fraught with futility and a lack of certainty.

Parrotry is one name for mimicry that was devised for visualizing power and promoting the conviction that the colonizer is such pressing necessity for Africa that independence was granted on a platter. The minister of Truth and Justice exalted the results of researches in Parrotology. The findings demonstrated that “those who joined hands with colonialists in protecting the law - loyalists -are really the ones who made the colonialists give us independence on a platter. I have ordered all those loyalist professors and all holders of Ph.Ds in Parrotology to be promoted and given permanent professorships” (*Matigari* 103). The minister’s order for promoting of all the contributors to the field of Parrotology in return of the good job they had been doing as interpreters between the blind ignorant masses, the colonizer and the neocolonizer, reflects the success of the mimetic mission. From a Fanonian perspective, the colonial indoctrination of mimicry by means of seeking legitimacy in the imitation of the colonial ethos would lead to cultural estrangement.

The Parrotry culture deprives the Africans of an autonomous cultural identity and fostered the internalization Western ideals. In similar context, Kanta Kochhar observes: “for Fanon, mimicry results from the exertion of colonial power on the colonized in such a way that he or she loses the possibility of an autonomous cultural identity; legitimacy is gained through the taking on of Western ideals—or what he has called “white masks” (297). It is fundamental to note, however, that mimicry succeeded to a certain degree in domesticating part the colonial subjects and in neutralizing any form of resistance to the colonizer’s dominion. Resistance was ignited, nevertheless, by those who staunchly resisted mimetic Parrotology. The victims of mimicry were honest students who protested at the status quo.

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One of them was arrested for asking the Provincial Commissioner one question: "*Why do you wear colonial uniforms?*" (*Matigari* 54) The mimics are manipulated by the inherently Eurocentric ideology of repeating the colonizer's ways and manners. Therefore, they feel the urgency to shed their native culture and swamp themselves by the Western culture. The minister wondered: "why can't these students follow the footsteps of the permanent professors in Parrotology? (104) The Parrotry culture and blind desire to emulate the colonizer cannot, nonetheless, obscure the scandalous side of the process.

James G Ferguson, goes further to argue that the scandal of Africans who "want to be like the whites" [...] was not that they blurred or destabilized colonial race categories but that they threatened, by their very conduct, to confirm the claim of the racist colonizer: that "African" ways were inferior to "European" one (553). In *Matigari*, the minister was angered by the rebellious student and university teacher who rejected entirely the culture of Parrotry; both taken away by prison warders, still resisting. This scene stirred up zeal and in the crowd and a song broke out:

Even if you kill us,
Victory belongs to the people.
Victory belongs to the people! (121)

The minister banned all the songs and ordered: "if you want to sing, you should sing from the official hymn-book, Songs of a Parrot. I don't want to hear any more subversive songs" (*Matigari* 122). Since the early stages of their mimetic project, the postcolonial rulers recognized that mimicry could work more efficiently when censorship is in place. The interpreters henceforth imposed one lens of viewing things and one book to sing songs: Parrotry. In denouncing Parrotry culture, Ngũgĩ seems to be saying that the postcolonial Kenyan nation is a blurred copy the original native nation. In other words, Kenya was/is allowed to develop a national identity merely within western confines. The Kenyan nation in this regard should be an aboriginal parrot, whose identity markers are to be defined by the

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metropole. The exigencies of asserting national identities then entail decolonizing Kenya from the influences of mimicry.

Apart from the Parrot culture, interesting is the idea raised by Wisam Khalid Abdul Jabbar, in which he argued that Mustafa in *Season* hankered for a complete assimilation into the colonizer's identity. He viewed Mustafa's journey as his royal path for going thoroughly a western native. What can negate this assumption nevertheless is that Mustafa presented himself to the readers as an indigenous conqueror who had undertaken a journey for vindictive motives.

With hindsight, it is easy to perceive the extent to which Mustafa's westernization is particularly fatal and costly to both the colonizer and to colonizer back. Mustafa's staying in the metropolitan center enables him to develop mimesis tactics that prove, for the most part, destabilizing to the colonizer. In a sense, Mustafa becomes an invader within the empire and thus engages in a sort of colonially ruthless war upon English women. To take hold of his female preys, Mustafa employs his knowledge of the East as a mimic camouflage to entice them. Most of his conquests fall into the category of those fervently enthusiastic to construct bridges of self-identification with East through loving an exotic Arab. The Singaporean critic Sim Wai Chew in this context maintains that Mustafa "had exploited his exotic image to seduce women" (696) and ultimately, Mustafa "actualizes the western idea of the virile oriental" (Kaktus 06).

In one scene, Mustafa fantasized his African tribal environment to Isabella Seymour, who feels frenzied with this vivid description: "there came a moment [I] had been transformed in her eyes into a naked, primitive creature, a spear in hand and arrows in the other, hunting elephants and lions in the jungles" (Salih 38). On another occasion, Mustafa narrated the way he tempted Ann Hammond, an English scholar at Oxford University, who was utterly fascinated by the Eastern philosophies. In Mustafa's words: "I deceived her, seducing her by telling her that we would marry and that our marriage would be a bridge

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between north and south and I turned ashes the firebrand of curiosity in her eyes” (Salih 68). Mustafa’s vengeful impulse is perceived as malevolent inclination of the former colonized subject against the colonizer. Saree S.Makdisi, in similar vein claims: “Mustafa carries out this self-appointed mission by inflicting pain and suffering on British women. Just as imperialism had violated its victims, Mustafa violates his, and his unwitting lovers become sacrifices in his violent campaign” (811). Mustafa’s overstatement *vis a vis* life in his motherland, to some extent, helped him forge a new emancipation approach, whose most apparent tools and patterns were the sexual intercourse with the colonizers’ females. To the same point, Mustafa’s sexual conquest is taken, by many critics like John E Davidson, as “an attempt to re-establish the dominance of the emasculated, colonized male by attacking the women of the colonizers” (Davidson 388). Mustafa, in this regard, utilizes mimic strategies to hunt women and to furnish his ego with a sense supremacy.

In the trial, he confessed: “I had a sort of feeling of superiority towards them for the ritual was being held primarily because of me; and I, over and above everything else, am a colonizer, I am the intruder whose fate must be decided” (Salih 94). The newly constructed sense of supremacy heightens by the suppression of the colonized’s personal identity and the simultaneously growing desire for domination. In so doing, roles are reversed: Mustafa became the imperial master and the white women became the subordinate colonial subject. This can be clearly found once the unnamed narrator found a photo of Ann Hammond undersigned: “from your slave girl, Sausan” (142). In another scene, before the two engaged in sexual intercourse, the two performed exotic rituals. Ann Hammond had knelt, kissed his feet and said: “you are Mustafa, my master and my lord,” she said, “and Sausan your slave girl” (146). In analogous compliance, Isabella Seymour surrendered herself: “Ravish me, you African demon. Burn me in the fire of your temple, you black god” (106). In truth, though, Mustafa shifted to a colonial master, he kept his sexual impulses covered with an emotional

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coolness. He enticed women to gratify his sexual lust and eventually dismissed them. He ended his womanizing escapades with a heinous murder of his wife Jean Morris.

By challenging Western imperial discourse, it is supposed that Mustafa's character "is created to stand as a symbol of Africa'[s] reaction against the invaders, the colonial power from Western civilization" (Saeed Adam 96). His interracial sexuality symbolizes a reversed crusade in such a way it sounds more than the eye can see and the mind can perceive in "[Mustafa's] character a man who exacts vengeance upon British colonizers of the Sudan through his sexual exploits with women in London" (Geesey 128/129). Mustafa's defiance is obscenely expressed in his anti-colonially hyperbolic language: "I'll liberate Africa with my penis," He said once (Saliah120).

On the other hand, Mike Velez underscores the seductively dramatized role Mustafa Sa'eed assumed in London, bringing to the fore the mutual misunderstandings emanating from the initial encounter between the West and the East. He proclaims that the "colonial and sexual conquests compete across the East-West divide in a remarkable colonial encounter, followed by misunderstandings of its kind. In a form of revenge for the colonial "taking" of his country, Sa'eed devotes himself to seducing English women by posing as the fulfillment of their Orientalist fantasies" (Velez 191). One might argue, then, that the real reason why Mustafa enacts this retaliation against the ex-colonizer is his desirable will to reproduce harm of the same sort. The long history of colonialism stands as a testimony for the colonial sexual rape of the colonized female. At the same time, it is more widely acknowledged, that the artistic encounters taking place during the period of colonization

automatically resulted in a complex relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, [...] the sexual exploitation of the native woman through the colonial media was often used as an allegory for Europe's colonial rape of the East. (Smail Salhi 27)

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Mustafa hence declares himself a native trespasser, who sought pleasure and retaliation, which meant at once life and death: “I was the invader who had come from the south, and this was the icy battlefield from which I would not make a safe return. I was the pirate sailor and Jean Morris the shore of destruction” (Salih 160). In similar context, Byron Caminero-Santangelo maintains that Mustafa’s sexual campaign against British females epitomizes an anticolonial rhetoric, where Mustafa is “a south that yearns for the north and the ice” (Salih 30). His journey to the metropole is the form of a reversed colonization to enact hegemony. Caminero-Santangelo also downplays Mustafa's sexual conduct that by no means emasculated the colonizer’s power structures, nor did it ignite liberation *de novo*. Nevertheless, Mustafa's “racially centered sexual crusade against Britain” (Tran 2) just:

strengthens those structures by perpetuating colonial binaries and stereotypes both in his characterization of the women he seduces and in his means of seduction, which entail his inhabiting the colonial image of the African. He links those binaries and stereotypes with a rhetoric of resistance, however, in order to justify the pursuit of his own pleasures and the damage he causes to others. (Caminero-Santangelo 76)

To finish this point, Mustafa’s rhetoric of resistance affirms the very ambivalent nature of mimicry. As an ideological discourse, mimicry gives Mustafa a sense of completeness to reverse subjugation, but it also subverts his cultural identity. In other words, the cultural ravages of mimicry go beyond enacting resistance through sexual retaliation to encompass a weird germ of violence that contaminated Mustafa.

2. The Empire Strikes Back: Mimicry and Lethal Germ of Violence

In the cultural politics of colonialism, the inevitability of mimicry in *Native Son* can be encapsulated in the violent bent resultant from the cultural dissonance between the Occident and the Orient, where Bigger Thomas emerged as an American copy to the white colonizer. However, this copy is not original as its blurred frontiers demarcate the un-sameness and the discontinuity of Bigger's selfhood to the white colonizer's. In similarity to Mustafa Sa'eed, Bigger had been fabricated by the white colonizer, but ultimately backfired on them when the germ of violence was injected into him. The whites did much to westernize Bigger, but did little to neutralize his radical otherization. Homi Bhabha stresses that mimicry's most remarkable "threat, [...] comes from the prodigious and strategic production of conflictual, fantastic, discriminatory 'identity effects' in the play of a power that is elusive because it hides no essence, no 'itself' ("Of Mimicry" 90). Therefore, people vulnerable to such kind of selfhood deficiencies may can translate the identity effects into a cataclysmic violence.

On the mimetic level, the violent character of Bigger Thomas is strikingly similar to the White man's temperament that is driven by violence and bloodshed throughout history. It is taken for granted that the Westerners' success in creating global empires and their ability to subjugate non-western races were only possible by wielding a high-intensity violence. Samuel Huntington in his seminal book, *The Clash of Civilizations* points out that "the West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact, non- Westerners never do" (51). For that reason, the White man's burden of civilizing the non-white, backward, and inferior Other was practically backed up by stimulating acts of ferocity.

From the outset of Wright's novel, violence is increasingly growing and Bigger Thomas: a carrier of this germ is like a wrecking ball. Bigger's violent signs against the rat epitomizes the beginning of perilous contamination, which saw a vertiginous progress with the violence exerted against Gus. Bigger, in other words, is influenced by the amount of

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violence that pervades his community. It is true he is black in skin, but he is violent in character as well. Mimetically speaking, he acts as violently as his oppressors do, and this is never helpful to him or to his people. The images of violence seem to be the driving force behind Wright's discourse to entitle book one of novel "Fear". In effect, Bigger's hostility manifests itself in the harm he inflicts upon people of his skin. In book one, Bigger with his friends Gus, G.H. and Jack planned to rob their first white storeowner: Blum. However, Bigger "was afraid of robbing a white man and he knew that Gus was afraid, too" (*Native Son* 55). In explaining Bigger's unbearable fear, Tony Magistrale suggests that Bigger "is acutely aware of the fear and shame experienced by black people stemming from their treatment by the white world" (22). Given this confusing state of hysteric dread, Bigger wears a white mask; to wit, a façade of violence to conceal this fear. In an effort to disguise his inward terror of the whites, Bigger projects his fear onto his friend Gus, accusing him of being too horrified to rob a white man: "[Bigger] felt a hot hate and fear; he had transferred his fear of the whites to Gus" (*Native Son* 55). This mimetic strategy was meant for generating an argument that would lead the gang to call off the heist.

Bigger is driven even crazier once Gus finds out that Bigger himself is replete with fears of robbing a white man. Gus said, "you just a scared coward! You calling me scared so nobody'll see how scared you is!" (57). In fact, "mixed images of violence ran like sand through [Bigger's] mind" (57), who employed physical and verbal violence against Gus. Frantz Fanon asserts that Bigger "is afraid lest the world know, he is afraid of the fear that the world would feel if the world knew" (*Black Skin* 139). More importantly, Bigger's fears float to the surface when he demands that they would bring guns.

Bigger's innermost fears confirm that violence is regarded as the only means to reclaim his shaken self-confidence. Wright puts it: "confidence could only come again now through action so violent that it would make him forget. These were the rhythms of his life; indifference and violence" (*Native Son* 57). In the evening of the robbery, Bigger is the first to

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arrive and his stressful fear makes him exceedingly disconcerted that he decides to forge any reason to cancel the theft. As soon as Gus finally arrives, Bigger commences to assault him, pressing his head. Bigger draws a knife. It is an opportune time for Bigger to discard his inward fears through exerting power over his frightened friend. This form of racially internal form of colonization, where Bigger is at the mimetic level, the white oppressor and the scared Gus is the black colonized victim of a western germ of violence. The very acts of Gus's humiliation and emasculation are Bigger's psychological deliverance. This germ of violence shapes even Bigger's language, wherein words related to violence had been recurrent in his speech. "Sometimes I'd like to cut his yellow heart out," Bigger said, fingering the knife in his pocket [...] I'll kill 'im" (66-68). Joyce Ann Joyce states that Bigger "fights with Gus because he fears whites intensely" (61). The rituals of violence culminates in Bigger's imposition on Gus to lick the blade and ending with an arc, he traces on Gus' chest that stands as a valid symbol for the power Bigger wields on his friend. The following passage tells in detailed description Bigger's tendency for a sadist mimicry:

[Bigger's] face softened a bit and the hard glint in his bloodshot eyes died. But he still knelt with the open knife. Then he stood.

"Get up!" he said.

"Please, Bigger!"

"You want me to slice you?"

He stooped again and placed the knife at Gus's throat. Gus did not move and his large black eyes looked pleadingly. Bigger was not satisfied, he felt his muscles tightening again.

"Get up! I ain't going to ask you no more!"

Slowly, Gus stood. Bigger held the open blade an inch from Gus's lips.

"Lick it," Bigger said, his body tingling with elation.

Gus's eyes filled with tears.

"Lick it, I said! You think I'm playing?"

Gus looked round the room without moving his head, just rolling his eyes in a mute appeal for help. But no one moved. Bigger's left fist was slowly lifting to strike, Gus's lips moved toward the knife; he stuck out his tongue and touched the blade Gus's lips quivered and tears streamed down his cheeks.

[...]

"Put your hands up, way up!" he said.

Gus swallowed and stretched his hands high along the wall.

"Leave 'im alone. Bigger," G.H. called weakly.

"I'm doing this," Bigger said.

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He put the tip of the blade into Gus's shirt and then made an arc with his arm, as though cutting a circle.

"How would you like me to cut your belly button out?"

Gus did not answer. Sweat trickled down his temples. His lips hung wide, loose.

"Shut them liver lips of yours!"

Gus did not move a muscle. Bigger pushed the knife harder into Gus's stomach" (*Native Son* 69-70).

In other part, Mustafa Sa'eed's pursuit of the western female is mainly due to the germ of violence that was transmitted to the indigenous colonial subjects ever since cultures came in violent contact between the West and the Other in the crusade. The fact that drove some to depression and causing some to commit suicide coupled with the murder of his wife, Mustafa acted as though he were the product of colonially germ-like contamination. The sociologist Chiara Volpato maintains that the implication of a violent past is so visible that more than the eye can see when aggression of Occident against the Other is brought to consideration. It is undeniable that

this violent past also has enduring consequences on former colonized people's identities and wellbeing [...] then it is not hard to recognize that] the colonial past [is] one of the main sources of racism, xenophobia, and intolerance towards Africans, Asians and indigenous peoples. (Volpato 05)

On that basis, in an interior monologue during his trial, Mustafa had not openly said what came to be clearly understood:

[The whites colonizers] imported to us the germ of the greatest European violence, as seen on the Somme and at the Verdun, the like of which the world has never previously known, the germ of a deadly disease that struck them more than a thousand yeas ago. Yes my dear sirs, I came as an invader into your very homes: a drop of the poison which you have injected into the veins of history. (Salih 95)

In fact, Mustafa "perceive[ed] a germ of violence to be part of the colonial education and identity" (Abdul Jabbar 137) and evolved a caustic tendency. The term "disease" becomes "Mustafa's metaphor for the danger lurking in the "depth" of a collective identity constructed in opposition to exotic, primitive, oversexed, irrational, uncivilized, non-European Others. (Hassan Tayeb Salih: *Ideology and the Craft of Fiction* 101). He emerged a spiteful horse of

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Troy, a germ that entered the colonizer's body to wreck it from the inside. As mentioned earlier, Mustafa had been transformed into a distorted copy of the Occident and therefore became quite threatening. His "flaw is no choice of his own; he is in reality the natural result of the historical pattern of political and cultural humiliation and hatred" (Takiyeddine-Amyuni 03). Attempting to flawlessly emulate the colonizer's methods, Mustafa grows into a postcolonial-Eastern plague that swept the Occident. Mustafa's love affairs, this is to say, speak to the Politics of Sex in the postcolonial realm. The novel closes with Mustafa killing of Jean Morris, while making love and "this dramatic ending to a tale of civilizational encounter" (In Memoriam III) became the milestone in the understanding of the complex and the controversial relation between the West and the Rest.

Mustafa Sa'eed's former professor at Oxford Maxwell Foster-Keen earnestly defends him despite his preliminary feeling of dislike toward Mustafa. He fashions his rhetoric to appeal to the jury members that Mustafa is a victim of a European germ of violence. He said during the trial: "Mustafa Sa'eed, gentlemen of the jury, is a noble person whose mind was able to absorb Western civilization but it broke his heart. These girls were not killed by Mustafa Sa'eed but by the germ of a deadly disease that assailed them a thousand years ago" (Salih 33). Like other critics, Frantz Fanon maintains that "Europe undertook the leadership of the world with ardor, cynicism, and violence" (*The Wretched* 311).

In fact, Mustafa "mimick[ed] European stereotypes of Africa and the East" (Caminero-Santangelo 76) and this mimesis reaches a fever pitch with his employment of the white man's ruthless violence as a mode of subjugation. According to Maxwell Foster-Keen Mustafa was the victim of the clash between two worlds. He was contaminated with the germ of the conflictual nature of Occident and East and was not immune from the conflictual encounter of two distinct worlds. Mustafa confesses: "Professor Foster-Keen turned the trial into a conflict between two worlds, a struggle of which I was one of the victims" (Salih 33).

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In fact, Mustafa does not have a safety valve for the seismic cultural transformations, he goes through and which eventually produces a lustful horse of troy.

It is highly crucial, for example, to suppose that Mustafa's ideological discourse of mimicry was not only dangerous to the west, but it also imperils his fellow natives. Mustafa, in other words, "becomes a menace to his native people as he no longer is like them" (Abdul Jabbar 134). Mustafa transmits the germ of European violence to his wife Hosna bint Mahmoud who, in the novel, kills Wad Rayyes and kills herself. The village never witnesses a shocking crime like the one occurs. Patricia Geesey points out that "the germ of violence has entered the village and change has come about, perhaps brought by the stranger Sa'eed or carried into the village by the residue of cultures in contact and of new ideas from the world outside the village" (137). This crime can be compared to the monstrous killing of Bessie Mears Bigger's girlfriend after she had been raped. Both Bigger and Mustafa are under the effect this germ of violence.

Bhabha expounds that when the colonized's attempts to mimic the colonizer doom to a menace for the reason that these endeavors disrupt and topple the colonizer's authority. The West purposefully meant for visualizing power through mimicry; however, mimicry destabilizes the colonizers' identity through physical and spiritual subjugation. Evidence for this claim can be found embedded in Hsuan L.Hsu's assertion that "any apparent imitation may conceal internal feelings of cynicism, resentment, or mockery. Thus, mimicry not only has the potential to camouflage subversive weapons—it is itself an ontological weapon that undoes the very unity of Western forms" (678). In this regard, the western civilization and its lethal knowledge became a major source of the resentment that Mustafa lived. Mustafa's actions embody the failure of the white man's 'civilizing mission'. On the purely ideological front, mimicry delimits Mustafa's agency of human behavior and simultaneously his innermost indigenous thoughts float to beat his Anglicization. In the novel, Professor Maxwell Foster-Keen in a disillusioned tone tolls Mustafa: "You Mr Sa'eed, are the best

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example of the fact that our civilization mission in Africa is of no avail. After all the efforts we've made to educate you, it's as if you'd come out of the jungle for the first time" (Salih 93-94). Mimicry in this frame does not merely negate the colonized subject's identity, but it thrusts them to fall into existentially identity crisis. Who is he? Is Mustafa a purely Western or an Eastern he is? What if he held within his identity both ends?

In a certain sense, cultural mimicry is not the only factor that aborts Algeria's strife for the assertion of an original Algerian nation, but it is also thwarted by a germ of European violence, which infected Algeria after independence. Violence translates itself in the novel with Khaled's flashbacks to the colonial era, when the French masters "imprisoned and tortured» (19) millions of Algerians. Khaled visited the Kidya prison, where he served one year. This colonial prison in particular "came to the fore with a new batch of exceptional prisoners for whom France had prepared an exceptional punishment" (*The Bridges* 242). Khaled was among 50,000 detainees the French colonial authorities imprisoned after the historic demonstrations of May 8, 1945. The protests claimed forty-five thousands of Algerian deaths. This shocked the world for the unprecedented method to deal with defenseless demonstrators who claimed their right for self-determination. Khaled narrates: "Forty-five thousand fell in demonstrations that shook eastern Algeria from Constantine to Sétif, Guelma and Kherrata. They were the first official batch of Algerian martyrs whose deaths came years before the war of liberation. Had I forgotten them?" (239). The germ of violence is typically a French in origin and the Algerian history was injected by this germ of violence.

It is true that France civilized Khaled and thousands of Algerian youths, but like Bigger Thomas and Mustafa Sa'eed, Khaled is metonymically the civilized native, whose partial process of civilization doomed to failure. Further and more importantly, this partial mission of educating and civilizing the native contaminated the French colonial identities. In this regard, James G. Ferguson stressed that "the uncanny presence of the "civilized native"

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destabilized colonial identities and presented a specter that haunted the colonial subject. What happened when became too "civilized?" or "half" civilized?" (553) So pertinent are, in fact, the two raised questions that translate the dilemma of partial dissemination of western ideals to the indigenous peoples.

When the Algerian Revolution broke out, the French colonizer utilized every means possible to torment the Algerian revolutionaries and smash the revolution in its outset. In his cell, Khaled can recall very clearly the Algerian imprisoned fighters yell in pain and curse their torturers at the same time. In Khaled's tone:

Take the voice of Abdel-Karim Ben Wataf, whose screams under torture reached our cell like a dagger plunged into our bodies or like an electric shock. His voice cursed his torturers in French, calling them dogs, Nazis, murderers, words that interspersed his other cries." (*The Bridges* 240)

Years after independence, the French officers' confessions and testimonies floated to the surface unveiling the wartime brutalities. In 2002, General Jaques Massu in an interview with *Le monde* admitted that there was unjustified use torture against the Algerian independentist revolutionaries. On the other hand, General Paul Aussarresse confirmed the systematic practice of torture and summary killing by the French army during the Algerian war (Beigbeder 117).

The French commanders were more creative in inventing new modes of torture. Namely, thirty leaders of the Revolution awaited the certainty of execution. They included Mustafa Ben Boulaïd, Taher el-Zubeiri, Mohamed Lafia, Brahim Tayeb, the comrade of Didouche Mourad, Baji Mukhtar and others (*The Bridges* 242). Khaled recounts: "all the preparations were in place for their death. Even the barber to the criminal inmates told the martyr Commander Mustafa Ben Boulaïd in the morning that they had washed the guillotine the previous night, and that he had dreamed they had been 'executed'. The word held a double meaning for Mustafa Ben Boulaïd, who had long been planning an escape from Kidya" (*The*

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Bridges 242). Additionally, Khaled himself was exposed to a systematic torture and his amputated arm stands as a testimony to the western history of violence France practiced against the Algerians. However, when independence was already championed, some Algerians put on colonial masks of torture and ill-treatment, and violence became the common divisor between the colonizers and the imitator of the colonizers' ways.

After independence, Algeria was on the verge of cataclysmic political violence; a bloody decade came to harvest thousands of Algerian souls during the nineties. Despite the fact that Mosteghanemi's novel appeared at the beginning of the Algerian violent decade, but it succeeded to a greater extent in foreshowing the bloody scenario of what may would happen. In this sense, the author seems to be well aware of the early images of dreadfulness. It has been argued that "although this novel [*The Bridges*] was written at the very outset of the civil war, which has since claimed the lives of tens of thousands, there is a sense of foreboding in the work that seems to prefigure the coming horror" (Jensen). The Algerian turmoil saw an unparalleled level of violence, as no one expected, the killer was Algerian and the victim was Algerian either.

The former colonizer France, with its pressmen and politicians, are portrayed as being intently awaiting for the images of bloodshed to be the crux of their discussion. Khaled describes the beginning of the Algerian violent decade: "I was aware of the events that had shaken the country. The French media competed to pass on in-depth details and images with a gloating prurience. I knew that the events of the second day were still restricted to the capital. How, then, could I have expected what happened?" (*The Bridges* 293)

Evidence for the extent to which the germ of violence can be found embedded in Paul A Silverstein's "An Excess of Truth: Violence, Conspiracy Theorizing and the Algerian Civil War", in which he states that

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Since 1992, civil war has directly affected the everyday lives of Algerians worldwide. Taking the form of massacres, assassinations, car bombings, and plane hijackings, violent attacks have occurred in remote villages, crowded city desolate highways, and overseas capitals, often without warning, and generally without declared motive (Silverstein 645)

So, it is not surprising then to discover that one of the threads around which the narrative is twined is the narrator's own pain caused by the civil war bloodshed, during which the Algerians fell into the abyss of civil conflict. The language of ferocity was louder and the Algerian mimicked the colonizer, once they had slipped into violence of all sorts. When a critic deals with the question of violence in *The Bridges*, he or she often tends to consider Aida Bamia's conclusive indication that "there is one major difference, however, in that victim and the victimizer in this post-independence period belonged to same family" (Bamia 88). The germ of violence was in the mimetic sense, a wrecking machine, which proved abortive to the construction of an Algerian modern nation. Civil wars across history had an overwhelming bearing in the dismantlement of nations, let alone the impact they exert upon entities taking their first steps in nationalist construction process.

In such festive situation, the political violence in the novel is unraveled in Hassan's assassination. Khaled receives the shocking news on the telephone with "Atiqa's voice kept repeating in broken fashion, 'They've killed him, Khaled. They've killed him.' [Khaled's] voice repeated in shock, 'How? How have they killed him?' How did Hassan die? Did the question matter? His death was as foolish as his life, as naive as his dreams" (*The Bridges* 293). In an inclusive sense, Constantine and Algeria turned into tyrannical motherlands, whose morgues could accommodate only corpses. The only discourse fully mastered during the bleeding decade was the one of blood and bullets: "once again Constantine. The tyrannical mother lying in wait for her children, sworn to bring us back to her, even as corpses. She has defeated us, brought us both back to her. At the very moment we believed we had got over her and cut the tie of kinship" (295).

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The flaw in the colonizer's mimesis more often yields a new paradigm in which a native colonizer subjected a native colonized to the evils of a germ of violence. The tremendously shifting pattern of power widened the rift between now and then. The evil germ of violence gives no answers to the pertinent question: "What to call death when it is by means of the Arab dagger?" (299) In fact, "Si Taher died at the hands of the French, Ziyad died at the hands of the Israelis, and now Hassan has died at the hands of Algerians" (*The Bridges* 299). Killing in Algeria was conducted in the name of ideology, which runs parallel to the colonial practices. Emulating the colonizer's methods of terror can be nothing but another form of colonialism argues Nuha Ahmad Baaqeel:

For Mosteghanemi, violence enacted in the name of any ideology cannot but be a form of colonialism; this form of violence always entails an attempt to control the functioning of the state apparatus, in an attempt to subjugate one section of the country's population to the will and directives of an elite minority. (Baaqeel 30)

As demonstrated here, we are critically encouraged to read Hassan's exposure to violence as similar to subjugation of Gus in *Native Son*, and this pertains to workings of a perilous germ within the ex-colonial entities. Bigger's success in subjugating Gus gives him an impetus to carry his knife and gun to the Dalton's home, where he would have an interview to get the job of the white rich family's chauffer. His persuasion is fed by the fact that "he was going among white people, so he would take his knife and his gun; it would make him feel that he was the equal of them, give him a sense of completeness" (*Native Son* 73). The inclination to violence instilled a sense of equality, a sense of superiority and sense of harmony to Bigger Thomas as opposed to the feeling of fear, lack and inferiority implanted in him by the white community. In this regard, Fanon accentuated the fact that "since in all periods the Negro has been an inferior, he attempts to react with a superiority complex" (*Black Skin* 213).

What was unrecognized, however, was the fact that before Bigger was infected with that invisible contagion of violence, he had been a victim of it. He had grown up fatherless as

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his father “got killed in a riot when [he] was a kid — in the South” (*Native Son* 106). Likewise, what can be taken to indicate a sense of environmental influence on Bigger’s violent identity is that his fierce crimes are the inescapable outcome of his upbringing. The inseparability of Anglo-Saxon landscape from the painful histories of racist extermination is emphasized. In book two entitled “flight”, Bigger passes through a place populated by Negroes and pictures of brutal violence against colored people flashed through his mind. He “remembered that bombs had been thrown by whites into houses like these when Negroes had first moved into the South Side. He swept the disc of yellow and walked gingerly down a hall and into a room at front of the house” (212). As a colonized, who internalizes the western strategies of violence, Bigger’s new mask sounds fatal on westerners themselves.

The workings of violent germ therefore are dramatically translated into the violent conduct he acts, notably his accidental murder of Mary, the daughter of his white landlord Mr. Henry Dalton. In recognizing the “bi-polar nature of Bigger's mind” (Brivic 233), the readers are in a better position to comprehend the implication of Mary Dalton’s murder. Bigger did not mean to smother her, he rather wanted to help her to get to her room as she was too drunk (Elmer 773). The moment he had seen Mary’s mother coming in the room, he was seized by fear of being accused of raping the white girl, he “knew that sex relations between blacks and whites were repulsive to most white men” (*Native Son* 227) that they would lead the poor blacks to the gallows. He wanted to silence the girl lest she revealed his presence. As soon as he lifted the pillow he had pressed on her face, Mary “was dead and he had killed her. He was a murderer, a Negro murderer, a black murderer. He had killed a white woman. He had to get away from here”, wrote Richard Wright (119).

The accumulation of violence against blacks throughout episodes of the U.S history gave birth to a native criminal whose ultimate act of violence culminates in what followed his casual murder of Mary, and the way he dealt with her body. The uncanny decision he takes in a thoughtless frenzy: to burn up Mary's body in the furnace after beheading and mutilating her

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body in such a way it fits inside the furnace is the ultimate expression of an advanced state of contamination that a void form of imitation helps to generate: “he could put her in the furnace. He would burn her! That was the safest thing of all to do” (122). This heinous murder confirms Bigger’s invisibility: “through a subtle deployment of the mask [...] Bigger begins to move invisibly in the white world, actualizing, for a brief interval, the potential in acting and dissimulation” (Tuhkanen 617). Wright’s description of the way Bigger struggles to cut the veins and bones of Mary’s neck with a knife and a hatchet embodies the harrowing syndrome of a monstrous machine that is void of human feelings. The following passage shows how profound is the aesthetic effect of violence on the readers:

He got his knife from his pocket and opened it and stood by the furnace, looking at Mary’s white throat. Could he do it? He had to. Would there be blood? ... He touched the sharp blade to the throat, just touched it, as if expecting the knife to cut the white flesh of itself Gently, he sawed the blade into the flesh and struck a bone. He gritted his teeth and cut harder. As yet there was no blood anywhere but on the knife. But the bone made it difficult. He paused, hysterical. He wanted to run from the basement and go as far as possible from the sight of this bloody throat. But he could not. He must not. He had to burn this girl. With eyes glazed, with nerves tingling with excitement, he looked about the basement. He saw a hatchet. Yes! That would do it. He spread a neat layer of newspapers beneath the head, so that the blood would not drip on the floor He got the hatchet, held the head at a slanting angle with his left hand and, after pausing in an attitude of prayer, sent the blade of the hatchet into the bone of the throat with all the strength of his body. The head rolled off. (123-124)

Yet, what seems important to be recognized is that such practices are transmitted to a native son through the amassing of excruciating experiences Bigger Thomases had gone through. Beyond Wright’s words, there lies one sad truth; Bigger’s enraged violence towards an Anglo-Saxon girl is an unwitting revenge from the white colonizer. In what appears to be an act of retaliation for the White America’s colonial oppression of Negroes: Bigger finally “transfers his position from victim to victimizer without ever really rescinding his position as victim” (*Bloom’s Guides* 39). The western partial diffusion of values created an invisible

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man; a man that was almost but not quite; a man whose ability to comprehend the western culture thoroughly and relevantly is deliberately hampered by the colonial strategies.

Through emulating the whites' ways, Bigger Thomas rose to a status of a native invader from within. His insurgency, though starts unintentionally, was a counter-discourse to the violent colonizers' hyper-violent methods. Bhabha indicates that "the ambivalence of mimicry - almost but not quite - suggests that the fetishized colonial culture is potentially and strategically an insurgent counter-appeal" ("Of Mimicry" 91). In her essay entitled "Mastering the Master's Tongue: Bigger as Oppressor in Richard Wright's *Native Son*", Lale Demitürk emphasizes the way Mary's murder reverses power structures, which redefines the interracial relationship and suggests a new hegemonic hierarchy. She observes:

Although it is an accident, Mary's murder has given Bigger a chance to reverse the power relationship between Mary and himself: for the first time he has been able to destroy the dominant image of the whites [...] By burning her corpse in the furnace to hide his crime, he can triumph over the white myth of black as totally powerless to act without white manipulation [...] He has now reversed the master-slave relationship between the Daltons and himself, for he has victimized the oppressor and has controlled the situation of which they are ignorant. (87)

Furthermore, the Western germ of violence ripened with another murder Bigger perpetrated against his girlfriend Bessie Mears. Barbara Johnson considers Bigger as "an artist with no medium to work in other than violence" (Johnson 83). When Bessie knows about killing and burning the Dalton girl, she feels traumatized and hence "to stop Bessie who now knew too much would be easy. He could take the butcher knife and cut her throat", Bigger thought to himself (*Native Son* 209). Robert Felgar contends that "at no other point in *Native Son* does Bigger appear more monstrous than in the horrible and graphically described scene in which he smashes Bessie's head in with a brick" (57). Bessie becomes, in a sense, the victim of double colonization: white colonial subordination and patriarchal oppression of her black

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boyfriend. Bigger rapes her (*Native Son* 264) and in cold blood, he smashes her head with a brick. The scene pertains to the Richard Wright's aesthetics of violence. The narrator goes on:

The brick was in his hand. In his mind his hand traced a quick invisible arc through the cold air of the room; high above his head his hand paused in fancy and imaginatively swooped down to where he thought her head must be. He was rigid; not moving. This was the way it had to be. [...] He lifted the brick again and again, until in falling it struck a sodden mass that gave softly but stoutly to each landing blow. Soon seemed to be striking a wet wad of cotton, of some damp substance whose only life was the jarring of the brick's impact. He stopped, hearing his own breath heaving in and out of his chest. He was wet all over, and. Cold. How many times he had lifted the brick and brought it down he did not know. All he knew was that the room was quiet and cold and that the job was done (267-268)

The “not white/not quite” Bigger's flawed identity applies to the white's compulsions to domesticate colored people in order to mold their collective identities. In similar context, Anne McIntock asserts that “flawed identity imposed on colonized people who are obligated to mirror back an image of the colonials but in imperfect form” (62). The effect of Bigger's deficient mimicry is a more radicalized individual, whose tendency to dehumanize himself reaches an unprecedented level when he had thrown Bessie's body in the building airshaft. He watched intently “the body hit and bumped against the narrow sides of the air-shaft as it went down into blackness. He heard it strike the bottom” (*Native Son* 269). In so doing, it is not surprising that the “readers are exposed to another realm of Wright's fascination with horrific details” argues Yvonne Robinson Jones (51). Stricken by the colonial discourse of mimicry, Bigger was no longer able to assimilate the confusion of self-identification. Mimetically speaking, the germ of violence as mimesis disavowed the pre-existing natural difference between Bigger and the whites and therefore produces a radical difference that is synonymous to weakness and conformity.

As a mimic man raised in western values, Bigger infallibly repeats the colonizer's violent ways and discourses of racism against his own people. Consciously or unconsciously,

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Bigger sought to be the colonizer, but he can never be a complete colonizer. Mimicry implies a partial existence that means a partial inclusion of the colonized in the colonizer's identity. Mimicry effectively articulates Bigger Thomases that are nearly the same but not white. Bigger's existence in this regard is merely metonymic. Just like, he could never change his skin to go completely white, Bigger's inclusion is almost impossible. The impossibility of an utter insertion leads Bigger to duplicate the white colonizer's manners as a means of enacting an anticolonial resistance to racial oppression.

In *Matigari*, the discourse of violence is derived from the colonizer's brutality during the colonial era. As the French colonizer did in Algeria, the British colonizer employed ferocity against the locals. In this regard, Ngũgĩ evidenced that

the British perpetrated violence on the African people for fifty years. In 1952, once the political leaders were arrested and detained, the colonial regime intensified its acts of indiscriminate terrorism, thereby forcing many peasants and workers to take to the forests. (Ngũgĩ *Homecoming* 29)

The most important point to note is that the British colonizer transmitted this seed of ferocity to the postcolonial government. The malice of germ of violence, in this framework, is encapsulated through the excessive coercion that the police exercise on people. Police is supposed to exist in order to provide peace and security for people, assuring stability and enforcing justice. Yet, unfortunately, in post-independence times, this security organism is eroding peoples' dignity. In the novel, *Matigari* asks Muriuki why they do not complain to the police about those coercing poor children to pay entrance fees and Muriuki replies with bitterness: "the police and these bandits work together" (*Matigari* 14). In this country, the police chose their camp to be "always fighting against students and workers?" "Of course. That's what the police are always doing," Muriuki answered. "Wasn't it only the other day that the workers were badly beaten, and some of them had their legs broken?" Muriuki said (40).

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On the other hand, Guthera tells Matigari that she hates police. During the colonial era, Guthera's father, a church elder and a patriot fighting for independence, was accused of "assisting the terrorists" (*Matigari* 36) as he "was found carrying bullets in his Bible." (35). He was arrested and later on, he was killed and his land was confiscated. All that befell him because Guthera did not offer her body to a policeman in return of her father's pardon.

Indeed, Ngũgĩ's novel remains a singular depiction of the changes of the native culture and the system of government notably. Long before the colonizer came, the Kenyans had not had a security apparatus, the so-called police. Thus, people question the use of having police and soldiers: "in the past, before the whites brought imperialism here, did we ever have police and soldiers?" (*Matigari* 76) The most of Africa's postcolonial leaders were/are domesticated by their colonial masters and the elaboration of police apparatus was a mimetic step. In such a situation, the "natives who imitated the colonizer were in this sense part of the colonial plan (Ferguson 553) and thus the plethora of indigenous values has been corrupted by mimicry.

After independence, Guthera suffers from the incessant harassment of the police. In the novel, two police officers heartlessly terrorize her, setting their ravenous dog on her, in their pursuit of sexual pleasure. Guthera vowed never to sleep with one of them regardless of how much one is ready to pay for her. She loathes them for they came utterly to replace the brutal colonizer with a strong germ of violence they inherently internalized. Police are for now on the side of the whites and brutalized the Africans and therefore, Guthera qualifies the neo-colonialist predator police as "hyenas" (29).

In relation to writers who oppose police brutality, one may elaborate a comparative line between the excess of violence that police exercised against people in *Matigari* and *Native son*. Set their efforts to chase Bigger Thomas, the police of Chicago employ an urban violence to terrorize the entire South Side. Bigger's criminality was utilized as a pretext to mobilize some five thousand police officer to carry out a brutal house-to-house pursuit of the

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ghetto. More importantly, the original germ of Anglo-Saxon violence collectivized thousands of white residents to form mobs in order to invade black neighborhoods to intimidate homes by means of assisting the police.

At the mimetic level, the police are not the brutal machine that translates the will of the ruling system into envisaging power in Kenya, the nouveaux-riche bourgeois, nonetheless, employ violence to enforce the rule of the their personal law. And, significantly, Muriuki's mother was burnt alive by a property owner. The reason for that furious act of violence is the mother's inability to afford payment the hut's rent they dwelled. The germ of European violence only came to exacerbate the colonized's agony. Ngũgĩ in this context emphasizes new patterns of violence, wherein propaganda plays an overriding role. In the novel, militants who stand against the reproduction of colonial injustice are qualified as violent lunatics. Ngaruroro wa Kiriro the spokesman of the proletariat in the novel is presented to the public opinion as a mad man who threatened to use violence against the police. In a flawed self-defense, the germ of violence led the police to shot Ngaruro dead (*Matigari* 151).

In killing those who rebel against the status of oppression, there is an attempt at silencing the subaltern's resistance. Matigari's decision to lay down his arms and to fasten himself with a of peace proves unfounded and therefore the same Matigari "who first renounces violence after slaying his colonial masters, and who, in the pursuit of truth and justice for the people, later rearms himself against a corrupt native polity" (McGlynn 509). More significantly, the germ of violence develops into a common consciousness whereby the commonplace people grow more persuaded that the aspired change for social equality could not be attained peacefully. They resolve that a counter-violence ought to substitute trade union struggle. Evidence for this claim can be found embedded in Matigari's conclusion: "justice for the oppressed comes from a sharpened spear" (*Matigari* 131). More significantly, James Ogude points out that "the theme of violence in Kenya's history is best dramatized in

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Matigari. According to the hero, Matigari, the oppressor cannot be rooted out without violence [...] Indeed, Ngugi seems to be suggesting that armed struggle should supplement trade union resistance.” (32)

Conclusion

From the preceding analysis of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari* and *The Bridges*, chapter three paid close attention to the cultural ravages resultant from the imitation of the colonizer's cultural codes. Drawing theoretically on Bhabha's sophisticated conception of mimicry, the chapter demonstrated the way the colonizer utilized the mimetic discourse to visualize power and equally identified the effect of mimicking the colonizers' ways and manners on the colonized's identity. As a colonial discourse, mimicry operates through education to create a set of interpreters who would mediate between the colonizer and the masses. In a sense, the colonial education played such a significant part in shaping the colonized's identity character and temperament that the colonial schools brought up generations of Africans black in skin, but European in taste.

The cultural ravages of mimicry can be clearly seen in the linguistic conversion of Mustafa Sa'eed, John Boy Junior and Khaled. Anglicizing or Gallicizing the colonial subject has been and still a Eurocentric approach to attain consciousness colonization. In so doing, the process generated a reformed, recognizable Other: Mustafa, Boy, and Khaled are Africans in blood and color, but English or French in perception.

In other part, Bigger Thomas and Gus mimetic mask is perceived as a tactic to struggle an overwhelming sense of military, political and economic invisibility of Afro-Americans. While imitating the colonizer, Bigger and Gus's mimicry is primarily a camouflage rather than a harmonization with their environment. Mimicry hence furnishes both niggers with a sense of power; and thus it becomes a weapon in their struggle against invisibility.

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It is vital to note, nevertheless, that through mimicry the imperial white masters only partially disseminate their values to the colonized in fear of the colonial subject's insurgence against. More specifically, Bigger, Mustafa, Boy, and Khaled are westernized, yet merely partially. Their incomplete presence subsequently threaten an eclipse of identity. In other words, mimicry's ironic sense of negotiation thrust Mustafa, Bigger Thomas, Boy, and Khaled into an identity crisis, wherein the four were trapped between opposed propensities: the colonizer's increasing desire for spreading domination over them and the their self-sought construction of an independent identity. From this point forward, the analysis attests to the ambivalent nature of mimicry that produces East-West polarization. Mustafa Sa'eed and Khaled are partially accepted and at the same time, the Western civilization whose culture is superior prevents a complete assimilation.

The self-identification within the parameters of the empire therefore produces a confusing zone. In stark contrast to John Boy Junior who westernizes himself to a non-return point and melts completely in the colonizer's identity, the colonizer succeeds in westernizing Bigger Thomas Mustafa Sa'eed and Khaled but fails in domesticating their radical otherness. The identityless Bigger and Mustafa imperil the colonizer with their far-reaching otherness and both turned into invaders who enact a retaliation from within. Precisely, Mustafa exploits his exotic image and his knowledge of the East to seduce the metropole's females whom he turns into surrogates to his desired tendency to avenge. Bigger's tremendously radical otherness is embodied in feeling of meaning and purpose after his accidental murder of Mary Dalton. Wittingly or unwittingly, killing a white girl the "not quite/ not white" Bigger Thomas successfully achieves a transition from non-visibility to visibility. And yet, this visibility makes him feel his supremacy over Whites. Additionally, Gallicizing Khaled is an unintentional enlightenment of the colonial subject that destabilizes the metropole's authority as this illumination contributes to the rise of an anti-colonial elitist resistance, where Khaled notably was among the first who joined the FLN, taking up arms against France.

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On the other hand, the analysis unveiled the devastating bearing of mimetic discourse in *Matigari* through what came to be called Parrotry culture. Mimicry as an ideological mode that fills the identity vacuum created by a loss of confidence among the postcolonial ruling elites. That is why the Kenyan postcolonial officials put on mimetic masks to assume colonial tasks of subjugation and oppression. The mindless mimics' cultural baptism entails a void replication that fully denies the colonial subjects of an adequate understanding of their repetition. More accurately, the mimic man is deprived of an autonomous cultural identity that proved especially subversive to the expectations of building a postcolonial nation-state.

Based on Bhabha's premise that mimicry is at once a remembrance and menace, the cultural ravages of mimicry equally translate themselves into a dangerous germ of violence that affects the colonized. The ideological discourse of mimicry more often makes the colonizer see himself in a broken mirror that somewhat but effectually distorts his real image. In fact, the violent bent in the four books of fiction delineate the cultural dissonance between the Occident and the Orient. So, it is not surprising, to find out that the characters represent blurred copies of the violent colonizer. To begin with, Bigger's mimetic rhetoric resonates with his excess of mimicking whites' violence. Bigger exercise of violence against the rat at the outset of the novel and against Gus as well culminates in his heinous murder of Mary Dalton, whose body is decapitated and burnt. However, his perilous contamination turns once more against his own people. Bigger, otherly said, mimicks the rituals of violence as he smashes Bessie's head with a brick after he raping her. Richard Wright seems to be saying that hopes for asserting Black national identity seems in first place to be delayed by the black-black violence. The emulation the colonizer's violent methods epitomizes the unsteady growth of black national awareness this is a first indispensable step in the complex construction of imagined sense of national identity.

In *Season*, Mustafa's flawless mimesis transforms him into a partial copy of the Westerners and consequently becomes quite threatening. Mustafa grows into a postcolonial-

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Eastern plague that sweeps the Occident when having been contaminated with devastating germ of violence. Despite his internalization of Western ideals, Mustafa killed his English wife Jean Morris and caused other women to commit suicide. The inevitable result of this contamination is that there is more than the eye can see. In a certain sense, Mustafa imperiled his fellow natives once he transmits the germ of European violence to his wife Hosna bint Mahmoud who, in unprecedented scene, kills Wad Rayyes and kills herself. Salih implicitly catapults criticism against mimicking the colonizer's ways that for most part breeds cultural estrangement. The Sudanese high expectations for nationhood seemed to be dashed by replicating the colonial subjugation via colonial masks.

In another dimension, the malice of germ of violence is encapsulated through the excessive coercion that the police exercise on people. In *Matigari*, police are always on the side of the oppressor. Culturally speaking, before colonialism people did not have police, it was rather brought by colonialism to cause a disservice to the Kenyan cultural ethos, most remarkably the Kenyans' solidarity.

The Bridges' analysis shows that the violent past of colonialism had an enduring consequence on the identities of the formerly colonized. Evidence for this claim can be found in the novel's emphasis on the amount of brutal violence France exerted against the Algerian revolutionaries. In the wake of independence, promises of nationhood fades away when Algeria immerses into a cataclysmic experience of political violence. *The Bridges* suggestively questions the country's unexpected slide into violence with an Algerian tendency to mimic the French violent ways to kill other Algerians. The Algerians witness a bloody decade that comes to harvest thousands of souls during the nineties just like Khaled's brother Hassan who is killed in the Algerian hands. In the mimetic sense, the germ of violence proves especially abortive to the construction of a unified Algerian nation. Civil wars throughout history had an overwhelming bearing in the dismantlement of nations, let alone the impact they exert upon entities taking their first steps in nationalist construction process.

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In sum, that the mimetic discourse imposed on colonized people flawed identity. The colonial subject mirrored back an image of the colonizer but in imperfect form. In the colonial sense, it creates an Other that is quite but not the same, or an Other that is quite but not white. In a postcolonial framework, however, mimicry creates nations that are quite but not the same. It helps forge unoriginal sense of nations. The mimic men in this context are the cornerstones of parrot-like nations. Mimicry also contaminates the colonized with a lethal germ of violence that enables the ruling elite to reproduce the colonial subjugation de novo. Thus, the imagined sense nation is metonymic.

As creative writers Wright, Salih, Ngugi, and Mosteghanemi played, and still do, such a significant part that their novels – *Native Son* , *Season*, *Matigari*, and *The Bridges*– enact a textual resistance to the various ideologically subversive discourses of mimicry. The current chapter has shown the embodiment of mimicry in the works of fiction and the role of the postcolonial novels under study in the decolonization of national identities will be elucidated in details in chapter five.

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Introduction

After independence, there was an unseemly scramble for maintaining hegemony over the formerly colonized countries among the crumbling empires. Therefore, classical designs of colonialism came to be replaced and the very core of colonialism was promulgated under a disguisedly rebranded label “neocolonialism”. In truth, the declared aim is to help the Africans to stand up for themselves; nonetheless, their ulterior motives are to keep Africa in absolute dependence on the west. Neocolonialist discourse has become since then an increasingly overarching notion in African and Afro-American philosophy. This phenomenon was, and still is, at the crux of the scholars and academics’ debates in politics, economics, history, sociology, and literary studies.

Disillusioned with the high promises of emancipatory struggle and the shattered dreams of independence, several African and Afro-American authors have settled for nothing less than combatting neocolonialist ideology by employing the pen’s power. Richard Wright, Tayeb Salih, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Ahlem Mosteghanemi illuminate the hardships of neocolonialism and their significant novels—the corpus of this study which includes: *Native Son Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*—are viewed as fictional resistance to dismantle the borders of neocolonial oppression. Indeed, decolonizing the neocolonized selves becomes a first necessary step toward any nationalist conquests. This chapter will namely focus on cultural bearings of neocolonialism on the elaboration of national identities. It should be noted that in a neocolonial community, the individual’s repression of personal through socio-economic exploitation resonates with the exploitation of the collective autonomy. The matter at stake the colonized’s way of life as one important trait of culture is negatively altered.

1. Can the Subaltern Bear the Neocolonial Burden?: Decolonizing the Land VS Neocolonizing the Self

Although politicians and historians had declared the demise of colonialism in the United States in its traditional pattern, nonetheless *Native Son* leaves the readerly impression that it embodies a neocolonial plight in the post-slavery American society. In such a degree, the novel brings to the fore the Afro-Americans' hardships and provides a multi-layered portrayal of neocolonialism. In unequivocal tone, Wright's novel disparages neocolonialism in the image of the underprivileged character of Bigger Thomas. Living on the South Side of Chicago in the 1930's, Bigger is depicted as deprived of all human rights proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence of 1870, stipulating that "all men are created equal" (qtd in Fonder 09). It is evident from Wright's comment that the end of slavery institution is only nominal, as it by no means implies a rupture with the legacy of the Negroes' long-standing oppression. Negroes, in other words, found themselves neocolonized. What aggravated the situation more is that the postcolonial American society witnessed a shift of from discrimination to segregation.

Albeit the 'Emancipation Proclamation' –as a historic document– had abolished slavery, but the Black Codes and the Jim Crow laws were effectively enacted to keep the blacks apart from the whites, creating a wide gap between the two races. In his critical essay entitled, "How 'Bigger' Was Born", Wright claims that:

In Dixie there are two worlds, the white world and the black world, and they are physically separated. There are white schools and black schools, white businesses and black businesses, white graveyards and black graveyards, for all I know, a white God and a black God. (13)

Not very far from Wright's stress of the racial subordination duplication that led the neocolonization of the Afro-American selves Salih's *Season* is an engaging postcolonial text that the book gives a pertinent and suggestive examination of colonialism and casts light on the difficulties resultant from neocolonialism too. In fact, neocolonialism came to prevail the

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post-independent Sudan and the narrative's episodes then "remind the reader of the neocolonial framework within which *Season* exists" (Davidson 391). After many years of absence during which time he was studying in Europe, the young narrator returns back to his village eager to make a contribution to the postcolonial life of his country. However, all his hopes are dashed by the fact his country like many other African states is kept within the iron curtain of neocolonialism.

The independence of Sudan, in some sense, did not bring a thorough assumption of sovereignty; nevertheless, the Sudan's fate lay in the hands of self-interested western powers and its decisive issues were still being decided in the metropole. In *Season*, the postcolonial characters' limited amount of awareness apropos the dangers of neocolonialism constitutes a real threat to the process of historical healing. Byron Caminero-Santango in this framework claims that

in the context of the novel, however, the narrator's naïve comments reflect precisely why neocolonialism is such a threat in *Season of Migration*; the Sudanese characters remain unaware of how deeply colonial ideology infiltrates everything colonialism brought with it (70).

In consequence, the colonial traditions did not vanish, but it reproduces itself in a new ideological mask. *Season* speaks to the ideological dialogue between the ex-colonizer and the ex-colonized. In the novel, the neocolonial discourse is manifested in the high-octane debate over the authenticity of the Sudan's liberation. This occurred when the narrator was invited to the house of one of his mates during their stay in England— a lecturer at university— and among the attendants was Richard, an employee of the Ministry of Finance in Khartoum. The Englishman argues with Mansour, a left-wing Sudanese civil servant. Mansour catapults criticism against the dirty games of the former and present imperialist powers, who had departed but left their ill-spirits behind them. The west exported the capitalist system to the newly independent Sudan. The Western multinational companies found in Africa a fertile

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field to squeeze wealth, while deepening the agony of the marginalized majority in tandem. Mansour addresses Richard saying, ‘You transmitted to us *the disease of your capitalist economy. What did you give us except for a handful of capitalist companies that drew off our blood- and still do?*’ (Salih 60 emphasis added). Mansour’s critique of the western new hegemonic schemes draws the reader’s attention to the country’s regression in sensitive areas such as education, health, economy and so on.

The Sudan’s dissatisfaction is also encapsulated through the unnamed narrator’s friend Mahjoub. Mahjoub expresses his frustration at the neocolonial regionalism that centered every aspect of life in Khartoum where the lion’s share of the national budget is spent there. The remainder of the country is ignored and deprived of their natural rights of education, health care and work. To pursue the idea further, Byron Caminero-Santangelo in his book entitled *African Fiction and Joseph Conrad: Reading Postcolonial Intertextuality*, claims the “increased urbanization and centralization at the expense of the rest of the country are also recognized features of neocolonialism” (73). The neocolonials are not able to construct one hospital. Mahjoub complains that it takes them three days to get to the one single hospital in Merawi. The women die in childbirth – there is not a single qualified midwife in the village (Salih 118).

On the other hand, not only has *Matigari* been a responsive work to the legacy of colonialism in Kenya, but the novel also denounces the neocolonial intelligentsia that distorted Kenya’s independence. After coming out of the bush, wearing a belt of peace, Matigari recognizes that Kenya’s independence was incomplete. To his surprise, nothing really changed as the Kenyans, who championed independence from foreign colonizers, were by then ruled by neocolonial oppressive Kenyans. Hence, “the possibility of Matigari’s homecoming is threatened by the marks of neocolonial oppression and exploitation visible everywhere he visits” (Kumar Nag 148). The key point to be made therefore is that, colonial injustice was propagated in a different form. People in this sense are still dispossessed and

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corruption fills the country. People live amid fear, as no room for voicing the opposition to the status quo is possible.

So embittered that Kenya's independence exists merely on paper, the freedom fighter Matigari finds that indeed the country's fate is engineered in the West. European imperialisms, in other words, manufactured an indigenous elite, ideologically westernized in the metropole, to maintain the colonizer's privileges. Assuming this mission is to oppress the indigenes and annihilate the native traditions. During the colonial era, the white Settler Williams and the black John Boy were the oppressors. However, when Matigari killed them, their sons Robert Williams and John Boy Junior came to fill in the imperialist gap.

The neocolonial picture looks much darker, notably with the recurrence of multinational companies in the novel. Banks and corporations such Barclays Bank, American Life Insurance and British-American Tobacco, Mercedes Benz (Ngugi *Matigari* 14) with the consent of the local puppet government ruthlessly impose their will on the majority of the Kenyans. Ngugi highlights the threat of these companies in his essay "The Writer in a Neocolonial State" in their ascendancy (7). In this traumatic transition from colonialism to independence, Kenya just like Algeria did not succeed in putting a term to the chronic misery caused by the brutal legacy of the colonial epoch. Albeit Britain's immediate disengagement of its direct subordination of Kenya, but it set up a network of indigenous agents who would act upon reinforcing a colonialist agenda by proxy. In so doing, neocolonialism as an advanced stage of imperialism is presented in a different packaging. Hitherto, it was orchestrated to serve the same imperialist interests or worse. In one point, the state radio announces that the American government is working to help the country with loans from the World Bank and the IMF. In Ngugi's words, "The United States government is requesting the World Bank and the IMF to give this country a loan for the development and the defense of the rule of law, truth and justice" (*Matigari* 132). Such monetary organizations, according to

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Nkuruma, constitute tools of imperial powers to concretize neocolonial subordination. Over and above these criticisms, these foreign companies are not merely tools for economic exploitation, but they are a dangerous channel to cultural neocolonialism.

Just as *Matigari*, Mosteghanemi's *The Bridges* is par excellence a resisting text to the inherently detrimental effect of colonialism. It is furthermore an engaging attempt at challenging the neocolonialist ideologies, which threaten to undermine Algeria's promising independence. Khaled, Mosteghanemi's protagonist is a middle-aged fighter in the Algerian anti-colonial struggle and a representative of an entire group of militants, who marvels at the fact that Algeria, for which they fought yesterday, is no longer the same Algeria they live in today (Gouffi and Berrahal "Neocolonial Burdens" 05). The country has *de facto* deviated from the essences of the revolution and consequently, neo-colonialism jeopardizes advancement in its varying shades.

Certainly, *The Bridges* should undoubtedly be interpreted in light of the ever-shifting political and cultural landscape of Algeria from the early 1940s to the late 1980s. Once in the Algerian Army, Khaled dreamt of a free Algeria where all Algerians would be judged equally; the same reason for which his left arm was amputated after two bullets had become embedded in it. Khaled's loss of arm epitomizes a sturdy testimony for the amount of the incommensurable sacrifice during struggle against the French colonizer. Khaled effectively had a chance to witness the dawn of his homeland's liberty. Yet against expectations, the beginning of postwar reconstruction, having begun so promisingly, went hopelessly futile:

After independence, corruption and dependency on foreign investment characterized the work of the new Algerian elite and Algerians soon realized that the promises of welfare, social justice and Arab unity were nothing but false claims used by the new Algerian elite to stay in power. (Hazem 68)

The euphoria of independence had not lasted so long with the hopes for independence trailing complex contours. Like *Matigari*, Khaled eventually comes to figure out that Algeria had

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accomplished only an outlandishly technical independence, and no effective break with the colonial era is meritoriously operated. Forms of discrimination, submission, deprivation, physical violence that were prevalent during the colonial era are propagated otherwise. Seriously, the Algerians began to question the extent to which prospects for real independence measure against the lived reality of post-independence Algeria. Indeed, things do not go the way planned and aspirations for healing the colonial past are drastically thwarted by neocolonialism.

In *The Bridges*, the neocolonial plight does not fall far from the new pattern of colonization delineated in the other works of fiction. The novel is imbued with the ongoing suffering of the Algerians in post-independence state. Once France had deactivated its immediate engagement with Algeria, it carried out an indirect control through a body of colonial agents who would implement a neocolonialist plan. This ideology is usually aimed at dehumanizing the Algerians culturally to annihilate their identity by preventing the possibility that any degree of awareness would rise among the masses. Namely, a neocolonial ruling minority does not merely hold the country's wealth, but also the country's way of life. Jean Paul Sartre in his seminal book *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* argues that:

[France] *fabricates* 'natives' by a double movement which separates them from their archaic community by giving them or maintaining in them, *in the solitude of liberal individualism*, a mentality whose archaism can only be perpetuated in relation to the archaism of the society. It creates *masses* but prevents them from becoming a conscious proletariat by mystifying them with the caricature of their own ideology. (Sartre 16)

Against the circuits of cultural domination and by challenging Western discourse, Mosteghanemi's dissatisfaction with Algeria's status quo is seemingly the driving force behind *The Bridges's* discourse. Through her text, Mosteghanemi brings to the fore the way neocolonial ideology infiltrated Algeria giving opportunity for nouveau-riches bourgeois to turn around the revolution acquisitions to grab a hold of Algeria's material and moral richness. Khaled's contempt for what Hazem Fadel calls a "new opportunistic elite" (78) is

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particularly destined at Si Sharif, Si Tahar's brother and Si Mustapha who represent the corrupt symbols of Constantine. In fact, they:

have benefitted from their new role in Algeria to enrich themselves rather than bettering the life of all Algerians. Finally, his missing arm not only marks his allegiance to Algeria but also stands as a protest against the highjacking of the revolution by those who call themselves the "revolutionaries. (Stampfl 136)

In *Native Son*, neocolonialism is manifested in the socio-economic ordeal of the Thomas family. Bigger Thomas lives with his family in a tenement room in "the ghettoized African-American community of Chicago's South Side" (Harding 96). In the novel, the ghetto demarcated the racial borders between two distinct worlds: a white prosperous world and a despondent black world. The ghetto is viewed an excruciating evidence to the consequences of neocolonial segregation.

In the slums of Chicago, Bigger finds himself trapped in a neocolonial status that dictates misery, intractable poverty and criminality, striking the stability of the ghetto dwellers. The Thomas family lives in such an unbearable milieu that is favorable but to giving rise to criminals. Besides living with rats¹, Mrs. Thomas has a heavy burden of raising her family. She scrubs and washes and irons from morning until night, day in and day out, as long as she has strength in her old body in order to pay the rent of a one infested room and provide the livelihood and the schooling of her kids.

The ghetto, otherly said, pertains to the fact that White America determinedly broadened its racial segregation beyond colonial practices, pushing the Afro-Americans to the periphery of urban or suburban area away from the metropolis. In this regard, segregation envelops every aspect of life; segregated houses, segregated schools, segregated businesses, segregated cemeteries, and segregated churches. As a pointer to the ingrained cultural mode of spiritual subjugation, the psychology of the blacks in the ghetto had largely grown fragile.

¹ The novel opens with Bigger killing a rat with an iron skillet

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Millions of Bigger Thomases had grown up without seeing many people of any other race growing up around them. Culturally speaking, they were isolated from the mainstream of the American culture. The reader of *Native Son* may be struck by recognizing that Bigger's neocolonialism takes an internal form. Mrs. Thomas, Bigger's mother, tells him she sometimes wonders why she gave birth to him. Her searing criticism goes further to defy her son's manhood when she claims that if Bigger had any "manhood" in him, the family would not have to live amid a garbage dump (Wright *Native Son* 38). The mother's critical words are somewhat a form of internal neocolonialism in a cultural sense. This reduces Bigger's humanity and macho to money and good living. Robert Felgar in this context maintains:

Wright seems to suggest here, then, that part of what has made Bigger a resentful, bitter, young black man is the black woman, based on this opening scene. If Mrs. Thomas had not construed manhood in the narrow sense of only the ability to make money, then it is implied that Bigger would not have felt so strongly his perceived lack of worth. (44)

Neocolonialism, that is to say, bred cultural confusion and misunderstanding among the blacks and posed a great obstruction of self-identification with others. Bigger when walking to the Dalton house to get the job of the family chauffeur wonders to himself, "if the Daltons for whom he was to work were like the people he had seen and heard in the movie" (*Native Son* 74). Indeed culturally ghettoized neocolonialism fails to present Bigger as a legitimate son of the United States. Paradoxically to what racist neocolonial whites think, Bigger is a native son of a Chicago ghetto. He "is indeed a native son, a product, of the United States, but not one for whom anyone wants to take responsibility" (Felgar 52). Bigger's native-ness is underscored starting from the title which implies that he is an inherently American son. America created him and discriminated against him in such way Bigger turned into an invisible native son that America is blind to see or recognize.

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Ngũgĩ brings to view the bitter ramifications of neocolonialism on the lives of the commonplace people in Kenya. In *Matigari*, people are described to suffer from poverty and low living standards. What can be taken to indicate the postcolonial mess is the government's failure to afford day-to-day prerequisites. Matigari's expectations of reaping the fruition of the bloody battle for freedom are eclipsed by perpetuation of colonial injustices lingering even after independence. In an interview with Maya Jaggi, Ngugi expounds why neocolonialism is given primacy in his novel, while in fact other authors seem less aware of the terrifying implications of it:

Neo-colonialism: it is a very important theme and one which, in my view, has not been sufficiently examined by writers. What is needed is for us in Africa and the Third World to become as conscious of neo-colonial arrangements and their economic, political and cultural implications, and to be horrified by them with the same force, determination and sincerity, as we were vis-à-vis colonialism. ("Matigari as Myth and History" 246)

Matigari recognizes the most heightened practice of neocolonialism in children's exploitation. In one scene, while he is searching for his children, he gets surprised to find a group of homeless children "who live in the vehicle cemetery" (*Matigari* 37). It is worth to note that spatial delineation is such profound significance that the car cemetery where abandoned children dwell in *Matigari* resembles in so many aspects the ghetto in *Native Son*. In the novel, heads of that nefarious design of neocolonialism compel "each child to pay a fee to enter" (11) the rubbish dump, which gives these children access to search through the litter. Matigari "stood there, shocked" (11), as the country is made such a colossal museum of acute hunger and grinding poverty that "some children had stuffed their mouths with rotten tomatoes, while others were busy cleaning bones with their teeth, hoping to find a scrap of meat still clinging to them" (12).

Not only that, but Matigari interferes when he observes two boys struggling over a bundle of shoelaces. The scene considerably embodies the extent to which the general

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populace are such dispossessed and deprived people that a mundane item like shoelace is thought worth enough to be struggling for. Matigari's surprise is mainly due to his incorrect perception of independence dynamics. Byron Caminero-Santangelo contends: "in the new "postcolonial" Kenyan nation, the belief that the age of colonialism is over because British have left becomes a threat to the interests of a majority of Kenyans since it will mask the need for resistance against neocolonialism" ("Neocolonialism and the Betrayal" 144). In a sense, Ngugi gradually educates his protagonist to direct him toward an adequate understanding of the postcolonial condition.

The shocking realities that Matigari encounters make him see his children, as he calls them, exploited by neocolonial Kenyans who ultimately serve the continuity to the customs known to the colonial era. This suggests that "after his encounter with the children who are exploited, Matigari is convinced that nothing has really changed in post-independence Kenya" (Breidlid). This justifies the transformation of his questions from a Socratic query to a more rhetorical tone. To pursue this idea, the money taken from the children soon go to the tractor driver and two police officers who all gather to apportion the money among them. The recently independent state has a remote possibility to ascend to justice because "a handful of people still profited from the suffering of the majority, the sorrow of the many being the joy of the few" (*Matigari* 12). These harrowing truths jolt Matigari's conscience to confirm one thing; neocolonialism is effectively the final stage of an oppressive imperialist apparatus. In such an ambience, Kenya is engineered by its previous colonial masters, but with neocolonial masks. The author questions the use of an independence when everything is kept unchanged except for the exploiters' skin color. In the same vein, James Ogude argues:

Ngugi seems to be saying that if colonialism led to degradation of black life and exploitation of the marginalized groups in Kenya, then these forms of human degradation repeat themselves in the postcolonial state, except with the minor difference that in the colonial context the exploiters were white, aided by black zombies, while now exploiters are black working with their masters in Europe. (54)

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The increasing prevalence of neocolonial ideology points to Matigari's unanswered questions. He rhetorically queries: "How can the tiller go on working for the benefit of those-who reap-where-they-never-sowed? Yesterday it was the whites. Today they have been joined by some blacks" (*Matigari* 75). Ngũgĩ catapults caustic criticism against an opportunistic bourgeoisie class, or "clan of white and black parasites" (78) which vindicate the neocolonization of the Kenyan selves through institutionalized laws. Just emulating the colonial line, Robert Williams and John Boy Junior, take the fertile land and squeeze their wealth from the wretched Kenyans.

In *Season*, the employee Richard casts doubt on the new forms of political, economic and cultural colonization of Africa. In the heated debate with Mansour, Richard is perceived as the real actor who represents Western imperialism in Africa and therefore stands as a valid example for its devastating effect. Interesting is the idea that Matigari's pertinent and puzzling question about the suspicious friendship between blacks and the clans of the white parasites is answered in *Season*. Richard, otherly said, staunchly refutes the accusations levelled against the western imperialism, arguing that colonialism has turned into a necessary evil to the Africans who cannot do without it. Richard responded to Mansour:

[‘All this shows that] you cannot manage to live without us. You used to complain about colonialism and when we left you created the legend of neocolonialism. It seems that our presence, in an open or undercover form, is indispensable to you as air and water. (Salih 60)

Following the way, in *Season*, the wretchedness of neocolonized selves is widened by the corruption of the ruling elite. In the novel, the narrator witnesses the widespread corruption of the ruling elite at his job in the Department of Education. Upon his return from England, the narrator feels a sense of obligation to employ his education to help advance the newly independent Sudan. "The stance of Salih's narrator provides a balanced insight into the dilemma of a Western-educated generation of Orientals who try to help their native community in a post-colonial era" (Kudsieh 215). Nonetheless, the narrator sees corruption

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filling each sector in the country. In his conversation with his friend Mahjoub, the narrator talks about a conference organized by the Ministry of Education, to which delegates from twenty African countries were invited to discuss ways of unifying educational methods throughout the whole continent. He is a member of the secretariat of the conference whose prestige awfully contradicts its empty content (117-18).

Mahjoub cannot understand the use of organizing such kind of conferences if originally schools do not exist and in case they exist, pupils have to make a tiresome walk to get there. Mahjoub says in an angered tone: “Let them build the schools first [...] and then discuss unifying education. How do these people’s minds work? They waste time in conferences and poppycock and here are our children having to travel several miles to school” (Salih 118). Most importantly, looking upon the whole landscape of the recently independent nations, a reader may notice that Salih’s critique of neocolonialism may relate also to hiring expatriate teachers whose effective role is an integral part in the neocolonial westernization of the Other. In his essay entitled “Education and Neocolonialism”, Philip G. Altbach states that certain developing countries rely on expatriate teachers for their educational institutions. These teachers, regardless of their personal alignments, cannot but inculcate Western ideals and visions in the schools (Altbach 453). The narrator is the outcome of this neocolonial education, which produces passive actors.

Not far from Sudan, the neocolonial drama in Algeria takes almost the same direction. In her novel, Mosteghanemi questions the use of organizing the greatest African festival of its kind a year after independence. Its declared objective is to celebrate Pan-Africanism in the name of the revolution, while in fact the folkloric festival is to conceal their bribery:

In 1969, at the height of the desperate cultural vacuum being endured by the nation, someone, over a few days, came up with the idea for the biggest festival ever seen in Algeria or Africa. It was called the Pan-African Festival, and the whole African continent and its tribes were invited to spend a week singing and dancing (at times naked) in the

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streets of Algiers in honor of the Revolution. (Mosteghanemi *The Bridges* 130)

As an indictment of the neocolonial ruling elite, Mosteghanemi among other anti-neocolonialism campaigners denounces the postcolonial scene and its culturally awkward stages. In addressing Algeria's neocolonial plight, Ferial J Ghazoul raises a set of important questions:

How were these revolutionary sacrifices obliterated to turn Algeria nothing but an 'impossible home', a place where real veterans are either enslaved or exploited? How was the homeland hijacked by such a bunch of mercenaries and businessmen that no alternative left for an Algerian citizen only an extreme Islamist dogma or a self-exile. ("Recalling (Af)filiation in Memory" 171- 172 Trans. Mine)

Along similar lines, the author poses pertinent questions, addressed to Algeria's neocolonial rulers about the organization of the festival:

How many millions were spent on this first and last festival of joy? Its most important achievement was to cover up the trial of a historic leader. During the festival, his men were interrogated and tortured in closed sessions in the name of that Revolution. The leader was also called Taher, and though we weren't friends, I didn't have any particular hostility towards him. He had once also been a fighter and a (63) commander. I started to be aware of the game and greed of power and became wary of regimes that held many festivals and conferences. They were always hiding something! (131)

In *The Bridges*, the unusual wealth of the neocolonial elite is associated with the escalation of poverty and deprivation of the majority ordinary Algerians. Hassan's figure gives insight into the author's rendition of socio-economic neocolonialism. Khaled's older brother Hassan is "a badly paid teacher with meagre dreams" (*The Bridges* 223). Hassan strives to provide his ever-growing family –six children and a young wife –with the least requirements of a good living in a country whose richness is controlled by handful of aristocratic neocolonials created and manipulated by France.

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Hassan's wife Atiqa never stopped complaining to Khaled about their "old Arab house with its backward way of life [...] house like that, with all its bad points (which at times were annoying) and its minor inconveniences surpassed by the modern age" (*The Bridges* 222). Hassan responds saying that today's women are becoming more demanding when watching *Dallas* on television. Thus, he invites officials to "to stop that soap as long as they can't give people decent homes and a better life" (222-23). Hassan, nonetheless, confesses that their situation is far better than "tens of thousands, rather, who didn't have a spacious house like that where they could live alone with their wife and children. No, they often had to share a cramped apartment with relatives for years" (*The Bridges* 223). Hassan is depicted as drained and always floundering in the daily problems of his family. Understanding adequately the surrounding environment, Hassan does not dare to dream not to incur upon himself the consequences of dreaming in neocolonial milieu. Hassan's projects have been belittled to the point all his dreams in those days were reduced to "finding someone with the connections to get him a new fridge, no more!" (224).

Upon listening to the complaints his brother, Khaled feels amazed at the enormous gap between Hassan's little dreams of and his large difficulties. His astonishment grows further by a fact he has just come to recognize; Algeria and the Algerians are not "just backward when compared to Europe and France [...] but [they] were also backward when compared to the way [they] had been under colonialism fifty or more years earlier" (*The Bridges* 224). Khaled's comparison confirmed what Kwame Nkrumah's warning that neocolonialism is a late stage of imperialism and its worst practice. Mosteghanemi underscores the absurdity of dreaming in times of neocolonialism. In other words, Hassan's dream of a fridge had gone partially fulfilled: "The nation had given him a fridge where he was calmly awaiting [Khaled] to bid him a final farewell" (297). In the end of the novel, Hassan is killed at the outset of Algeria's bloody decade and is offered a fridge in the morgue while awaiting for his burial.

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In *Season* Mahjoub raises significant questions: “Aren’t we human beings? Don’t we pay taxes? Haven’t we any rights in this country? (Salih 118). These questions strip bare the brutal realities of neocolonialism and to a greater degree echo with the questions that flash through Bigger’s mind in *Native Son*: “It’s funny how the white folks treat us, ain’t it?” asking friend Gus (Wright *Native Son* 55). Bigger Thomas takes umbrage whenever he feels enchained by the Jim Crow laws. Bigger could not bear living in neocolonial segregation that was nothing but an existential prison. Bigger was an invisible native son who found himself without plausible answers. In the following passage, Bigger Thomas amazed at the racial rift between whites and blacks:

‘Goddammit!’

‘What’s the matter?’

‘They don’t let us do nothing’

‘Who?’

‘The *white* folks’

‘You talk like you just now find that out’, Gus said.

‘Naw. But I just can’t get used to it’, Bigger said. ‘I swear to God I can’t. I know I oughtn’t think about it, but I can’t help it. Every time I think about it I feel like somebody poking a red hot iron down my throat. Goddammit, I look! We live here and they live there. We black and they white. They got things and we ain’t. They can do things and we can’t. It just like living in jail. Half the time I feel like I’m on the outside of the world peeping in through a knot-hole in the fence...’

‘Aw, ain’t no use feeling that way about it. It don’t help none’, Gus said. (Wright *Native Son* 49-50)

The Jim Crow laws gave blacks no right to enter school of the whites, get on buses or trains of whites or stopping at white restaurants and motels. Negroes were prevented from several veins of human life, and education was the most targeted area. Neocolonial Whites worked upon limiting Negroes’ education, who were not allowed to continue any educational careers and reaching a good level of their own. They did not have the right to dream of a superior training and getting respectful jobs. The Negro, in this regard, was kept away from vital positions in the country. In his critical essay “How ‘Bigger’ Was Born”, Wright argues:

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The white neighbor decided to limit the amount of education his black neighbor could receive; decided to keep him off the police force and out of the local national guards; to segregate him residentially; to Jim Crow him in public places; restrict his participation in the professions and jobs; and to build up a vast, dense of racial superiority that would justify any act of violence taken against him to defend white dominance; further, to condition him to hope for little and to receive little without rebelling. (14)

Bigger's condition is pretty much the same as that of Muriuki in *Matigari*. Muriuki had no chance to have education of any kind. He did not even have a house and thus found himself searching for a place where to sleep instead of caring much about education. Bigger Thomas in other part was compelled to leave school in early age to earn money to support his destitute family. He does not think twice to say "no money" (Wright *Native Son* 105) for leaving school.

Bigger's education is a major handicap hampering him from dreaming of being an aviator. Despite Mrs. Dalton's good intention to help him fix this handicap through attending night classes (92), but he refuses. It is too late for him as he feels the need to find a job. The white neocolonial supremacy excluded the blacks from knowledge quest. Blacks could not frequent libraries as the whites to express their humanity in the world of books (Gouffi *Social Constraints* 45). Consequently, the neocolonial ideology goes beyond physical oppression to reach mind subjugation. The neocolonial impositions "enslav[ed] both the mind and the body" (Dexter B. 40). Literacy was entirely a white defining feature and an exclusively white tradition. For that reason, Anglo-Saxon neocolonials felt the urgency to impede blacks overstepping the boundaries of the white world.

If anything marks the postcolonial transition, it is the inexorable repression of the individual's right to dream. In *The Bridges* Hassan's dreams are simple but hard-to-obtain, while in *Matigari*, the Minister of Truth and Justice vows he "shall ask the government to ban dreams" (*Matigari* 120). However, Bigger's dreams of entering an aviation school are aborted by an overwhelming neocolonialism. This wish was conceived as a far-achieving dream and

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the only upsetting truth was that of the white's subordination. Bigger expresses his utter dismay for not having equal opportunities as whites. The following passage epitomizes a postcolonial dialogue within the Afro-American neocolony between Bigger and his friend Gus. This neocolonial discourse expresses disillusionment among the blacks, who are so marginalized that they are thrust into the confines of a segregated community. The two boys are watching a plane in the sky and Bigger immerse in his utopian dreams and idealistic ifs: In Wright's words:

'I could fly one of them things if I had a chance', Bigger mumbled reflectively, as though talking to himself.

Gus pulled down the corners of his lips, stepped out from wall, squared his shoulders, doffed his cap, bowed low, and spoke with mock deference:

'Yessuh'.

'You go to hell', Bigger said, smiling.

'Yessuh', Gus said again.

'I could fly a plane if I had a chance', Bigger said.

'If you wasn't black and if you had some money and if they'd let you go to that aviation school, you could fly a plane,' Gus said.

For a moment Bigger contemplated all the 'ifs' that Gus had mentioned. Then both boys broke into hard laughter, looking at each other, through squinted eyes. When their laughter subsided, Bigger said in a voice that was half-question and half-statement:

[. . .]

'God, I'd like to fly up there in that sky'.

'God'll let you fly when he gives you your wings up in heaven,' Gus said. (46-47)

Bigger's bitterness for having no adequate level of education that enables him fly a plane resonates with the dismay of the Mamur that the central character meets on his trip to Khartoum in *Season*. In Salih's book, the protagonist travels to Khartoum to get his new job in the Department of Education, in the same compartment with a retired civil servant. The man expresses his discontent over the fact that officials only granted him as limited amount of education as to fill minor government positions. The man spent thirty years as a sub-Mamur and he was not allowed to have a promotion to Mamur only two years before his retirement (Salih 53).

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The retired civil servant's disappointment takes an increasingly intense tone with his confession that the Sudanese elites remain dependent on their capitalist masters, who were gods on earth. In his words: "The English District Commissioner was a god who had a free hand over an area larger than the whole of the British Isles and lived in an enormous palace full of servants and guarded by troops. They used to behave like gods" (Salih 53). The effect of neocolonialist discourse is that there is more than the eye can see when it comes to nation building. Byron Caminero-Santangelo proclaims that

neocolonialism is the exploitation of the newly independent nation by "native" elites working within Western capitalism. After independence, these elites, who have often been trained by the West and given some privileges under colonialism, gain political and economic control of the nation. ("Legacies of Darkness: Neocolonialism" 12)

The administrative, economic and socio-cultural dependence of erstwhile colonies on their European masters bred also a psychological complex of inferiority within the commonplace people. The retired Mamur presents what Alexandra W. Schultheis calls a "critique of British colonial and neocolonial influence" (197) and complains that when they were sent to bring in taxes, people would harass them and complain them to the English Commissioner. It would not have been possible for the English Commissioner to hold such amount of power and influence if the neocolonizers had not granted him a *carte blanche*. In doing so, the locals showed love and respect to the neocolonizer, whereas their hearts were replete with hatred to the natives:

They would employ us, the junior government officials who were natives of the country, to bring in the taxes. The people would grumble and complain to the English Commissioner, and naturally it was the English Commissioner who was indulgent and showed mercy. And in this way they sowed hatred in the hearts of the people for us, their kinsmen, and love for the colonizers, the intruders. (Salih 53-54)

In fact, the most overriding objective of the study is to show the way creative writing contributes to the assertion of national identities in postcolonial communities, which inherited

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a set of chaotic values from the colonizer. The role of creative authors will be discussed in details in the final chapter. But, it is highly important to note that the postcolonial novelists, through their fiction, denounce the corruption of the cultural mores by the neocolonial ruling elite, who created new principles in order to individualize the process of mapping the nation within the scales of their interests.

In fact, neocolonialism subverted, and still subverts, the cultural mores. In *Matigari*, Ngũgĩ denounces an opportunistic bourgeoisie class or a band of white and black individualist exploiters. More specifically, in his conversation with the neocolonial character John Boy Junior, Matigari expresses his astonishment with this weird relation between whites and a handful of blacks. Matigari asks: “Where did this friendship between you and the clans of the white parasites come from?” (*Matigari* 49). Within the realm of postcolonial discourse, Ngũgĩ alerts the readers to the increasing danger of enslaving people in a post-independent state. The majority of blacks, in other words, “still slave on the plantations?” (39) In his attempt to justify exploitation, John Boy Junior underlines the importance of “survival of the fittest” (49) principle.

With no regards to Gĩkũyũ customs of solidarity and communal belonging, Boy’s neocolonial Darwinism destroys the tribal structure of the Gĩkũyũ society. Paradoxically enough to Matigari who chooses to share of his food and drink with his fellow prisoners during his arrest, John Boy Junior acclaims his individualism as opposed to the masses collectivization of interests, efforts and feelings. Putting on a white mask, Boy to Matigari:

But you black people? You walk about fettered to your families, clans, nationalities, people, masses [...] My father knew this [importance of individualism]; that's why he sent me to school and ignored the idiots who were mumbling nonsense about sharing the last bean” (*Matigari* 49).

Crucially, Matigari’s stress on sharing one bean in the clan may be read as a statement of utopian sense of the collective action and social cohesion. Through this mutual supportiveness

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and social cohesion, people strongly oppose neo-colonialism as the rampant individualism generated by capitalist John Boy Junior (Williams *Ngugi Wa Thiong'o* 128).

The alarming growth of individualism as opposed to the collectivization of values in the erstwhile colonies can be also explained in terms of the neocolonial paradigm in *Season*. In fact, the locals are described as being much influenced and dazzled by the Eurocentric philosophy that outsiders are prioritized in everything. The Mamur laments the fact that the European colonizers embarked upon manufacturing a native elite, who would occupy the highest posts after formal independence. And consequently, the Sudan's affairs are engineered from afar. In doing so, "neocolonialism thrives because of the alliance between a native comprador class and a foreign bourgeoisie" (Ngugi *Writers in Politics* 120). The resentful Mamur questions the validity of the country's independence. He says:

Mark these words of mine, my son. *Has not the country become independent? Have not we become free men in our own country?* Be sure, though, that they will direct our affairs from afar. This is because they have left behind them people who think as they do. They showed nonenties – and it was such people that occupied the highest positions in the days of the English. (Salih 53-54 *My emphasis*)

The Mamur's question regarding the validity of independence is at the same time raised by Khaled in *The Bridges*: Had we really gained our independence? (Mosteghanemi 172). Khaled was invited to a party given by a neocolonial figure Si Sharif in Paris. Khaled expects an Algerian familial warmth and talks about the homeland, but against his expectations, Algeria is made absent. The handful of neocolonials speak only the language of their colonizer and master the language of business and projects funded by the Algerian banks. The author seems to be saying that nothing really sounds originally Algerian as the sense of Algerianness is corrupted by tone and tenor of those in power. The party represents:

The whole evening I asked myself what I was doing at this strange party. I had expected a family event, or at least a rare encounter with the homeland where I would recall distant memories with *Si Sharif*.

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But that evening the nation was absent. Its still-open wounds and newly disfigured face stood in. It was a soirée in France where we spoke in French about projects to be carried out, in the main, by foreign agencies with Algerian funding. *Had we really gained our independence?* (Mosteghanemi 172 *My emphasis*)

Interesting is the idea that the Khaled and Mamur's multiplied questions about authenticity of independence are replied in Ngũgĩ's *Matigari*. In recognition of the postcolonial situation, *Matigari* puts it incontestably clear that the "first independence has been sold back to imperialism by the servants they put in power!" (*Matigari* 172). In his analysis of *Matigari*, Fidelis Odun Balogun stresses Ngugi's criticism of the suspicious role of the ruling political and intellectual elites of Kenya, who chose to collaborate with foreign neocolonial forces to undermine Kenyan independence (130).

One of the most visible ramifications of individualism is the distortion of an indigenous culture and the creation a neocolonial Feudalism. In Wright's novel, neocolonial feudalism weighs down on the lives of thousands of Negroes. Mr. Dalton is the neocolonizer, who owns a controlling share of the company that manages the apartment building where Bigger's family lives. Bigger's landlord Mr. Dalton is of schizophrenic nature. On the one hand, he squeezes his wealth from the blacks as his real estate company charges high rents for rat-infested, one-room apartments. Mr. Dalton and other wealthy real estate barons effectively rob the poor black tenants on Chicago's South Side. Blacks are not allowed to rent apartments in predominantly white neighborhoods, which leads to overpopulation and artificially high rents in the predominantly black South Side. On the other hand, Mr. Dalton sees himself as a benevolent philanthropist. Mr. Dalton told Bigger: "You see, Bigger, I'm a supporter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Did you ever hear of that organization?" (*Native Son* 84). Peggy an Irish help said to Bigger: "Yes, the colored people. He gave over five million dollars to colored schools." (87). This philanthropist token is mainly to alleviate Mr. Dalton guilty conscience for abusing poor blacks. In so doing, the

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neocolonizer believe they are doing good for the neocolonized blacks, but have no idea of the amount of suffering that their neocolonial greed inflicts on them.

Furthermore and more importantly, *Matigari* delineates the neocolonial feudalism with a seismic upheaval of the human values of the Gĩkũyũ society. Ngũgĩ shocks the readers evoking strong emotions of both hatred to the neocolonial bourgeoisie and a high sense of sympathy with the characters. Certainly, the death Muriuki's mother pertains to this situation to the fullest. In cold blood, the woman was burnt alive by a landlord for being unable to afford to pay the hut's rent. This impulse to act violently in order to attain supremacy over others epitomizes the inclination of the neocolonial capitalist system to an unprecedented level of neocolonial cannibalism. A penumbra of despair fell over Matigari while listening to Muriuki's dramatic story. With no regards for the authentic Gĩkũyũ customs, the protagonist was alarmed at the sad fact that post-independent Kenya moved from a tribal system of government that is based on its adherents' solidarity and collaboration –to a neocolonial entity that is ready to impose peculiar ethics. Such kind of neocolonial impositions does not only ruin the Kenya's lifestyle, but allows it to slide into cultural disarray.

Along similar lines, during the colonial era, the French colonizer took the most fertile from the Algerians and imposed on them a feudal system. The colonizer targeted the destruction of the community values and the individual's cultural alienation from the community. Sartre writes:

In Algeria, the French Republic cannot allow itself to be republican. It maintains the cultural ignorance and the beliefs of the feudal system, but suppresses the structures and customs which permit a living feudal system to be, *despite everything*, a human society; it imposes an individualistic and liberal legal code in order to ruin the frameworks and the development of the Algerian community, but it maintains kinglets who derive their power solely from it and who govern on its behalf. (Sartre 16)

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On the other hand, Mosteghanemi brings her criticism to the core imperialists' selfishness to a new level. This can be exactly seen in the elaboration of a comparative line between Constantine and by extension the motherland Algeria in one part and Hayat in other part. In similar vein, the Iraqi critic Ferial Jabouri Ghazoul asserts that "Hayat personifies an Algeria that is driven away from revolutionary glory to mundane concerns" ("Memory and Desire"). The Syrian critic Hazem Fadel, in the same context, argues that "Khaled's troubled love relationship with Ahlam² stands for a deeper and more complex love story, the love story of the protagonist with the city Constantine" (69). The alignment of a feminine character with Algeria's postcolonial reality draws the readers' attention to the fact that the novel, as a postcolonial text, undertakes the uneasy negotiations between the individual's sense of being colonized anew and the nation's deviation from the ideals of the revolution.

In *The Bridges*, Si Sharif and Si Mustafa's' neocolonial routes reproduce the colonial practices. As Nouveau-riches bourgeois, they seem to control the country's resources leaving the majority in a continuous need. In outcome, neocolonialism has a damaging effect on the neocolonized's cultural collective consciousness. As a matter of illustration, Mosteghanemi straightforwardly equates Hayat's wedding party with Algeria's neocolonial line. The marriage is par excellence a political or economic transaction conducted by a corrupt official in the Algeria government and Hayat's greedy uncle –Si Sharif- who aspires at reaping the gains of the deal. The post-colonial individual finds himself surrounded by questions such as what is so different between now and then? Matigari suggests a plausible answer: "Yesterday it was the imperialist settlers and their servants. Today it is the same" (*Matigari* 78). It is, therefore, easy to lose sight of the messy reality to distinguish between a former French master who maintained the cultural subjugation of their formerly colonized Algeria and a neocolonial who changed the cultural values molding them in accordance to their individual desires.

² The overall novel is a book Khaled writes to Ahlam or Hayat so named by him as a narrator at the end of his novel.

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The most intensified practice of cultural neocolonialism in the wedding is reinforced through granting the government corrupt officials seats in the front, whereas honest ancient militants like Khaled do not sound worth respecting: “Former ministers and ministers-in-waiting. Former thieves and thieves-in-waiting. Opportunist administrators and opportunists waiting to become administrators. Former informants and military men disguised in ministerial dress. [...] They always gathered like sharks, always swarming around dubious feasts” (Mosteghanemi *The Bridges* 266).

In the four novels, the authors seem very disillusioned with the passivity of the elites’ to change the status quo via a vehement criticism of what they call ‘a culture of silence’. In so far *Matigari* is concerned, James Ogude compares characters from Ngugi’s earlier work *Petals of Blood* – with passive characters like the teacher in *Matigari*. He states that “Munira and Gaturia, just like the teacher in *Matigari* who prefers the culture of silence to active political engagement, express Ngugi’s attitude and sense of disillusionment with the intellectual elite in Kenya” (82).

In *Season*, Salih seems to be stating that the postcolonial intelligentsia are not thoroughly conscious of the most pressing and vital interest of eradicating corruption and combating poverty. Despite the enlightenment they have by virtue of their western education, the elitist figures are portrayed as unwilling to take action in order to change the neocolonial realities. Further and more importantly, Byron Caminero-Santangelo argues that Salih’s “narrator is so blind to the ideological forces controlling him that he eventually takes a job in the Ministry of Education, thereby becoming a tool of neocolonialism. (“Legacies of Darkness: Neocolonialism” 23). Mahjoub’s criticism, at a given juncture, is addressed to the narrator himself: “And what are you doing in Khartoum? What’s the use in our having one of us in the government when you’re not doing anything?” (Salih 118). Nevertheless, the narrator admits: “We civil servants, though, are of no consequence. Civil servants like me can’t

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change anything” [...] If our masters say “Do so-and-so”, we do it. You’re the head of the national Democratic Socialist Party here. It’s the party in power, so why not pour out your anger on them? (Salih 99-121)

What seems to be a major dismay for Mosteghanemi is the involvement of the postcolonial intelligentsia to emulate the corrupt leaders and to their mirror. In this sense, the elite’s passivity to contribute to the nation construction moves to new level of false consciousness. In order to see this more clearly, in *The Bridges* Khaled inclined to the neocolonial code of eliminating the others’ views as he was responsible for publishing in Algeria. It occurred when Khaled requested the Palestinian poet Ziyad to remove or edit texts in his poetry that “seemed to [...] overly critical of certain regimes and Arab leaders. He made clear allusions to them and called them everything under the sun” (*The Bridges* 108). This would allow Ziyad to get published. Khaled laments the fact that he was as a keeper of creativity within the ethics of the neocolonial corrupt leaders. These faults are likely to occur as “it can happen that a nation becomes illiterate” (305).

Ziyad is an anti-neocolonial defender of his tenets rejects any sort of excision: “I’ll never forget the look he [Ziyad] gave me that day. His eyes stopped at my amputated arm for a moment, then he gave me a withering look and said, “Sir, my poems do not undergo amputation. Give me back my book. I’ll publish it in Beirut” (108). Khaled has come convinced that “after all, civil servants have traded their manhood for the job!” (54). Ziyad’s straight attitude is such a turning point in Khaled’s life that he confesses: “it was my job to spy on the alphabet and excise the occasional word. What others wrote was my sole responsibility. I felt ashamed inviting a writer to my office to persuade them to remove an idea or opinion that I shared” (108). Khaled got what he calls a slap from Ziyad to finally get reawakened to the saddening truth that an Algerian generation of veterans becoming active players in the neocolonial game.

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In *Season*, the nameless narrator casts doubt on the extent to which the Sudan is factually independent since the metropole still holds a potent influence on the ex-colonized countries. It is for this reason that still today the Africans in power are loyal to the external authority in Europe and to their own interests not to the African community. These neocolonial trajectories developed a sense of schizophrenic pragmatism within the neocolonizers. This schizophrenic rift between, what the neocolonizers say and what they do, can be clearly seen in the utopian addresses delivered by one the ministers of education in *Season*. The narrator quotes:

No contradiction must occur between what the student learns at school and between the reality of the life of the people. Everyone who is educated today wants to sit at a comfortable desk under a fan and live in an air-conditioned house surrounded by a garden, coming and going in an American car as wide as the streets. If we do not tear out this disease by the roots we shall have with us a bourgeoisie that is no way connected with the reality of our life, which is more dangerous to the future of Africa than imperialism itself. (119-120)

The minister's claims and conception for a necessity to elaborate a harmony between what African students learn in schools and the way they engage with the lived reality, is diametrically opposed to the minister's deeds. This very minister, effectively, "escapes during the summer months from Africa to his villa on Lake Lucerne and that his wife does her shopping at Harrods in London, from where the articles are flown to her in a private plane" (Salih 120). On the corruption of the elites Frantz Fanon asserts that "scandals are numerous, ministers grow rich, their wives doll themselves up, the members of parliament feather their nests and there is not a soul down to the simple policeman or the customs officer who does not join in the great procession of corruption" ("National Consciousness" 186).

What is more, the actions taken by the elite gives evidence that neocolonialism is a continued survival of the colonial system in independent African states. To support the claim, Matigari exact the logic of neocolonialists: "In our land today lies are decreed to be the truth, and the truth is decreed to be a lie. Theft and corruption have become the order of the day.

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That is what people pride themselves on” (137-138). Corruption in this sense is another face to colonial injustices. In *Season* the narrator goes on to say that:

the members of his [the minister’s] delegation themselves openly say that he is corrupt and takes bribes, that he has acquired whole estates, has set up businesses and amassed properties, has created a vast fortune from the sweat dripping from the brows of wretched, half-naked people in the jungle? *Such people are concerned only with their stomachs and their sensual pleasures.* There is no justice or moderation in the world. (Salih 120 *My emphasis*)

In an interior monologue, the narrator wonders about Mahjoub’s reaction to the shocking facts about the African postcolonial ruling systems. This certainly goes beyond the painful realities that the African neocolonial leaders’ loyalties are to their colonial masters not their African communities, to include selfish and self-centered ruling elites. Africa’s neocolonial governors grow more concerned about their appearances rather than being worried about the ways to come to terms with the effects of colonialism. The narrator describes the neocolonial rulers of Africa:

He [Mahjoub] will not believe the facts the new rulers of Africa, smooth of face, lupine of mouth, their hands gleaming with rings and precious stones, exuding perfume from their cheeks, in white, blue, black and green suits of fine mohair and expensive silk rippling on their shoulders like the fur of Siamese cats, and with shoes that reflect the light from chandeliers and squeak as they tread on marble. (118-19)

Matigari lays bare the neocolonialist domineering impositions on women who are forced to follow their way to delinquency. Frustrated of the post-independence hard times, Guthera is a mouthpiece of thousands of Kenyan women, whose destination becomes the bar to sell their bodies to earn money to feed their destitute and hungry families. When Matigari enters the bar, he gets startled with the number of women there. He asks Muriuki, “so now women work in bars?” (25) This question draws the attention to the seismic upheavals that socio-economic neocolonialism impacts upon the values and lifestyles of the Gĩkũyũ culture. Muriuki goes on to say that “women work everywhere [...] They sweep the factories, cut grass in the fields, pick tea, coffee and pyrethrum and clean all the slime from the smelly drains and gutters”

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(25). The worst, most of Gĩkũyũ women turned out to be hunters of men, which translates a prostituted economy. Oliver Lovesey states that Guthera's sexual exploitation represents the country's neocolonial plunder and her break of the eleventh commandment is a sort of a second struggle against neocolonialism (Lovesey "Writing the female subject" 154- 57). In this situation, the Indian scholar Sourav Kumar Nag points out that "Guthera symbolizes the "prostituted economy [...] of Kenya terrible dependent on the imperialist powers" (149). Neocolonialism broadened the postcolonial shift in women values and this is a strong sign of cultural deterioration.

The neocolonial schizophrenia and demagogic discourse also manifests itself in *Matigari* in such a way woman is at the crux of the subject matter. Banking heavily on dramatic irony, Ngũgĩ brings the reader to a high level of absurdity, pointing out the discrepancy between the postcolonial lived realities and the way things are thought or expected to be. In the bar, Guthera and the other women intently listen to a radio show "the housewives program". The presenter talks about the opening of the annual general meeting of the Women's Development Association. Kicking off the meeting and addressing women, the wife of the minister's for Truth and Justice, laments: "adultery and drunkenness were the principal evils behind the destruction of many homes in the country. All women [are] urged to take refuge in the safety of the church and to stop competing with their husbands in drinking and adultery. Women were the corner-stones of the home" (*Matigari* 27).

From the words of the minister's, it goes without saying, women are bedrock of human society. What has gone unnoticed, nevertheless, is that the same government pushes women to the confines of prostitution and drunkenness. Guthera sadly admits the fact all women frequenting the bar lost their souls a long time ago (*Matigari* 39), but at the same time she feels surprised to find minister's wife making love with her chauffeur. It has become evident that the minister's wife is a demagogue, who plays on exciting people's emotions

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rather than admitting the current problems and suggesting good ideas and practical solutions. There is wide a gap between reality and the image promoted by a demagogic ideology to dominate the neocolonized.

Gĩkũyũ women were and still the keystones of the Gĩkũyũ tribal society and they have traditionally played vital roles in the community. This ranges from giving birth to children that was seen as a religious obligation to bringing up children and maintaining the family. They also worked on plantations to help their husbands. Thus, their major responsibility was preserving the family that is a basic unit in the Gĩkũyũ tribal society. And during the Mau Mau revolt, the Gĩkũyũ women were patriots struggling side by side with men against the colonizer. Soon after independence, neocolonialism tremendously changed women's prominence and more importantly, it changed the cultural traditions.

Within a situational ironic tone, Tayeb Salih asserts factual truth that rejects and refutes the postcolonial elite's narrow perception of independence dynamics. The African postcolonial leaders namely build edifices and give them catchy names related to independence. For instance, the conference organized by the Ministry of Education, is held in the Independence Hall that the government built for the purpose. With no regards of difficult situation characterizing the lives of millions of Sudanese, the neocolonial system did not feel embarrassed to spend more than a million pounds to construct:

An imposing edifice of stone, cement, marble and glass, constructed in form of a complete circle and designed in London, its corridors of white marble brought from Italy and the windows made up of small pieces of colored glass skillfully arranged in a framework of teak. The floor of the main hall was covered with fine Persian carpets, while the ceiling was in the form of a gilded dome; on all sides chandeliers hung down, each the size of a large camel. The platform on which the Ministers of Education in Africa took it in turns to stand for nine whole days was of red marble like that of Napoleon's tomb at Les Invalides, its vast ebony surface smooth and shiny. On the walls were oil paintings, and facing the main entrance was a vast map of Africa fashioned in colored mosaic, each country in a different color. (Salih119)

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In postcolonial Algeria, the Schizophrenic line and demagogic thought of the Algerian officials does not differ much from demagogic mask in African America, the Sudan, or Kenya as shown in the novels. In *The Bridges*, fake revolutionaries seem to monopolize the most elementary right to fallaciously theorize about revolutions, while honest revolutionaries are unexpectedly marginalized. While the neocolonials in *Season* independence can be reduced to constructing a building, revolutions in *The Bridges* have increasingly become evacuated of their real meaning as erecting edifices or planting a handful of trees become exceptionally synonymous with revolution: “only the Arabs erect buildings and call the walls a revolution. They take land from one person to give to another and call that a revolution” (107). In a narrower sense, Algeria is governed from distant and while recognizing these and other inadequacies, the country can never be a culturally safe home for its native outsiders unless it goes back to “Africa with no retour, or return, to France; it demands that any bridges linking the nation to its colonial antecedent be cut” (Shaden 98). The expatriation that colonialism and practices of neocolonialism produce extreme sense of alienation. The neocolonial ruling systems, in some sense, have grown contaminated with historical amnesia, which make African-America, the Sudan, Kenya and Algeria anything but favorable for displacement.

2. Common Routes and Divided Roots: Displacement of the Subaltern

The study has shown thus far that discourses of mimicry and neocolonialism have been too dangerous to the construction of postcolonial individual’s identity and so they are impactful on the construction of postcolonial nation-state. Nevertheless, the sense of nationalist belonging is relentlessly being hampered also by displacement.

As a vibrant issue in the postcolonial sphere, displacement is one of the central areas of focus in this research. In the context of the current study, however, it is important to know that displacement— positively or negatively— affects the national fabric. In post-colonial framework, nation building has been, and is still being, ceaselessly disturbed by the cultural

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disarray, the thing that entails a constant reworking of national discourse in order to realize identity balance. In similar vein, Akram Al Deek points out:

Displacement also troubles the ideas of citizenship and national belonging and offers to the noncitizen the freedom to be “out of place,” out of the familiar and status quo, which opens doors for cultural translation and filtration. Displacement falls therefore somewhere between nationalism [...] and nomadology [...], allowing critical and aesthetic distance and balancing the central authority between past and present, tradition and modernity, by translating (between) them. (01)

The inception of modernity and postmodernity radically transformed the way people perceive and experience place. And since postmodernism coincided with a wave of decolonization, place and displacement witnessed philosophical reassessments. Engendered whether by colonialism or modernism, displacement is endemic to the modern novel, be it African or African-American. Burdened with colonial history, postcolonial writers found themselves heavily preoccupied with the politics of home and national belonging. Not surprisingly, displacement emerged as a fundamental question in the realm of postcolonial literature. Much of its vitality comes from the importance of place as crucial component in the identity formation process. Space and location are also relevant because of the enormous range of ramifications that displacement leaves on the lives of an ever-increasing number of people worldwide. Its centrality in addition stems from the consideration that “the separation of people from their native culture either through physical dislocation (as refugees, immigrants, migrants, exiles, or expatriates) or the colonizing imposition of a foreign culture—is one of the most formative experiences of our century” (Bammer xi). The post-colonial human psyche and collective sense of national belonging are, otherly stated, affected.

Displacement refers explicitly to the act of moving or being sent out of the natural or native place to an entirely new one. Either voluntary or forcible, displacement is perceived to take several patterns, depending on the circumstantial contexts within which it occurs. Forms of displacement may encompass: migration, journey, relocation, exile, diaspora, mass

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departure, removal, deportation, travel, imprisonment, escaping. All of these are some distinguished sorts of displacement.

In a specifically postcolonial context, displacement is deemed as a crucial notion that applies to all diasporic sites. Whether physical, social or cultural, displacement opens up the most absorbing questions *vis-à-vis* belonging, nativism, alterity and alienation of the individual. Creative writing, the postcolonial novel most notably, undertakes the expression of the human experience of displacement. In similar framework, the fictional “representations of displacement function as powerful tropes in the cultural production of modernisms” (Kaplan 28). So while mapping out the dynamics of place and displacement, in the novels under study, the “out of place” characters are usually seen in a situation that sounds unsuitable for their state of being. Displacement, in this regard, is heavily reflected in such a way a reliable interpretation of the postcolonial crisis of identity is propounded.

In the United States, the Negro’s condition has been largely one of perennial displacement over three hundred years. Such historical instances informed *Native Son* in that the novel offers an eyewitness account of the lives of the displaced African-Americans. It provides a sharp analysis of the political, economic and psychological effects of their displacement. The reader of *Native Son* will not find it hard to apprehend that the protagonist Bigger Thomas is a product of a long cycle of displacement. In his **Foreward** to *Race and Displacement Nation, Migration, and Identity in the Twenty-First Century*, Houston A. Baker Jr. proclaims:

Native Son is an ethical, expressive, resistive *explication* of the transatlantic slave trade written as a novel of black urban existence. It is situated, that is to say, at the point of diasporic displacement and strategic entanglement... [*Native Son*] is a psychologically resonant representation of race and displacement. (x-xi)

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As all blacks in America, Bigger holds within him a caustic seed of a spatial displacement that started three centuries ago. Houston Baker in his seminal essay: “Richard Wright and the Dynamics of Place in Afro-American Literature,” stresses that

PLACE as an Afro-American portion of the world begins in a European DISPLACEMENT of bodies for commercial purposes. Commodification of human beings meant the relationships of property, not free, human, personal relations marked the spaces between Europeans and Africans” (“Wright and the Dynamics of Place” 91).

Isabel Soto on other hand argues that “while no longer subjected to plantation slavery, Bigger instinctually grasps the privileged role of the (white) controlling gaze inherent to the racialized space(s) he successively occupies” (76). The first immediate bearing of the geographical displacement on thousands of blacks from their ancestral land is the rise of multiple versions of “Bigger Thomases” in the New World. His ancestors, otherwise stated, were enslaved in Africa and against their will, were displaced.

Once arrived in the New World, Negroes worked in the plantation as indentured servants in the south. Living under the shadow of physical displacement, several “Bigger Thomases” had to endure traumatic transition. Survival depended much on their ability to withstand the unbearable condition imposed by the peculiar institution of slavery, wherein white culture supremacy dominated the south. In escaping the harsh forms of exploitation, some African-Americans fled the south as fugitives to the negrophilic north. The Negro second displacement can be seen as facultative dislocation that only ended their slavery formally, but it contributed to the rise a new form of alienation. Racism came to prevail the life of blacks in the north.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) –issued during the Civil War– liberated Bigger Thomases from slavery, but the blacks became embroiled in discrimination. Wright’s exceptional character Bigger experiences several layers of displacement. The African-Americans’ uprootedness is certainly exacerbated by a diasporic movement

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northwards. What I want to argue here is that the protagonists of Wright, Salih and Mosteghanemi take common route towards the north. The texts approach artistically the shock ensuing from the physical displacement and the character's tendency to go along with it. In *Native Son*, the onset of Bigger's displacement in the text manifests itself in his family's movement from the south toward the north after his father had been killed in a riot. In search for new horizons, moving north is intended primarily to escape the Jim Crow constraints. Valerie Sweeney Prince states:

during the early part of the [twentieth] century, America witnessed the largest mass migration in history. African Americans left the South looking for opportunity promised by the industrial North. The North did offer relief from the despotism of Jim Crow, which was ruthlessly enforced by mob violence, but poverty and racism also awaited the migrants in northern cities .(01)

Exactly like Mustafa Sa'eed in *Season*, Bigger's departure from the South is perilous journey towards the unknown north and his arrival to the city is still another area of contest. As a displaced subject, Bigger experiences fragmentation in such a way he is made the product of an initial interaction between Negro migration and the urban landscape. Though the experiences of Bigger Thomas, Mustafa Sa'eed and Mosteghanemi's protagonist Khaled may sound different, but what appears stimulating is their common form of cultural displacement. Just as a plant uprooted from its original soil to be replanted in a completely different environment, the dislocated protagonists encountered the complexity to adapt to the new conditions. The north, the city to be exact, is not the space that might ease Bigger's transition. Wright's novel a new window that affords an artistic definition of black awareness and a stern consideration of the Negro's psyche. The narrative features Bigger's exposition to an unaccustomed space and time.

Wright explores the consciousness and psyche of the black migrant in greater depth than any other artist. He is therefore central to any discussion of the migration narrative. In his [...] *Native Son*, Wright illustrates the varying ways the experience of migration affects black men. His migrants

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are not only thrown into an unfamiliar space, but they are also in an unfamiliar time. (Griffin 69)

As displacement narrative, *Native Son* demonstrates that Bigger's displacement is not merely engendered by the historical enslavement of his grandfathers in Africa, but it was widened over the course of the cultural displacement that systematically shook the very foundations of his identity. In this case, Bigger grows up between two cultures, living on borders and in margins of homeland. Most importantly, the displaced Bigger undergoes a sense of double-displacement, to wit: geographical or physical and spiritual or cultural to be exact.

However, it is argued here that Bigger's displacement does not only relate to his being forced to confront a deep sense of cultural loss, national alienation, and psychological disorientation, but his sense displacement is heightened by his flight as soon as a white pressman had discovered Mary's unburned bones. Interesting is the idea that the novel's Book II is entitled flight. Wright dramatizes the racial displacement of African-Americans through Bigger's flight from the south belt to a psychological belt that is created in the American imagination. It is certainly an escapism from heart of blackness to the heart of whiteness, or it is rather "an escape into the subterranean side of his own nature, an exploration into his own inner "heart of darkness" (Bluefarb 135-36)

In *Native Son*, the tragic flight of Bigger Thomas helps Wright chronicle the crisis of displacement. The text evokes the reader's mixed emotions— vacillating between hatred and sympathy— toward Bigger who is confronted not only by the white looming force in his pursuit but also by nature. The streets are covered with a thick blanket of snow, which hinders Bigger and Bessie quest for an abandoned flat to hide (*Native Son* 281). Both Bigger and Bessie "went into the snow, over the frozen streets, through the sweeping wind [...] They stopped in front of a tall, snow-covered building whose many windows gaped blackly, like the eye-sockets of empty skulls" (*Native Son* 261). Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* calls

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attention to the meaning of snow especially for those who own shelter: “Snow gives a single color to the entire universe which, with the one word, snow, is both expressed and nullified for those who have found shelter” (Bachelard 39).

Bigger eludes the massive manhunt for as long as he can, but he is eventually captured after a dramatic shoot-out. The consequence of Bigger’s escape is so detrimental when he realizes that Bessie’s dreadful mood and her insistence on liquor would only impede his flight. Displacement constitutes in this sense a catalyst of crime: the first escape ends with Bessie’s murder. After murdering Bessie, Bigger continues his flight alone.

In another dimension, given the interrelatedness of spatiality and postcoloniality, displacement and belonging have always occupied the agenda of diasporic writers (Kocaoner Silku 168). Like his character Matigari, Ngugi himself had gone through a politically forced displacement and his search of a truly humane home in Africa has been strenuous. (Ogude “Homecoming: The Idea of Return” 167). Hence, “*Matigari* is a unified myth of return (Lovesey *The Postcolonial Intellectual* 152) as it speaks to the displacement of Kenyans by the mass influx of British settlers and their native servants.

The novel “is perhaps distinguished from Ngugi's prior novels by its [...] celebration of alienation” (Gikandi *Ngugi* 227) and serves as a literary heuristic model to unveil the consequences of dislocation. The protagonist’s return from the bush to the homeland by no means denotes a celebration of independence. This historical instant, on the opposite, gives way to an unsettling sense of personal displacement, social and cultural marginalization. Unfortunately, the victory on the ground was not accomplished on other fronts.

As an ex-warrior who survived the bullets during the emancipatory war, Matigari fought for a country where he dreamed of restoring the warm feeling of being ‘homed’. There is no doubt, however, the only reality he has to confront –after emerging from the forest– is that his house is taken by the colonizer’s inheritors. The figures that represent neo-

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colonialism: John Boy junior and Howard Williams. Matigari experiences what Lyn McCredden calls “homelessness at the heart of “home” (McCredden 221). That is why, he starts to feel the urgency to reignite the liberation war, where a voluntary displacement emerges as a necessity.

Given the plight of the overwhelmingly vast majority of Kenyans, Matigari is certainly a microcosm of the Kenyan displaced people, who emerged disillusioned with the gloomy trajectories of post-independence Kenya. In actual point, Matigari’s search for a place to call home is juxtaposed with the wider history of displacement experienced by colonial and post-colonial Kenya. Based on his spatial displacement and physical inaccessibility of home, Matigari’s feeling of never being able to find a pure sense of cultural identity leads him to act out in nihilistic rebellion and thus becomes the outsider, who possesses the critical national consciousness. This national consciousness stems from the idea that space, goes beyond the physical dimension, to connote also a “psychological need, a social perquisite, and even a spiritual attribute” (Tuan 58) for human beings. The same national consciousness turns into a destabilizing factor of the ruling system. Then under all circumstances, Matigari becomes wanted.

James Ogude stresses that Matigari’s quest runs at two levels: the initial displacement is away from home into the forest in search of self-determination and his subsequent journeys to a foreign land from where he returns to claim his house and land (*Ngugi’s Novels and African* 99). However, the long journey to reclaim the house from the imperialists and their local servants starts with an initial conflict where John Boy mercilessly whips Matigari ending up with his arrest. Later he manages a successful escape from prison. Like Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*, Matigari’s escape is from one big prison to another one. Yet, the typicality of Matigari’s experience is a long journey to find truth and justice.

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Matigari's unfinished search for truth and justice causes him to frequent varied places: the market-places, in shops, at crossroads, in the fields, in the courts of law and even in the wilderness (*Matigari* 94). He even frequents the wilderness to enquire about truth and justice. However, according to Christine Loflin "the wilderness can provide shelter, but it cannot provide answers (Loflin 91). In the wilderness, he meets shepherds who listen intently to the radio: Voice of Truth station. He had an impression that "the announcer's voice seemed to chase him across the plains" (*Matigari* 86).

In his encounter with teacher, Matigari understands the hard conditions of the post-independence elites. The teacher acknowledges his desire to move to a place where problems as such are not existent. He has it in grief: "This country has changed from what it was yesterday, or what it was when we fought for it. We have no part to play in it any more. I'm thinking of going to a country where there aren't as many problems as here" (*Matigari* 91). Like many intellectuals in Africa, the teacher would wish to displace himself from his original home to a place with less problems.

Matigari's rhetorical quest for truth and justice takes him towards the Minister of Truth and Justice who feels perplexed over the questions Matigari raises. The best answer that can downplay Matigari's determination and wane his charismatic significance in the eyes of millions of oppressed Kenyans is to accuse him of being mentally deranged. Addressing the mob, the minister says: "Didn't you hear him confess that he was a murderer? But the judges have found him insane" (*Matigari* 123). In what follows, both Matigari and Ngaruro wa Kiriro are deliberately displaced from sanity to insanity.

In *Season*, Salih frames his antagonism against the far-reaching consequences of displacement in terms of the experiences of his main characters: nameless narrator and Mustafa Sa'eed. In fact, Salih's title "Season of Migration to the North" is the gate to the readers' understanding of the interaction between external place (homeland) and the external

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one (exile). The dynamism and the movement from the South to the North; from the East to the West; and from London to Khartoum call attention to the significance of contact between the native and the other (Medgan Trans. Mine 145). The author's fictionalized space posits that the contextualized tropes create an emotional effect of migration and exile in the colonial and post-independence Sudan. Mike Velez comments:

The novel's terrain is thus by turns psychic and physical; Salih's spatial language— in particular, its chain of geographic and directional tropes— reveals the characters' sense of place and place-sense. *Salih's geographic tropes encompass depictions of the varying landscape, in the context of "home" and (specifically) the intimate spaces of private rooms and meeting places; these tropes parallel Salih's directional tropes which contextualize migration and exile.* (Velez 191 *My emphasis*)

Mustafa's experiences of journeying north and his deep sense of dislocation impinge upon the construction of his identity. In undertaking a Conradian journey:

The voyage is both historical and symbolic, a kind of Conradian "journey within" in search of one's place in the universe, one's roots, one's identity and what happens to that identity in a foreign country, particularly if one is a Black African Muslim in a world dominated by the White European (Takeddine-Amyuni 1)

In response, his critique of displacement situates the perceived loss of place within the contemporary discourse of a more intensely cultural dislocation (Rahimieh 92). Chapter III of the study shows how mimetic discourse shapes Mustapha journey to the North. What is important to note, however, is that Mustafa's journey to the "heart of whiteness" follows a highly ambivalent destination that represents a resignation to psychological displacement. London is a metropole whose cultural influence cannot be ignored. Like Khaled in *The Bridges*, Mustafa leaves his native home to join the metropole. His arrival is yet filled with the conditions of cultural disruption because Mustafa as millions of diasporic subjects were

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“subjected to a series of attitudes which frequently objectified and demonized them, often in terms of race” (McLeod 2). Most important, he has to endure the western conception of his journey as a “migratory flight from one nationality to another [...] as a form of madness requiring rational correction” (Johns 589).

Salih’s critical account of spatial and temporal dimensions of displacement enables him to present two divergent models of the displaced. In this regard, one may argue that despite the unnamed narrator’s desire to familiarize himself with the new setting in London, but the displacement condition makes him haunted by the return to his homeland. In the novel, the unnamed narrator enjoys a sense of stability. His physical displacement can emerge as a complementary source of identity, wherein things are static. In other words, the narrator regards his homecoming “as a return to his proper place, the place to which he can be attached, and in relation to which his life has meaning” (Makdidi 816). Upon his return to the village on the banks of the Nile, he finds out that “the village was not suspended between sky and earth but was stable: the houses were houses, the trees trees, and the sky was clear and faraway” (Salih 48-49). Furthermore, the narrator sees his village as furnishing a background of stability that makes him enjoy a profound sense of continuity and integrality in that he envisions his native village Wad Hamid as if it were a static tableau (192)

Although he lived for a long time in the metropole, but his diasporic identity seems to keep untouched by his interaction with the ‘white Other’: “but I have lived with them [the English] superficially, neither loving nor hating them. I used to treasure within me the image of this little village, seeing it wherever I went with an eye of imagination” (Salih 49). The narrator’s strong connection to his village makes him see it and feel it in every corner of the metropole with a high sense of neutrality. This conscious neutrality furnishes the narrator’s identity with a worth sense continuity and sameness to a Sudanese community. He admits:

I must be one of those birds that exist only in one region of the world [...] I would imagine the faces over there as being brown or black so that they look like

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the faces of people I knew. Over there is like here, neither better nor worse. But I am from here, just as the date palm standing in the courtyard of our house in our own house not in any one else's. The fact that they came to our land, I know not why, does that mean we should poison our present and future? (Salih 49)

While the sense of displacement that Bigger and Matigari feel is a dislocation from which there is no egress, the nameless narrator in *Season* enjoys intimacy with the fatherland that makes him see in the white faces of the westerners the image of his own people. He is increasingly persuaded that the differences that exist between the west and the rest are narrow. Easterners, in a sense, ought not to poison their present and future with dazzle and amazement at the colonizer's mores. In an interior monologue, the narrator claims himself a native bird that exists only in one part of the world and diasporic displacement in this background is certainly one element to empower his belonging to a formerly colonized community. The effect of Salih's allegorical language is more than the eye can see or the ear can hear when it comes to enforcing one's belonging. Salih reinforces his narrator's native identity through comparing him to palm tree growing in the courtyard of the narrator's house in particular not in any house elsewhere. Belonging to a land is synonymous with growing out of its soils to be a native palm tree or a native son, so to speak.

Mosteghanemi's *The Bridges*, on the other hand, attests to displacement, and mobility that characterize life of the post-colonial North African individual in general and the Algerian in specific. Her oeuvre engages the notion of displacement and stresses the struggle to address issues of place and displacement that keeps its intense levels even in Algeria's present day polemics. The book is an invitation to explore displacement in its physical and psychological sense in a work of art. The analysis is premised on Salman Rushdie's outlook that displacement narratives are, in some sense, the outcome of the migrant's agonizing experiences "of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis [...] and from which [...] can be derived a metaphor for all humanity" (394). The novel, in effect, traces the protagonist's

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displacement within experience of the post-revolutionary war and the failure of the post-independence nation to reap the fruit of the victory over the French colonizer.

Sharing a particular affinity with the memory of Matigari's revolutionary past, Khaled's displacement can be traced to the instant he begins to feel alienated in his free home. "The disabled Khaled, in fact, found himself cut off from his origins and unable to fit in a city that traditionally produced fighters and always served as a place of struggle" (Hazem 75-76). His loss of arm symbolically stands as an excruciating testimony for the incommensurable sacrifice he did for struggling against colonial domination of his native land. While Marie-Aude Baronian and Stephan Besser consider "memory as process of displacement" (13), Khaled's amputated arm is memory of a time when the common interest of the Algerians was to restore the Algerian colonized home. This said, Khaled's feeling of displacement is reinforced with his bitter perception that his amputated arm becomes a representation of shame rather than being a source of national pride in the eyes of the Algerians. In other words, his amputated arm "has now become an embarrassing sign of personal pain and isolation" (Stampf 135). Khaled communicates his pain:

For the brief moments that people's eyes were on my paintings, they forgot to look at my arm. Perhaps this was also the case in the first years of independence, when fighters were venerated and the war-wounded were regarded as sacred. They evoked respect more than pity. There was no need to explain or tell their story. They carried their memory in the flesh. A quarter of a century later, I was ashamed of the empty sleeve of my suit. So I would tuck it into my jacket pocket, as though hiding my own memory and apologising for my past to all those who had no past. (Mosteghanemi 26)

It is essential to underline that the post-independence Algerian nation is displaced by a handful of self-interested intelligentsia whose political as well as economic privileges caused the native sons of Algeria to reassess their belonging to a nation as such. In post-independence Algeria, Khaled's revolutionary spirit turns no longer possible or desired. He is compelled either to relinquish his ideals to serve the ruling system – as a sensor and a guard on artistic and literary creativity – or to quit the homeland to uphold his freedom. The novel

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seems to be saying that a real militant in post-independence Algeria has but two choices: death or exile. (Ghazoul Recalling (Af)iliation Trans. 175) In such a climate of spiritual displacement, Khaled shuns all the political posts that the government offered him and chooses for himself an exile in Paris.

Khaled's forced migration disrupts his ties with his national history, war memories and cultural heritage. His being within a neocolonial community that shapes identity politics in Algeria makes him feel even more displaced in his homeland. Here, Khaled's exilic experience of displacement is highly suggestive. Caren Kaplan asserts that "exile implies coercion [...] Exile connotes the estrangement of the individual from an original community [and] plays a role in Western culture's narratives of political formation and cultural identity" (27). Moreover, Jan Felix Gaertner considers exile as a common metaphor for the alienation and estrangement of modern and postmodern intellectuals (01). And hence, Mosteghanemi's *The Bridges* is a post-colonial and the post-colonial representation of the artist in erstwhile colonized Algeria.

Stuart Hall points out that each "displacement from" is necessarily "a displacement to" a new contextual setting" (Hall "Culture, Community, Nation." 362). However, in Khaled's diasporic movement, the reader is perplexed by the ambivalent endpoint: the same metropolitan city and the locus of colonial subjugation. His destination is France, which caused the Algerian tragedy, one hundred and thirty two years of colonization. Repelled by feelings of rejection that by then sweeps the fatherland, Khaled resolves to quit his country and to a substitute homeland in the west. That would be no better than self-exile in a metropolitan that grants artistic asylum to misguided hearts.

In *Native Son*, Bigger's flight is a journey to struggle hunger and cold and to search for a vacant place in which to hide. In spite of the fact that he is a self-proclaimed native son of America, and yet his claim of belonging is denied. Paying a close attention to the

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architectural aspect becomes highly suggestive in the consideration of postcolonial literatures. Yasser Elsheshtawy maintains that examining postcolonial literature can offer momentous insights into the role of the built environment, in particular for countries which are engulfed in a dilemma about identity (Elsheshtawy 21). The search for a space is synonymous with a search for a sense of security and assurance he can hardly feel within the boundaries of the ghetto. Owing to the overcrowding triggered by a housing deficiency on the South Side, he has to search for a long while before he finally finds a suitable place. The flight enables Bigger to understand one bitter truth: the blacks are restricted in space to suffocation. Yi-Fu Tuan contends that “the "big man" occupies and has access to more space than lesser beings. An aggressive ego endlessly demands more room in which to move” (58). Although his name is Bigger Thomas, but he enjoys only a little and over-restricted sense of space. The thing which makes his ego aspire for a wider sense of space via violent impulses.

In fact, “space [...] determines the aesthetic structure of *Native Son* [...] The existential impasse is reflected in the novel’s spatial poetics, which determine Bigger’s existence and define even his final moments” (Soto 76). Bigger perceives what it feels like being bottled up in the South Belt like wild animals. His stay for a time in an empty apartment is soon disturbed by the police search before he finds himself obliged to evict the place. He could hardly move in the snows that fill even his mouth, eyes, and ears:

Would he freeze trying to find a place in which to get warm? How easy it would be for him to hide if he had the whole city in which to move about! They keep us bottled up here like wild animals, he thought. He knew that black people could not go outside of the Black Belt to rent a flat; they had to live on their side of the "line” (*Native Son* 279)

A contemporary reader of *Native Son* will be struck by Wright’s novelistic description that is sufficient to make clear that not only does Bigger’s displacement isolate him from the

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external world, but such flight often dehumanizes him as all Afro-Americans. Bigger's "long icy runway" (*Native Son* 289) ends up with discriminatory shouts:

'Kill 'im!
'Lynch 'im!
.....
'Kill that black ape' (301)

What is particularly emphasized here, though, is that Bigger's displacement is significant because it distances him physically, but it also produces a stranger in that "Bigger is devoid of any human connection and does not fill that void with a critical consciousness until he has already become an outlaw" (Griffin 08). The novel's detailed portrayal of his escape in terms of time, space, and personal experience defines the shocking realities of the human condition. There is no question that Bigger is a tragic hero, whose tragedy represents a real eye-opener to the hardships of African Americans. As soon as the police along the vigilante mobs rush into the deserted building, Bigger escapes to the roof just as they burst into the building. A dramatic shoot-out ensues and the authorities finally capture the half-frozen Bigger. Like the rat caught in a labyrinth at the opening passage of the novel, Bigger's experience of vortical entanglement places him in a complex labyrinth:

After his discovery, Bigger jumps from rooftop to rooftop in his attempt to evade his pursuers, dodging behind chimneys—all part of the experience of a man caught in a labyrinth. For the urban labyrinth is only an extension of the ghetto labyrinth, the ghetto itself a microcosm of the larger labyrinthine world of the city. (Bluefarb 146)

Bigger's self-sought displacement would only sound like an absurd flight from one ghetto into another. At a certain moment, his mind goes through paralysis. He asks himself: "What was the use of running?" (*Native Son* 296). Bigger's "escape takes place within the urban labyrinth that has come to be called the black ghetto" (Bluefarb 135). The novel seems to be

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telling that Bigger's displacement is one way to step outside of the Black Belt toward a world of visibility and consciousness. Displacement in this sense becomes Bigger's quest for acceptance and his strong desire "to shed his cloak of invisibility and to be respected as a man among men" (Fishburn 62). In same context, Griffin Farah claims that "Bigger is able to gain a higher level of consciousness only by committing murders. Invisible Man seeks a critical consciousness in all the wrong places" (Griffin 124). Unfortunately in his escape, every way is blocked and he even "thought of burying himself deep in the snow of the roof, but he knew that that was impossible (*Native Son* 287)

Matigari's escape from the mental hospital can be read as a voluntary displacement from a fake world of madness to a one of reason and consciousness. His flight with Muriuki and Guthera is beyond doubt a journey to recover the meaning of real freedom from slavery and subordination. Reaching the weapons buried under the *mũgumo* tree holds a symbolic significance to militarize the quest of national belonging. "I will retrace my steps to where I went astray and resume my journey from there," Matigari told himself (*Matigari* 139).

Exactly like Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*, Matigari's displacement is accelerated by flight or chase. In his description of the chase, the author depends on power of the word by means of generating the reader's suspense and sympathy. The images engendered in the reader's mind are so powerful that the reader is transported to the world of Matigari to live his spectacular chase. As in *Native Son*, Matigari's flight takes a strong tone with his decision to head to his house after stealing the Mercedes of the Minister of Truth and Justice. Soldiers and police officers are everywhere and their car races after him. They are clearly out to get him. He drives faster than ever before. The chase begins. (*Matigari* 161). He is trapped between two police cars. How is he ever going to escape? (162), the narrator describes. Like the spectacular chase of Bigger, in *Matigari* people see the soldiers and policemen quickly

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surround the house. More army lorries arrive and unload the Paramilitary Shooting Unit, their guns at the ready. The people suddenly understand what is going on (*Matigari* 156).

Although the need to belong can rise above the territorial logic of dispersal and return, Mustafa in *Season* recognizes that his blackness makes it virtually impossible for him to go completely white. Not only does the sense of alienation cause Mustafa to get entangled in an uncanny self-identification, but it also drives him to adopt the role of the outsider, confident of his ability to impose himself as an intruder (Rahimieh 92). It has often been challenging for migrants to enjoy a sense of assurance and belonging in a drastically alien community. In this background “Sa’eed’s sense of place-relation lacks a sense of home or belonging to a group; the duality of his English identity contorts place-sense. Thus, he has constructed a simulacrum of Africa for his English home” (Velez 197).

The western exclusionary discourses led Mustafa to forge a discourse that invests positively the diasporic experience in identity mobilization. Lucinda Newns argues that the discursive claims of belonging among “migrants and diasporic communities often mobilize “identity” as something to be held on to, that gives the displaced body/community strength in the face of a potentially hostile host environment” (512). More specifically, in *Season*, Salih seems to take displacement as course of alteration and regeneration of the postcolonial self that involves a complex process of identity re-fashioning.

Whereas the nameless narrator realizes a strong wish to reclaim his cultural identity upon his homecoming, Mustafa’s diasporic experience drives him to detach himself from the homeland. Ahmed Karim Bilal claims that the delineation of the Sudan and Cairo as two mountains through which the protagonist passes on his journey is an invitation to the contemplate Mustafa’s spirit of alienation and destabilized sense of belonging (100-01).

Notwithstanding the previous analysis, the displaced character Mustafa suffers from the harmful effects of displacement that exacerbates his inability to re-integrate the homeland

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despite his return to Sudan. Mustafa Sa'eed feels an outsider when back in Sudan, and he internalizes his cultural displacement, developing a special mood of disorder, which threatens his life. To overcome this sense of alienation he willingly adopts the role of the outsider, confident of his ability to impose himself as an intruder (93).

Mustafa can be viewed as one of dissatisfied intellectuals of the Sudan: the product of a colonial and postcolonial upbringing. Added to familial displacement, the villagers see him as "a stranger who had come here five years ago" (Salih 2). Mustafa experiences a searing sense of internal displacement in that "to the village Mustafa remains forever a stranger" (Klee and Siddiq 6). Mustafa is furthermore the victim of a displacement ensuing from the relentless questioning of his origins and roots in a Sudan that is ethnographically speaking very diverse. The Mamur, referring to Mustafa's rootedness, says: "it was the nobodies who had the best jobs in the days of the English" (Salih 54). The Sudan in such a framework is a favorable setting of displacement for two reasons. First, the post-colonial community is described as having nothing to offer to a genius brain like the one of Mustafa, who is subsequently impelled to travel north to Cairo so as to accomplish his quest for knowledge. To illustrate, Benedict M. Ibitokun maintains that Mustafa's "intellectual brilliance turns out to be baneful because it makes his native environment too restrictive and myopic to his ever-broadening quixotic soul" (411). The second reason is that the villagers still consider Mustafa as a stranger despite his very African origins.

Effectively, Mustafa's "inability to place himself in his surroundings reveals a profound solitude, one both literal and metaphoric. An intellectual and emotional restlessness spurs his migration even as his land-locked solitude is self-imposed" (Velez 194). The result is that Mustafa is repeatedly seduced by a wild call to journey north again. The fatal experience of Mustafa's displacement makes him cautious to spare his two kids the evil of what Salih calls wanderlust. Nasrin Rahimieh points out that "this wanderlust leads to

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disappointment” (Rahimieh 93). Mustafa solicits the help of the unnamed narrator to “give my family your kind attention, and to be a help, a counsellor and an adviser to my two sons and to do your best to spare them the pangs of wanderlust. Spare them the pangs of wanderlust and help them to have a normal upbringing and to take up worthwhile work” (Salih 65). In affording the causes of a good upbringing to his sons, Mustafa’s thinks that they can lead a normal and stale life. But for him, the reverse also applies. If they:

grow imbued with the air of this village, its smells and colors and history, the faces of its inhabitants and the memories of its floods and harvestings and sowings, then my life will acquire its true perspective as something meaningful alongside many other meanings of deeper significance. I don’t think how they will think of me then. [...] Rationally I know what is right: my attempt at living in this village with these happy people. But mysterious things in my soul and in my blood impel me towards faraway parts that loom up before me and cannot be ignored. How sad it would be if either or both of my sons grew up with the germ of this infection in them, the wanderlust. (Salih 66-67)

In effect, what marks a shift in the course of Khaled’s spiritual displacement is its development into a physical journey in the modern period that itself is regarded “as spiritually orphaned and alienated, the age of anxiety and estrangement” (Said *Reflections on Exile* 173). In view of home hardships, Khaled’s experience of displacement is both a diasporic passage and an exilic detachment. Whereas the first entails adaptability and accommodation to the foreign context, exile– in its traditional understanding –presents it as a melancholic, solitary state that is heavily dependent on the idea of an inapproachable and remote home (Polouektova 435). In this regard, Khaled is no longer able to adapt the new setting and at the same time, he has to come to terms with the impossibility to accomplish homecoming.

Paris witnesses the astounding metamorphosis of a one-armed veteran during the Algerian revolution into an artistic prodigy. Algeria’s chaos of belonging continued to play its game over Khaled even when he was in exile. At a point in time, Khaled saw himself a prophet in exile. On Khaled’s tongue, Mosteghanemi (2013, 41-42) narrates: ‘[In Paris] I was,

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a minor prophet who was struck with inspiration one autumn in a mean room on Bab Sweiqat Street in Tunis. There I was, a *typical prophet in exile*. And why not, when a prophet is never honored in his homeland?' (*My emphasis*). Not only is Paris an eyewitness for Khaled renowned as a painter, but Paris becomes a battlefield of another undeclared war of war memories, of love and challenge to unfetter the mother country from corruption. In perceiving Khaled's imposing reasons of displacement, the reader forms an instant bond with the protagonist Khaled and his bitter sense of displacement that props him against an agonizing journey.

The deep reader of the novel grasps from the outset that Khaled's personal autonomy is repressed at home owing to the cultural displacement. Nevertheless, his physical displacement in that he dwells in Paris is self-reminder that he is in a still-standing-revolution against the new political and cultural order. France reminds him of the historical trauma of colonialism and its crippling legacy. Khaled chooses France as his grandfathers journeyed North in a diasporic effort to move resistance to France itself, once they organized manifestations in opposition to practices of the colonial domination at the heart of Paris. Khaled, at this juncture, feels compelled to get engaged in a serious struggle of a kind.

When Khaled feels compelled to quit the motherland, he was aware of the reality that leaving one's birthplace is such a traumatic experience that the individual can be dissociated from his cultures, traditions, customs and languages. In so doing, Khaled's ties with the homeland are fatally challenged. His reaction to exilic experience of displacement is a work of art he writes. It has been argued that "exceptionally talented people can live for art or science and go wherever they thrive" (Tuan138).

The experience of exilic dislocation has paradoxically become Khaled's artistic investment and a pillar of self-identification. But as a work of art, *The Bridges* approaches Khaled's displacement by juxtaposing love with politics. Hayat's emergence in the novel moves in Khaled the nostalgic feelings of home. While in *Season* "woman stands for the

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city”, (Hassan *Tayeb Salih: Ideology and the Craft of Fiction* 93), Hayat represents the homeland in Khaled’s awareness. “Khaled projects his feelings of exile and loss onto Hayat and tries to fashion her into a replacement for his mother and his homeland, simultaneously” (Youssef 8). Her presence certainly makes Khaled feel at home and Khaled finds his home in her (Valassopoulos 119): “Through his relationship with Ahlem, Khaled tries to recreate his association with Constantine which, interestingly, turns into a nostalgic attachment to a lost city/place” (Hazem 78).

Mosteghanemi’s dramatization of displacement when Hayat marries a corrupt official. Lindsey Moore suggest that Khaled’s unfulfilled “love for Ahlam suggests a failed cathexis (84). This makes Khaled feel being on borders of no-home: “It is a non-house in the same way that metaphysicians speak of a non-I, and between the house and the non-house it is easy to establish all sorts of contradictions” (Bachelard 40).

Mosteghanemi’s attributes are manipulated to create a specific effect. In this regard, Mosteghanemi directs her readers to see how the narrative demonstrates the individual’s morphing into a displaced, split subject. It is beyond doubt that this sense of defamiliarization of ordinary things: the sense of estrangement from one’s own homeland, that probably lends coherence to Mosteghanemi’s fiction (Suyoufie 29). Khaled’s morphing into the strange, the uncanny or the unhomely is artistically celebrated by Mosteghanemi by means of communicating and negotiating the pain of loss on white paper:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile’s life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever. (Said *Reflections on Exile* 173)

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Khaled's paintings and later on the novel he writes can be seen as mediations between exile and home. The novel's attention to issues of displacement displays an acute awareness of the ways in which identities are created and preserved through the use of recognizable modes of creative self-expression. In losing his home and his beloved Hayat Khaled turns to writing in order to clear up "a third space" that enables him to create new roots for himself as an exile who lives in Paris and wants to reconnect to his native city" (Hazem 81).

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the Nation through N(arr)ation**

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"Decolonizing the mind is certainly the basis and the origin of body decolonization ... it is impossible to emancipate a body whose mind is still enslaved"

Cheick El-bashir Elibrahimi

The Negro writer who seeks to function within his race as a purposeful agent has a serious responsibility. In order to do justice to his subject matter, in order to depict Negro life in all of its manifold and intricate relationships, a deep, informed, and complex consciousness is necessary; a consciousness which draws for its strength upon the fluid lore of a great people, and moulds this lore with the concepts that move and direct the forces of history today.

Richard Wright, "Blueprint for Negro Writing," 1937

You taught me language, and my profit on't Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language!

Shakespeare *The Tempest*

Introduction

In chapters three and four, we have shown the negative impacts of mimetic, neocolonial and displacement discourses on both the post-colonial individual and the collective identity. In this sense, these ideologies thwarted the high aspirations of cultural building and delayed the project of national awakening in African-America, the Sudan, Kenya and Algeria. The final chapter will spot light on the role of creative writing– the postcolonial novel in specific–in the assertion of national identities. The focus will be centered on the role postcolonial novelist in communities invaded and pervaded by discourses that hinder the crystallization a real postcolonial consciousness as a first overriding step in nation-state foundation. First, the challenge in the final chapter is, to permit ourselves to read *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*, from Benedict Anderson's lens. The study intends to show how the novel provides a

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vital space for representing the nation as a kind of imagined community. Second, the final chapter demonstrates the way the postcolonial novel allows for the emergence of a national consciousness paving the ground for the national belonging to arise. Finally yet importantly, engaging with Ngugi's theory of language, the last section examines the construction and restoration national identity that is embedded in the rejection of the colonizer's language and the indigenization of the mother tongue.

1. Mapping the Nation through Imagi(nation): An Andersonian Approach

When, for some reason, creative writers could direct their pens to write the nation, literature's capability to operate as a signifier of national identity or heritage turns undeniable (During 138). Though certainly exacerbated by colonialism, both the history and nation-building started to form the most dire challenge of African and Afro-American creative authors. The re-assessment of decolonization project was then premised on writing genuine narratives, whose power of representation can allow enormously the pillarization of the nation-state:

The decolonization project was predicated on the simple assumption that Africa's history, its soul and being had been repressed by colonialism and it was the primary task of both writers and historians to redeem the African nation/s from this act of violation. In other words, narration of the nation in Africa was also the struggle over history. In the nationalist period it was taken for granted that the liberation of the nation was an important precondition for the production of a 'genuine' African narrative. (Ogude "The Nation & Narration" 269)

More specifically, in tracing dynamics of nationhood in the postcolonial literature, there is far more to experience with the authors such as Richard Wright, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Tayeb Salih, and Ahlem Mosteghanemi. Striking is the idea that several creative authors in the postcolonial era assumed the task of theorizing about nation construction in a time overburdened by chaos of national belonging. For instance, the aforementioned names engaged in a committed process of writing back to the white colonizer. In so doing, they

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attempted to play a significant role in mapping the nation through narration. It is precisely here that the role of narration in the evolution of the modern nation-state turns incontestable (Baty 50).

It has been argued in chapter one that imagination is a primordial element in creative writing. Thus in considering the postcolonial novels: *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*, imagination is such considerable force that it enables the authors to map the nation in fictional canon. The Afro-American and African literature was, certainly, created in the crucible of colonial and post-colonial modernity that is characterized by tremendously sweeping currents of chaos. In outcome, the postcolonial novels started to constitute promising terrains of identification along dynamics of the nation. Writing literatures that speak directly that national crisis of belonging becomes the preoccupation of *engagé* novelists, whose urgent tasks involve forging and strengthening a truthful sense of nationalist belonging.

It seems very interesting if not tempting to consider the plethora of postcolonial writing as a nationalist catalog. Nevertheless, the vocation of a postcolonial creative author is not lesser important than the overarching role that a political nationalist plays. Hence, the postcolonial novelists—Richard Wright, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Tayeb Salih, and Ahlem Mosteghanemi—succeeded to a larger extent in elaborating imagined nations. The assertion of national identities resonates powerfully with Benedict Anderson’s groundbreaking approach of nation-states and nationalisms.

Benedict Anderson has also shown a great deal of interest in the literary elements of the novel, the world the novel creates. Anderson studied the structure of novels and their plots in order to show us the way in which these details provide the ability for people—whose anonymity is the hallmark of modern nations—to imagine a time and place. In his hallmark

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publication *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson explains national imagination. Anderson quotes the work of the Mexican novelist's Jose Joaquin Fernandez de Lizardi *The Itching Parrot* (1816). Anderson seems to be saying that the novel delineates:

The 'national imagination' at work in the movement of a solitary hero through a sociological landscape of a fixity that fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside. The picaresque *tour d'horizon* — hospitals, prisons, remote villages, monasteries, Indians, Negroes — is nonetheless not a *tour du monde*. The horizon is clearly bounded. (30)

In broadening understanding of view of the nation, Benedict Anderson gives prime importance to the abstract connection elaborated in the mind of people who may happen to share one image of their sense of being. It should be observed that Benedict Anderson presents the rationale behind qualifying nations as imagined communities. He writes: “[the nation] is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (*Imagined Communities* 6). As a form of creative writing, the postcolonial novel holds perpetually lasting artistic significance. Given the Andersonian assumption that the nation is a cultural construct, the postcolonial novelist's continuous interrogation of both self and the community in fictitious works sets the pivotal foundations of the nation. This is especially conducted through provoking and moving the emotional side of the individuals.

Nations, according to Anderson, are cultural, emotional experience and not concrete ones. Nations can therefore be compared to narratives whose horizons are romantically or symbolically achieved in imagination or what would Homi Bhabha call ‘mind's eye’:

Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of the nation— or narration — might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation

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emerges as a powerful historical idea in the west. (Bhabha *Nation and Narration* 1)

It is not surprising that the postcolonial novel emerged as a vehicle of national self-expression. It retains the capacity to reinforce imaginatively the cultural mores, traditions, values, rituals and prospects of a given group. With its emotionally powerful appeal, the postcolonial novel as one of the most potently renowned modes of literary expression rose to maintain the national interests amid the ferocious ideological tensions that tend to impose cultures upon others.

From Andersonian perspective, nations are imaginatively propounded before they are recognized. Anderson argues that the nation is to form a moral bond between individuals who are not supposed to know one another effectively. They are rather connected virtually through a common feeling of belonging to a certain community. Again, the nation is “imagined” for the reason that most its people will not ever have to meet one another face-to-face; they rather, perceive themselves as being an integral part of a political community of known borders. This community gives an impression that as if they are one family, whose share the same origins, common interests, collective values and above all they share “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson *Imagined Communities* 6).

Within this Andersonian background, national comradeship is creatively engaged through employing a keen sort of literary imagination. For one thing, imagination considerably helps authors reveal the state of mind and emotions of both the individual and the community. Placing Anderson’s outlook on the phenomenon of nationalism in dialogue with other views, one may find in the concluding words of America’s unique lecturer, poet, and essayist: Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essay “The Poet”, a vibrant mediation of the nation through poetic sensibility. Though Emerson laments the lack of poets writing about America,

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but at the same time, he exuberantly reassures the Americans by celebrating America in a metaphoric sense: “America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination” (338). Not very far from Emerson’s trope of “America is a poem in our eyes”, authors of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari* and *The Bridges* build national networks of relations where a strong sense of *familiarity is created among characters who are fashioned in the imagination of the writer’s mind. In the minds of each character, there lives a potent image of intimacy* despite the physically scope- limited encounter with their partners.

Several literary narratives, within the context of decolonization, have come to reinforce the central significance of Andersonian nationalism. Transcending the sociologically epistemic level, the analysis engages with the decisive role of the postcolonial novelist in the construction of the nation through narration. To begin with, owing to its accessibility and its unfathomable insights into the complexities of the nation in post-emancipatory America, *Native Son* explores the sort of cultural nationalism. “[Nationalism’s] most powerful form — cultural nationalism — was in fact developed against imperialism” (During 138) and came to celebrate the nation by means of identifying it along a shared set of cultural ideals. What supports Wright’s claim to cultural nationalism is his rejection to the appealing Garveyist nationalism¹, which “sought ultimately to establish separate nations for African Americans, preferably in Africa” (Bucci74-75). In so saying, Wright places at the forefront the dangers of race and racism, but at the same time he emphasizes a sort of national identity that is molded by cultural mores, not the one based on ancestry or race. According to Wright, “nationalism is necessary from a cultural perspective because it provides the context, the conditions of possibility, for African Americans to speak and be heard in their own words and forms” (Libretti 132). In one word, despite its shortcomings, nationalist discourse, for Wright is a driving force of cultural self-definition.

¹ “Universal Negro Improvement Association”

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It is often claimed that “identity would find its clearest and most profound expression in works of the imagination produced by black writers” (Irele 50). The power of imagination in Wright’s novel helps express his nationalist leaning. *Native Son* constitutes –from an Andersonian standpoint– an imagined community where black characters like “Ma” Thomas, Bigger Thomas, Buddy, Vera Thomas, Bessie Mears, Doc, Gus, GH and Jack are expected to transcend their color-coded world to enjoy a profound and horizontal sense of comradeship with their white fellow men. At certain point, Jan Erlone and Mary Dalton succeed in erasing the racial frontiers with Bigger Thomas and blacks in general via a narrative that gives what Bhabha views as “the sociological solidity of the imagined world of the nation” (Bhabha *DissemiNation* 308).

However, Wright accentuates the stages through which the American nation degenerates from the ideals of liberal nationalism to a state of racial violence and civilizational destruction. Paradoxically to Wright’s sense of loyalty to a nation, where Bigger Thomas has sought to be recognized as a native son of America, promises of cultural nationalism are thwarted by characters such as Britten and David Buckley. The latter represent respectively the private detective and The State Attorney, whose rhetoric is fashioned only to appeal to the emotions of the white mobs’ fury. In a strenuous effort of literary imagination, Wright deconstructs and represents a nation whose very existence is threatened. Robert Bone praises Wright’s idiosyncratic brilliance and his fertile imagination:

If the function of the literary imagination is to conquer new frontiers, to prepare unpopulated regions of the soul for permanent settlement, then Wright must be honored for his pioneering role. He has shown us a nation divided against itself; a gulf so vast between the white suburb and the black ghetto that no kindly paternalism can span it. He has revealed the hatred and resentment of the ghetto masses and exposed a psychic wound so deep that only violence can cauterize it. (24-25)

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The case of Salih is most intriguing when it comes to nationalism. Mona Takieddine-Amyuni points out that “Salih's artistic sensibility matured at a time of great national pride in the Arab world: in Egypt, Nasser; in the Sudan, independence; in Algeria, a heroically triumphant struggle (3). Given the imaginariness of the nation, creative authors generate virtual countries or conceptual nations in such a way they furnish their narratives with characters who may happen to people the same narrative without having prior encounters. In *Season* more specifically, characters such as the nameless narrator, Mahjoub, the Mamur, and Abdul Mannan, Bakri feel the pride of belonging to the same tribe and the same land. All of them conceive of themselves as a nation. Salih’s genius and productive imagination enabled him to give a more objective image of national sense of belonging. Ngugi proclaims that “the chemistry of imagination transforms the quantity of these different images, reflections, thoughts, pictures, sounds, feelings, sights, tastes, all the sense impressions, into a coalescence of a qualitatively different but unified image or sets of images of reality” (*Decolonizing the Mind* 80). In this regard, the uniqueness of Salih’s talent manifests itself in the fact that *Season* is more than a work of fiction; rather it is a microcosmic image of a larger nation: the Sudan. Put it another way, a novel is a world that runs parallel to the real world we live in reality:

Given the fact that art lives on the debate and comparison of experiences, it is likely to say that we live happy moments when we find in a novel our family, our land, our people. The most accomplished writer is the one whose art successfully discusses the intertwined issues of our nation and the cosmic concern of its people. (Owais “The Role of Novelistic Tradition Trans. Mine)

With a delicate sense and wide imagination, Salih was able to create characters from scratch, making them out of the oppressed’s groans in every place and time. And through their ability touch the bottoms of each human, who is in an unending search for the depths of his identity, these characters gained immortality (Al-Hassan A deep-seated Genius Trans. Mine).

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Despite Tar Tsaaior's argument that Salih's authorial intent to use the novel as a study in Sudanese nationalism is a limited success (231), but a non-Sudanese reader of the novel will be transported to the world of Sudan through the novel's significant approach of the nation's impediments without having to make a tiresome journey there. Yahya Ali Abdullah Idriss draws the attention to the strongly divisive issues of ethnicity and originality that have been threatening to tear Sudan apart. He argues that "the novel's use of expressions such as 'slave' and 'master,' 'local man' and 'stranger,' 'south' and 'north' epitomizes its approach to highlighting the fate of the Sudanese people as a nation" (117).

On other hand, in *Matigari* – "the romance of nationalism" (Gikandi and Wachanga *Ngugi Reflections* 08) as referred to by Simon Gikandi– imagination holds a hard-edged impact on national belonging. Imagination in the novel has an innate power; a power that readers have to harness in order to understand the pervasiveness of nationalism. In *Matigari*, Ngugi highlights the centrality of narration in the process of national identities construction. Ngugi seems to respond implicitly to Christopher Miller's pertinent question: "What happens when Africa "writes back," when the people who previously played shadow-like roles in European literature take up a discourse of their own? (217). In this sense, a critical reader of the novel is more probably to reflect on the effects of using a certain language to define a place, to describe an occurrence, or else the character's role in the plot-building with a view to understanding dynamics of the nation-state.

The "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 6) growing initially between Matigari –the fighter who is just emerging from the bush to experience an emotional journey– and Guthera, Muriuki, Ngaruro Wakiro and the children in the car cemetery carries the particular weight of forging an original sense of national identity through imagination. Ngugi's novelistic theorization of national identity is premised on the idea that the "nation functions to provide an "imaginary" coherence for individuals interpellated by discourses that seek at once

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to ground their identities in biology, geography, and language” (Mowitt 171). The intimacy between Ngugi’s characters develop and flourish to yield a national consciousness, whose first result is the collectivization of the community values.

Like many contemporary narratives, *Matigari* engages with nation formation, addressing the taxing politics of postmodern identity. *Matigari* symbolically attempts to reawaken the national resistance via encouraging his fellow citizens to decolonize nationalism. In so doing, the novel is a nationalist channel of cultural resistance to the distortion of Kenya’s independence by the ex-colonizers and their neocolonial puppets. Ngugi’s focus on the Kenyan history turns out to be his royal path to appreciate the African imagination, which in turn helps the Kenyans to conceive of themselves as a nation. Ogude, S. E states: “to appreciate fully the nature of the African creative imagination as manifested in contemporary African literature, we must be profoundly familiar with the history of the African people” (24).

Departing from Timothy Brennan’s assumption that “literary myth too has been complicit in the creation of nations” (49), Mosteghanemi’s *The Bridges* helps map the national landscape of postcolonial Algeria. Building the nation through narration is demonstrated as being an integral part of a complex process, where imagination is a crucial factor in the construction of individual and collective identities. The importance of imagination in the novelistic tradition lies in its ability to give insights into the nature of nationalism crisis. What is mostly stressed here, though, is the reflective spirit of imagination of which a sense of responsibility more often arises. The Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami confirms in his masterpiece *Kafka on the Shore*: “It’s all a question of imagination. Our responsibility begins with the power to imagine. It’s just like Yeats said: In dreams begin responsibilities. Flip this around and you could say that where there’s no power to imagine, no responsibility can arise” (122). A critical reader of *The Bridges* will soon recognize the power

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of Mosteghanemi as a novelist, and her national responsibility that goes beyond the aesthetic purpose to encompass fulfilling nationalist tasks. Mosteghanemi's creative genius lies in recognizing that what the postcolonial community really wants is an author who exorcises the ghost of mind colonialism without putting to risk the existing pillars of the Algerian nation. Far from any overstatements, Lindsey Moore claims that "the idealized nation, born with Ahlam, is here reconstrued under the sign of the law-of-the-father, bearing traces of its own bloody foundations in violence and the repressed narratives (and name choices) of mothers" (Moore 85).

In struggling with issues of identity, the novelist artistically interrogates concepts of nationhood and nation in a tale, which narrates the self through the nation. The work's potential of imagination often carries the reader to the world where the borders between reality and fiction are unrecognizable. Hoda Wasfi suggests that "by writing the self through the nation, by the double voice of body and language, and by combining the techniques of fictionalized autobiography with documentation, thus blurring the frontiers of genres and creating intertwining meanings" (qtd in Ghazoul "Memory and Desire"). Effectively, great novelists are incontestably the ones who are able to touch effortlessly the pains of their nations with the power of the pens.

As a postcolonial novel, *The Bridges* maps the Algerian nation through inserting imaginary characters and events that speak to the real problems and aspirations of the Algerian people. From Bakhtin's dialogist view of imagination, "Mosteghanemi juxtaposes two views of Ahlam: one as a person and another as a nation" (Youssef 8). In inserting characters like the protagonist Khaled, Si Taher, Nasser, Hassan, Mosteghanemi seeks to narrate, re-create and make sense of the postcolonial Algerian nation in such a way memory is developed along a utopian line to conceive a dream-like text that speaks directly to challenges of the nation-state. A consideration of how this particular novel works to encourage

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empathetic responses speaks to the wider necessity of creative writing in building a promising present that is embedded in a sense of continuity and sameness to the past. The American scholar Lloyd S. Kramer's analysis of the sense in which historical processes shape cultural and national identities may provide a hint to as to why Mosteghanemi's imagination plays political and memories in such a thought-provoking craft that readers find nuanced frontiers between reality and fiction. Kramer's points out:

Memory shapes national identities in many of the ways that it shapes individual identities: it gives order and meaning to selected events and people in the past and provides narratives of continuity to establish a coherent identity in the present. Neither nations nor individuals could sustain their identities if they had no memory of the past. (73)

There is a way in which memory and the continuity it provides in relation to national identities assertions is stressed in Valassopoulos' viewpoint. The argument in the following passage suggestively backs up what has been already argued: "the incongruous nature of memory, coupled with a will to idealism and romanticism produced in the text, results in an overwhelmingly dream-like narrative where crucial issues of home and love fuse until the meaning of one threatens to suffocate the other" (Valassopoulos 114). In a certain sense, then, Mosteghanemi's characters whose trajectories and memories interweave with the homeland's hardships to accomplish the project of nationhood best represent and even accelerate the nation's construction process and self-appropriation.

One further dynamic point for this kind of postcolonial writing is especially characterized by a complex interplay between imagination and expressiveness. In this regard, *The Bridges* as a form of creative writing goes beyond the confines of fiction to concretize the emotional or imagined feelings of the nation. As long as Hayat "symbolize[s] a national dream" (Moore 85) for Khaled, craving for Hayat is synonymous with his yearning to national

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belonging. In this regard, “Mosteghanemi draws attention to the libidinal potential of writing to redefine the nation” (82). Khaled recognizes the extent to which the dream of nation-building or “Elwatan” in newly independent Algeria becomes a horrendous experience:

Building a nation proves to be not an easy task after one hundred and thirty years of colonialism, which undermined the native social structure. Disappointed intellectuals, like Khaled, look beyond national borders to make a niche for themselves abroad and gradually the dream of Algeria becomes a nightmare. (Ghazoul)

In the four novels under scrutiny, there is of course a sense in which virtual or imagined communities are invented via narratives that deal imaginatively with the collective experience. It is becoming increasingly self-evident that “the institution of literature works to nationalist ends” (During 138). The fictional lines of creating a nation-state in United States, Sudan, Kenya and Algeria express the power to exploit the mechanics of postcolonial novel in the creation of imagined communities that would rise above the metaphoric representation of the nation to the effective translation of national belonging expectations into a reality. The case of Richard Wright is most fascinating, since he decided to translate his feelings of the nation on white papers to see the birth of Bigger and the American nation. The power of imagination is the secret that may enable him to create “an experimental nation” in laboratory of fiction:

Why should I not try to work out on paper the problem of what will happen to Bigger? Why should I not, like a scientist in a laboratory, use my imagination and invent test-tube situations, place Bigger in them, and, following the guidance of my own hopes and fears, what I had learned and remembered, work out in fictional form an emotional statement and resolution of this problem? (Wright “How ‘Bigger’ Was Born 16)

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Using the framework of Anderson's conception of the nation, Homi Bhabha draws the attention to the separation of language from reality. This separation gives way to a national imagination that allows a national temporality that in turn "produces a symbolic structure of the nation as 'imagined community' which, in keeping with the scale and diversity of the modern nation, works like the plot of a realist novel" (Bhabha "DissemiNation" 308). As artists Wright, Salih, Ngugi and Mosteghanemi in their novels succeeded in parting language from the lived reality. In so doing, they wrote a kind of romantic realism, whose power of imagination reflects what Bhabha calls "the imaginary or mythical nature of the society of the nation" (308). In reading romantic realism, readers would be under the effect of an aesthetic shock. This is certainly to shorten the rift between expectations of nationhood and the frustrations of national belonging.

Creative authors employ imagination to help their newly independent countries overcome the barriers that obstruct the completion of nationhood. Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* stresses the importance of teaching national classics with a focus on the way these classics reinforce a sense of national loyalty, which may culminate in sacrificing one's life for his nation-state's sake. He comments: "For instance, American, French, or Indian students who are taught to read *their* national classics before they read others are expected to appreciate and belong loyally, often uncritically, to their nations and traditions while denigrating or fighting against others" (Xiii). National novels have the power to transcend all these constraints to strengthen the feeling of solidarity among the fellow men of the same nation-state in such a way their human experience is channeled into a nationally productive enterprise.

In colonies that overthrew their European masters, nationalism –as a resilient experience– handily confers meaning to countries striving for meaning. Finding that meaning entails the realization of a change from the fanciful into the tangible. This means that when a

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given country manages to enact a shift from the imaginary into the concrete, the inexorable course of nationalism originates. The novelist can contribute to the acceleration to this shift with narratives of exceptional complexity. In the context of Sudan, it is often claimed that the

Sudanese novel since its inception and owing to its historical journey produced authors who write about their personal experience and others who succeeded in making their imaginary characters 'real' in the sense that one can meet them at any point in time and place like Salih's characters in *The Wedding of Zein* and *Season of Migration to the North*. (Owais "The Role of Novelistic)

Not very far from the argument raised above, in *The Bridges*, for example, Mosteghanemi's imagined nation forces the reader to understand Khaled's rejectionist spirit of the current Algerian nation. Khaled proclaims his real sense of Algerianness because through the novel "he wants his homeland to acknowledge that he is Algerian and to unearth the old ideals and goals of the freedom fighters during the revolutionary war" (Stampfl 136).

Unlike the mimetic works, which celebrate a distorted line of nationhood, many works of fiction celebrate society's heritage that includes values, beliefs, customs, and rituals. The point is that, for historical reasons that include anti-colonial struggle and decolonization in the New World and Africa "Nations, then, are imaginary constructs that depend for their existence on an apparatus of cultural fictions in which imaginative literature plays a decisive role. And the rise of European nationalism coincides especially with one form of literature — the novel" (Brennan 49). In one word, it has become undeniably clear that national canon grows in tandem with genuine sense of cultural nationalism since the rise of European nationalism concurrently with the novel by the eighteenth century.

On a theoretical level, it is argued that nationalism is caused by the increase in literacy. According to Benedict Anderson, the novel and newspaper are regarded as the decisive print media. The accent is definitely on the ties between nation-building and print

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communities formed around newspapers and novels. Anderson maintains: “two forms of imagining which first flowered in Europe in the eighteenth century: the novel and the newspaper. For these forms provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the kind of imagined community that is the nation” (*Imagined Communities* 24-25).

Inevitably, the national role assigned to postcolonial novelists has been equally empowered by the rise of literacy rate, wherein novels’ accessibility means that it is able to reach wide audience. In reading nationally committed literatures, literate audiences experience, in new consciousness, the continuity to the ancestral national legacy. However, it is precisely in the four novels that media institution presence is meaningful. As a matter of illustration, Bigger, in *Native Son*, steals and reads a newspaper, the thing which allows for a self-image formation. Seeing himself in the white’s image is certainly a wish towards a nationalist impulse that is hampered by racial and cultural exclusion. The newspaper is loaded of news about his escape and this gives him an idea of “who he is?”. Hence, furnishing him with a sense of meaning. The novel’s acute capacity to map out the African-Americans’ identity crisis is unique: Bigger’s national gap is microcosm of nationally excluded Black America. The blacks’ hopes for integration, though much desirable, are unattainable under exceptionalist discourse.

Along similar lines, the parameters of contemporary novel prove committed to the nationalist and political interests of its authors. In *The Bridges*, the heroine Hayat is a novelist and Khaled by the end of the novel is perceived to lead a journey of self-realization through an epistolary novel he writes to Hayat: a woman with a nation-like appeal. It is not an exaggeration to assert that *The Bridges* is the best opportunity of a thoughtful dialogue between a veteran and the Algerian nation. On the other hand, the centrality of the “Voice of Truth” radio in *Matigari* as a metaphoric tribune for promoting the postcolonial oppressive pronouncements functions simultaneously as a critical voice to the postcolonial nation-state in

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its current form. Together, the works of fiction analyzed here constitute an ongoing conversation with the literary and cultural engagement with colonial and neo-colonial practices of suppression and disempowerment. In taking up pens, the authors in question meant to pen novels that ignite national consciousness. In returning to national roots, this national awareness is an overarching seed toward clearing up a space for the nation-state to arise in ‘decolonized lands without nations’.

2. Towards A National Consciousness: the Postcolonial Novel as A Tool of Nation-ness

It has been shown previously how the postcolonial urge gives an Andersonian sense of imagined nation-state to African-America, Sudan, Kenya and Algeria in which the postcolonial novel retains a significant role. Imagination particularly unifies the spirit of people strengthening their solidity and solidarity. The outcome of the imaginary refinement of collective emotions culminates in a deep and horizontal comradeship among the community’s members. However, the role of the postcolonial novelist grows much more crucial when the homeland in its weary journey to achieve nationhood strives to enact a shift from the imaginary into the concrete.

The novelist’s contribution may speed up this transference through narratives whose literary theorization is solid enough to interrogate critically the deficiencies of nationhood. It is no exaggeration to assert that authors can change the world with the power of the word. Be it through prose, poetry or drama, the role of literature and the creative writer is not lesser important in the national liberation than the role assigned to politicians. Striking is the manner in which Sarah Corse’s *Nationalism and Literature: The Politics of Culture in Canada and the United States*, pushes the debate over the role of national narration further, analysing how national canon foundation arises in tandem with nation-building, and how canonical novels

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perform a representational part in the process. Corse argues that it is hard to ignore the claim “national literatures have traditionally been understood as reflections of the unique character and experiences of the nation” (01).

In chapter three, the study demonstrated how Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi vehemently criticized the vestiges of mimetic discourse. Whereas in chapter four, with an artistic vigor, the novelists carried to an extreme point the dangers of neocolonialism and displacement. In the final chapter, the focus will be centered on the role of the postcolonial novelists –as founders of the nation through narration– in devising a national consciousness. The national process may continue successfully when the canonical novels function as national valves to protect the nation from harmful ideologies and an early alert system against the national identity crises.

If anything marks the postcolonial phase in Africa and African-America, that is certainly the increasing mood and obsession of their creative authors to reflect an African and African-American need to produce a postcolonial protest literature in which the novel acts as “a vehicle of critical consciousness” (Nkosi 204). The subaltern’s resistance entails the reinforcement of the complex interplay between the nation, national consciousness, and narration. Simon Gikandi stresses that narration has to be a national means and a national end at once: “the liberation of the nation was an important precondition for the generation of an ‘authentic’ African narrative. Clearly, ‘nation, national consciousness, and narration would walk hand in hand in African literature” (Gikandi “Politics and Poetics”451). This is the case of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*, where the authors plotted the trajectory towards a national consciousness whose definitive purpose is the creation of an original sense of nationalist belonging.

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In fact, many of the elements necessary to the dynamics of modern nation are present in the literary legacy of Richard Wright. Fresh ideals come to the fore, in specific, the ideals of nationalism, bearing witness to Wright's avant-gardist view of the nation. The point to make here is that according to Anthony Dawahare: "[Wright's] literary treatment of nationalism remains avant-garde since he reveals what many contemporary theorists have yet to disclose: a complex insight into the deep psychology of nationalism" (112). Given the fact that the author is by no means isolated from their nations' hardships, James Tar Tsaaior stresses that African writers like Tayeb Salih "have been variously motivated by the imperatives of cultural nationalism and textual/critical discourse to interrogate western assumptions about marginal categories outside the circumference of continental Europe" (222). Salih's vital contribution as an artist is *Season*, whose discursive diction "epitomizes its approach to highlighting the fate of the Sudanese people as a nation" (Abdullah Idriss 117).

Other related effects of literature on nation-formation in contemporary Africa can be found embedded in Ngugi's novelistic heritage. Since the early stages of Ngugi's career as a creative author, his "nationalist inclinations are not to be faulted" (Raditlhalo 75). By challenging Western discourse, Ngugi addresses the issues and needs of belonging to the Kenyan nation-state. In a postcolonial context, however, the case of *The Bridges* is most interesting, as "the novel is ambitious in its scope, negotiating a consideration of aesthetics, passion, desire and fear that coalesce when issues of nationhood and belonging come to the fore (Valassopoulos 114). Mosteghanemi appears to be telling a tale, in which the protagonist tends to articulate a new sense of "attachment to the nation as a "compulsive affection" that redirects the love of his dead mother into nationalistic feeling" (Fieni 58). The novel seems to underpin Algeria's national disillusionment and her search for a true national identity.

In narrating the nation, the role of creative writing is to undertake a self-definitional attitude, whose discourse of decolonization is to maintain national originality. The colonizer

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worked upon annihilating the colonized's identity through an imposed discourse of mimicry. Rather than accepting the over-imposed set of western values, the creative author dedicates his pen to fighting mimetic discourse. There is a reverse process of writing in which the Rest write(s) back. Shehla Burney mentions that the creative authors "are a form of intellectual energy that wishes to inscribe itself as a counter-discourse in an effort by formerly colonized countries to regain national identity" (107). In so doing, it is possible, against the background of mimetic discourse, to make a shift from nations that are "white but not quite" or "almost the same but not quite" to original nations that match themselves.

To take a step backward, the ambivalent influence of mimicry consists of its reflection of the Other's partial presence. As a colonial discourse, mimicry is meant for undermining the deep, horizontal comradeship of the nation. In so doing, the West guarantees the rise of metonymic nations: nations whose souls are certainly exacerbated by the ingenuity. Hence, faced with the threat of mimicry the African and Afro-American creative author should write the self. In similar context Christopher Miller assumes that the "African novel will address itself to the concerns posed by the European discourse of Africanism. [...] the new African genre will come to be explicitly concerned with forging *an authentic voice for itself*" (Miller 217 *my emphasis*). In this regard, the examined works of fiction expose, in a certain level of national awareness, an authorial resistance to the discursive imposition. The objective is to reterritorialize original versions of the American, the Sudanese, the Kenyan and the Algeria nations.

At the center of the discussions and the debates regarding mimicry and in response to those who advocate for articulating original nations, the creative author's responsibility has doubled. The burden of an authentic representation, under those circumstances, entails an

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authorial firm confrontation of Du Boisian² Double Consciousness as a detrimental outcome following a process of mimicry. Striking is the way in which Wonhee Anne Joh, – an important South Korean and American author and theologian– elaborates a connection between ‘mimicry’ and ‘double consciousness’: “This double-edged mimicry is similar to W.E.B. Du Bois’s “double consciousness” and is something with which most marginalized/colonized people are familiar. This double Consciousness becomes apparent in uncomfortable, unexpected and unconscious slippages by those who mimic” (Joh 57-58). Resultantly, double consciousness, as an innovation, became in the experience of African Americans, who, though achieving emancipation from the peculiar institution of slavery, still feel fragmented and have no clues of national belonging.

In fact, double consciousness refers to a situation where people concurrently hold two ostensibly inconsistent or incompatible sets of creeds and precepts. This involves logic of ‘the two-ness’, where one has more than one identity due to the fact of getting exposed to two dissimilar cultures or experiencing life in two or more distinctive environments or places. Du Bois in similar context argues: “one ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body” (XXI). So, just like Afro-Americans colonial and postcolonial peoples feel as though they are stuck between two or more backgrounds and then remained undecided. What is accentuated here, however, is that chapters three and four of the work help bring into sharp focus the most

² Framed by William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, ‘double-consciousness’ is increasingly an important notion in race criticism, but it also found avenue to postcolonial theory. Double consciousness echoes Frantz Fanon’s argument of the alienated and fragmented self in his seminal book *Black Skin, White Masks*. Du Bois expounds that the blacks constantly look at themselves through the whites’ eyes. This means to say, Fanon’s work has gone much further in setting the ground for a line to deal with the harrowing ramifications emanating from the sense of inferiority that was/is implanted in the consciousness of the colonial subjects. Needless to say, colonized peoples who internalize the inferiority complex more often identify themselves with the ideology of the colonial agency. For the very good reason, one form of this identification is certainly Bhabha’s mimicry.

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significant indictment of colonialism on nation-building. This said, identity of the newly independent territories experience a deep fracture. Interrogating this nationalist fragmentation, made Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi – wittingly or unwittingly – feel the urgencies of getting engaged in a process of building unified nations. A community, whose individuals are subjected to double consciousness, is necessarily a discontinuous nation.

Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi applied their effort and pen to resist national double consciousness and this helped forge identity for their people. They rose to the challenge of dealing with the divided consciousness destabilized by the colonial practices. Mimicry for instance contaminates the minds of colonial writers, who take the western culture as a model to emulate, and in so doing they push their culture to the limits of power and locate the western culture at the locus. Writing consequently loses its power of representation and thus “mimicry repeats rather than re-presents” (Bhabha “Of Mimicry and Man” 88). That’s how other writers appeared to smooth the troubled passage between the colonial unrepresented subject and reality. This must go through a diagnostic assessment for the ravages of cultural double consciousness.

It has often been difficult for those under the effect double consciousness to construct a sense of self or a sense of the nation. When, for some reason, the postcolonial peoples find themselves trapped between two cultures, two environments, and two pasts, they would forge hyphenated identities. This means living within two fluctuating identity forces; the image that one constructs about himself and the image the others construct about him. There is no question that double consciousness would cause the erstwhile colonized and their imagined communities to oscillate between identity shift and identity theft. Amid the existential crisis, national identity does not merely emerge fragmentary, but also replete with paradoxes.

Not very far from the mimetic fault-lines that divide national feelings and delay the nation-formation, the investigation illuminates the way Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and

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Mosteghanemi steered their literary trajectory towards reconstituting a community that is less affected by the germ of western violence. The four novels bring to the surface the dangers of inherited violence in such a way that it enhances national consciousness. Historically speaking, violence has been and still a destructive machine that undermines any sense that the nation. The postcolonial societies are looked at as too violent and uncivilized. So the authorial counter-discourse of writing back in this regard means fighting back to refute these patronizing allegations and to erase the deleterious ideas of the Africans and Afro-Americans often propagated by the European imperial ideology.

One cause why the postcolonial novel retains such representational power is its heteroglossic nature. Heteroglossia is a typically Bakhtinian term that appeared in Mikhail Bakhtin's important essay "Discourse in the Novel" (1934–1935). Heteroglossia is related to the multiple and diverse discourses competing within the same novel. Taking into account Bakhtin's view, the postcolonial novel clears up spaces for the many silenced voices in the novel to be heard. Bakhtin contends that the power of the novel usually arises in the coexistence of and collision between various types of discourses and voices. Bakhtin asserts:

Heteroglossia, once incorporated into the novel (whatever the forms for its incorporation), is *another's speech in another's language*, serving to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. Such speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. (324)

In the novels under study, the voices of characters, the speech of narrators and even the speech of the authors hold such dynamic power not only to denounce violence for instance, but to channel the violent impulses in their fiction into a societal awareness of what may happen if silencing and eliminating the other's voice persists. In this sense, the linguistic vigor of the novels lies in its ability to express the conflicting voices through vivid portrayal to

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different features of the novel's discourse. Hence, the creative authors help preclude the eruption of violence in the countries in question. The heterogeneous nature of the novel and the nation demands that the fulfilment of aspiration for nationhood can be only negotiated within peace and dialogue. In putting their views to paper, the role of the novelists can be more important than the one attributed to politicians. Of course, there is a certain sense in which novels enable novelists to call for imagining peaceful resolutions of serious conflicts.

National consciousness, as demonstrated previously, involves giving a voice to the voiceless. The research reads, that is to say, the novels against the strategy of eliminating the colonized's voice. The assumption that can almost go without saying is that the creative author's vocation is to take a national responsibility to be the mouthpiece of the silenced. The postcolonial novel is not completely divorced from the real needs of the nation-foundation. In a situation such as this, "the representational power of the novel and its ability to give voice to a people in the assertion of their identity and their history is of primary importance to postcolonial writers and scholars" (Murphy "Postcolonial Novel"). Richard Wright, for instance when talking about the genealogy of his mythological protagonist Bigger Thomas in "How 'Bigger' Was Born, states that: "I could hear Bigger Thomas on Chicago's South Side saying: "Man, what we need is a leader like Marcus Garvey. *We need a nation, a flag, an army of our own.* We colored folks ought to organize into groups and have generals, captains, lieutenants, and so forth. We ought to take Africa and have a national home" ("How 'Bigger' Was Born 13-14 *my emphasis*). In this respect, the outcome is to attain a new national self-formulation via the voice that springs from creative expression: the postcolonial novel, to be exact.

To be speaking for the silenced, several of the most brilliant writers began to search for new ways of telling that denounce chronic backwardness and corruption. The novel became an instrument to accomplish nationhood, where power of the word can turn the

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novelist into a revolutionist. The novelist's words are as strong as bullets in combating the neocolonial oppressive machinery. Frantz Fanon insists that a literature of combat is only the one, which brings to the fore nationalist themes:

It is only from that moment that we can speak of a national literature. Here there is, at the level of literary creation, the taking up and clarification of themes which are typically nationalist. This may be properly called a literature of combat, in the sense that it calls on the whole people to fight for their existence as a nation. It is a literature of combat, because it molds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility, and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space. (Fanon *Wretched* 173)

One should bear in mind that “a writer can be a warrior with his words as his weapon. He can be a revolutionist by writing a literary piece that exploits corruption in his nation yet fosters development for his fellow countrymen. Not all revolutions have to be fought in blood” (Lorenzo). Raising national awareness apropos the dangers of neocolonial discourse is an overarching step towards decolonizing the postcolonial ‘Self’.

In fact, Nina Baym suggests that American literary criticism has presumed that literature produced in “[the American] nation would have to be ground-breaking, equal to the challenge of the new nation, and completely original” (125). Inasmuch the former argument is true, it can safely be said that *Native Son*'s “engagement with the meta-narrative of the nation warrants its central position in the American literary canon, whose creation responded from the beginning to a standard of Americanness rather than a standard of excellence” (Fraile-Marcos 120). Structured around themes such as the quest for national inclusion in time of multi-layered neocolonialism, Wright's novel was quick to attract the attention of experts in the American canon. This proves particularly important with Wright's ideological base of nationalism that was premised on the power of the word. A profound disillusionment with

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whites' new sense of neocolonialism gave birth to a novel where different versions of Bigger Thomas would stand to speak loudly for marginalization.

Sensitizing the readers to the difficulties inherited from the colonial era, Mosteghanemi wrote a political novel that encompasses a passionate love story. In such a context, then, the power of *The Bridges*, according to Aida Bamia resides in the fact that “the love story is nothing but an excuse and a venue for the main theme, *the trial of independent Algeria by its children, those who liberated it and those who were expected to build its future*” (90 My emphasis). Within that background, the postcolonial novel assumes a libertarian discourse. Liberating the postcolonial ‘selfhood’ from the shackles of corruption and neocolonialism would certainly serve to reclaim the nation’s distorted identity. The point is that, for historical reasons, strong sense of nationhood could not emerge in a community whose adherents do not feel free.

The African writer’s responsibility is to denounce the neocolonial rulers who chose to join hands with international capitalism in exploitation of the natives. Peter Nazareth maintains that Ngugi is both “an artist and a fighter against colonialism and neocolonialism” (Nazareth 13). In the same direction, James Ogude comments on the extent to which Ngugi’s Novel *Matigari* is a best opportunity of the emergence of a new nation from the debris of both colonialism and neocolonialism:

Symbolically, Matigari’s actions point to the possibility of a national rebirth and to the emergence of a new nation from the ruins of colonial and subsequent neocolonial plunder. Ngugi celebrates this possibility of the new nation, still subterranean, when Matigari marries Guthera and takes the orphaned boy, Muriuki, into his care. (Ogude *Ngugi’s Novels* 100)

The Zimbabwean critic Emmanuel Ngaru stresses the undoubted vigor of Africa’s committed writers as an inseparable part of speaking for the marginalized in the neocolonial state. In a certain sense, then, the African writer should be part and parcel of the nation’s national and

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political re-awakening. He states: “In the wake of neo-colonialism, committed writers in Africa have become the spokespersons whose role it is to awaken the oppressed, to make the citizens of Africa aware of the new reality so as to challenge that reality and fight for a more humane society” (131). The work of the postcolonial novelist, Ngara states, should go much further than writing a fiction that is divorced from the community’s challenges to pen literature whose serious task is to map the nation-state.

The postcolonial aspiration for self-expression, self-assertion and freedom from the tyrannical neocolonial power structures became strongly attached to the nationalist ethos. The character of *Matigari* according to Ogude “is forced into a second war of liberation because not much has changed in favor of the oppressed majority in the postcolonial state. (Ogude *Ngugi’s Novels* 54). Lack of insight into the complexity of neocolonialism among the commonplace people led Ngugi to condemn the governmental corruption and the ongoing economic subservience to the West in *Matigari*’s words. In An Interview with Maya Jaggi Ngugi says: “*Matigari* is saying that neo-colonialism must end because Africa cannot possibly develop or find its true liberation while neo-colonialism holds sway; and a very important aspect of neo-colonialism is, of course, democratic repression” (“*Matigari* as Myth” 245).

Within the framework of the African and African American novel, the nation needs its creative authors express an acute sense of national awareness in order to grapple with the nation’s traumatic experiences. Salih’s *Season* calls attention to the contaminating colonial legacy and the failure to build national unity in a country that is remarkably characterized by ethnic diversity. The novel serves as an eye-opener to institutional corruption and its gross impact in stimulating ethnic conflicts. Recognizing, nevertheless, the colossal ramifications of neocolonialism and corruption on national consciousness, “Salih’s critical approach to nationalism’s idealisation of the home culture and false construction of national cohesion, as

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well as its concealment of such deficiencies as ethnic prejudice, patriarchal power, governmental corruption and continuing economic subservience to Western states” (Hammond).

In the passage quoted thus far, one may understand that Salih seems to go thoughtfully beyond the colonial legacy to tackle hot issues regarding oppression emanating from cultural segregationism that preceded the British invasion. John E. Davidson points out that “*Season* goes beyond a simple rejection of the European invasion and legacy. It offers a stunning critique of cultural segregationist moods by exposing in Sudanese culture the oppression that predated British intrusion” (385). Salih’s literary text decolonizes at the following level. Through his critique, Salih is the literary conscience of the Sudanese nation. As a literary piece of commitment, *Season* warns against internal otherization that widened the national gap between the Arab-dominated North and the Africans in the South. Several decades before the partition of Sudan into North and South, Salih cautioned against the dangers of ethnic stratification.

Not sharing a common ground in Sudan led Arab and African citizens to experience nationalism differently, clarifies Yahya Ali Abdullah Idriss. The Sudanese citizens’ “perception of the nation to which they belong, therefore, is tainted by the racial sense that their nation comprises masters as well as slaves,” added Abdullah Idriss (118). Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi write back to combat nationalist invisibility. Although it may appear, at first glance, that it is an overstatement, but the bearing of a novel when it comes to nationhood, the capacity it may lend to put an end to subjugation and invisibility is more than one may expect. Pratibha Parmar points out that “While writing cannot always be a substitute for action, words are nevertheless powerful weapons in the struggle against imprisonment, exclusion and invisibility” (149). This would allow them give visibility to the hidden

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exclusions. Timothy Brennan emphasizes: “Many of the novels often attempt to assemble the fragments of a national life and give them a final shape. They become documents designed to prove national consciousness, with multiple, myriad components that display an active communal life” (61).

Writing against the oppressive ideas of exclusionism becomes an urgency that reinforces the national fabric. In order to see this more clearly, Yahya Ali Abdullah Idriss highly evaluates Salih’s creative contribution to national consciousness decolonization. He shows: “*Season* addresses the idea of the Sudanese nation by narrating the people’s difference, the process of forging a sense of communion between the nation’s members as well as the national pitfalls; the challenge of reinventing the difference and the danger of fragmentation” (118). Not surprisingly, Salih as a creative author, has successfully engaged with his nation and his literary prophecy eventually proved true with the partition of Sudan.

While *The Bridges* shows Mosteghanemi’s “aware[ness] of the heavy political mission of her book” (Bamia 90), Ngugi denounces the attempts of the postcolonial ruling regimes to depoliticise people. Ngugi believes that “try[ing] to depoliticise people is a form of disarming them, making them less alert; at independence, people were told that politics were now over, and that it was possible to achieve development without politics” (Wa Thiong’o, Ngũgĩ and Jaggi, Maya 246). A more complex form of creative writing may accordingly allow subaltern to reach unprecedented levels of national consciousness. That being said, it must be admitted that committed literature, Tanure Ojaide assumes, should go somewhere to “sensitize the rural peasantry towards political consciousness. It is a form of mobilization of the people towards taking their fates into their own hands and not allowing the national government to deceive them” (91).

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On the other hand, Salih's *Season* rings alarm bells against the postcolonial intelligentsia passivity towards national identity building. The most telling indictment of the postcolonial intelligentsia is the fact that it has become the neocolonizers' and imperialists' tool. The elites' culture of silence and indifference proved very subversive in so far national identity is concerned. Hence, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi would like to criticize writers who distance themselves from their nations, betaking themselves to a closed circle of creativity. Robert Irwin opines that "art without politics is not art. Many creative writers in the Arab world remain in thrall to the idea of a literature of commitment and to the idea that literature should seek to change society, as well as registering the changes taking place in it" (Irwin 22). In a sense, the writer's vocation is no less central than that of the politician. Most important, the creative author possesses a margin of freedom that enables him to go as far as possible to engage in a conscious critical process where nation's elaboration would commence on white papers.

Forging a national consciousness as a first step in the construction of national identities entails, in another dimension, an authorial responsibility to resist discourses of displacement. It is, in fact, the urge to give strength to national belonging that the role the African and Afro-American novelist in the formulation of national identity turns indispensable. It is, certainly, in the circumstances of displacement that the Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi are becoming more vigorous and sensitive in their responses against the complex problems of home and nation in Africa and African America.

As creative writers, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi helped direct the national process by poeticizing the painful experience of exile and flight. While national identity binds the personal identity to a territory, displacement's deracinating spirit fragments that sense of belonging. In the 'nation-in-formation' context, the postcolonial novel provides an excellent starting point for people who wish to achieve some awareness against national

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deracination. The postcolonial novel continually interrogates alienation of the postcolonial individual, bringing to the surface the dilemma of the native bodies growing in alien lands. Consequently, discourses of national literatures became centered around re-fashioning national identities through (Re)canonization of displacement. Of course, there is a sense in which the postcolonial creative author's role is to help "the transformation of space into place through various processes of naming, mapping, description, story-telling and mythologizing" (Viljoen 94). The outcome of this process, it must be assumed, is a national identity, whose agency emerges from the postcolonial novelist's sustained engagement with national gaps of displacement.

Writing against peripheralization, the postcolonial author deconstructs and represents at the same time the realness of national belonging in such a way that it sustains the re-appropriation of national identity. Bigger's spectacular escape, Mustafa's northern trip, Matigari's chase and Khaled's forceful exile are all a self-annihilation process, which connotes an unbearable heaviness of being. As far as the national impulses keep unchannelized, nationhood will be a far-reaching project. In narrating of the self, the novelist, at a social level, narrates home-nation. Within the same background, James McDougall assumes that "If writing itself is an act of individuation, of self-expression, indeed an act of self-construction, which is simultaneously a discovery and a performance of the individual, it is also a necessarily social act" (McDougall, James. "Social Memories 37).

The nation as a narrative is a building of an architectural space for the displaced. In employing the power of the word, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi write novels and erect buildings at once:

Any novel may be thought of as an edifice: a structure either intimate or vast and alienating wherein characters must live and confront one another, carving out spaces for themselves within a cacophony of imagined lives. And so it hardly surprises to find human dwelling places as fictional settings that swell to become

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more than simple backdrops, and make and curtail memorable fictional characters' lives. (Booth 377)

The argument in the above passage presupposes the necessity for a Third Space³ for the displaced. While Richard Wright attempts to build himself and his character Bigger Thomas a home free from the one that “has come to be associated with the exclusionary machinery of [white] nationalism” (News 507), Salih and Mosteghanemi tend to make their Mustafa Sa'eed and Khaled dwell a home that is out of “the xenophobic rhetoric associated with anti-immigration sentiment”. (507). In Ngugi's case, *Matigari's* rhetorical quest for home catapults him from being a minor voice in Kenyan nationalism to a major leader of Kenya's journey to accomplish nationhood.

Throughout the analysis that is meant for exploring the relationship between the fiction and nation-formation that the centrality of postcolonial novel in the process of making national identities is brought to view. The assumptions underlying to national identity constructions contends that “It was the *novel* that historically accompanied the rise of nations by objectifying the 'one, yet many' of national life, and by mimicking the structure of the nation, a clearly bordered jumble of languages and styles,” (49), Timothy Brennan writes. It should by no means, then, be considered as an exaggeration to stress that the novels of Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi are a device for realizing the nation's self-esteem.

³ Propounded by Homi K. Bhabha, the “Third Space” is a typically postcolonial theory of identity and community articulated via language. It has its roots in hybridity theory and applies to a mixture of manifold resources, multiplicity of selves, diverse knowledges, contradictory practices, and plural identities that existing between cultures. Drawing on the previous features, individuals clear up a space that engenders new possibility helping them produce meaning and constitute identities. Making a sense of the world demands that the two existing spaces be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space. Important to note, constitutive role of culture in mind helps to create a Third Space to enable the uniqueness of person's identity to arise.

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Given its representational nature, the novel can be a tool for revolution. It is often claimed that in the history of the United States, no novel has made such commanding resonance than Harriet-Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The novel's power lies in its engagement with a theme that is both demanding and emotional. In her fictional renditions of the Negro slaves' hardships, Stowe became that "little lady who made that this big war" (qtd in Morris 8), as the president Lincoln qualifies her. The role of the creative author, it is now widely recognized, is to transition people from being the oppressed to become patriots: in *Matigari*, Guthera and Miuruki are transformed into patriots. In order to see the emancipatory power of narratives more obviously, Edward Said argues:

The grand narratives of emancipation and enlightenment mobilized people in the colonial world to rise up and throw *off* imperial subjection; in the process, many Europeans and Americans were also stirred by these stories and their protagonists, and they too fought for new narratives of equality and human community". (Xiii)

Along similar line, Kirk A Denton maintains that "the idea that literature was a weapon for struggle gained greater popularity, [...] The demand for moral seriousness in literature, formerly met with soul-searching complexity and profundity of thought, was under these conditions met by the sincere determination to use literature as a weapon in the effort to resist [... invasion]" (310). While Wright and Mosteghanemi's literary nationalism is primarily intended to turn the oppressed into civil patriots. Ngũgĩ suggests that the challenge of writing *Matigari* is to reignite of Mau Mauism: "What I really meant in the novel is that the spirit of Mau Mau is still very much alive in Kenyan society" (*Matigari as Myth* 243-244). Wright and Salih, in other part, employ "words as weapons" (Rowley 74) to create and decolonize their nationalist protagonists. What is particularly emphasized here, though, is the expressive spirit of the words in that "words are weapons for liberation" (Parmar 149).

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3. Decolonizing the Mind Means Decolonizing the Nation: Western Cannons VS. Native Canons

Before moving to discuss the politics of language and the role of the postcolonial novel in decolonizing the indigenous mind, a mind that is already taken over by the colonizer's discursive impositions, it is crucial to afford a clear insight to the relation of language with culture, literature and nationalism in the postcolonial context. On the purely ideological front, nationalism is an emotional identification or a deep comradeship with fellow subjects of a state. This national partnership is mainly based on shared geographical space, language, and culture. But contrary to what views informed by the white colonizer, whose burden is to civilize and Christianize non-white and non-European other, the African and Afro-American novel— as the most elevated form of creative writing— works repeatedly to the question of the colonial encounter and nation-formation.

Given the situation in which postcolonial writers find themselves *vis-à-vis* language of literary expression, the relationship between language and the literary production is especially overarching. In a certain sense, then, Abiola Irele argues: "The association between language and literature can be said to be "natural" insofar as language constitutes the grounding structure of all literary expression, so that the unity of a body of literature is more readily perceived in terms of its language of expression than by any other criterion" (51). In struggling with issues of national identity, the novel finds itself embroiled in complications related the question of whether to write in the colonizer's language or to write in the mother tongue. Central to the critique of language contained in chapter II, the current argument presupposes the necessity for a strategic relationship between indigenous languages of African literature and the African and Afro-American culture. There is, in effect, a complex interplay between language and culture. Language is molded by culture, whereas culture is enormously influenced by language. Language is an inseparable constituent of culture and at

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the same time, language is the vehicle that carries the cultural ethos that includes: the knowledge stock, values, customs, beliefs, lifestyle, and the behavioral patterns of a certain group of people. Most important, while language is transmitted culturally; that is, it is also important to note that culture as a whole is fundamentally transmitted through language.

In a field such as postcolonial studies, Adèle Jinadu cautions against the lack of insight into the detail that “language was and still is a potent vehicle for cultural and political domination in a colonial situation (603). With the ability to communicate, write, and publish, language has become an enabling instrument for postcolonial novelists. Owing the fact that postcolonial literature was generated in the crucible of modernity, it should be noted here that “the concept of “nation” was [also] one of the innovations of modernity” (Orbaugh 36). Amid the storm of national belonging, literature has been playing and still plays a significant role in the national identification process.

Looking upon the whole scene since the early days of independence, one will not find it hard to view language not simply a means but an end itself. There is, in fact, something essentially relevant about that since national literature becomes the intersection of both language and culture. This point underscores the importance of what nationalist role language can perform through literature. In some senses, “language is not only a vehicle of literary ideas, but it also formulates the socio-political and economic definitions of the nation concerned. This is true of [Third World Nations], where literature is in the process of national formation” (Ahmed 03).

Almost both critics and general readers were to gauge narratives in Africa and the United States according to the level of their nation-ness rather than the standard of canonical excellence. In *Fiction and the Colonial Experience*, the critic Jeffrey Meyers illustrates the kind of criticism widely found in English studies of the colonial novel. He recognizes liberally

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that “Europe has imposed “its manners, customs, religious beliefs and moral values on an indigenous way of life, and that the reverberations from centuries of foreign domination constitute 'one of the most significant historical developments in our century” (61). Postcolonial writers confronted with this national challenge engaged in a literary rebellion of ‘writing back’ in order to search for national form that would reinforce national belonging and maintain the newly obtained independence: “The rebelliousness of nationalist writers against colonial writings was therefore most welcome as it facilitated the consolidation of African independence. It was a source of a social collective vision of the Africans” (Ochwada 152).

The main point to be made therefore is that, when colonialism deprived the colonized of their own sense of belonging, nationalism arose to help them reinvent and build belonging to a certain community. Language is one pivotal component that empowers nationalism. This holds particularly true for a good number of critics like the Bengali academic Je Bhasha Amar Áapon who claims that “language is the soul of nationalism”. For good reason, colonialist institutions worked upon the unremitting deterioration of the harmony existing between language and culture in the direction of consolidating the subjugation of the aboriginal peoples and their isolation from their nations.

Interesting is the idea that spirits of decolonization brought about national canon that is ready to defend and celebrate the nation’s language and culture at once. Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi as creative authors strived, and still for those still alive, to define meaning of nationhood in African-America, Sudan, Kenya and Algeria. *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges* form a subterranean rebellion against the cultural order. The four authors’ writing back response can therefore be considered as consciously intended narratives of national emergence.

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It is, however, important to note that the debate concerning politics of language in *Matigari* and *The Bridges*, textually speaking, is more powerful in that Ngugi and Mosteghanemi place language at the forefront of nation-building. What is, for the most part, underscored here, nevertheless, is the critical spirit of writings in the colonizer's language, the thing that delays the project of nationalism. On the one hand, Salih's *Season* speaks to the politics of language, and yet in a less intense tone. Wright's *Native Son*, on other hand, is analysed in terms of its vernacular language and the role attributed to the Afro-American postcolonial novel in decolonizing the native mind. Nativism, it is emphasized here, is to consider Afro-Americans native sons of the United States of America. Their mother language is English that is laden with an Afro-American jargon that sets the differences between blacks and other components of America's melting pot.

It may appear to be an exaggeration to assert that "the day *Native Son* appeared, American culture was changed forever" (Howe qtd in Miller 85), but the novel is the most profound and original creation that momentarily changed the trajectory of African American literature. Precisely because of its capacity to express the misery and the grief of Afro-Americans throughout history in one life, the book succeeded in mapping the African-American novel on the literary map of the American literature. Its effect on readers made critics such as Malcom Cowley and Clifton Fadiman compare its power and impression to the one left by Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* (6-9). A national rather a merely literary, the novel's success changed radically the stereotypical view of whites in America to Negroes.

It must, nonetheless, be obviously indicated that the "relation of Bigger Thomas to America is complex, but understanding it must begin with the assumption that he is native son, a true American" (378). It can equally be argued with certainty that "Bigger's identity crisis is precisely of a "New World" type that emerged from the historical blend of multiple cultures and heritages" (Sengova 332). Hence, in a language, that is his own, Wright

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employed the English language as a political arm against racial colonization of black minds in the US. Politics of language in *Native Son* is fundamentally different from it in other novels. It can be seen in the presence of the Afro-American vernacular in the novel in such a way Wright forces his white reader to accept blacks as native sons of America. Negroes are as able and skilful in using English –a language imposed and acquired by force of history– as white authors in American literature.

Recognizing, however, the enormous interaction of the individual during which time national identity is being constructed, Marie Orton proclaims that

Individuals are both objects of national identity as well as subjects; they create national identity and at the same time, are created by it. Literary canon itself becomes one of the institutions that teach and reinforce national identity” (Orton 23).

Coupled with Wright’s language that holds a political charge, “his intricate language system through which Bigger’s tragic fate evolves” (Ann Joyce 110), to turn racial subjugation of blacks into culturally nationalist rebels. That is no surprise that the novel’s creolized language enforces Bigger’s nativism. An excellent literary scholarship on Wright, by Joko Sengova, has successfully tended to point towards one direction concerning the African exotic presence in Black English. In the process of his explanation, he sets examples of some Creole features found in Wright’s text. For instance, a sentence Bigger utters “You done said that ten times” (Wright *Native Son* 41) sounds powerfully similar with a sentence from Sierra Leone Krio: [b]. Yu don se dat ten tem (Sengova 343).

The novel, to some extent, forges a sense of nationalist belonging in its recourse to African-American English whose vernacular deficiencies speak directly to the nationalist exclusion of blacks not only from the mainstream of the American culture, but also from belonging to a pluralistic nation. Wright’s strategy is based on an insistence upon the difference between an African-American English and a ‘standard English’ spoken by whites.

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In the novel, Wright deliberately sprays the Afro-American vernacular that grants the novel a local color. The Afro-American vernacular is with a special syntax and special grammar. Bigger's vernacular is a syntax and grammar of nationalism. In the novel statements such as: "I can't. I am broke." (Wright *Native Son* 51), "Aw; they wasn't my friends" (161), "What you doing tired?" (162) embody a problem in the black communication system.

Joko Sengova expresses that "one of Bigger's greatest setbacks is an atrophied communication system, a less sophisticated and acceptable sub-code of the oppressor's language system over which he can show no mastery (351). This subsequently pertains to the uniqueness of Negroes as in integral part of mosaic America that is founded on pluralism, but at the same, America ignores the Negroes' national belonging. Issues regarding Bigger's national identity that is anchored in linguistic belonging surfaces and culminates in Bigger's existential dilemma of language. In the Dalton's house, Bigger finds himself perplexed owing to his inability to grasp the language of whites. The words of Mr. Dalton with his wife:

Bigger listened, blinking and bewildered. The long strange words they used made no sense to him; *it was another language*. He felt from the tone of their voices that they were having a difference of opinion about him, but he could not determine what it was about. It made him uneasy, tense, as though there were influences and presences about him which he could feel but not see. He felt strangely blind. (Wright *Native Son* 77)

The Daltons' highly formal language does not only distance Bigger from their world; rather, it blinds their collective intelligence and superior literacy. To consider this more closely, Barbara Johnson, in her critical commentary "On Bigger's Ransom Letter", proposes that Bigger's sentence "*Do what this letter say*" (Wright *Native Son* 207) could have helped the detectives identify who is the kidnapper. Yet, the detectives' failure to stylistically trace the identity of the ransom letter's author consolidates their invisibility and more importantly their inability and to see the linguistic flaws within the letter. Barbara Johnson argues: "the identity of the author of the note remains invisible because the detectives do not know how to read

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what is plainly there before them Behind the sentence “*Do what this letter say*” lies the possibility—and the invisibility—of a whole vernacular literature” (86-87). In one word, Wright seems to be saying that Bigger’s linguistic flaws are his path to national inclusion.

The novel’s power concerning nationalism resides also in its eloquent approach of culture politics. In fact, the political importance of culture to national legitimacy is enormous. Pheng Cheah expresses that “culture’s political vocation lies in its ability to articulate society into an organic community, to transform the masses into a dynamic self-generating whole that approximates or actualizes the ideal of freedom” (Cheah 235). In struggling with issues of national identity, Wright was aware enough to caution against the contamination and the appropriation of the Negro’s mind. In decolonizing the Negro mind, Wright’s power of the word is one strategy to collectivize national dynamics, transforming the masses into a productive whole. There are, of course, problems that arise through conflating culture and nationalism that is premised on mind emancipation in African-America. Effectively, “culture in this sense is a source of identity, and a rather combative one at that, as we see in recent “returns” to culture and tradition [...] culture is a sort of theater where various political and ideological causes engage one another” (Xiii Said). Of course, there is a certain sense in which Bigger is intimately connected to his mother tongue, a certain sense in which the mother tongue constitutes a bank of his collective experiences that are transmitted from one generation to another one. In similar context, Ngugi states:

Values are the basis of a people's identity, their sense of particularity as members of the human race. All this is carried by language. Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history. Culture is almost indistinguishable froth the language that makes possible its genesis growth banking, articulation and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next. (*Decolonizing the Mind* 15)

In another dimension, faced with “the consequences of the fact that English [or the colonizer’s language] is saturated by metaphors and meanings linked to Imperialism” (Cooper 151),

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pioneers of the African fiction like Achebe, Ngugi, Salih and others became equally confronted by the dilemma of African fiction languages. Despite his mastery of English, Salih is one among so many African novelists, who have completely rejected metropolitan languages in favor of African tongues. More than this, his *Season* textually dramatizes identity crisis whose most remarkable feature is linguistic double consciousness. Chapter 3 has demonstrated that Mustafa's exposure to the English language is a turning point in his identity-formation. English is with such a colossal influence that it speeds up his self-Anglicization and Mustafa describes his initial encounter with the English language as a discovery of a mystery:

I discovered other mysteries amongst which was the English language. My brain continued on, biting and cutting like the teeth of a plough. *Words and sentences formed themselves before me as though they were mathematical equation; algebra and geometry as though were verses of poetry.* (Salih 22 emphasis added).

Mustafa's mind can be said to have been taken over by his attraction to the English language. He did great efforts to master it; and it has become evident that Mustapha spoke the English as though he were a native speaker. The Mamur whom unnamed narrator meets on a train ride describes Mustafa's mastery of English: "We used to articulate English words as though they were Arabic ... whereas Mustafa Sa'eed would contort his mouth and thrust out his lips and the words would issue forth as though from the mouths of one whose mother tongue it was" (52-53).

One should put in mind that language is not neutral. On the contrary, it is rooted in politics and its political implications are definitely subversive. In highlighting challenges of an Arab national identity of the Sudan, Salih stresses that Mustafa's gravity to English seems to deprive him of the healing power of the mother tongue. In this context, Benedict Anderson underscores the power of the indigenous language and what meanings it can hold for a patriot:

What the eye is to the lover — that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with - language - whatever language history has made his or her mother tongue — is to

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the patriot. Through that language, encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined, and futures dreamed. (154)

In *Season*, Salih implicitly criticizes Mustafa's linguistic dazzlement that causes a consciousness colonization. The same Eurocentric strategy that entangled the Sudanese nation in an identity crisis because of the domination of the colonizer's language over the Arabic language. In order to see this more clearly, Mamur acknowledges: "In our day, the English language was the key to the future: no one had chance without it" (Salih 53). Pursuant to this highly performative faculty, Mustafa is believed to be "the spoiled child of the English" (Salih 52) and many of his classmates would nickname him a "black Englishman" (53).

Language in Ngugi's argumentative logic is not "a mere string of words. It had suggestive power well beyond the immediate lexical meaning" (*Decolonizing* 11). By arguing passionately for the importance of language in formative stages, it has become incontestably clear that language is a catalyst of identity construction and development. In effect, the American sociologist George Herbert Mead points out that the human identities develop out of a three-way conversation between the "I," "Me", and generalized "Other". The most important aspect in this conversation is certainly language. Mead claims that "the "I" reacts to the self which arises through the taking of the attitudes of others. Through taking those attitudes, we have introduced the "me" and we react to it as an "I" (174). As one might expect, Mustafa's gravity to the English language brings to the surface what Ngũgĩ has always been cautioning against the linguistic invasion of the African minds through linguistic subordination. In similar context, Ngũgĩ confirmed that "language was the means of the spiritual subjugation" (*Decolonizing the Mind* 09).

In another dimension, Frantz Fanon argues: "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (Fanon *Black Skin* 17-18).

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Mustapha's spiritual intimacy with the colonizer's language is emboldened by the reaction of the white teachers of the English language who are fascinated by Mustafa's mastery of language to the extent of giving the lesson to him alone while excluding the rest of the students in the class. In creating Mustafa Sa'eed character, Salih intends to combat linguistic imperialism. In other words, Salih directs the attention to the dangers of the ideological brain washing that has been and still effectively re-affirming an Easterners within the ethics of the West.

Salih's choice of Arabic as a language of literary expression goes beyond his intention to generate aesthetic pleasure, despite his novel's success as a work of art. As post-colonial Sudanese novelist who settles on to write in Arabic, Salih is conscious that writing in non-African languages is faced with the threat of expressing one's own social and cultural inheritance an alien language. Writing in the language of the oppressor does not only offend the African sensibility, but it carries a grave consequence of undermining resistance discourse. Mustafa's libertarian failure is due to the usurpation of his indigenous identity by a foreign language. His harmony with his Sudanese cultural environment is destroyed. Ngugi affirms that "language as culture is [...] mediating between me and my own self; between my own self and other selves; between me and nature. Language is mediating in my very being" (*Decolonizing* 15). In writing Mustafa Sa'eed's national crisis, Salih's national vocation is to reterritorialize the Sudanese nation through a narrative written in Arabic.

Taking language politics to another level, Ngugi is a notable addition to the debate. Owing to connectedness of language with culture, the first is perceived as a fundamental instrument in the expression, transmission, maintenance and adaptation of culture. On the other hand, culture enriches, strengthens and molds language. Along the way, language and culture evolved side by side and in various contexts, none can operate without the other. It is on that basis that Ngugi invites African writers to dismantle the linguistic prison erected by

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colonialism and to opt for the indigenous languages as modes of literary expression. In addition, Ngugi's quest for mind decolonization is premised on "the indigenization of culture, from the attempts at institutional and curricular reform referred to earlier, to the controversial gradual switch from English" (Williams, Patrick "Like wounded birds" 216-17). Ngugi's *Matigari* is the best representation of this exhortation to make native tongues come home. Ndirangu Wachanga hails Ngũgĩ's artistic genius in Gĩkũyũ as it offers him a unique mood: "In *Matigari*, the oral narrative fuels Ngũgĩ's certain fluency in Gĩkũyũ, a mood, which he rarely captures when he writes in English" (15). The novel shows an unprecedented level of intellectual awareness and nationalist maturation. It is often claimed that unlike the novel written in English, the novel in indigenous Gĩkũyũ languages is a tool to fight back the negative concepts of Africa propagated by the European colonizers. Consequently, *Matigari*'s artistic value, it was able to confirm Ngugi's claim that African languages can be modes of literature and hence national literatures can be national pillars of identity.

In his justification for abandoning English to write in his native Kikuyu, Ngugi went further to qualify language as a "War Zone" (Ngũgĩ and Inani "Language Is a 'War Zone'"). Interestingly, Ngugi's "War Zone" resonates powerfully with Mosteghanemi's issue with what her critics would call "the minefield of the Arabic language" (Mosteghanemi's official site)⁴. It is no exaggeration to place language issue in an increasingly hot area of consideration. Language is not simply a tool of communication, but a tool to achieve intellectual hegemony. In Ngugi's view:

Language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation [...] language and literature were taking us further and further from ourselves to other selves, from our world to other worlds. (*Decolonizing* 09-12)

⁴ <https://www.ahlammosteghanemi.com/about-english>

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In these circumstances, the African novelists are becoming more delicate and more sensitive in their reactions against language choice. In this regard, the urge of asserting nation-states of distinct cultural identities goes hand in hand with linguistic decolonization and this certainly lay in the enunciation of new parameters of nationalism.

In his commentary on Ngugi's theory of language, James Ogude suggests that "the legacy of colonialism in Africa had separated the Africans from their language and colonized their minds. The root to freedom lay in the articulation of a new grammar of nationalism that would liberate the African identities from the prison house of European languages and culture" ("Homecoming: The Idea of Return" 166). It must, however, be clearly stated that within the parameters of mind decolonization, Ngugi like many African authors vowed not to write in a language that is not his own.

According to Ngugi, writing African literature in European languages is to pass by the African history. The western literature in European languages reflects necessarily the European experience of history. Having the colonial children exposed to European literatures means shaping their mind in such a Eurocentric way that they grow detached from their history and the core of their being:

African children who encountered literature in colonial schools and universities were thus experiencing the world as defined and reflected in the European experience of history. Their entire way of looking at the world, even the world of the immediate environment, was Eurocentric. Europe was the centre of the universe" (93).

When seen in this light, the African individual will be vulnerable to asymmetrical construction. A national balance can only be realized provided that there is no contradiction between what is taught and society's reality. Indeed Ngugi's decision to write for a Gikũyũ-speaking-audience is a point of inflection in his creative life. He is a notable addition to the Kenyan literature written in Gikũyũ. Macharia Mwangi mentions that "Writing in vernacular

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presented [Ngugi] with fresh aesthetic possibilities that have significantly influenced the style in his fiction” (01). Entwined with its artistic success, *Matigari* evokes the way Ngugi strives to anchor himself in his daily Kenyan life and to make sense of the national identity. The Gĩkũyũ language reveals its expressive power of liberation from the outset of the narrative as *Matigari ma Njirũũngi* means in Gĩkũyũ the “patriot who survived the bullets” (Ngugi *Matigari* 20). The Gĩkũyũ reader is invited to delve into the national resistance and to be part of it. Furthermore, the novel’s orality what sustains an unusual communicative impact. Kofi Anyidoho suggests that “the use of an indigenous African language, and its ‘written orality’, which made it possible, indeed easy for the narrative to be immediately assimilated into oral tradition and carried around the country, “by word of mouth” (Anyidoho 189). Authors who write in local languages are far abler to address a wide portion of society: the peasantry and working class, who serve as central subjects in Ngugi’s novels and plays. (Gikandi “Ngũgĩ’s Conversion 131)

The powerful language discourse of *Matigari* is to permit the reterritorialization of the Kenyan nation through narration. While the minister of Truth and Justice orders the ban all aspects connected to the local culture that is laden with the spirits of the Mau Mau revolt, the masses celebrate them in verbal resistance. The minister demands that “no song, no story or play or riddle or proverbs mentioning *Matigari ma Njirũũngi* will be tolerated” (*Matigari* 118). For instance, the presence of the *mũgumo* tree, which attains “cultural, religious and political power” (Karangi 121) stands for a cultural celebration of the nation. The *mũgumo* according to Matthew M. Karangi is “a sacred tree among the Gĩkũyũ of Kenya and is the key to understanding the cosmology of this ethnolinguistic community of central Kenya” (117). Ngugi’s inclusion of aspects of the Gĩkũyũ culture such as the *mũgumo* tree symbolises a return to the roots and a return to the rhythmic Gĩkũyũ culture. In his non-fiction book entitled *Detained*, Ngugi takes a firm stance whereby to Kenyan writers are reported to have no

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“alternative but to return to the roots, return to the sources of their being in the rhythms of life and speech and languages of the Kenyan masses if they are to rise to the great challenge of recreating, in their poems, plays and novels, the epic grandeur of that history” (196).

It ought to be noted here that Ngugi engages with the drama of language politics in *Matigari* through passages written deliberately in English. Gĩkũyũ is the most widely spoken language in Kenya, but having some indigenous subjects such as John Boy Junior speaking in English is meant for stressing the extent to which English separates the indigenous subject from his community, from his name and his roots. The reader of the novel in Gĩkũyũ will find passages such as:

'Is he all right?' the white man asked the black man. 'Amuse him a little, eh? A piece of comic theatre, eh? I will be the audience and you two the actors.'

"I was ever such a poor actor", the black man said. 'And I would prefer a tragic role. But to amuse you, I'll try ... Who are you?' he now asked Matigari” (*Matigari ma Njirũĩngi* 38)

Matigari’s confrontational tone dramatizes the falsification of the postcolonial cruel realities by employing a dialogue that downplays fiction role that praises the decisive role of militants and instead exaggeratedly pretends that independence was brought by those who truly obeyed the colonial law. Ironically, the words of Truth and Justice minister confirms this: “If you look at the situation dispassionately, without the kind of *distortion* you find with some of those *fiction* writers, you can see that it is those who obeyed the colonial law who brought about independence” (*Matigari* 103). As a writer of fiction, Ngugi seems to celebrate the ways in which texts of fiction are able to persuade their readers to engage in ideological and political arguments with the oppressors.

Elleke Boehmer’s examination of how Ngugi’s legacy works to encourage the restoration of identities in their original indigenous sense through the assertion of a truly

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national culture, wherein people's history language and identity are reworked and reconfigured. Boehmer pronounces:

For Ngugi it is through the formation of a truly national culture, through the reconstitution of the people's history language and identity, that oppressed groups are restored to themselves. If anything, it would seem, his revolutionary ideas have worked to consolidate and more precisely define his Kenyan nationalism. (43)

On the other hand, If anything marks the postcolonial phase in the Algerian novelistic tradition it is certainly "Mosteghanemi's decision "to direct her voice towards her own people [that] is an important context in which to read [her work *The Bridges*]" (Jensen "Mosteghanemi's Memory"). In *The Bridges*, Mosteghanemi undertakes the struggle of writing a novel in which "only language and emotions are capable of restoring and rebuilding a new Algeria. Perhaps one of the causes of our present problems is our neglect, after the revolution, of the emotional and psychological make-up of people" (Moore 82). Mosteghanemi is among the authors whose writings create an unending debate over, linguistic affiliation and national belonging, so to speak. The polemics of breaking the linguistic ties with the French colonizer articulated a linguistic drama whose heated debate still lingers nowadays. Born to a western-educated family, Ahlem Mosteghanemi was encouraged by her father to learn his mother tongue Arabic in such a way a linguistic retaliation is enacted throughout:

The Arabic language, encouraged by her French-speaking father as if in revenge, provided her with a sense of liberation since her family had not mastered the newly reacquired Arabic language. But, at the time, the Algerian society was rebuilding its identity and recovering from a colonial past that resulted in the death of over a million and a half. (Mosteghanemi's official website)

The outcome is that there is more than the eye can see when it comes to Mosteghanemi's success as a female author of Arabic expression. Mosteghanemi seems committed on bridging

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the linguistic gulf so as to enact reconciliation between the Algerian selfhood, the Algerian literature and the Algerian national culture –partially distorted by the French language. In a certain sense, then, Mosteghanemi’s resort to Arabic is a thoughtful effort to reinvent the Algerian self through language. It is this criticality of narrative in the process of reterritorializing national identities that one may read “Mosteghanemi’s use of Arabic over colonial French [as an attempt] to reassert Algerian identity” (Baaqeel *The Kaleidoscope of Gendered Memory* 36). The point is that, for ideological reasons, which include language choice in post-independence Algeria, Mosteghanemi is said to be “a writer who has banished the linguistic exile to which French colonialism pushed Algerian intellectuals” (Ali El-Ra’I qtd in Ghazoul “Memory and Desire”).

The reader of *The Bridges* finds that the novel is pregnant with complications as regards the politics of language in the Algerian literature. Personally, I am not sure whether Mosteghanemi read Ngugi’s work apropos the politics of language in the African literature, but striking is the manner in which the two share the same ground *vis a vis* writing in the native language. Tanja Stampfl stresses that Mosteghanemi’s novel “not only underlines her choice of writing in Arabic but also links language and violence of the letter to national belonging” (130).

Language, as a matter of fact, constitutes a bedrock of identity and in opting for Arabic as a language of her novels, Mosteghanemi plots a libertarian trajectory in what she calls “a revolution in the Algerian mind”. *The Bridges* engages with the idea of a revolution in the Algerian mind through the protagonist Khaled. Khaled says: “I wanted mindsets and values to change. This meant a *revolution in the Algerian mind*” (Mosteghanemi *The Bridges* 107 emphasis added). As a veteran in Algerian Revolutionary War, he had fought with his gun and after the independence, he became a writer-warrior. Khaled’s left arm was amputated after two bullets had become embedded in it during the war. In escaping the aftershocks of his

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physical amputation, Khaled turns to writing. Added to physical amputation, the traumatic experience of colonialism denied him of articulating his pain in his mother tongue. Otherly stated, his ability to write only in French becomes his psychological exile since writing in French in post-colonial Algeria can be seen, according to Shaden M. Tageldin as “an act that would betray the very struggle for which he sustained his war wounds” (“The African Novel” 97). Subsequently, Khaled goes to Tunisia to perfect Arabic. Like the author Mosteghanemi, Khaled effectively succeeds in excelling Arabic. In fixing his linguistic complex, Khaled becomes fluent in Arabic and thus he writes his first novel in Arabic. Indeed, toward the end, the metafictional tone of the novel’s narrator informs the readers of the novel would perceive of the story they read is an as an epistolary piece Khaled writes to his beloved Hayat.

So central to understanding language choice and the betrayal of the Algerian nationalism, one may read Khaled’s decision to write in Arabic as a political assertion. Khaled success in writing in Arabic resonates powerfully with Mosteghanemi’s success in “settling her accounts beautifully with the white page and do[ing] justice to Haddad and all the Algerian intellectuals who were denied the use of the maternal tongue in a creative way” (Ghazoul “Memory and Desire”). To a large extent, Khaled resembles the prolific Algerian author of French expression Malak Haddad to whom Ahlem Mosteghanemi dedicates her novel. In the wake of independence, Haddad vowed not to write in a language that is not his own. The reason why Haddad “was assassinated by the blank sheet [...] he perished silenced to become the first martyr to the Arabic language, the first writer who chose to die silenced, vanquished, and in love with her” [Trans. Mine] (Mosteghanemi *Dhakirat al Jasad* 5). Khaled’s choice of writing in Arabic symbolizes his sheer tendency to banish his linguistic exile and to construct a linguistic bridge with the Algerian nation.

Khaled’s indigenizing of the mother tongue stresses the interdependent connection between the Arabic language and the Algerian culture that is so crucially an essential step the

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construction of an Algerian national identity. The entirety of Mosteghanemi's Arabophone fiction is said to mark a rupture from Algeria's Francophone history and a continuance of the strife for cultural independence. Writing her novel in Arabic is often regarded an act of national pride to renounce the enduring colonial effects and to construct an authentic sense of Algerianness. Language, Claire Kramsch maintains, "is an integral part of ourselves – it permeates our very thinking and way of viewing the world. It is also the arena where political and cultural allegiances and loyalties are fought out" (Kramsch 77). There is of course a sense in which Mosteghanemi's 'revolution in the Algerian mind' is being increasingly praised and hailed, especially when placing language at the heart of Algeria's cultural renaissance. On Mosteghanemi's national vocation, Nuha Ahmad Baaqeel writes:

As a female writer writing in Arabic, Mosteghanemi is one of the pioneers of modern, post-independence Algerian literature. Other well-known Algerian women writers use French, but Mosteghanemi identifies the use of Arabic as part of the birthright which modern Algerians have recaptured from the French as a result of the War of Independence. *Her novels thus represent a break from Algeria's Francophone past and can be seen as a continuation of the struggle for independence in the domain of culture. In a sense, therefore, the War of Independence is still being waged in Algeria today, in the hearts and minds of its citizens, many of whom were educated in French ways and still do not have a comparable range of contemporary literary and artistic works in the medium of Arabic that demonstrate Algerian values and achievements.* (Baaqeel *The Kaleidoscope of Gendered Memory* 36 emphasis added)

There is a way in which Bakhtin's heteroglossic sense of art can enhance the reader's understanding of language politics. Bakhtin postulates that "the prose artist through with dialogized overtones; he creates artistically calculated nuances on all the fundamental voices and tones of this heteroglossia" (279). The heteroglossic nature of *The Bridges* dialogically takes the language politics to another level. In the course of a dialogue between Khaled and the novelist Hayat, Khaled asks: "What language do you write in?" (*The Bridges* 62) Hayat replies 'Arabic' (32). Khaled in excitement: 'In Arabic?!' (62). The reader understands Khaled's surprise that eases with his recognition that Arabic is, for Hayat, window into a

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congenial understanding of herself: “What matters is the language we speak to ourselves, not the one we use with others!” Hayat says (62). Hayat’s choice concerning language, it can alternatively be argued, is a quest for meaning and purpose. She says: “I could have written in French, but Arabic is the language of my heart. I can write in nothing else. We write in the language we feel with” (62). More importantly, Khaled’s love story with Hayat paved the way for his love with the Arabic language. In celebrating his self-discovery, Khaled tells Hayat: “I discovered Arabic afresh with you. I learned to get around its gravity, to submit to its secret seduction, its contours, its allusions” (160). What is specifically underlined here, though, is the redemptive spirit of Arabic, which allows linguistic healing from the deep scars of the French language and hence a national affirmation. The reader is to extrapolate Khaled’s new sense of conformity with his mother tongue.

The harmony Arabic enacts to Hayat and Khaled echoes strongly with the intimacy existing between Ngugi and the Gĩkũyũ language. When recounting his childhood experience, Ngugi complains that once he had been sent to a colonial school, “this harmony was broken. The language of [his] education was no longer the language of [his] culture” (DTM 11). It is at this point, then, that Khaled in essence opposed the French canon and knowingly grasped that exchanging an Algerian pen for a French one is a loss of national power.

It can be said with certainty that Mosteghanemi, Hayat and Khaled’s choice of Arabic as a mode of literary expression goes beyond any personal choice; rather, it can be read, according to Elizabeth Holt, as crystallizing a sense of Algerian national coherence (125). The same national coherence that has been destabilized by the enforcement of the French language during the colonial era and following independence. There is, nonetheless, far more to experience than the colonization of the Algerian minds. With this background, the French language does not only fascinate the souls and contaminate the minds of Algerian writers; but

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it also takes them from their own selves to other selves and displaces them from their own worlds to linguistic exiles, so to speak.

At the level of national relevance, it should be underscored that writing in French, the Algerians risk losing unity, coherence and harmony with their native environment and culture. Likewise, French makes the Algerians lose faith in their culture, in their names and even in themselves. For some writers who tried to write in both Arabic and French to produce a kind of artistic co-existence, it all doomed to failure, owing to the impossibility of “creat[ing] a relatively homogenous cultural terrain” (Bensmaïa 16) which brings together two languages of two incompatible cultures.

While Khaled accentuates that Constantine is “a city where it was impossible to ignore the authority of Arabic and its esteemed place in people’s hearts and memories” (Mosteghanemi *The Bridges* 18-19), French distanciates the Algerian self from the community, generating a belonging crack. Consequently, French threatens to sabotage the Andersonian deep and horizontal comradeship, making an Algerian unable to identify himself with another Algerian. French is an expatriation for the Algerian self, a spring of mutual misunderstanding and reciprocal skepticism. For a long time, French has been obscuring the brilliance of the Algerian culture and muting the authority of the aboriginal Arabic tongue, generating what Elizabeth Holt labeled as a “linguistic distance” (134). This linguistic distance obliterates the Algerians’ native language and widening the identity fracture. “Mosteghanemi’s insistence that in Arabic, not French, lies the liberation of Algerian men and women” (Tageldin “Which qalam for Algeria” 491). Her very act of writing in Arabic is meant for liberating the Algerian word and mapping the Algerian nation primarily in fiction.

In chapter two, the study demonstrates how sameness and continuity are two primordial levels for identity construction. It is of paramount importance to underline that Mosteghanemi’s work helps bring into sharp focus “the novel’s linguistic and national

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orientations as being rooted in an Arab and Arabophone cultural context” (Holt 129). The novel celebrates the Algerian identity along Arabized cultural lines. Namely, the novel evokes an affinity with the Arabic classical and modern literature. In his epistolary novel, Khaled quotes poets like Abu Firas al-Hamdani, Bard Shaker Al-Sayyab, Khalil Hawi ... etc.

Algeria was prevented a complete cultural disintegration thanks to a strong religious faith, in which Arabic language retains a prestigious place since it is the language of the sacred. The novel succeeded in raising the awareness to national identity construction in language discourse. The author celebrates the successful reforms of Chiekh Ben Badis, which fueled the Algerian war of independence and contributed by independence though its potent influence to mind emancipation. As a marker of national identity, the Arabic language becomes an efficient weapon against Francophony whose new waves of Gallicization and westernization intensify after Arabization project began to bear national fruits. In the ceremony given by the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature organizing committee in Cairo in 1998, Mosteghanemi delivered a speech whose final words were considered by Shaden M. Tageldin as “nothing less than a declaration of war” (Which qalam for Algeria? 467):

My thanks go also to the panel of judges, one by one, for honoring me, as through their tribute to me they offer moral support to Algerian writers writing in Arabic who confront unarmed the onslaughts of Francophony and its diverse temptations, while they stand patriotically against the dubious and divisive tendencies to which Algeria is exposed. (Mosteghanemi "To Colleagues of the Pen" my emphasis).

In reconsidering Mosteghanemi’s discourse on national identity in postcolonial Algeria, a discourse that, in its most tendentious form, suggests that a workable sense of national identity entails abandoning the metropolitan language, one may see that Mosteghanemi’s pen highly seeks to reterritorialize the Algerian self within the borders of national identity.

Conclusion

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To conclude, the final chapter to the study analyzed mapping nation through narration. From Benedict Anderson's perspective and through wild flights of imagination, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi succeeded in conquering new borders, engendering a deep, horizontal comradeship among the uninhabited areas of the soul. Departing from the assumption that the novel has been historically complicit in the construction of nations, those novelists employed their powerful of imagination to transport the reader to a region where the borders between reality and fiction tend to be less recognizable. In the literary language of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*, the nation emerges in African America, Sudan, Kenya and Algeria in a way people in these countries successfully perceive of themselves as being an integral part of an imagined community albeit they will not ever have to meet one another face-to-face.

In another dimension, the analysis argues that the postcolonial novel as the pinnacle of creative expression becomes a vehicle of critical consciousness. Within the context of mimicry, violence, neocolonialism, displacement, marginalisation, the intelligentsia's passivity and national invisibility, *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges* raised the readers' awareness to unprecedented levels. Far from being merely works of fiction, the four novels function as conscious narratives of national emergence.

On the other hand, the aspirations of newly independent African nations and the challenges of nationhood dictate the decolonization of the mind through the decolonization of the word. In this sense, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi wrote their works in their native tongues. Owing to the high aspirations for nationhood that arose from the debris of colonialism, writing in the Gĩkũyũ, Arabic, or a vernacular African-American English is viewed an act of resistance, and a challenge to the colonial imposition. Under these circumstances, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi seem to be saying that language is not only a system of communication; it is rather as a marker of national identity. Hence,

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literature of nationalism and decolonization ought to articulate a new African and Afro-American identity that is anchored in the indigenization of the African languages.

General Conclusion

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that nations and civilizations are more frequently identified and celebrated by the lives and works of their creative writers. The creative works, whose artistic value is perpetually lasting, hold the ability of bolstering the mores, traditions, values, rituals and prospects of a particular group. However, in the context of colonialism and decolonization, the postcolonial novel as one of the most potently renowned modes of creative expression emerged to maintain interests amid ideological tensions thanks to its powerful emotional appeal and its complex interplay between two primordial constituents of creativity: imagination and expressiveness. Important to mention, the study's theoretical engagement confirms that creative writing goes beyond the confines of any personal choices to involve the expression of a mental or neurological state in an original way. With the evolution of literature, originality has become the pinnacle of literary and cultural consciousness. It encompasses three senses: psychology, aesthetics and the role of art in society. This is the reason why the theorists devised two premises to approach originality: invention and creation.

In a field such as postcolonial studies, the importance of creative writing escalated to a state of urgency. Given the fact that levels of discourse are almost vulnerable to ideological influence, texts are more often strategically manipulated in order to put across ideological arguments or find themselves being read in certain ways so as to further ideological debates. On that basis, the research traced the enigmatic relationship of ideology and literature. While Althusserian and Eagletonian criticisms map literature at heart the ideological landscape, the research found out that ideology came to contact and interaction with literature through crucial phases. First, ideology marked its presence through linguistic aberrations and then it was

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smuggled by ideologically-oriented authors. What follows, however, ideology's smuggling began to be canonized and accordingly heralded what the study calls 'ideological permissiveness.' The implication is that modern schools of thought such as Marxism consider literary works as reflections of the social institutions from which they originate. Within that context, literature pertains to the ideological class struggle and literary authors are thus the prisoners of their false consciousness. Further and more significantly, the study radiates the impression that creative authors were quick to grasp that at the final process of this relationship lies a turn toward the aestheticization of ideology wherein the radical experience artistically flowers to transmute radicalism of all forms. The implication is that there is more than the eye can see when it comes to a revered process: moving from ideologizing literature to aestheticizing or literatizing ideology.

In another dimension, identity as a topical issue seemed to have produced more preoccupations in the world. Historically speaking, identity and the self are not new to the twentieth century's epistemological scene. Their roots date primarily back to the Greco-Roman legacy, and then to the Anglo-Saxons tradition, which produced a new meaning of the self through religious identifications. Yet despite this, others argue that the influence of Puritanism in sixteenth-century Europe lent a new shape and structure to the construction of the self. The third key claim, however, stipulates that the Scottish Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement significantly contributed to the creation of a modern sense of self.

Throughout the epistemological analysis, it can be said with certainty that the construction of selfhood is never a matter of option. Inserting a personal selfhood is especially vital to make us distinct from others. In Mead's view, asserting a selfhood entails an interaction of the physiological pole with social one, whereby the "I" or the self that acts; interacts with the "me", the self that is acted upon. Still, with the mounting tension of ideologies, entwined together with fierce mobilizations of ethnic, cultural, and religious identities, collective identity emerged as a fundamental tool for preserving the groups' belonging from identity crisis.

General Conclusion

Never has it been more important to consider nationalism than by 1960s as scholars and writers began to devote a good deal of systematic studies to deal with the nature, causes and effects of nations and nationalisms. This coincided with a large-scale process of decolonization of the territories subdued by most of the colonial masters. One has to bear in mind that nationalism as an ideological philosophy locates the nation at the heart of its concerns, wherein loyalty and devotion to a nation among a certain group of people inhabiting a given land of geographical borders is celebrated. Nationalism likewise promotes the culture and interests, serving three main objectives: autonomy, national unity, and national identity. The conclusion was then, four main theoretical paradigms: Primordialism, Perennialism, Ethnosymbolism, and Modernism.

While the present work sustains itself on the crucial encounter between colonialism, decolonization, creative writing, identity and nationalism, it is central to recognize that nationalism and colonialism hold a close connection in such a way that nationalism as an ideological motive laid the ground for colonialism. In this respect, the need to further the colonial projects and in order to compete with their rivals, nationalist rulers employed nationalism as a strong impetus to enforce their imperialist projects, go out into the Third World to grab whatever land, territory, or nation.

In another angle, the African-Americans, the Sudanese, the Algerians and the Kenyans were part of the western nationalist project and were subjugated to colonial control. Nonetheless, they crystallized a national consciousness, which was one necessary step towards decolonization. First of all, as an ideology, Black Nationalism developed through three distinct phases: Pre-Classical Black Nationalism, Classical Black Nationalism and Revival of Black Nationalism. Secondly, nationalism in Sudan took Arab and Muslim orientations, to wit; a tribal and religious opposition to the British occupation and it was essentially in the Northern provinces. Moreover, Algerian Nationalism involves four crucial tendencies that marked the

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elaboration of political parties: the egalitarian reformist current; assimilationist tendency; the pro-independence nationalist movement; and the Islamic Reformist agenda. Furthermore, the Kenyan Nationalism began by the early 1920s with the formation of the KCA that had a nationalist schedule that heightened with ‘The Mau Mau’ Revolt. Kenya attained independence from Britain in 1963. While the blacks in the United States were emancipated from slavery, the Sudan, the Algeria and the Kenya threw their colonial masters and gained independence.

With independence achieved, several countries started to come to terms with the legacy of colonialism and the challenges of the post-independence era. Many theorists devised views and elaborated strategies to re-assess the process of colonization and decolonization as well. Their contribution, however, heralded a new discipline: Postcolonial Theory and Criticism. One of the most important challenges of Postcolonial Theory is to assess the assertion of national identities and to help their states notably prevailed by a crippling legacy of colonial influence to transcend the taxing problems of national belonging. Considering that collective identities are neither static nor innate, the newly independent territories such as Algeria, the Sudan, and Kenya in one part and post-slavery America in other part engaged in a seriously enthusiastic struggle to configure who they are. Correspondingly, the negotiation of a unified sense of national belonging that is distorted by ideological fragmentation became a priority of a postcolonial intelligentsia, whose novelists are assigned with a certain role and a certain contribution to the assertion of national identities. As creative authors Wright, Salih, Ngugi, and Mosteghanemi were, and still, the frontline defenders of national identity.

From the preceding analysis of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari* and *The Bridges*, the research approached the cultural ravages of mimetic discourse in which the colonizer utilized the mimetic discourse to visualize power and equally identified the effect of mimicking the colonizers’ codes on the colonized. Forcing the colonized to replicate the colonizer’s cultural ethos is aimed at creating a generation of native interpreters who would mediate between the

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colonizer and the masses. Important to note, the colonial education played such a significant part in shaping the colonized's identity character and temperament that the colonial schools brought up generations of Africans black in skin, but European in taste.

The cultural ravages of mimicry can be clearly seen in the linguistic conversion of Mustafa Sa'eed, John Boy Junior and Khaled. Anglicizing or Gallicizing the colonial subject has been and still a Eurocentric approach to attain consciousness colonization. In so doing, the process generated a reformed, recognizable Other: Mustafa, Boy, and Khaled are Africans in blood and color, but English or French in perception. In other part, Bigger Thomas and Gus mimetic mask is perceived as a tactic to struggle an overwhelming sense of military, political and economic invisibility of Afro-Americans. While imitating the colonizer, Bigger and Gus's mimicry is primarily a camouflage rather than a harmonization with their environment. Mimicry hence furnishes niggers with a sense of power; and thus it becomes a weapon in their struggle against invisibility.

It is vital to note, nevertheless, that through mimicry the imperial white masters only partially disseminate their values to the colonized in fear of the colonial subject's insurgence against. More specifically, Bigger, Mustafa, Boy, and Khaled are westernized, yet merely partially that their incomplete presence subsequently threatens an eclipse of identity. In other words, mimicry's ironic sense of negotiation thrust Mustafa, Bigger Thomas, Boy, and Khaled into an identity crisis, wherein the four are trapped between opposed propensities: the colonizer's increasing desire for spreading domination over them and the their self-sought construction of an independent identity. From this point forward, the analysis attests to the ambivalent nature of mimicry that produces East-West polarization. Bigger, Mustafa, Boy, and Khaled are partially accepted and at the same time, the Western civilization whose culture is superior prevents a complete assimilation.

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The self-identification within the parameters of the empire therefore produces a confusing zone. In stark contrast to John Boy Junior who westernizes himself to a non-return point and melts completely in the colonizer's identity, the colonizer succeeds in westernizing Bigger, Mustafa and Khaled but fails in domesticating their radical otherness. The identityless Bigger and Mustafa imperil the colonizer with their far-reaching otherness and both turned into invaders who enact a retaliation from within. Precisely, Mustafa exploits his exotic image and his knowledge of the East to seduce the metropole's females whom he turns into surrogates to his desired tendency to avenge. Bigger's tremendously radical otherness is embodied in feeling of meaning and purpose after his accidental murder of Mary Dalton. Wittingly or unwittingly, killing a white girl the "*not quite/ not white*" Bigger Thomas successfully achieves a transition from non-visibility to visibility. And yet, this visibility makes him feel his supremacy over Whites. Additionally, Gallicizing Khaled is an unintentional enlightenment of the colonial subject that destabilizes the metropole's authority as this illumination contributes to the rise of an anti-colonial elitist resistance, where Khaled notably was among the first who joined the FLN, taking up arms against France.

On the other hand, the analysis unveiled the devastating bearing of mimetic discourse in *Matigari* through what came to be called Parrot culture. Mimicry as an ideological mode that fills the identity vacuum created by a loss of confidence among the postcolonial ruling elites. Correspondingly, the Kenyan postcolonial officials put on mimetic masks to assume colonial tasks of subjugation and oppression. The mindless mimics' cultural baptism entails a void replication that fully denies the colonial subjects of an adequate understanding of their repetition. More accurately, the mimic man is deprived of an autonomous cultural identity that proved especially subversive to the expectations of building a postcolonial nation-state.

Whereas mimicry is at once a remembrance and menace, the cultural ravages of mimetic discourse equally translate themselves into a dangerous germ of violence that affects the

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colonized. The mimetic discourse more often makes the colonizer see himself in a broken mirror that somewhat but effectually distorts his real image. In fact, the violent bent in the four books of fiction delineate the cultural dissonance between the Occident and the Orient in that the characters represent blurred copies of the violent colonizer. Bigger's mimetic rhetoric resonates with his excess of mimicking whites' violence. Bigger's violent impulse against the rat at the outset of the novel and against Gus as well culminates in his heinous murder of Mary Dalton, whose body is decapitated and burnt. However, his perilous contamination turns once more against his own people as he smashes Bessie's head with a brick after raping her. Richard Wright seems to be saying that hopes for asserting Black national identity seems in first place impossible owing to the emulation of the colonizer's violent methods: a black-against-black violence.

In *Season*, Mustafa's flawless mimesis transforms him into a partial copy of the Westerners and consequently becomes quite threatening. Mustafa grows into a postcolonial-Eastern plague that sweeps the Occident when having been contaminated with a devastating germ of violence. Despite his internalization of Western ideals, Mustafa kills his English wife Jean Morris and causes other women to commit suicide. The inevitable result of this contamination is that Mustafa imperiled his fellow natives once he transmits the germ of European violence to his wife Hosna bint Mahmoud who, in an unprecedented event in the history of the village, kills Wad Rayyes and kills herself. Salih implicitly catapults criticism against mimicking the colonizer's ways that for most part breeds cultural estrangement. The Sudanese high expectations for nationhood seemed to be dashed by replicating the colonial subjugation via colonial masks.

In another dimension, the malice of germ of violence in *Matigari*, is encapsulated through a shocking image of cannibalism .i.e., Muriuki's mother was, in cold blood, burnt alive by a landlord for being unable to afford to pay the hut's rent. On the other hand, the excessive

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coercion that the police exercise on people epitomizes a systematic violence against the individuals who are the cornerstones of nationhood. Culturally speaking, before colonialism people did not have police, it was rather brought by colonialism to cause a disservice to the Kenyan cultural ethos, most remarkably solidarity of the Kenyans.

Analyzing *The Bridges* shows that the violent past of colonialism had an enduring consequence on the Algerian national identity, bringing to the fore the amount of ruthless violence France exerted against the Algerian revolutionaries. In the wake of independence, promises of nationhood fade away as soon Algeria slides into a cataclysmic experience of political violence. The novel suggestively questions the incongruous tendency to mimic the French violent ways, wherein Algeria witnesses a bloody decade that comes to harvest thousands of souls during the nineties. In the mimetic sense, the germ of violence proves especially abortive to the construction of an Algerian unified nation.

The mimetic discourse imposed on colonized peoples' flawed identity. The colonial subject mirrored back an image of the colonizer but in imperfect form. In the colonial sense, it creates an Other that is quite but not the same, or an Other that is quite but not white. In a postcolonial framework, however, mimicry creates nations that are quite but not the same. It helps forge unoriginal sense of nations or metonymic nations, so to speak. The mimic men in this context are the cornerstones of parrot-like nations.

While, mimetic discourse threatens to create nations that are "white but not quite", neocolonialism suggests a nation with no effective sense of continuity or sameness to one's original sense of identity. A neocolonial community configures the national identity along a sense of sameness and continuity of the puppeteers'. More specifically, the analysis demonstrates that the colonizer, against the high promises of independence, retains substantial influence on African America, the Sudan, Algeria and Kenya. The analysis of the four novels lays bare the deceptiveness of any notion of a thoroughly radical rupture between colonial and post-colonial society. The novelists catapult criticism against a neocolonial age that confirms

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one truth: it was too premature to announce the demise of colonialism. Albeit the colonial masters had departed their colonies, but left their ill-spirits behind them. The imperialist powers put in place a set of Western multinational companies that found in Africa a fertile field to squeeze wealth, while deepening the agony of the marginalized majority in tandem.

In *Native Son*, neocolonialism manifests itself in the disease of your capitalist economy in which the ghettoized African-American community of Chicago's South Side and the socio-economic ordeal of the Thomas family is drastically contested to a segregatory neocolonization. On the other hand, having fought against colonial rule, Matigari and Khaled return to realize that injustice and oppression still exist, albeit in a somewhat different arrangement that reflects altered circumstances of neocolonial societies. Upon his return Matigari is intrigued to witness the metamorphosis of home into a colossal museum of acute hunger and grinding poverty. Both Matigari and Khaled go beyond the colonial binarism and assume a vision of utopia to be accomplished through armed struggle for the first and unarmed struggle that is based on art for the latter. The analysis of cultural vestiges of colonialism on nation construction avows that the aspired discontinuity between the colonial and post-colonial practice is a mere illusion.

Both Salih and Mosteghanemi denounce the neocolonial drama in the Sudan and Algeria that seems to take almost the same direction. If there is one thing that connects all of the diverse discourses in the two novels, it is that both authors question the neocolonial strategies of organizing the greatest African festival and conferences. While Khaled in *The Bridges* asks: "How many millions were spent on this kind of festivals", the character Mahjoub in *Season* in disillusioned tone raises his voice denouncing the organization of conferences that discuss unifying education where in fact schools are not existent.

Not very far from the former claims, Bigger Thomas in *Native Son* is segregated by the Jim Crow Crowism in such a way his dreams of entering an aviation school are aborted by an overwhelming neocolonialism, giving blacks no right to enter school of the whites. Bigger's dream to fly a plane resonates powerfully with the dismay of the Mamur in *Season* who is

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deprived of a higher education and promotion. Matigari, at a certain juncture, raises pertinent and puzzling question about an esoterically suspicious friendship between blacks and the clans of the white parasites. In cross-textual dialogism, Matigari in Ngugi's novel, raises pertinent and puzzling question about an esoterically suspicious friendship between blacks and the clans of the white parasites. The answer can be interestingly posited in Salih's *Season* when the Mamur bitterly acknowledges that the locals showed love and respect to the neocolonizer—who is granted a *carte blanche*—whereas their hearts were replete with hatred to the natives.

In a significant moment in the world of literature, the feeling of being neocolonized is translated in a cross-cultural question that is laden with a deep sense of disillusionment. In a cross-cultural dialogue again, the study draws the attention to Bigger's question in *Native Son* that is almost repeated in *Season*: "It's funny how the white folks treat us, ain't it?" asking friend Gus (Wright 55). Mahjoub in *Season* raises a highly significant question: "Aren't we human beings? Don't we pay taxes? Haven't we any rights in this country?" (Salih 118). These questions reflect the extent to which the brutal realities of neocolonialism deepened the dehumanization of the colonized. The dehumanizing effect of neocolonialism is equally encapsulated through the alarming growth of individualism as opposed to the collectivization of values in the erstwhile colonies. In *Matigari*, Ngugi searingly criticizes a neocolonial Darwinism that risks to subvert the Gĩkũyũ customs of solidarity and communal belonging and the tribal structure of the Gĩkũyũ society.

One of the most visible ramifications of individualism is the distortion of an indigenous cultures and the creation a neocolonial Feudalism. In Wright's novel, neocolonial feudalism weighs down on the lives of thousands of Negroes. Mr. Dalton is the neocolonizer, who owns the apartment building where Bigger's family lives. Bigger's landlord Mr. Dalton is of schizophrenic nature. In *The Bridges*, the neocolonizers' privileged access to the country's resources is compared to the practices known to the colonial era, once the French colonizer took the most fertile from the Algerians and imposed on them a feudal system. The colonizer targeted

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the destruction of the community values and the individual's cultural alienation from the community. This novel is not merely a love story; it lays the pain of the Algerian people as they try to comprehend how long years of struggle against colonial subordination came to be replaced by native dictators, who are as bad as the colonial government.

With a powerful blend of political and aesthetic concerns, Ngũgĩ evokes strong emotions among his readers; emotions of hatred to the neocolonial bourgeoisie and a high sense of sympathy with the characters. Ngugi cuts his imagination far and wide to help us understand the feudal dogma that produces neocolonizers who eat where they never sowed, dwelling on the oppressed's hunger.

In the four novels, the main characters lament the fact that the European colonizers' stress on manufacturing native elites, who would occupy the highest posts after their departure. Consequently, affairs of African Americans, the Sudanese, Algerians and Kenyans are engineered from afar. In questioning the validity of independence and the menace of the neocolonial paradigm, a critical reader can quickly grasp that both the Mamur in *Season* and Khaled in *The Bridges* raise almost the same question, inviting people to radically reassess independence. On this view, in *Season*, the Mamur: "*Has not the country become independent? Have not we become free men in our own country?*" (Salih 53 My emphasis). Khaled in *The Bridges* interrogates: "*Had we really gained our independence?*" (Mosteghanemi 172 My emphasis). Interesting is the idea that the analysis establishes a cross-cultural idiom in which for instance Khaled and Mamur's multiplied questions about authenticity of independence are replied in Ngugi's *Matigari*: "*first independence has been sold back to imperialism by the servants they put in power!*" (*Matigari* 172 My emphasis).

In the four novels, the authors seem very disillusioned with the passivity of the elites' to contribute to a change of status quo. The postcolonial intelligentsia are divorced from reality and hence are not thoroughly conscious of the most pressing and vital interest of eradicating corruption and combating poverty. Despite the enlightenment they have by virtue of their

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western education, the elitist figures seem to relinquish any responsibility by indulging themselves into what one calls 'a culture of silence'. What is a major dismay for authors in question is the involvement of the postcolonial intelligentsia to emulate the corrupt leaders and to their mirror manners. The implication is that there is more than the eye can see when it comes to nation construction that is delayed by the neocolonial trajectories that bred a sense of schizophrenic pragmatism within the neocolonizers in which a schizophrenic rift between, what the neocolonizers say and what they do stands evidently. To see this more clearly, the socio-economic neocolonialism brought about seismic upheavals upon the values and lifestyles of the Gikūyū culture. While in fact the neocolonizer plays on demagogic discourses of nationalism considering them cornerstones of the nation, they force them into prostituted and profit-oriented economies. The neocolonial schizophrenia posits Gikūyū women as the best example the painful realities.

Among the research findings that enhance the readers, teachers, and critics of serious contemporary literature is the need to insightfully consider the way in which displacement furthered, and still, the failure to elaborate national identities. In a world defined by psychological alienation and social displacement, and national estrangement, the four novels expose the authors' awareness of the effect displacement on the feeling of nationalist belonging. Through an authorial writing of the self, the novels present the main characters as products of a long cycle of displacement. The reader will not find it hard to apprehend that Bigger, Mustafa, and Khaled set on a journey, taking common route towards the north. The texts approach artistically the shock ensuing from the physical displacement and the character's tendency to go along with it.

Although the experiences of Bigger, Mustafa and Khaled may sound different, but what appears stimulating is their common form of cultural displacement. Just as a plant uprooted from its original soil to be replanted in a completely different environment, the dislocated protagonists encountered the complexity to adapt to the new conditions. Bigger in *Native Son*

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holds within him a seed of ancestral displacement. His ancestors, since their arrival in the New World, were subjected to physical displacement. Thousands of “Bigger Thomases” had to endure the traumatic transition by escaping the south as fugitives to the negrophilic north. The onset of Bigger’s displacement in the text manifests itself in his family’s movement from the south toward the north after his father had been killed in a riot. The displaced characters: Bigger, Mustafa, and Khaled grow up between two cultures, living on borders and in footnotes of homeland and subsequently undergo a sense of double-displacement: geographical or physical and spiritual or cultural to be exact.

In thought-provoking way, the analysis of Wright’s deliberate drawing on climatic condition when embodying Bigger’s flight stages the drama of displacement in which his quest for acceptance and his strong desire to shed his cloak of invisibility and to be respected as a man among Americans echoes with the African American collective longing for national inclusion.

Indeed the historical instant of returning from the bush denotes, for Matigari and Khaled, no celebration of homecoming. On the opposite, the moment is a declaration of an unsettling sense of personal displacement, social and cultural marginalization. Both have to experience homelessness at the heart of “home”. The feeling of never being able to find a pure sense of national identity leads them to act out in nihilistic rebellion and thus become the outsiders, who possess the critical national consciousness.

In undertaking a Conradian journey, Mustafa and Khaled’s journey to the “heart of whiteness” follows a highly ambivalent destination that represents a resignation to psychological displacement. Both are accepted by the metropole as talented diasporic subjects but at the same time both are equally subjected to a series of patronizing attitudes. However, Khaled is pretty much similar to Salih’s nameless narrator who finds in his diasporic displacement an empowerment of his belonging to a formerly colonized community that he claims himself a native bird that exists only in one part of the world. Whereas the nameless

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narrator realizes a strong wish to reclaim his cultural identity upon his homecoming, Mustafa and Khaled's diasporic experience drives them to detach himself from the homeland.

Mustafa and Khaled cultural displacement exacerbates their inability to re-integrate the homeland as they started to feel themselves outsiders and experience a searing sense of internal displacement in that both remain forever a stranger for the first and the unhomely for the second. Not only does the sense of alienation cause them to be entangled in an uncanny self-identification, but it also drives them to adopt the role of the outsiders who find in wanderlust a refuge from estrangement, whose disappointment is an etiologic symptom. Hence, Salih and Mosteghanemi seem to take displacement as course of alteration and regeneration of the postcolonial self that involves a complex process of identity re-fashioning.

Whichever way one approaches *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari* and *The Bridges*, it can safely be construed that memory of the four protagonists Bigger, Mustafa, Khaled and Matigari can be viewed as process of displacement. Bigger's memory— a legacy of racism and violence against negroes— gestures at the condition from which rejection and resistance can stem. Besides, Mustafa's memory makes him the victim of a displacement ensuing from the relentless questioning of his origins and roots in a Sudan that is ethnographically speaking very diverse. On the other hand, Khaled's experience of displacement is both a diasporic passage and an exilic detachment. Khaled's exile connotes the estrangement of the individual from an original community that is incidentally reinforced with his bitter perception that his amputated arm becomes a representation of shame rather than being a source of national pride in the eyes of the Algerians. While it is an assumption widely acknowledged that most people's thinking of belonging to a land is synonymous with growing out of its soils to be a native tree or a native son, Matigari: conscience-driven protagonist, seriously contemplates the terrifying deviation of the homeland from revolutionary glory to a world of immoral displacement.

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In coming to terms with the cultural vestiges of displacement, it should be observed that while in *Season* woman stands for the city, Hayat in *The Bridges* represents the homeland on whom Khaled projects his feelings of exile and loss in attempt to fashion Hayat into a replacement for his mother and his homeland. Khaled uses his paintings as mediations between exile and home: in this respect, by collapsing Ahlem and Nostalgia, Khaled turns Ahlem into “a third space” that enables him to create new roots for himself as an exile who lives in Paris and wants to reconnect to his native city.

Having regard to the fact that the fact that the Afro-American and African literature was created in the crucible of colonial and post-colonial modernity that is characterized by tremendously sweeping currents of chaos, the study analyzed national identity construction, a complex process wherein creative authors play an overriding role in mapping the nation through narration. In asserting the connection between nation and narration, one needs to be aware that national imaginings of the new nation-state are born out of the womb of colonialism. In response, having traced Andersonian concepts and preoccupations of the nation as imagined communities in the novels under scrutiny, it can be concluded with certainty that the postcolonial writers: Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi committed, and still, their pens to write back to the white colonizer. Perhaps they moved a step further than other creative authors to invest their talent in producing deeply moving works where the boundaries between imagination and reality are utterly blurred. Through wild flights of fancy, they succeeded in conquering new borders of the nation, engendering a deep, horizontal comradeship among the uninhabited areas of the postcolonial self. In considering the postcolonial novels: *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges*, imagination emerges such a considerable force that it enables the authors to reterritorialize the nation through literary canon. Imagination in the four novel has an innate power; a power that readers have to harness in order to understand the pervasiveness of nationalism. These novels are taken to have posited a highly nationalist feeling of belonging in such a way layers of literary imagination do not merely reinforce the poetic

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structure of the text, but they also give, with a tantalizing effect, insights into the nature of the nation and its problems.

The case of Richard Wright is most fascinating, since he translated his feelings of the nation on white papers to see the birth of Bigger and the American nation. The power of imagination is the secret that may enable him to create “an experimental nation” in laboratory of fiction as he puts in his essay “How ‘Bigger’ Was Born”. The instant Wright directs his pen to write the nation, literature’s capability to operate as a signifier of national identity becomes hard to ignore. *Native Son* becomes as a contributor to the coherence of a national (American) identity while simultaneously reinforcing a sense of an African American national identity.

As postcolonial text, *Season* holds the ability to reinforce imaginatively the cultural mores, traditions, values, rituals and prospects of the Sudan. By employing a keen sort of literary imagination, it creatively engages national comradeship, revealing the state of mind and emotions of both the individual and the community, where characters such as the nameless narrator, Mahjoub, the Mamur, and Abdul Mannan, Bakri feel the pride of belonging to the same tribe and the same land. All of them conceive of themselves as a nation. Salih as an artist successfully brought to discussion the intertwined issues of the Sudanese nation and the cosmic concern of its people.

In another respect, layers of literary imagination in literary text as poetic structure is engaged with in Ngugi’s fiction. Imagination in *Matigari* has an innate power; a power that readers have to harness in order to see the workings of nationalism and how the novel as a nationalist channel of cultural resistance helps the Kenyans to conceive of themselves as a nation. No one knows exactly the extent of what is fact and what is fiction in the novel as imagination enables the continuous interrogation of both self and the community setting the pivotal foundations of the Kenyan nation.

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With her powerful blend of national and aesthetic concerns, Mosteghanemi's power of imagination is able to speak to the wounds of Algerian nation through the character of Hayat. While her readers are entirely unaware of each other, but in their consciousness, actions and characters together perform the pain of identity crisis on the national level with close attention to synchronicity of time. Khaled's amputated arm is par excellence a cultural marker that loses its significance and signals the fluidity and complexity in the construction of national belonging and identity. The novelist artistically interrogates concepts of nationhood and nation in a tale, which narrates the self through the nation in that Mosteghanemi seeks to narrate, to re-create and to make sense of the postcolonial Algerian nation in such a way memory is developed along a utopian line to conceive a dream-like text that speaks directly to challenges of the nation-state.

As artists Wright, Salih, Ngugi and Mosteghanemi wrote a kind of romantic realism, whose power of imagination reflects the mythical nature of the nation. In reading romantic realism, readers would experience the effect of an aesthetic shock. This is certainly to shorten the rift between expectations of nationhood and the frustrations of national belonging. The importance of imagination in the novelistic tradition and the dialogist nature of imagination enable one to have insights into the nature of national crisis. While the power of imagination enables Waldo Emerson to celebrate America as a poem in the American eyes, Richard Wright's imagination has the power "to invent Edgar Allen Poe from the ashes of horror instead of waiting for to invent horror ("How 'Bigger' Was Born" xiv).

On another level, from the earlier scrutiny, it is argued that the postcolonial novel as the pinnacle of creative expression becomes a vehicle of critical consciousness. Nationalism originates when the novelist contributes to the acceleration of the shift from the fanciful into the tangible with narratives of exceptional complexity. This is the case of *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, and *The Bridges*, where the authors plot the trajectory towards a national consciousness, whose definitive purpose is to create an original sense of nationalist belonging.

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Within the context of mimicry, violence, neocolonialism, displacement, marginalisation, the intelligentsia's passivity and national invisibility, the novels in question raise the readers' awareness to advanced levels. Far from being merely works of fiction, the four novels function as conscious narratives of national emergence in which people who previously played shadow-like roles in European literature take up a libertarian discourse of their own.

Indeed toward the end, the analysis of the novels suggests that the role of the postcolonial novelist grows much more crucial when the homeland in its weary journey to achieve nationhood strives to enact a shift from the imaginary into the concrete. In so doing, it is possible, against the background of mimetic discourse, to make a shift from nations that are "white but not quite" or "almost the same but not quite" to original nations that match themselves. In a certain level of national awareness, the novelists assumed an authorial resistance to metonymic nations to reterritorialize original versions of the American, the Sudanese, the Kenyan and the Algeria nations. It is no exaggeration to assert that authors can change the world with the power of the word. Be it through prose, poetry or drama, the role of literature and the creative writer is not lesser important in the national liberation than the role assigned to politicians.

Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi applied their effort and pen to resist national double consciousness and this helped forge identity in communities, whose individuals are subjected to double consciousness, and are hence necessarily a discontinuous nation: hyphenated identities. The representational power of the novel and its ability to give voice to the silenced subaltern evidences that the creative author's vocation is to take a national responsibility to be the mouthpiece of the silenced. The postcolonial novelist and novel are not completely divorced from the real needs of the nation-foundation. In this regard, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi steered their literary trajectory towards reconstituting a community that is less affected by the germ of western violence, bringing to the surface the dangers of inherited violence in such a way that it enhances national consciousness. *Native Son, Season,*

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Matigari, and *The Bridges* constitute a committed attempt to assemble the fragments of a national life and to give them a final shape.

As fictional characters Bigger, Mustafa, Matigari and Khaled go beyond the fictional representations assigned to them, to stand epically for ideals of resistance and struggle against oppression. In so doing, they try to reinvigorate the withered spirit of struggle among their post-colonial communities through decolonizing the consciousness of readers by means of filtering them out from residues of colonial subjugation. Wittingly or unwittingly, the characters do not merely project the truth to the people, but also remove blinders of ideological impositions. The implication is that there is more than the eyes can see when it comes to removing national invisibility. The postcolonial novel in this vein represents a highly sophisticated force for creating decolonizing political change. Founding an original sense of national belonging entails an authorial enlightenment of the masses to the present state of national affairs.

On the other hand, the aspirations of newly independent African nations and challenges of nationhood dictates the decolonization of the mind through the decolonization of the word. In this sense, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi wrote their works in their native tongues. Owing to the high aspirations for nationhood that arose from the debris of colonialism, writing in the Gĩkũyũ, Arabic, or a vernacular African-American English is viewed an act of resistance, and a challenge to the colonial imposition. Under these circumstances, Wright, Ngugi, Salih, and Mosteghanemi seem to be saying that language is not only a system of communication; it is rather as a significant marker of national identity. Hence, literature of nationalism and decolonization ought to articulate new African and Afro-American identities that are anchored in the indigenization of the African languages.

At the level of the national quest for relevance, authors should not ignore the complex interplay between language and culture. Language is molded by culture, whereas culture is enormously influenced by language. Remarkably, language has become an enabling instrument

for postcolonial novelists whose national challenge involves a literary rebellion of ‘writing back’ in order to search for national form that would reinforce national belonging and maintain the newly obtained independence. Language in some senses is one pivotal component that empowers nationalism via national canons that are ready to defend and celebrate the nation’s language and culture at once.

Intended as narratives of national emergence, *Native Son*, *Season*, *Matigari*, *The Bridges* form a subterranean rebellion against the linguistic and cultural order. The Afro-American urge of sustaining a national identity that is premised on a distinct sense cultural belonging goes hand in hand with linguistic decolonization and this certainly lay in the enunciation of new parameters of Afro-American nationalism. Given the fact that language is a central instrument in the expression, transmission, maintenance and adaptation of culture, Wright wrote a great American novel that speaks to the African American culture while at the same time the African American culture enriches, strengthens a sense of national coherence.

Salih and Mosteghanemi’s choice of Arabic as a language of literary expression goes beyond their intention to generate aesthetic pleasure, despite their novels success as works of art. In Sa’eed’s national crisis, Salih’s national vocation is to reterritorialize the Sudanese nation through a narrative written in Arabic. In other part, reconsidering Mosteghanemi’s discourse on national identity in postcolonial Algeria, a discourse that, in its most tendentious form, suggests that a workable sense of Algerian national identity entails abandoning the French language, one may see that Mosteghanemi’s pen does not merely seek to reterritorialize the Algerian self within the borders of a national Arabic identity, but she also finds solace in Arabic against the onslaughts of Francophony. The novel is beyond doubt a celebration of the Algerian identity along Arabized cultural lines and an explicit translation of tenets and precepts of Chiekh Ben Badis on the ground.

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A closer examination of African literature would allow the establishment of an idiom to understand how Ngugi and Mosteghanemi dismantled their linguistic prison to achieve a literary excellence that would never be accomplished without the authors' commitment and sacrifice. Both succeeded in removing the disjunction between language and literature when it comes African literature. Whereas Ngugi instigates his project of "mind decolonization", Mosteghanemi in her *The Bridges* devises a libertarian trajectory in what she calls "a *revolution in the Algerian mind*".

The heteroglossic nature of four novels dialogically engage with the language politics. Ngugi notably revolts against the legacy of cultural colonialism in Kenya that his *Matigari* among other writings is meant for reuniting the Kenyans with their language and decolonizing their minds. In his fiction written in Gĩkũyũ, he enunciates a new grammar of nationalism that articulates new roots to cultural autonomy. That is said, his literary legacy succeeded, to a large extent, in liberating the Kenyan national identity from the prison house of English and European culture.

As a resolution to the problematic raised so far, I can say that the role of the creative authors, the postcolonial novelist in specific, is to write novels that stand as a model of the process of nation-building. Their role is to call into question principles of belonging to form an articulate vision of their own national values in a globalized world that is terribly distorted by subversive discourses. In so doing, narrating the self is synonymous with re-inventing the nation.

The present research is effectively a journey I have undertaken to situate the aesthetic views of Richard Wright, Tayeb Salih, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Ahlem Mosteghanemi within the context of writing back to the colonizer and the neocolonizer. In writing dynamics of the nation, they combatted the malignant symptoms of of mimicry, neocolonialism and displacement. The role of the postcolonial novelist is to fashion new militants who would pick up the torch of national resistance. While *Matigari* believes by the end of the novel that "Justice

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for the oppressed comes from a sharpened spear”, (Ngugi Matigari 131), the study concludes that decolonization of minds comes from a sharpened pen. It is said that a nation has a soul and this study is season of migration to nation’s soul. The research clears up a trail that enables native sons to walk safely when searching to heal their wounded flesh and repair the contaminated memory of the nation.

Probably this doctoral thesis had succeeded to a larger extent in answering the questions raised thus far. However, it enabled new questions to arise and float to the surface. One of all these is to continue exploring the chronotopic dimension of the novels of this study. The aim is to examine the way configurations of time and space are delineated in language and discourse. The chronotopic analysis will certainly enhance our understanding of how the novels operate with different configurations of time and space, the thing that gives each text its particular narrative character.

Glossary of Terms

Cultural Materialism. A theoretical framework and research method for examining the relationships between the physical and economic aspects of production. The concept is rooted in Marxist theory and popular in anthropology, sociology, and the field of cultural studies.

Dialogism. In literary works, Bakhtin's term for a style of discourse in which characters express a variety of (potentially contradictory) points of view rather than being mouthpieces for the author: a dialogic or polyphonic style rather than a monologic one. In fact, some have called dialogism a kind of INTRAtextuality in order to distinguish it from intertextuality. certain genres.

Discourse. Written or spoken communication or debate. However discourse, while seeming intellectually honest, to the contributors of and all participants in the discussion, can be perceptually affected by ideological constraints, which confine it within dominant paradigms.

Double Consciousness. Propounded by W.E.B. Du Bois in his "*The Souls of Black Folk*", the term "double consciousness", refers to a situation where people concurrently hold two ostensibly inconsistent or incompatible sets of creeds and precepts. This involves logic of 'the two-ness', where one has more than one identity due to their exposure to two dissimilar cultures or experiencing life in two or more distinctive environments or places.

Heteroglossia or (multilingualness). A term, which originated with Mikhail Bakhtin and particularly in his work "Discourse in the Novel." Heteroglossia involves the presence of two or more expressed viewpoints in a text or other artistic work. Heteroglossic texts contain multiple variations of languages and ideas/perspectives and conflicting discourses within those languages.

Identity. The collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known”.

Ideology. A system of values, or more usually beliefs, precepts and strategies. To Eagleton, “ideologies are any set of beliefs motivated by social interest”.

Mimicry. An overarching conception in the postcolonial theory and criticism. It was introduced by Homi K. Bhabha in his book *“The Location of Culture”*. Drawing on the Lacanian conceptualization of mimicry as a camouflage, mimicry implies the colonial discourse that forces the colonized to internalize the colonizer’s cultural ethos, language, manners...etc. The colonial master deploys strategies in intention of destabilizing the cultural boundaries to create *“a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite”* (86). The partial dissemination of values produces a set *flawed identities imposed on colonized people who are obligated to mirror back an image of the colonials but in imperfect form.*

Nationalism. An ideology based on the premise that an individual's loyalty and devotion to one's country should come above the interests and opinions of other citizens or the interests of a certain group of citizens.

Neocolonialism. A term coined by the first President of independent Ghana Kwame Nkrumah in a memoir entitled, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965). Neocolonialism means the perpetuation of colonial exploitation and brings to the surface the deceptiveness of any rupture with the colonial condition. It entails no military presence as hegemony is enacted through the puppet governments the west puts in place.

Phenomenalism. A philosophical theory of perception and the external world. Its essential tenet is that propositions about material objects are reducible to propositions about actual and possible sensations (Britannica Encyclopedia).

Stoicism. A systematic philosophy created at Athens by Zeno of Citium and reached its peaks in Greek the Roman antiquity. It retains importance even to present day. John Sellars argues that Stoicism “was not only one of the most popular schools of philosophy in antiquity but has also remained a constant presence throughout the history of Western philosophy” (03). The stoic thought is based on the idea that value may be found but not quite in the way it is found in virtue. Stoics believe that “virtue should shape all human actions, including the most minute and seemingly trivial ones” (Jedan 62).

Third Space. Propounded by Homi K. Bhabha, the “Third Space” is a typically postcolonial theory of identity and community articulated via language. It has its roots in hybridity theory and applies to a mixture of manifold resources, multiplicity of selves, diverse knowledges, contradictory practices, and plural identities that existing between cultures. Drawing on the previous features, individuals clear up a space that engenders new possibility helping them produce meaning and constitute identities. Making a sense of the world demands that the two existing spaces be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space. Important to note, constitutive role of culture in mind helps to create a Third Space to enable the uniqueness of person’s identity to arise. Third space is situation carved between two extreme ends that enables the individual to engender new possibilities and this can help negotiate a sense of being.

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ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى مقارنة نقدية لما تحوَّزه الكتابة الإبداعية - رواية ما بعد الكولونيالية على وجه التحديد- من عظيم الأثر في تشكيل ملامح الهوية الوطنية وأبعادها، في أمريكا عشيّة التحرر من ظاهرة الرق، وفي السودان وكينيا، وفي الجزائر غداة الاستقلال، وهذا على هدي مُدونة تشمل أربعة أعمال روائية؛ "ابن البلد" لـ ريتشارد رايت، و"موسم الهجرة إلى الشمال" لـ الطيب صالح، و"ماتيجاري" لـ نجوي واثيونجو، و"وجسور قسنطينة" لـ أحلام مستغانمي.

ذلك أنه قد واكبت تشكّل الهوية الوطنية تلك، تيارات هائلة من الخطابات المضادة تتعلّق بـ"محاكاة المستعمر" وكذا "الاستعمار الجديد" و"التغريب"، ما وقف حاجزا حقيقيا أمام بلورة وعيٍ وطنيٍّ لأمة ظلّت تبحث عن معالم هويتها الوطنية.

وإنّ الدراسة، في هذا، تروم استجلاء مكامن قضية "الأمة والقومية" في كتابات رايت ونجوي وصالح ومستغانمي، لما تفتقر إليه من اهتمام في الدراسات النقدية ما بعد الكولونيالية، حيث إنّ البحث في هذه القضية يدفع، لا شك، إلى فهم الدور الشامل للرواية والروائي ما بعد الكولونيالية، في البناء الوطني، فيضِيء على جملة تلك المؤثرات الثقافية المنطوي عليها خطابُ "محاكاة" المستعمر في الفرد والأمة.

هذا، وإنّ الدراسة تُعالج نقديًا مفهوم "الاستعمار الجديد"؛ ذلك الاستعمار الذي آل بالقطيعة الإبستمولوجية، في تقدير طبيعة العلاقة مع المستعمر الإمبريالي، إلى محض وهم، حيث تنبري نُخب ما بعد الكولونيالية إلى تنفيذ أجنادات المستعمر بالوكالة، فتكوّن بذلك امتدادا

للظلم والقهر الذي يعود صداه إلى فترة الاستعمار. وتتدرّج الدراسة إلى مفهوم "التغريب"، بوصفه اهتماماً محورياً لرواية ما بعد الكولونيالية في المستعمرات السابقة، حيث تكشف عن الآلية التي يتفاعل بها الأدباء مع "النزوح القسري" فيرتدّ صدى التغريب الفردي للشخص الروائي ويتناغم بشكل فني قويّ مع شعور الأمة الجمعيّ بالاستلاب السياسي والثقافي والوطنيّ.

والدراسة تسعى، في خلال مقارنة السياقات والأنساق المختلفة لكلّ رواية، إلى مناقشة الحمولة الأيديولوجية للغة، بين اللغة الأمّ ولغة المستعمر التي ترتبط ارتباطاً وثيقاً بما يضمن الانسجام القائم بين القومية والثقافة والأدب.

وتعتمد الدراسة منهجاً انتقائياً يجمع عدداً من النظريات الثقافية والمفاهيم السوسولوجية، يستند إلى أطر ما بعد الكولونيالية - المستوحاة من فكر "بحابحا" و"فانون" و"نغوجي" و"نكوروما"، ومن جهة الاستناد إلى رؤى سوسولوجية، كانت مقارنة "بينديكت أندروسون" للقومية من حيث كونها "جماعات متخيلة"، يمكن أن يُعين على فهم الروايات وتلقّيها بثراء أكبر.

هذا، وتخلص الأطروحة إلى أنّ الالتزام الفني بقضايا القومية والأمة، لدى "رايت" و"صالح" و"نغوجي"، و"مستغانمي" جعلهم يبدون أكبر من مجرد مؤلف مبدع، بل هم يُروّن جنوداً من نوع خاصّ، يستميتون في الخطوط الأمامية للمقاومة الوطنية، ضد الخطابات الأيديولوجية المناوئة، فقد وجّهوا، ولا يزالون، مساراتهم الأدبية نحو بلورة وعي وطني جمعيّ، إذ هم يسعون لأن يحرّروا العقل من أجل إنشاء مجتمعات متخيلة.