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Dissenting Minds and the Call for Social Change: the African Hero in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*

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Dissenting Minds and the Call for Social Change:

The African Hero in Mouloud Mammeri's

Le Sommeil du Juste and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a comparative study between two works, one by the Algerian writer Mouloud Mammeri and the other one by the Ghanaian Ayi Kwei Armah. It aims to show the way *Le Sommeil du Juste* and *Fragments* negotiate the issue of acculturation. The study adopts a Post Colonial approach; it is based on the concepts of mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity specifically, as developed by the Indian scholar Homi K. Bhabha.

In their novels, the authors show the way African individuals use the colonizer's culture to re-appropriate their own, perverted by the colonial encounter. The writers point out the immense opportunities young intellectuals have to offer their countries. The study attempts to examine the authors' converging views around the healing possibilities a sound education can provide if used adequately. In the context of the novels, the education in question is the colonial one, given the fact that it was the only one present in place and time. Although *Le Sommeil du Juste* and *Fragments* display different situations, the kernel idea is the same; the colonial education does not produce systematically acculturated individuals.

This study consists of three chapters. The first chapter deals with the necessary theoretical tools with which the literary works are approached. It examines the notions of mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity as initiated by Homi Bhabha. The latter claims that these concepts demonstrate the extent to which the colonial subjects were not submissive to the colonial power; rather they challenge their authority.

The second chapter probes into the novels and the way the authors pinpoint the reasons causing the malaise of both the protagonists and their communities. In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Mammeri holds responsible the rigid local tradition, while in *Fragments*, Armah blames a materialistic neo-colonial society. The chapter focuses on the literary devices used by both authors to reveal the dysfunctions in their societies.

The third chapter deals with the different ways the authors present their protagonists as actors in charge of laying down sound values for their societies in transition. Both writers appear to advocate a profound and a drastic revision of the principles and attitudes governing their countries, if progress is to occur.

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INTRODUCTION

The African continent has been forcefully in contact with the West for centuries. This ineluctable relationship has brought into co-existence different cultures, languages and ways of life. The Africans have not exactly welcomed the ‘civilizers’ who were ready to take charge of "the white man’s burden". They opposed and rejected them, leading to countless destructive wars through different epochs, and ending up with the era of decolonization. The cultural battle, if one may say so, has long been lost to the hegemonic onslaught of the colonizer. The study in hand will examine the cultural changes endured by the African societies, and their ways to resist acculturation, as can be observed in African literature. It pays particular attention to the role of the colonial learning in the subsequent reconstruction of the African continent.

African writers have sought to investigate the problematic of the irreversible changes the colonizer’s culture introduced into the colonized one. Some of them called for the total cleansing and purging of the harmful remnants of the oppressor’s culture, while others argued for the impossibility to do without the colonial ’heritage’, and seek ways different from open struggle through the use of the very means that have caused alienation, thus turning the oppressor’s own ‘weapons’ against them.

The study will focus on showing the healing possibilities some African writers suggest in their works, even if with the use of colonial or Western education. This research will examine *Le Sommeil du Juste* and *Fragments* produced by two writers that seemingly everything differentiates, namely Mouloud Mammeri, an Algerian writer and, Ayi Kwei Armah, a Ghanaian one, respectively. Though the writers evolved in different political, social and cultural climates, they share a common belief in the place the young African intellectual should occupy in his society. The two novelists portray characters most of the time caught between their personal beliefs and expectations and the realities they are faced with in their societies.

The two writers depict the heroes entrapped between a colonial upbringing and a society that considers them as ineffectual. One should not interpret this as an attempt from the writers to praise the colonial enterprise as they are among the most vehement

detractors of it. Yet in their novels, they believe that a sound education is not tantamount to a cultural alienation. In the two novels, the characters are fictionalized as deeply committed to receive the learning that allows them to be equals to their 'benefactors'; then are hit by the striking reality that to the imperial institution, they are never meant to be counted as such.

The two writers picture the panorama in which the protagonists evolve. The novels tackle traditional life in its various aspects, dissect and analyse it. The writers do not glorify it at the expense of the western ideals, as far as Armah is concerned; one has to take into consideration that in his later novels he becomes more traditionalist than in the early ones. Both writers proceed in a meticulous and exhaustive way when it comes to fictionalize all facets of the indigenous way of life including the less appealing features. The writers' endeavour is hardly an intiative to retrieve a bygone past either; it is instead a quest to depict the malaise of young Africans and the possible positive outcomes they can come out with.

Mammeri sensed the squalid context in which the Algerian society was sucked into, and sought to wake up consciences to the soaring realities. His novels address the crucial phases the Algerians went through, and are a sort of a tribute he rendered to the Algerian history. He focused on Upper Kabylia as a favourite setting, leading some critics to label him a regionalist or at best a local color writer, which strengthens the nationalist stamp of his novels.

Mammeri understands first handedly the dilemma which young Africans, mainly intellectuals, were confronted to. The vivid characterization in *Le Sommeil du Juste* stems from the keen understanding and the link Mammeri shares with his characters. Like the protagonist Arezki, Mammeri embraced and became utterly fond of the French schooling. He explains it to Tahar Djaout as follows:

> L'école c'était … au moins au début notre seule fenêtre sur le monde. Les vitres, je l'avoue étaient des prismes déformants mais cela, je ne devais l'apprendre que plus

> tard… et puis de toute façon, c'était le prix à payer … pour lors la fenêtre faisait vraiment partie de la maison.[1]
>
> *(*School was… at least in the beginning our only window on the world.The glass was a distorted prism, but this I was about to learn only much later, and that was the price to be paid anyway, as for then the window was part of the house.)[2]

This speaks of the frustrating feeling many Algerian intellectuals had as being products of the French schooling. It is evident that the French language, deeply carved in the acquired identity of the colonized, shook the sense of belonging of the individuals. Albert Memmi puts it in the following terms:

> The difference between the native language and cultural language is not peculiar to the colonized, but colonial bilingualism cannot be compared to any linguistic dualism. Possession of two languages is not merely a matter of having two told, but actually means participation in two psychical and cultural realms. Here, the two worlds symbolized and conveyed by the two tongues are in a conflict, they are those of the colonizer and the colonized.[3]

Memmi points to the fact that the imposed colonial language produced a double form of thinking. He means that speaking the colonizer's language will inevitably add portions of the culture in the minds of the colonized. This reminds us of Frantz Fanon's contention that speaking a language systematically boils down to assuming its culture. The colonial encounter perverted the hitherto stability in the autochtone societies. It introduced alien attitudes and thoughts that rapidly overwhelmed the native culture by the pace and groundbreaking flux of this novel culture, still the native culture battled all along and managed to survive. Mammeri expressed it quite unequivocably as follows:

> The Colonial conquest was truly the arrival of the Martians, the irruption of forms of cultures, of beliefs totally alien to the society. The Berber had fought and were vanquished. Logically, there could happen only one thing at that moment: a society faced with a civilization infinitely more efficient than it, is doomed to disappear. It survived however; it was harshly shaken up, in front of these unthinkable events,

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[1] Djaout, Tahar. ***Mouloud Mammeri, Entretien avec Tahar Djaout, Suivi de "La Cité du Soleil"***. Alger: Éditions Laphomic, 1987., p. 14.
[2] My translation. It is to be noted that all the translations used in this study are mine.
[3] Memmi, Albert. ***The Colonizer and the Colonized***, New York: Orion, 1965, p. 107.

there were men who resumed the old values, giving up all that was outdated, and allotted to the essential to survive and to resurface.[4]

The quotation refers specifically to the Berber identity, yet the pertinence of the words regarding the Algerian identity is striking. Mammeri summed up what occurred to the Algerian culture and to the African one as a whole; his insistence on the resurfacing of the native culture translates his efforts and those of his likes to restore the native culture, through an amalgamation of the old and the new. Many African writers stress the necessity to sift the culture out from obsolete notions in order to enhance its move forward. They seek to conglomerate useful parts from the colonizer and the colonized culture to form a viable whole.

To help to explain the endeavours of the writers, this study will rest on the theory of the Indian thinker Homi Bhabha regarding the hybridity of cultures. Mammeri seems to corroborate Bhabha's thinking concerning the positive sides a hybrid culture presents. In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Arezki the protagonist who after having acquired a great deal of the French culture ends up rejecting the superfluous, transcribed in destroying the very pillars of this culture. Mammeri's alienated hero echoes many other African heroes across the continent. The plethora of oeuvres depicts characters with a somewhat poisonous gift which is the colonial system of education. The French schooling is a historical accident that provoked a brutal awareness of the universal value of Algerian culture.[5]

Ayi Kwei Armah shares Mammeri's idea that the culture of the 'other' does not systematically produce a replica of the colonizer. In *Fragments*, Armah's protagonist Baako is a 'been-to' returning to his native land after five years spent in the United States; he envisages to work for the progress of his society, but falls into a tremendous disillusionment with the signs of the neo-colonialist spirit still pervading Ghana. Armah fictionalizes the general situation with such striking accuracy that this makes him 'a

[4] My translation of the passage published originally in French in Berrichi, Boussad. ***Mouloud Mammeri: Ecrits et Paroles***. vol. I & II. Alger: CNRPAH, 2008, p.19.

[5] Chaker, Salem. **''Mouloud Mammeri (1917-1989)''**, in *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* No.51, 1989, pp. 152, http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/remmm_0997-1327_1989_num_51_1_2279, (Accessed on January 6th, 2014).

creative member of his country's literate class', and is expected 'to participate in the business of national reconstruction, his contribution is cultural.'[6] Emmanuel Obiechina endows Armah with a healing mission of the African continent:

> [Armah] is expected to play the important role of rehabilitating the African culture; he is to give the people a new vision of life, to rescue them from the trauma of cultural confusion in which they have been left as a result of European acculturation, to provide them with new values, new outlooks and new spiritual bearings with their base in African culture and psychology.[7]

This study stresses the importance that the writers give to education, as the only possible means to re-possess the identity once stolen. The writers point out the danger of mistaking a political independence for a cultural one. They insist that the latter would inevitably entail an overhaul of the values and principles that govern the native culture, associated with the new items instilled by the colonial presence. The Guinean thinker and politician Amilcar Cabral observes that:

> A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only, if without complexes and without underestimating the importance of positive accretions from the oppressor and other cultures, they return to the upward paths of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjugation to foreign culture.[8]

The path leading back to an African identity therefore requires working with the contextual realities of the continent. Through Baako, Armah vehicles the message that not only the intellectual individuals are not intrinsically western-minded but are the only alternative agents African societies can rely on for their redemption. Mammeri's and Armah's thinking converge around the idea that being a cultural hybrid is not a stigma in itself. Along similar lines with Bhabha, they believe that 'plac[ing] different civilizations in contact with each other, … is an excellent thing, to blend different worlds; that

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[6] Obiechina, Emmanuel. **''Cultural Nationalism in Modern African Creative Writing''**, in *African Literature Today*, No.1, pp. 32.

[7] Ibid, p. 32.

[8] Africa information Service eds. **''Return to the Source : Selected Speeches of Amilcar *Cabral''*** in *Monthly Reviw Press New York and London*, 1973, pp. 43, https://fr.scribd.com/doc/81956607/Return-to-the-Source-Selected-Speeches-of-Amilcar-Cabral, (Accessed on March 10th, 2015).

whatever its own particular genius may be, a civilization that withdraws into itself atrophies…'[9]

The blending that the Martinican poet and politician Aimé Césaire advocates is deeply related to the study in hand. The contact of cultures will enable to give rise to new paths capable of healing the African self. Mammeri and Armah sustain that the sense of alienation pervading their respective novels springs from a lack of understanding and communication within their families, firstly and their society at a grander scale.They seem to argue that colonial education is not a scourge per se, and that appropriately handled it would serve as a liberative force.

The current study revolves around the question of heroes' alienation from their surrounding, and the reasons and possible outcomes ushered in by the two novels discussed. The work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is entitled **Mammeri, Armah and the social representation: postcolonial landmarks**; it is devoted to the theoretical background and the key concepts to be used in the course of this study.

This research examines the notions of mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity as developed by the scholar Homi K. Bhabha. In his sunbstantial work *The Location of Culture*, he stipulates that the colonial 'master' produces the tools for his eventual loss. The colonial discourse needs to have the colonized fixed through a perpetual imitation of his subjugator's values and philosophies, and still he is denied resemblance with his ''master''. For Bhabha, 'it was [the colonized's] equivocal resemblance to the white man that turned the mimic man into a 'hybrid'.'[10]

This chapter intends to study how the heroes who are compelled to receive a foreign education turn out to call for a rethinking of social and cultural norms in modern Africa.

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[9] Césaire, Aimé. ***Discourse on Colonialism,*** *translated* by Joan Pinkham in *Monthly Review Press : New York and London*, 1972, originally published as ***Discours sur le Colonialisme*** in 1955 by *Editions Presence Africaine*, p. 2.

[10] Mizutani, Satoshi. **'' Hybridity and History: A Cretical Reflection on Homi Bhabha's' Post-Historical' Thought''**, in *Zinbun*, No. 41, 2008, pp. 9, http://hdl.handle.net/2433/134691, (Accessed on March 10, 2015).

In the second chapter headlined **alienated heroes in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments***, I move to expose the environment in which the protagonists evolve. The chapter highlights the reasons behind their estrangement; then it scrutinizes the literary devices the authors used, to impart the sense of confusion that consumes the heroes' psyches.

Finally, the third chapter is given the title **salvation and redemption in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments***. It pinpoints the possible ways out of the turmoil the two novelists evoke in their respective works. Their ending notes muse about the possibility that African societies can eventually be saved by the heroes who if not leaders of their people, still are cornerstones in the reconstruction of their countries. The writers do not elaborate miraculous recipes for an ideal African continent. Indeed, their novels are all but solution pointers, still the novelists seem to wave a hope banner for a brighter future. Despite their timid positivism, the novels underscore the conviction that if any progress is ever to be expected, it ineluctably has to display a joining of the past and the present, the old and the new and most importantly all kinds of knowledge susceptible to push African societies to the centre stage of the world.

CHAPTER ONE

Mammeri, Armah and Social Representation:

Postcolonial Landmarks

This chapter is to put forward the theoretical framework that will be used to examine the two literary works for this discussion. It will rely mainly on the works of Homi Bhabha in the field of postcolonial studies. His concepts of mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity in particular, have revolutionized the field. These concepts reveal the different ways in which the colonized resisted the power, and then sought to challenge the authority of the colonizer. Bhabha has aimed at showing that the whole period of colonial rule was characterized by varied and complex cultural contacts and interactions that were not solely summed up in a complete and overwhelming domination of the West over the East. He has claimed that throughout the colonial era 'the colonial subject' resisted the western monopoly of power.

He sought to demonstrate this through the close re-reading of the colonial archive. For the study of the colonial text, he has applied post-structuralist techniques[1] producing what has been termed as 'colonial discourse analysis'. Bhabha seeks to invalidate the claim of the colonial discourse that he holds responsibe for the subjugation of the colonized. Bhabha explains the meaning and strategies of the colonial discourse in a definition that is worth quoting at length. He states that:

> It [colonial discourse] is an apparatus that turns on the recognition and disavowal of radical/cultural/historical differences. Its predominant strategic function is the creation of a space for a 'subject people' through the production of knowledges in terms of which surveillance is exercized and a complex form of pleasure/unpleasure is incited. It seeks authorization for its strategies by the production of knoweldges of the colonizer and the colonized which are stereotypical but antithetically evaluated. The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and establish systems of administration and instruction.[2]

[1] Basically the structuralists denied the Sausurian stance that 'the signifier' and 'the signified' are the two factes of the same coin, in fact, they claim that this relationship is blurred, and there is no fixed meaning attached. This thinking shuttered the belief in a unified stable identity and rendred it impossible. For thinkers such as: Deleuze, Foucault and Derrida, the key word is difference. Postsructuralists find differences and complexities in all texts as well as in identity. It is the cultural difference that Bhabha intends to explore.

[2] Bhabha, K Homi. ***The Location of Culture***. New York: Routeldge, 1994, p. 100.

As Bhabha notes in this definition, the colonial discourse aims at constructing a certain image of the colonized. It is in the process of constructing this image that the colonizer can survey and control the 'colonial subject'. This idea of the colonized as 'degenerate types', that has for origin the colonizer's mode of thought and their narratives about the inferiority of the colonized, according to Bhabha paved the way for colonial conquest.

Through his 'colonial discourse analysis', Bhabha seeks to shift the focus from self and other formulas, that long held the colonized to be powerless and subject to infinite injustices , to demonstrating the active agency of the colonized through his ability to respond and resist the oppression, through the use of cultural values in his society. Bhabha's study of the colonial texts aims at highlighting the anxiety present within them, and destroying the mythic image of the purity of cultures, thus bringing down the long claimed 'superiority' and 'uniqueness' of the western civilization. Bhabha offers a whole rethinking of history and a re-examination of the cultural values that sustained the power of the western civilization.

In his *The Location of Culture*, a collection of his most groundbreaking essays, Bhabha creates a series of concepts whose purposes are to discredit the simplistic polarization of the world into self and other. Bhabha thinks that the world is a much more complex and elusive composition than a clear-cut division between the 'good' that were formerly oppressed, and the evil that were their former oppressors. He maintains that this Hegelian reasoning is non-effective in this situation and brings no ultimate change, making Bhabha stand against the Saidian binary politics in *Orientalism*, that he states has 'weakened' Edward Said's arguments by providing the West with an everlasting option to maintain its domination. Instead of the binary opposition, Bhabha speaks of Mimicry, Ambivalence and Hybridity that are more eligible to explain the complex relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Mouloud Mammeri and Ayi Kwei Armah which this study intends to explore, clearly illustrate Bhabha's assumptions about the kind of

relationship that unites the colonizer and the colonized. Both writers are iconoclastic in their visions and views. It is undoubtedly their personal experiences that cemented the singularity of their literary works.

Mouloud Mammeri who was born in an Algeria that had been under the colonial yoke for more than seventy years was cradled by the Berber poetry and the French Literature since his father was a holder of 'un certificate d'études'. This upbringing fostered his interest and led to his subsequent researches to dig up the Berber cultural heritage long enshrouded. He dedicated his life to uncover the truth, as he confided to Tahar Djaout in an interview. His search for the truth took him far away from the beaten tracks, leading to unfair and unjustifiable flooding controversies associating him with assimilationist currents; like the crusade unleashed against him after the publication of his first novel *La Colline Oubliée* in 1952. An oeuvre judged pro-colonialist and satirically renamed '*la Colline du reniement'*.[3] This misinterpretation of Mammeri's first novel stems unmistakingly from his unwillingness to embellish the Algerian realities. His portrayal of Tazga, the setting of the novel as a godforsaken place was his inner appreciation he felt and seen and he refused to ulter. In fact, his four novels translate the crucial phases the Algerian people went through. As Jean Déjeux puts it:

> Ses romans représentent, si l'on veut, quatre moments de l'Algérie : *"La Colline Oubliée"* les années 1942 et le malaise dans le village natal avec le départ pour le pays des "autres";*"Le sommeil du juste"* l'expérience de l'Algérien chez ceux-ci et le retour, déçu, chez les siens : *"L'Opium et le bâton"* la guerre de libération dans un village de la montagne kabyle (...). Enfin "*La Traversée"* depuis 1962 se termine sur le désenchantement.(...) 'La mystique est retombée en politique', le dogme et la servitude sont 'programmés'.[4]
>
> (His novels represent, if one may say, four moments of Algeria: *"La Colline Oubliée"* the years of 1942 and the malaise of the native village with the departure for the country of 'others'; *"Le sommeil du juste"* the experience of Algerian with those and the return home, disillusioned: *"L'Opium et le bâton"* the war for liberation in a village of the Kabyle mountain (...) then "*La Traversée"* the aftermath of 1962 end

[3] It is the title of the article that Mohammed Cherif Sahli published in the journal *Le Jeune Musulman, No. 12, January, 2nd 1953*, in which he contested violently the novel, and claimed that it was patronized by a French Marechal.

[4] Déjeux, Jean. ***Dictionnaire des Auteurs Maghrébins de Langue Française***, Paris: Editions Karthala, 1984, p. 158.

with disenchantment (…) the mystique weakened in politics, the dogma and servitude are programmed.)

Mammeri considered the pursuit of the actual as a raison d'être, and devoted his life to the rehabilitation of the Berber culture and the Algerian identity alike. He contributed unlike any other Maghrebian author to an extensive anthropological work that explains the small quantity of his literary production.

In his novels, we notice instantaneously the maturity process that the protagonists pass through, and their eventual awareness of their condition of the 'dominés', that propelled their rebellion against the discriminative behaviours of the Frenchmen. He states in his last interview given to the Moroccan magazine *Le Matin du Sahara*, twenty four hours before his mortal car accident, that:

> lorsque j'étais au lycée à Rabat … je me suis rendu compte qu'il était question de tout le monde sauf de nous, les Maghrébins. On était des étrangers dans l'enseignement qu'on recevait. Et quand on est jeune, cette expérience laisse une trace car elle a fini par créer en nous cette réaction de se sentir péjorativement jugé.[5]
>
> (when I was at high school in Rabat … I found out that it was about everyone except us, the Maghrebians. We were strangers in the teachings we were receiving. And when you are young, this experience leaves a trace as it ended up creating in us this reaction to feel pejoratively judged.)

It is this recognition of his position as a 'stranger' that sparked in him the necessary will and motivation to get rid of what was overrated and hampering in the culture of the 'other' that prevented the development of his society. It triggered in him the need to wrench himself away from 'the truths [he] was inculcated, and [he] was compelled to acknoweledge the falsity and lure.'[6]

It is striking to notice the extent to which Mouloud Mammeri's vision converges with that of Ayi Kwei Armah. The two writers make a point of demonstrating the importance of the individual in engendering the success of African societies. Armah is

[5] *Le Matin du Sahara*. No. 6632, 12 mars 1989 published in a Moroccan newspaper on February, 25th 2006, in http:/www.latribune-online.com/divers/18130.html, (Accessed on May 16, 2016).

[6] Cited in Kassoul, Aïcha et al. ***Mouloud Mammeri, 1917-1989: L'Intellectuel Démocrate Impénitent***, Alger: Casbah Editions, 2008, p. 38.

'one of the most provocative and versatile of the post-war wave of Anglophone West-African novelists'.[7] He is a writer with a very peculiar status among his contemporaries; the sort of 'isolationsim' he has followed earned him substantial criticism. Indeed, the number of his interviews and essays can be counted on the fingers of one hand. He considers his literary oeuvres as the most appropriate link with his readers. Through his short stories *An African Fable* and *The Offal Kind* to mention the most important ones only; to his novels *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, W*hy Are We So Blest?*, *Two Thousand Seasons*, *The Healers*, *Osiris Rising* and the last published one *KMT: in the House of Life*, Armah discusses Africa and what befell on it since its unfortunate encounter with the colonial powers. His themes range from:

> Africa's continuing oppression under the mystique of independence and helpless entrapment in a cycle of neo-colonial dependency; the failure of human reciprocity and connectedness under the pressure of a manipulatory system of relationships; the renewal of despair and destruction in the place of the awaited social political and spiritual regeneration of the postcolonial world.[8]

The feeling of revolutionary soul that animates Armah's novels stems from his wish to join the Cuban soil in 1963 after the Bay of Pigs conflict.[9] Cuba became the shrine of revolutionaries at that epoch. His wish to join Cuba was subsequent to the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the first Prime Minister of the independent Congo. Armah was deeply affected after he found out about the participation of American hands in this vile crime, leading him to drop out from Harvard University and to leave the United States at once. After being turned down from joining Cuba and the nervous breakdown he experienced in Algeria in 1964, he considered writing as the adequate medium to convey his message.

The utter disappointment he felt after Ghana's independence, and his realization that a 'neo-colonial Comprador'[10] class, to borrow Ngũgĩ's phrase replaced the former

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[7] Wright, Derek.eds. ***Critical Perspectives on Ayi Kwei Armah***, Washington: Three Continents Press, 1992, p. 1.
[8] Wright, Derek. **''The Early Writings of Ayi Kwei Armah''** in *Research in African Literatures,* Vol.16, No.4 Special issue on West African Fiction (Winter, 1985), pp. 487, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3819473, (Accessed on May 21st, 2015).
[9] It is the failed incursion of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to invade Cuba militarily in 1961.
[10] The phrase Ngũgĩ coined to refer to the post-independence colonial leaders.

colonial opressors; he travelled through the African continent in what can be considered as Armah's quest of a Pan-African solution to the continent's upheavels. Armah is aware of the need of a collective action to put back the African societies on track. Through his novels, he believes in the urge to understand the causes and the proportions of the African turmoil, if any progress is yet to come.

The position of Mammeri and Armah is quite similar among the literary circles. The critics point out that their paths translate the commitment they have regarding their respective societies. The realities they depict, and the characters they portray are deeply embedded within themselves.

In his book *La Littérature Maghrébine de Langue Française*, published in 1973, Jean Déjeux, one of the forerunners critics of francophone Literature in the Maghreb, discussed in an intricate way Mammeri's oeuvre among others. In the chapter dedicated to Mouloud Mammeri entitled *Mouloud Mammeri ou les chemins de la liberté*, Déjeux focuses on the maturity process Mammeri's protagonists follow. Déjeux stresses the fact that the protagonists embrace the culture of 'the other' for starters, and then they return symbolically to their initial culture they renounced.

Déjeux argues that Mammeri, like his protagonists, is endowed with duplicity of character, divided and is in a battle against himself. He sustains that all Mammeri's life was a journey that had as a purpose to lead him back to his roots.

The same stance is expressed by Pierre Bourdieu in *The Odyssey of Reappropriation.* He examines the relationship Mammeri had with his native village. Bourdieu points out that this relationship is like an Odyssey of the old times, with a withdrawal from all that is native, and finally a slow and painful comeback to his land.

Like Mammeri, Ayi Kwei Armah's critics singled out his unique position in dealing with his characters and the realities he depicts in his novels. In his book *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah: A Study in Polemical Fiction*, Robert Frazer denotes Armah's development as an innovative novelist, and the accomplishment of his oeuvre. Frazer greets Armah's

narrative development from complex to simple and transparent style. Frazer maintains that Armah portrays characters with complex moral and political issues, which seem impossible to solve, that lead to the characters' alienation and despair.

Derek Wright, another renown critic of Armah pinpoints in his book *Ayi Kwei Armah's Africa:the source of his fiction*, published in 1989, he claims that 'Armah is an African writer and his Africanness is the main subject of his work'. He argues that Armah uses his narrative to reappropriate a purely African narrative and style, and thus discards all assumptions of western indebtedness.

In their novels, Mammeri and Armah depict individuals who embrace the colonial culture and values but prove to be able to discern the true intentions of the colonizer and recognize the hypocrisy of his discourse. It is this recurrent pattern of the individual as an agent of change in the African societies of post independence in particular that gave rise in theory to concepts like Bhabha's mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity.

1- The Concept of Mimicry:

Mimicry has been one of the most debated concepts in postcolonial theory. It is a state that apparently seemed to impose itslf in a colonial situation, and a notion sought by the colonialists themselves in order to help them to better understand the colonial subjects. As stated by lord Macaulay, the British politician, in his *Minute to Parliament* in 1835, that [they] must at present do [their] best to form a class of interpreters between [them] and the million whom [they] govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect[11]. The basic idea behind the creation of 'persons …. English in taste' and 'morals' or to be more accurate , Anglicized subject, but definitely not English, is to help in matters of administration, and to provide 'tools' for better domination. Mimic subjects are created to reinforce subjugation by offering the very means of domination to the colonizers. The 'class of interpreters' was necessary for the survival of the colonial enterprise as the colonized were:

[11] Cited in Bill Aschcroft et all: eds. ***The post-colonial Reader***. London: Routeledge, 2003, p. 430.

> sources or native informants who supplied, viva voce, in English or Indian languages, who collected, translated, and discussed texts and documents, and who wrote exegeses[12] of various kinds that were classified, processed, and analysed into knowledge of or about india.[13]

This intentional move from the colonizers to produce assets to promote the colonial enterprise underestimated the power they bestowed on those to whom this knowledge is being imparted. The mimic subjects soon came to discover that they were actually meant to remain mere 'informants'. The colonized now came to feel superior both to their brethren and to their European 'masters'. The colonial subject seemed to be familiar with two cultures, languages, values and 'intellects'. As Sisir Das argues in *Sahibs and Munshis* 'the Indian scholar knew he was superior to the European master in respect of Indian languages, [but] …. A mere tool to be handled by others'[14].

Colonial mimicry is, whether sought or naturally present given the presence of the colonizer, an unescapable feature of colonialism. As it is the case of French colonialism in Algeria, Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste* offers a situation where the young Algerian finds himself drawn in to the French schooling in order to escape from the stifling and superstitious tradition. Arezki, the novel's protagonist denigrates all that is native and fully embraces the French culture. At the beginning of the Novel, the image unfolds clearly when Arezki mocks the traditional beliefs of Ighzer and the commitment of its people to religion. Arezki simply mimics the doctrine that his teacher Mr. Destouche inculcated him. Arezki hopes for a higher plane of existence and believes he will attain it through immersion in the French culture. As Sasir Das said, the colonized is

[12] It is a long and detailed interpretation and translation of a text.
[13] Cohen, S Bernard. ***Colonialism and its Forms of knowledge: the British in India***. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, (2002) , p. 51.
[14] Das, Kumar Swsir. ***Sahibs and Mundhis : an Account of the college of Fort william***.Calcutta : papyrus, 1978, p. 107.

a mere 'tool' in the hands of others, and Arezki realizes that for the French he will never be more than an IMANN[15].

It is Arezki's realization that he is different from the Frenchman that Bhabha finds most challenging in colonial mimicry. He disagrees with what he calls a 'line of descent of the mimic man'[16] through authors from Rudyard Kipling to V.S Naipaul. This latter he discusses in depth in *The Location of Culture*. Bhabha argues that those writers display:

> a pessimistic view of the possibility of escape from this situation. He views this mimicry implicit in the post-colonial condition and, hence, its literary text as a permanently disabeling, because of the disorder and inauthenticity imposed by the centre on the margin of empire. The distinction is between the authentic experience of the 'real' world and the inauthentic experience of the invalidated periphery[17]

Authors like Kipling and Naipaul in their works identify mimicry with the idea of heplessness, and a state where the colonial subject is trapped, and from which there is no way out. It is this view of the colonized as deprived from any cultural agency that Bhabha has sought to invalidate. Bhabha sought to disclaim the nineteenth century western stereotype of the oppressed as impassive and motionless. In his *The Location of culture*, precisely in the essay of *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial discourse*, Homi K. Bhabha chooses to start with a Lacanian[18] definition of mimicry:

> Mimicry reveals something in so far as it is distinct from what might be called an itself that it is behind. The effect of mimicry is camouflage … It is not a question of

[15] Indigene Musulman Algerien Non- Naturalisé (Non – Naturalized Algerian Muslim) a phrase used by the French to describe Algerians.
[16] Bhabha. ***The Location of Culture***. op cit, p. 125.
[17]Cited in Bill Aschcroft, et al. ***the Empire Writes Back : Therory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures***, London and New York : Routledge, 1989, p.87.
[18] Jacque Lacan (1901-1981) the French Psychoanalyst, whose work turned around a re-reading and expanding of Sigmund Freud's theories, shifted Freud's psychoanalysis into post structuralist discourse. He is a key influence on the work of Homi. K Bhabha. Lacan 'mirror stage' concern is a cornerstone of Bhabha's work. The 'mirror stage' where the infant creates an illusion of his ego through the identification of his image in the mirror and thus stabilize his identity fails and is an illusion. Bhabha uses this notion to disclaim the fixity of identity.

> harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background, of becoming mottled – exactelly like the technique of camouflage practiced in human warfare[19]

Bhabha's usage of mimicry as defined by Jacque Lacan shifts entirely from the hitherto given meaning to colonial mimicry.The use of mimicry as 'camouflage', and separating it from the lingering meaning of 'making one with the background' reveals a colonized aware of 'the enemy' and thus ready to resist its influence. In the same essay Bhabha offers his own definition of mimicry. He says:

> Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference, *that it is almost the same, but not quite*[20] which is to say that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference[21]

What Bhabha infers above is that the colonial discourse carries needs and desires whereby the colonized resembles the colonizer, but by no means becomes his equivalent, which would otherwise be a grave paradox regarding the legitimacy of colonial rule, and its philanthropic zeal about civilizing subject races. The colonizer thus creates unwillingly and ineluctably a crack or a split within its discourse, as the created subject must be 'the same but not quite'.

Bhabha aims to show that 'in ''normalizing'' the colonial state or subject, the dream of post-enlightenment civility alienates its own language of liberty and produces another knowledge of its own.'[22] This state of 'the same but not quite' is explicitely portrayed in Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste*. In a passage involving the protagonist Arezki, Mammeri describes how the protagonist feels segregated against the French in the refectory

[19] Bhabha. ***The Location of Culture***, op cit, p. 121.
[20] Emphasis in the original.
[21] Ibid, p. 122.
[22] Ibid, p.123.

> Il (le sergent) en ressorti bientot, appela les Européens: ils n'étaient pas là. Le sergent leur envoya un tirailleur. Deux d'entre eux arrivérent bientôt, se dirigérent droit vers les tréteaux et placèrent leurs plats et leurs bouteillons devant ceux d'Arezki. Pardon, dit il, je suis arrivé avant toi, camarade. L'autre le regarda ne lui répondit pas. Quand le cuisiner leva sa grosse louche, Arezki poussa les plats et bouteillions du camarade Et avança les siens. Tous deux s'agrippérent. Le cuisiner les sépara. Le sergent vint, dit que les Européens devaient être servis les premiers. Arezki protesta qu'il était arrivé avant eux. C'est le règlement, les européens d'abord![23]
>
> (he soon got out, called the Europeans: They were not there, the sergeant sent them a soldier. Two of them soon arrived, heading straight to the counter and put their plates and their bottles before Arezki's. Excuse me; he says I arrived before you, comrade. The other stares at him silently. When the cook raised his ladle, Arezki pushed the plates and bottles of his comrade and placed his. Both got to grips, the cook split them, the sergeant came in, says that, the Europeans should be served first, Arezki protested that he arrived before them.Those are the rules, says the sergeant, the Europeans first).

The above passage explicitly illustrates Bhabha's idea since Arezki is fighting in the French army against Nazi Germany for liberty and justice; he is a French soldier in the battlefield but treated unequally when it comes to considering his position as equal to the Frenchmen.The colonial discourse embodies a duplicity that shakes the very basis of its pillars of equity and justice.

In his book *Homi K. Bhabha*, David Hudart argues that Bhabha speaks of a 'partial presence' of the colonized and the colonizer as well; 'partial presence ' which is as Bhabha specifies is' incomplete' and 'virtual'. It implies that the colonial subject exists and is 'real' but definitely not fixed and stable.[24] It locates the colonial discourse in a state of:

> Uncertainty, which fixes the colonial subject as a 'partial' presence'.By partial I(Bhabha) mean both 'incomplete' and 'virtual'. It is as if the very emergence of the 'colonial' is dependent for its representation upon some strategic limitation or

[23] Mammeri, Mouloud. ***Le Sommeil du Juste.*** (1955), Alger: El Dar El Othmania, 2005, p.86.
[24] Huddart, David. ***Homi Bhabha***. New York : Routledge, 2006, p.41.

> prohibition within the authoritative discourse itself … that ensure its strategic failure, so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace[25]

Bhabha's argument is that this colonial mimicry carries in fact the seeds of destruction of the colonial power because the 'menace' that it constitutes can not be diassociated from the resemblance that the colonizer wants to produce. Bhabha exemplifies this partiality by the text of Charles Grant, the British politician, *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* (1792), his dream in a reformed Indian society through evangelical means comprised in it 'the fear that the Indians might become turbulent for liberty '[26]. What Grant intended to create was a

> reform through which Christian doctrines might collude with divisive caste practices to prevent dangerous political alliances… [but at the same time] that 'partial reform'will produce an empty form of '*the imitation* (my emphasis) of English manners will enduce them [the colonial subjects] to remain under our control[27]

Bhabha exposes the anxiety of the colonial discourse to remain valid and well-intentioned. This emptied reform Grant seemed to strive for, was clearly against 'true' and 'benevolent' Christian teachings that the colonizers were preaching. Bhabha makes the British and their discourse of authenticity 'near to mockery'.

The question that arises here is how is Grant going to keep control of the Indians' minds? In teaching them what the Bible says about Man's equality and his right for liberty, the Indians would automatically seek those values for themselves. The rhetorical question posed above highlights the unlikely ways the colonial powers would guarantee that the teachings given to the Indians will result in subordinated and well-trained subjects ready to obey their 'masters'. According to the post- structuralists, the way the 'subjects' are going to deal with the teachings that the colonized received is unforeseeable and

[25] Bhabha, ***The Location***, op cit, p. 123.
[26] Ibid, p. 124.
[27] Ibid, p.124.

definetly out of control. What Bhabha also maintains, is that given the assumption that the colonizer is not truly himself, and is alienated from his 'true' values of equity and liberty, his sanctified notion of superiority becomes an illusion. According to Bhabha, then, when we speak of colonial discourse, we should include the colonized too, as the two are brought together in this notion of 'partial presence'.

The positive sense Bhabha inscribes in colonial mimicry, and its probable use as a discursive strategy to undermine the claim of the colonial superiority is shown in many African oeuvres. Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments* displays the same pattern of a mimic subject working for the amelioration of his society. Though in *Fragments*, the protagonist travels to the metropolis; so we do not have a quite regular colonial situation, the protagonist shows characteristics of the Bhabhaesque notion of mimicry. Baako Onipa, the novel's protagonist spends five years in the United States. He no doubt has been immersed in the colonial imperial system of values, but is not indoctrinated and does not fit into Grant's scheme of 'empty' learner. The conversation he has with Brempong, a Ghanaian fellow he meets in the plane back to Accra reveals it:

> ''Brempong is my name'' he said '' Henry Robert Hudson Brempong'' '' Baako'' ''Is that your Christian or your surname?'' Brempong asked. ''No, Christian name'' said Baako '' I'm not Christian.'' '' you know,'' said Brempong, '' you know, your other names.'' he chuckled, a bit uncertainly, at the end. '' Onipa'' ''it's an unusual name'' Brempong said. ''My family name'' said Baako, '' I think of it as a very common name myself.''[28]

Though Baako receives a western education abroad, he resents the necessity to have a Christian name. What is striking here is his answer that he thinks of his family name as 'a very common name'. Baako's answer leads us straight to 'the menace' Bhabha speaks about. The African name though different from the western name does not entail its inferiority. Baako seems aware of the danger the likes of Brempong represent on the thriving of the African society.

[28] Armah, Ayi Kwei. (1969). ***Fragments***. Oxford : Heinemann,1983, p. 43.

The concept of mimicry shows Bhabha's parting with the politics of binaries put forward by Edward Said in his seminal work *Orientalism*. Bhabha takes up Said's contrapuntal reading[29] to emphasize that the colonized was not entirely powerless and devoid of any cultural agency in those very texts. He claims that the very entry of the colonized in the mainstream discourse is proof enough of his resistance and of the anxiety of the colonial discourse. Bhabha acknowledges Said's prominent place in the issue of the postcolonial location and representation, and feels himself indebted to Said in several respects, being one of the forunners of the field with his groundbreaking work *Orientalism*, but he disagrees with the notion of Otherness. In fact, Bhabha states that Said's utilization of the Foucauldian power knowledge paradigm and Gramsci's concept of Hegemony to counter –attack the west, would only create an antithesis to the colonial thesis, and eventually would come out with no outcomes to the colonial situation. Unlike Bhabha; as Sumit Chakrabarti contends, the critical tools afforded to Edward Said in 1978 did not provide wide scope of analysis[30]. Bhabha relies on a Post Structural stance, where the text becomes flexible, and not always means what it is initially meant to say. The text becomes subjective and can embody an infinite number of meanings. It is this assumption that does not impose on Bhabha to take a final stand. In fact, Bhabha is 'refusing to let his terms reify into static concepts'[31]. He assumes that it is when the colonial discourse locates the colonized as a 'knowable' and 'recognizable' subject that becomes subject to discursive attack. This idea is shared by Jean Baudrillard, who states that 'as soon as the other can be represented, it can be appropriated and controlled'[32] .

[29] It is a phrase coined by Edward Said (1936-2003) denoting a re-reading of the colonial archive to demonstrate how the texts are implicated in the colonial enntreprise. As he believes that this kind of reading 'reveal[s] their(texts) deep implication in Imperialism and the colonial process' (cited in Bill Aschcroft.et al. ***key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies***.eds (1998) London : Routledge, p. 55).

[30] Chakrabarti, Sumit. **''Moving Beyond Edward Said: Homi Bhabha and the Problem of Postcolonial Representation''** in *Interdisciplinary Political and cultural Journal*, Vol.14, No. 1, 2012, pp.9, cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.../02-sumit.pdf, (Accessed on April 7th 2014).

[31] Young, C Robert. ***White mythologies : Writing History and the West***.London : Routledge, 1993 p.187.

[32] Baudrillard, Jean. ***In the Shadows of the Silent Majorities… Or the End of the Social, and Other essays***. Trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and John Johnnston, New York : Foreign Agents Series, 1983, p.3.

In his *Orientalism*, Edward Said is aware of the anxiety of the colonial discourse, and the need for an alternative language of resistance with this encounter of the East and the West. He states that:

> One [the West] tends to stop judging things either as completely novel or as completely well-known; a new median category emerges, a category that allows one to see new things, as versions of previously known things. In essence such a category is not so much a way of receiving new information, as it is a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things[33]

Said notices in the colonial discourse this tendency to fix the identity of the colonized. The west tries to put the colonized into a place which makes him totally predictable, and this serves as a way for the colonizer to control the colonized. What Said seems to say, also is that this 'new median category' is seen as a 'threat to some established view of things'. The idea that the West's endeavour to control the East, and the threat that this latter constitutes is Said's understanding of the confusion within the colonial discourse.

This 'new median category' Said mentions is what Armah depicts in *Fragments*. Baako is a 'been-to'[34] coming back to Ghana. Armah portrays Baako as a man of will that has a true belief in the possibility to help his country. After his return, Baako intends to work for the 'Ghanavision Corporation' to deliver messages to his people. In a conversation he has with Ocran, his former Art Master, Baako thinks of writing as:

> '' … a way of making my life mean something to me. After all, I had to ask myself who'd be reading the things I wanted to write '' … '' … I can write for film instead of wasting my time with the other stuff – It's a much clearer way of saying things to people here''[35]

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[33] Said, Edward. ***Orientalism***, Great Britain :Penguin books,1978 p. 58-9.

[34] It is someone who travels abroad, and is supposed to come back with a lot of material riches. This notion of the 'been-to' is closely related to the 'cargo cult' concept in the novel. It was an unusual religion followed by some islanders in the South Pacific around World War II, they believed that, although they worked hard they remained poor, whereas the Americans and the Europeans had only to write things on paper or send messages through air and shipments of riches were sent to them from the sky, thus they built replicas of airports and airplanes to imitate them and try to have the same shipments. A 'been-to' in contemporary Ghana is a cargo purveyor.

[35] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 80.

Baako is a man with a western education who wants to work in script writing in order to enlighten his people whom he sees need guidance. Through his conversation with Ocran, the reader sees Baako as a man Ghana and the African continent as a whole need to make a leap forward. Baako is the 'new median category' that uses the western teaching and values he has learnt abroad for the betterment of his society. Armah portrays his protagonist as a spirited young man who does not only 'mimic', in Naipaul's sense the western values, but rather uses them for his country's benefit. The point here is that rejecting the Other (west) and his teaching and values and stand in a binary position would be of no help.

It is, thus, easy to understand Bhabha's different course of action that is more likely to insure promising results for the colonized people. His use of Psychoanalysis reminds us of Frantz Fanon's method whom he discusses in his essay *Interrogating Identity: Frantz Fanon and the Postcolonial Prerogative* which is a part of *The Location of Culture*. Bhabha examines at length Fanon's seminal work *Black Skin, White masks*[36]; he considers being a form of resistance in itself. Bhabha states that Fanon does not fix his work in the Saidian way, and points out that *Black Skin, White masks* is a hybrid text in itself. Hybridity which is the milestone of Bhabha's theorizing will be discussed at length later. According to Bhabha, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 'splits between a Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, a phenomenological[37] affirmation of Self and Other and the Psychoanalytic ambivalence of the Unconscious'[38]; he uses versatile means to rest his case. Fanon's flexible approach is a way of not being 'recognized' and 'known', fixed and thus counter-

[36] Black Skin, White Masks was published in 1952.The work of the Martinican psychiatrist and thinker Frantz Fanon. This work, wriiten while Fanon was exercizing at Blida Joinville Hospital, examined basically the psychological scars and domination that Colonialism caused. In Black, Skin White masks, Fanon resorts to both Freud's and Lacan's Psychoanalysis to examine the destructive psychological effects of Colonialism. *Black Skin, White Masks* adhers neither to assimilationist French culture nor to a seemingly belief in Black superiority.

[37] It is the study of phenomena : apparences of things, or how they appear in our experience, or more simply, the way we live experiences. This field of philosophy studies conscious experience and how they are experienced from a subjective point of view. It is crucial to Fanon's study as it explains the way the colonized comes to feel about himself and his surroundings.

[38] Bhabha, ***The Location***, op cit, p. 58.

attacked. Bhabha emphasizes that Fanon's poetic style challenges the lifeless statements of colonialism. Indeed, when asked once by a publisher to explain some 'obscure' passages, Fanon says:

> I cannot explain this sentence. When I write things like that. I am trying to touch my reader effectively, in other words irrationally, almost sensually. For me, words have a charge. I find myself incapable of escaping the bite of a word, the vertigo of a question mark[39]

It is this stress on the 'effective'and 'sensual' sides that Bhabha finds most appealing. Like Fanon he does not feel the necessity to be cristal clear in the usage of the words. He assumes that language is not meant to be transparent, which has earned him most of the criticism. In an interview with William John Thomas Mitchell, Bhabha responds to the inaccessibility of his works by saying that he:

> take[s] the question of accessibility very seriously. …. I also feel that the more difficult bits of my work are in many cases the places where I am trying to think hardest , and in a futuristic kind of way – not always, … I find that the passages pointed out to me as difficult are places where I am trying to fight a battle with myself. The moment of obscurity contains, in some enigmatic way, the limit of what I have thought. The horizon that has not as yet been reached, yet … must be marked[40]

As a post structuralist, Bhabha departs from the notion that language must convey a clear message. It is language, according to Bhabha that becomes the message. Like Fanon, Bhabha is not interested in the East-West dichotomy; he argues that Fanon speaks of a transitional truth that calls for a change in society. Bhabha argues that Fanon believes that there is no 'fact of blackness' or whiteness, in fact self and other are locked together.

In *Black Skin, White Masks,* Fanon speaks of 'epidermalization' which he considers a crucial issue as he thinks that the essential identity is located on the skin's surface. In

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[39] Macey, David. ***Frantz Fanon, A Biography***. New York : Picador USA, 2000,p. 159.
[40] Mitchell,William John Thomas. **"Translator translated. (Interview with the Cultural Theorist Homi Bhabha)"** in *Artforum* v.33 , n.7 (March 1995) pp. 81, https://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bhabha/interview.html, (Accessed on April 10th, 2015).

the introduction to *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon says 'the white man is sealed in his whiteness [and] the black man in his blackness[41]. Fanon sees that the fact of neglecting one's blackness and of trying to mimic the Whites is negative, for he thinks the idea of universal humanity turns out to be a white western idea. He puts it as follows:

> I move slowly in the world, accustomed now to seek no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. and already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am fixed. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality.I am laid bare. I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus, Why? It's a Negro![42]

Fanon points out two important things: Firstly, the white man considers himself as the only reality. The white man's gaze at the black man is to highlight his difference. The black man is fixed in a place and objectified, made an object that is 'laid bare'. Therefore, it is the white man that imposes his reality and creates the image of the black man through his gaze. The second thing is that the black man becomes a 'genus' a 'new kind of man'. The word in biology emphasizes the inferiority of species, and Fanon thinks it is the way the white man looks to the black man.

This has been the general way Fanon has been read by critics before as most critics believe that the title Black *Skin, White Masks* sums up the idea of Fanon that the black man can neither reach the whiteness he strives for, nor take out the black skin he learnt to denigrate, and thus, the idea of an empowering hybridity contrasts fundamentally with Fanon's way of thinking. Bhabha's re-reading of *Black Skin White Masks*, therefore leaves some critics perplex. Henry Louis Gates J.R is one instance; he states that Bhabha is creating his own Fanon. It is probably Fanon's own influence by Jacques Lacan that enables Bhabha to re-read Fanon the way he does. His relying on post structuralism and their stance of *différence*[43] enables him to give a plausible and convincing re-theorization

[41] Fanon, Frantz. ***Black Skin, White Masks***. England : Pluto Press, (1952), p. 3.
[42] Ibid, p.87.
[43] The term originates in a conference that Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) the French philosopher, and the father of Deconstruction gave in 1968 to *La Société Française de philosophie*, which sums up the whole of Derridean thought,

of Frantz Fanon. Bhabha's reading of colonial discourse has enabled him to locate the anxiety and ambiguity of the colonizer. Bhabha reveals how the colonial mimicry that the west strove to intiate, in order to strenghthen their domination of the colonized, resulted in an ambivalent and menacing situation to the colonizer.

2- The Concept of Ambivalence:

The notion of ambivalence was first developed in Psychoanalysis to describe an oscillating movement of wanting a thing and rejecting it. Bhabha's influence by the theories of Freud and Lacan, as stated above, brought him to adapt it to the colonial discourse analysis. For Bhabha, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is ambivalent, as the colonized is somewhat attracted to the colonial culture he discovers, and through it, he wants to associate himself to its discourse of equality and justice, thus ending up threatening the colonial domination. Ambivalence 'disrupts the clear- cut authority of colonial domination, because it disturbs the simple relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Ambivalence is therefore an unwelcome aspect of colonial discourse for the colonizer'[44].

As mentioned in the previous section, the fact of being 'the same but not quite' disturbs the positions of both the colonizer and the colonized. The rather long discussion of the concept of mimicry above is relevant to its crucial importance to Bhabha since ambivalence is somewhat an automatic by-product of the mimic situation. Bhabha suggests that these anxious and confused statements within the colonial discourse or colonialism in general will cause inevitably its downfall.

Robert Young suggests that the notion of ambivalence is Bhabha's way of turning the tables on imperial discourse. He adds that 'the borderline, the marginal, the unclassifiable, the doubtful by the centre responds by constituting the centre as an

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Différence marks the break up, if one may say so, of the relationship between signifier and signified: each signifier refers automatically to a fixed signified hetherto believed. Thus, it crumbles the belief in a fixed identity and its dominance and originality. It destroys the western assumption of the dominance and superiority they believed was inherent in their civilization.

[44] Achcroft et al, ***Key Concepts***. op cit, p. 13.

'equivocal, indefinite, indeterminate ambivalent'[45]. Young suggests that with the ambivalence of the colonial discourse, the colonized characterized here by 'marginal', 'unclassifiable' and 'doubtful' reveals the colonizer to be 'undefined, indeterminate' thus depriving him of his originality and his position on a pedestal.

Through its 'double' talk, the colonial discourse creates cracks within it, instilling a sense of division, loss and absence of stability in the colonized toward him that undermines the colonizer's authority. In an attempt to fix the colonized through his gaze, the colonizer is subject to the return of the gaze on the part of the colonized. Bhabha further clarifies it as 'the look of surveillance returns as the displacing gaze of the disciplined, where the observer becomes the observed' and 'partial representation rearticulates the whole notion of identity and alienates it from essence'[46] This displacing gaze or what is called in psychoanalysis 'the scopic drive'[47] is what makes the colonizer 'ambivalent' and question his position of superiority.

In his essay, *Signs taken for Wonders* Bhabha discusses ambivalence at length, and he reveals its significant relevance to the colonial situation. Bhabha takes as an illustration the case of an Indian catechist and his experiment with five hundred Hindu converts. Bhabha underscores the reluctance of the people to attend the teaching since 'the book' was translated by cow flesh eaters. Bhabha focuses on the point that the bible that is instrumentalized to instore a total subjugation of the Hindus ends up being a subversive weapon against the European 'authority'. Bhabha infers that the Indians did not conform to the fixed place the Europreans want them in and give instead an altered understanding of the book.

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[45] Ibid, p.14.

[46] Bhabha, ***The Location***, op cit, p. 89 127.

[47] A notion developed by Jacques Lacan. He believes that the the human being's subjectivity is determined through the gaze, which places the subject of the gaze himself under observation, thus the subject becomes object, and is alienated from himself. Bhabha uses the scopic drive to emphasize that the colonizer's gaze is met by the displacing gaze of the colonized and thus he becomes the object of the observation that alienates his sense of identity and his authority as well.

Bhabha goes further into his argumentation, when the catechist Messeh proposes to the Indians the idea of baptism so as to become true Christians. The reaction of the people was striking; they first evaded the subject as 'now [they] must go home to the harvest'[48] then, they accepted the idea with a strong resistance and refusal of the sacrament because of the the part entailing cow flesh eating which is part and parcel of Baptism. Bhabha wants to draw attention to how the 'colonial subject' disrupts the colonizer's domination through creating his own version of Christianity, in this case, by only accepting what does not contradict hinduist principles, the whole undertaking results in a mockery of the colonial authority and its incapacity to assert its alleged strength.This pattern of adapting the other's religion to suit the traditional framework is also present in the African context. In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe portrays the missionaries preaching the good word to the people of Mbanta, Okonkwo's motherland; the villagers mock the teachings, and do not conceive of the Holy Trinity as one God. According to the Igbo tradition, they can not see how God can have a child but no wife. The way the villagers conceptualise Christianity is in regard to their own beliefs and thinking only.

Bhabha, not only demonstrates how the colonial subject is ambivalent with his example of the bible, but turns to show the colonizer's ambivalent discourse as well. In the same essay, Bhabha quotes a passage from Joseph Conrad's 1902 novella *Heart of Darkness*. It is the scene when Marlow comes upon Towson's or Towsor's *Inquiry into some points of Seamanship*, a book that is found abandoned in a hut while Marlow travels to the Inner Station. Marlow is delighted with this book which has 'a singlenss of intention', then the Manager, another character exclaimed that it must be the book of 'this trader [Kurtz], this intruder' then Marlow adds 'He must be English'[49]. The association of the words 'English, miserable, intruder' shows the ambivalence inherent in the colonial discourse. Kurtz, a European man, comes equipped with 'high ideals', but ends up

[48]Bhabha, ***The Location***, op cit , p.147.
[49] Ibid, p. 148.

making himself a god to the natives. This shows how the colonizer destroys his assumption of having an essential and stable identity. Bhabha says that

> The colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearances as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference. It is a disjunction produced within the act of enunciation as a specifically colonial articulation of those two disproportionate sides of colonial discourse and power[50]

Bhabha argues that it is the very idea of colonialism which creates ambivalence in the first place. Since colonial relationships are not inherently self-evident and their existence lacks coherence and justification, thus consequent developments of this encounter are inevitably ambivalent. In his *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Mouloud mammeri fictionalizes the ambivalent attitudes of the colonial process through Arezki and his relation to the French administration. Arezki's fight with the French soldier in the refectory has shattered his hopes and previous opinions of liberty. For the first time, he realizes that the colonial talk is twofold, and that the French rule meant him always to be inferior. He knows it 'il le (réglement) connaissait bien sûr; il savait qu'un article y disait qu'à grade égal le gradé indigène doit obéissance au gradé européen' [51] (he knows the rule of course, he kwows that a section in it said that at equal ranks, the native soldier has to obey the European one), then Arezki hears on the radio that :

> Venus de tous les points du globe, parlant toutes les langues, adorant tous les dieux, mais tous mus par le même grand amour de la plus humaine des patries, les Français de France, du Maroc, d'Algérie, de Tunisie… qu'ils soient blancs, jaune ou noirs, tous égaux, tous libre…' the narrator adds that ' on ne put jamais savoir la fin de la phrase … parcque le rire d'Arezki couvrit la voix cassée, un rire brusque, énnorme qui partit … sans qu'il s'y attendît'[52]
>
> (came from all parts of the globe, speaking different languages, worshiping different gods, but all silenced by the same big love of the most humane of all nations, the French of France, of Morocco, of Algeria, of Tunisia …being white, yellow or black, all equals, all free…. The rest of the sentence was not known as Arezki's laughter

[50] Ibid, p.153.
[51] Mammeri, ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 88.
[52] Ibid, p.89.

overwhelmed the trembling voice, a husky laughter, loud, went without him expecting it)

Arezki's satirical laughter signals the 'hypocrisy' of the French discourse. Mammeri illustrates the Bhabhaesque stance of the forked and ambivalent colonial discourse. The episode of the refectory and the speech Arezki hears on the radio instill in him the awareness of his difference to the French, and highlight the double standards and hypocrisy of the French values and authenticity that Arezki ends up cursing and urinating on in the book burning episode. Through Arezki, Mammeri shows how the awareness of his intellectual hero materialises when he is subjected to the double standard applied by the colonial administration. This awareness becomes a formidable weapon of resistance of the subject races. Colonial ambiguity thus ends up being the grave of both the colonizer's claim for authenticity and superiority and the ineluctable defeat of the colonial enterprise as a whole. Indeed, as far as the Algerian context is concerned, the day of the proclamation of the end of the Second World War, in which many Algerians like Arezki fought side by side with the French against Nazism for a 'free world' over Forty five thousand Algerians were massacred in Guelma, Kherata and Setif .'It is one of the ironies of history that the 'free France' which found a refuge against Nazism in Algeria turned out to perpetuate Fascism in its colony'[53]. Many historians hold the episode of May 8th 1945 as the beginning of the end of French Algeria. Albert Camus, who was sent by the magazine *Combat*[54] to investigate the massacres, stated in his *Crise en Algérie* that before 1945, Algerians had desired to be assimilated but after the massacres they stood against it. It is the ambivalence of the French power and the hypocrisy of the liberty talk that caused its downfall in Algeria.

The ambivalence that Bhabha argues for instills in the colonized the awareness that he is a mere tool at the hands of the colonizer, so he revolts and eventually threatens

[53] Forsdick, Charles,et all eds. ***Francophone Postcolonial Studies : A Critical Introduction.*** London : Oxford University press, 2003, p.67.
[54] French newspaper published from 1941- 1974, as an organism that supported resistence in the occupied France.

the colonizer. The colonial power creates ambivalence unwillingly and it ends up destroying its very authority and presence. As Bhabha sustains the colonial discourse 'speaks in a tongue that is forked'[55] which 'results in the splitting of colonial discourse so that two attitudes toward external reality persist; one takes reality into consideration while the other disavows it…'[56] According to Bhabha, the colonizer's refusal to identify the colonized as equal to him cracks his authenticity and ends up refuting his long held authority.

3- The Concept of hybridity:

For Bhabha, ambivalence creates a sort of dialogue between the language of the colonizer and the one of the colonized which results in a state of hybridity. Dialogim initiated by the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakhtin has been of a major influence on Homi Bhabha's hybridity. For Bakhtin, a word or a sentence is in a constant dialogue with itself and with each other, and only acquires a meaning through its dialogue and interaction with each other. The word 'is born in a dialogue as a living rejoinder within it; the word is shaped in dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already in the object'.[57] Bakhtin maintains that languages are by the same token, in constant relationship with each other. They tend more to co-exist' and 'cohabit' than 'exclude each other. He states that:

> at any given moment, languages of various epochs and periods of socio-ideological life cohabit with one another... Thus at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form... Therefore languages do not exclude each other, but rather intersect with each other in many different ways.[58]

[55] Bhabha. ***The Location***, op cit, p. 122.
[56] Ibid, p. 130.
[57] Holquist, Micheal, ed. ***The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M Bakhtin***, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992, p. 279.
[58]Ibid, p. 291.

It is this thought of the indelible relations of things and objects in the world that Homi Bhabha applies to Postcolonial studies, mainly hybridity. He sustains that instead of considering cultures in exclusive terms and in warring positions which according to Bakhtin is improbable, cultures should be regarded in dialogic terms, each producing an answer to the other and vice versa, and certainly not in binary terms, he compares to

> tennis match …[that he] … tried to get away from… to suggest that there may be ways of thinking about the general as a form of contingent conditionality, or as an ‘‘intersitial’’ articulation that both holds together and ‘comes between’[59]

Bhabha believes that the colonial encounter that establishes patterns of ‘mutual and mutable’[60] relationships between the colonizer and the colonized constructs a culture and an identity within the conditions of colonial antagonism. Indeed, Bhabha states that ‘all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity’[61]. Bhabha shifts from the nineteenth century negative meaning the likes of Rudyard Kipling held in his novels and personal stances. On the occasion of the inauguration of Punjab University in 1882, Kipling wrote the following letter to George Wiles that gives us the spirit of the time regarding cultural hybridity.

> Just imagine a brown legged son of the East in the red and black gown of an M.A as I saw him. The effect is killing. I had an irrelevant vision of the common room in Muhammedan get up. At the end of the proceeding, an excited bard began some Urdo verses, composed in honor of the occasion. It was a tour de force of his own. But I am sorry to say he was suppressed, that is to say they took him by theshoulders and sat him down again in his chair. Imagine that at Oxford[62]

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[59] Mitchell. **‘‘Translator Translated’’**,op cit, pp. 82.

[60] Meridith, Paul.**‘‘Hybridity in the Third space : Rethinking Bi-Cultural Politics in Aotearea/New *Zeland’’*** *paper prsented to Oru Rangaham Research Development Conference*, Massey University, July 7-9,1998, pp.2, http://lianz.waikato.ac.nz/PAPERS/paul/hybridity.pdf, (Accessed on April 6th , 2015).

[61] Rutherford, Jonathan. **‘‘The Third Space : Interview with Homi Bhabha’’**. In : *Ders.(Hg) : Identity, Community, Culture, Difference.London* : Laawrence and Wishart, 1990, pp. 211, http://www.wsp-kultur.uni-bremen.de/summerschool/download%20ss%202006/The%20Third%20Space.%20Interview%20with%20Homi%20Bhabha.pdf, (Accessed on April 6th, 2015).

[62] Singh, Amardeep, **‘‘Mimicry and Hybridity in plain English’’** May 8 th 2009, http://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/2009/05/mimicry-and-hybridity-in-plain-english.html, (Accessed on Feburary 7th, 2015).

Kipling expressed the general *zeitgeist* of the time as hybridity was considered an aberration, a sign of impurity and miscegenation, and thus hybrid subjects were thought to be worse than inferior races. Homi Bhabha's method of colonial discourse analysis highlights this concern, and sought to correct this usage since according to him the very idea of pure cultures is a fallacy in the first place. In his interview with Jonathan Rutherford, he states that

> meaning is constructed across the bar of difference and separation between the signifier and signified. So it follows that no culture is full unto itself, no culture is plainly pleinitudinous not only because its own symobol-forming[63] activity, its own iterpellation in the process of representation, language, signification and meaning making, always underscores the claim to an originary, holistic, organic identity[64]

As a Post Structuralist, Bhabha believes that culture is like a system of language that is composed of a signifier and a signified, that meaning is not pre-existent which results in a signifier leading us to a definte signifier; but it is rather the result of exterior factors to the signifier itself that produces meaning. Since the signifier may refer to an infinite number of signified, and thus is never self-complete, Bhabha argues that culture is in an everlasting, ongoing hybridity.

The stress on the 'impurity' of cultures in general and the exposure of the falsity of the 'original', 'organic' cultures allow Bhabha to destroy the essentialist discourses of some cultures being superior to others. This rejection of the essentialist discourse springs from his influence by Jacque Derrida, and his outstanding work *Of Gramatalogy*, published in 1967, in which the point is made on the opposition between speech and writing that has been a central issue in Western thought. Speech involves flexibility, being alive and the presence of the speaker, while writing is fixed and present even in the absence of the speaker. Derrida shifts from this traditional opposition, and states that

[63]A term developed in Psychoanalysis which describes a process whereby abstract self/world relations are articulated in one's actions and thoughts.
[64] Rutherford. **The Third Space**, op cit, pp. 210

'speech' and 'writing' are in fact more similar. In fact the rejection and opposition of 'the other' is as void and useless as the distinction between speech and writing.

It is Bhabha's belief that essentialism is historically and culturally untenable, that makes him develop his unique meaning of cultural hybridity. It is the belief that hybridity is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance; an encounter between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another, that produces a ground of negotiation. Bhabha's rejection of original and pure cultures makes the coinage of hybridity extremely challenging. As Ania Loomba argues

> It is Homi Bhabha's usage of the concept of hybridity that has been most influential and controversial within recent postcolonial studies. Bhabha goes back to Fanon to suggest that liminality and hybridity are necessary attributes of the colonial condition. For Fanon, you will recall, psychic trauma results when the colonized subject realizes that he can never attain the whiteness he has been taught to desire, or to shed the blackness that he has learnt to devalue. Bhabha amplifies this to suggest that colonial identities are always a matter of flux and agony. It is always, writes Bhabha in an essay about Fanon's importance for our time, in relation to the place of the other, that colonial desire is articulated.[65]

This quotation from Loomba's book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* sums up the necessity of a re-defining of the colonial condition. The author speaks of 'liminality' and 'hybridity' as part and parcel of Colonialism. The author speaks of a spotting of a liminal space or what Bhabha compares to a 'stairwell' in *The Location of Culture* which is crucial to cultural hybridity since it creates two supposed opposites of upstairs and downstairs where, as Ramone singles out '[cultures] are connected necessitate that they are made a part of each other'[66]. The stairwell image involves both the colonizer and the colonized together which renders such notions of 'purity' in any context inexact. This denotes that the colonial encounter does not necessarily result in a total subjugation of the colonized culture, according to Bhabha, it is quite the opposite; the colonized culture is transformed, or 'translated' to use Bhabha's word, into other positions. Bhabha suggests

[65] Loomba, Ania. ***Colonialism/ Postcolonialism***. London : Routledge,1998 p.176.
[66] Ramone, Jenni. ***Postcolonial theories***. Basingstoke, UK : Pulgrave Macmillan, 2011, p.114.

that the contact between the colonizer and the colonized creates a 'third space of enunciation'[67]. In his interview with Rutherford, Bhabha defines it as follows:

> … the third space that enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it and sets up new structures of authority; new political initiatives… it bears the traces of those feelings and practices which inform it, just like a translation, so that hybridity puts together the traces of some other meanings … the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different , something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation[68]

For Bhabha, hybridity is not a mere mixing or a blending of two cultures, but rather more like a translation of a book. The translation never equates the original due to 'certain traces of meaning' that emerge. One recalls here the episode of the Bible's translation into Hindoostanee that Bhabha mentions in *Signs Taken for Wonders*. The way the the Indians came to understand it was 'new' and different from what the westerners expected. The 'negotiation of meaning' Bhabha refers to is by no means a compromise or a way to avoid conflicts, but thinks that 'Subversion is negotiation; transgression is negotiation, negotiation is not just some kind of compromise or 'selling out'[69]

Hybridity is a way of resisting and affirming one's position, and provides the 'colonial subjects' with an empowering energy to articulate their culture. It is this sense of hybridity that Bhabha takes as an alternative 'solution' if any at all, to the West's claim of superiority and authenticity, that gave the colonizers justifications for their colonial project. In *Fragments*, Ayi Kwei Armah portrays Baako a 'been-to' who displays signs of cultural translation. In one passage, Baako speaks to Asante Smith, the manager of Ghanavision whom he hopes to work for. He shows the Manager pieces of scripts featuring the right of the oppressed:

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[67] Aschcroft, ***Key Concepts***. Op cit, p. 118.
[68] Rutherford. **''The Third Space''**, op cit, pp. 211.
[69] Ibid, p. 216.

> At the production meeting when he'd presented this treatment (script entitled the Root). Asante-Smith had stopped him just here and asked, "What is it about?'' "Slavery" "Why such a choice of topic?'' "how do you mean, why?" "you understand me, Mr. Onipa," said Asante-Smith, with a small yawn. "Look, we're a free, independent people. We're engaged in a gigantic task of nation building. We have inherited a glorious culture, and that's what we're here to deal with." "Slavery is a central part of that culture, isn't it?"… "do you have any others?" Asante-Smith asked suddenly. "There's more of the first, *The Root,''* Baako said[70]

Baako believes that any attempt to reconstruct a nation has to start from the roots, therefore his scripts deal with the history of the African continent. Baako is in the position of 'negotiation'that Bhabha argues for. In another similar passage, Baako is talking to his grandmother, Naana, after he quits Ghanavision. He burns his manuscripts out of despair; he tells Naana that '[he] was trying to say things in [his] mind, to let other people see.'[71] Armah fictionalizes a crucial reality, the one that the intellectuals like him felt in postcolonial Ghana. They strive for a better society, by making into practice what they learnt abroad, but end up frustrated with the meeting of a neocolonial, materialistic society.

Like Armah, in *Le Sommeil du Juste* Mouloud Mammeri portrays Arezki a young intellectual in an 'in-between' place that confuses him. One should mention that Arezki does not choose his state or fully understands it. Indeed, he puts down everything that reminds him of his village Ighzer and of the stifling tradition he has escaped from. It is the 'double' talk of the French colonialism that instills in him a weird feeling of rejection. In the significant scene of the book burning, Arezki realizes that the words 'liberty' or 'justice' are not made for him. He says 'Allume! dit Arezki. …. Tout le tas! L'ideal, les sentiments, les idées. Mais vas-y donc, ha! Ha! Brûle ha! ha! Brûle les idées'[72] (Light the fire! says Arezki … all the stack, the ideal, the feelings, the ideas, come on, ha! ha! burn ha! ha! burn the ideas). While understanding the falsehood he lives in, Arezki enters in a

[70] Armah, ***Fragments***, op cit p.147.
[71] Ibid, p. 154.
[72] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 100.

state of frenzy that makes him burn all the books that he has venerated so far. Mammeri later on in the novel portrays Arezki who tries to join 'Le Parti', though it is never mentioned explicitly; it is the FLN, National Liberation Front, which is the the political wing of the Algerian army. Arezki's seeking to join the Party comes after a painful realization of the Ambivalence of the colonial discourse.

As the protagonists of the two novels demonstrate; the idea of 'third space' or 'in-betweenness' is not about releasing tensions between cultures. The realization of their difference from the colonizers unleashes in the characters a force to affirm their own identities. '[Hybridity] instead intends to increase tensions. This increase in tension is required in order to create a crisis for systems of authority which depend upon their ability to ascribe a kind of sense to colonialism.'[73] What Jenni Ramone seems to point out here is that the aim of the Bhabhaesque hybridity is to raise awareness that there is no pre-existing authority or superiority of cultures whatsoever, and this belief in authority legitimized the colonial enterprise in the first place.

In consequence, Bhabha's in-betweenness is an empowerment and a formidable tool of resistance. Hybridity enables the colonized to tell their own stories with some borrowed means from the colonizer which the colonized can still translate to 'new' and 'different' meanings. The Postcolonial studies as a discipline offers a plausible and strong stance for the in-betweenness, as scholars of the field use ideas and thoughts of the likes of Derrida, Foucault or Lacan, to name only a few, yet tell their stories of this Third World with their proper and new scopes.

The hybrids Bhabha speaks of are Africa's one chance to walk ahead of centuries of subjugation and lack of consideration. In their novels, Mouloud Mammeri and Ayi Kwei Armah demonstrate the possibilities of their societies to pull through the turmoil if they are managed appropriately. Though Arezki and Baako seem confused and can not come to consensual terms with their environments, they are able to spot the negative

[73] Ramone, ***Postcolonial Theories***, op cit, p.112.

sides. The authors depict their protagonists as eligible 'in-between' individuals; the protagonists instill the feeling of up-coming amelioration in their environments thanks to the awareness they show. Both novels show the same rigor in singling out the crucial importance of a collective action. Arezki's and Baako's confusion stems from the fact that they are battling alone in oceans with multiple currents. The novelists infer that solitary actions are undeniably doomed to failure. They believe in:

> forging a national consciousness based on a sense of a shared destiny. The need to feel part and parcel of the collective struggle is shown in the life stories of the heroes. They are more often than not, middle-class intellectuals who overcome their isolation and hesitation by making common cause with the revolution. Here, only here, the novelists seem to imply lies the path of redemption and resumption of an identity shattered by conflicting loyalties.[74]

The quotation above sums up the kernel idea the two novelists intend to transmit in their novels; the awareness that genuine initiative for Africa's progress can only be activated by the 'middle-class intellectuals' through a 'collective struggle'. The intellectuals, who by a historical accident inherited a culture that is in a perpetual conflict with their native one, transform their acquired culture to a formidable subversive weapon to re-appropriate their own. The hybrids expose 'the sly civiity' of the colonial discourse that is 'splitting, doubling turning into its opposite'[75] , and permits to re-articulate the cultures of the long dominated and held 'inferior' peoples.

[74] Arab, Si Abderahmane. **''The National Liberation War in the French language Novel of Algeria''** in *Bulletin British Society for Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 17, No. 1 (1990), pp. 37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/194828, (Accessed on May 20th, 2015).
[75] Bhabha. ***The Location***, op cit, p. 137.

CHAPTER TWO

Alienated Heroes in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste*

And Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*

In African literary works, the individuals are most of the time at odds with their surrounding: family or social connections in general. It is widely noticed that the heroes in the oeuvres are alienated from their society. 'Many social scientists have begun to view widespread alienation as a major development in modern life'[1] Alienation is indeed a generative term that is frequently debated and discussed in social sciences. It is Alienation, as described by Melvin Seeman[2]; particularly what he has called normlessness and isolation aspects, which seem pertinent to this study.

As debated in Seeman's article ''On the Meaning of Alienation'', the use of Normlessness that was derived from Durkheim's description of 'anomie', describes the state when the social norms regulating the individual's conduct have become inadequate or irrational for him. In *Fragments*, Baako is at a loss to exist in a community which has lost its norms. Seeman's other use of Alienation is Isolation which concerns mostly the intellectual, who holds popular cultural standards as low or non important, and opposed to his own conception of society and ethics. This 'apartness from society … leads men outside the environing social structure to envisage and seek to bring into being a new, that is to say, a greatly modified, social structure.'[3] This disregard of the social values and the attempt to get rid of them correspond with the description of Arezki in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste*. Both heroes are archetypes[4] of the individuals who experience difficult contacts with their societies and are in a spiritual quest to find meaning to their lives. The theme of departure from a society that disavows the heroes and an eventual return to it are pervasive in both novels. This chapter is divided into four

[1] Lystad Hanemann, Mary. **"Social alienation : a review of current Literature"** in *The Sociological Quarterly* Vol. 13.NO.1(Winter, 1972). pp.90, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4105824, (Accessed on May 20th, 2015).

[2] An American renown social scientist who devided alienation in to five diffrent uses : Powerlessness, meaninglessness, Normlessness, Isolation and Self estrangement. Each use ushers to the wide and multi facetted meaning of the concept of Aliennation.

[3] Seeman, Melvin. **"On the meaning of Alienation''** in *American Sociological Review*. Vol.24, NO.6 (December, 1959), pp.789, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2088565, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).

[4] Arechetypal heroes is a concept devoloped by Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell stipulating that all heroes have in common recurrent patterns and they ultimately developed from a 'Monomyth'. In his paramount book, ***The Hero With A Thousand Faces***, published in 1948, Joseph Campbell compiles many myths and stories and compares them, unabling him to develop his theory of 'the Monomyth'.

parts. The first two parts of this chapter entitled **Arezki and the Stifling tradition in Le *Sommeil du Juste***, and **Baako 'the been-to' and the expectation of a neo-colonial materialistic society in *Fragments***, discuss the reasons that cause the alienation of both heroes. The last two parts subtitled **Narrative structure in *Fragments***, and **The letters as a form of communication in *Le Sommeil du Juste***, probe the means and devices Mouloud Mammeri and Ayi Kwei Armah choose to depict this alienation in both novels.

1- Arezki and the Stifling Tradition in *Le Sommeil du Juste*

In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, the characters seem all to be engaged in a kind of 'war' for liberties. Each character exemplifies it in his peculiar way, but eventually, they all converge to the same desire for freedom. They acquire a sense of awareness that they are alienated from their society and rebel against the traditional pressures put on them, as well as against a colonial power that reveals itself indifferent to the ills of the population.

In a conference held in Algiers in 1987, Mouloud Mammeri mentioned the fact that *Le Sommeil du Juste* 'revolves around a confrontation between alienation that is lived and an imposed servitude'[5]. It is interesting to see how Mammeri deals with the theme of alienation in his novel, as he first examines the causes that led to it, which he seems to say started because of the stifling tradition that is incapable of understanding the population. In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Arezki repels all that is traditional, and denigrates all the values of his society, whether social or religious. Mammeri puts this fact at the forfront of the novel, when Arezki rejects the existence of God in Tajmaat[6]. This brutal and quite radical opening of the novel reveals Mammeri's intentions. He seeks to reveal what happens to a young Algerian coming from 'the mountains', caught in the middle of an'archaic'tradition, and plunged into the troubled waters of the Other's civilisation. According to Mammeri, it is this lack of understanding and sometimes strict application

[5] Berrichi. ***Mouloud Mammeri Ecrits***, op cit, p. 149 (My Translation).
[6] The place where the people of the village gather to discuss matters and issues concernng the village. It is also used as a court where conflicts are settled.

of this tradition that leads the hero to negate all that constitutes his people's customs, and makes him leave his rural milieu. The way Mammeri portrays Arezki in *Le Sommeil du Juste* resembles the Epics of classical Literature. The hero is misunderstood, unaccounted for, disregarded and finds himself, sometimes unwillingly, the antagonist of his surroundings. This hero is thus an outcast who goes on a journey that is supposed to bring him belonging, maturity and wholeness that makes sense to his life.

Through the discussion that Arezki has with his father at the beginning of the novel, the reader feels the wide chasm that exists between the two characters. The father-son exchange signals an impossible communication which is at the core of the problem. In this very interesting dialogue putting two generations of Algerian mentalities in opposition, Mammeri raises the issue of the generation gap. The son is astonished by his own eloquence and feels a true sense of pride when he says:

> Eh bien! Dieu même ne peut rien contre la logique. Or la logique veut… mais à quoi bon t'expliquer? La logique que tu ne sais pas ce que c'est: toute votre vie la nie, votre vie qui est un non-sens, un tissu d'absurdités.… [la logique]de tout le monde… de tout le monde sauf des gens d'Ighzer …[elle] enferme dieu dans un dilemme, couic, attrapé, comme dans une souricière… Quel pauvre Dieu que celui qui ne peut éviter le néant que par la méchanceté, par l'impuissance. Et couic attrapé… [7]
>
> (Oh Well, Even God is powerless against logic. When logic wants … but how can I explain it to you? Logic you don't know it: All your life denies it, your life which is nonsense, a tissue of absurdities. [Logic] of everybody… of everybody except of people of Ighzer… [it] locks up God in a dilemma, caught, like in a mouse trap… What poor God is the one who can't prevent chaos without unkindness, without powerlessness. Then, caught …)

The above dialogue, I chose to mention Arezki's part only, shows the extent to which Arezki opposes the values of his society. This very interesting conversation of the two characters reveals the true state of the Algerian society. Arezki attempts to argue why the existence of good and evil condemns the existence of God; a philosophical and metaphysical conversation in which Arezki tries to state his case. Instead of appearing as

[7] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil*** , op cit, p.9-10.

a very profound and thoughtful character, Arezki is depicted as a young man who is solely interested in 'lecturing' his father what 'logic' is. Through his answers, the father remains calm and tries to follow his son's arguments. His calm state is clearly contrasting with the frenzy and excitement of the 'wise' and 'philosophical' Arezki. In a very subtle way Mammeri imparts to the reader the' confusion and frustration' that Arezki experiences.

Arezki does not question the values of the Kabyle society only, but seems to disclaim such universal notions as honor. In a discussion with his brother Sliman, this latter speaks about the Kabyle honor, to which Arezki answers that 'l'honneur c'est une plaisanterie'[8] (honor is a joke). Arezki says 'honor' and does not imply the Kabyle honor solely. It is important to show that early in the novel Arezki believes in nothing. It is not only his society he rejects, but some universal codes as well. The interesting fact here is that Arezki does not appear aware of his status. When the old man in 'la place' tells Arezki that the devil speaks out of his mouth[9] Arezki says that he cares neither about God nor about the devil. The reader feels here that Arezki's purpose is more to provoke his people than to articulate his free thinking about values that should change. This lack of discernment and maturity is due to the character's inglorious early life. Mammeri renders this quite explicity through the discription he gives about the protagonist's childhood:

> Arezki, quand il était plus jeune, ne laissait pas percevoir qu'un jour il finirait si mal; des traits de petite fille, un grand corps qui grandissait trop vite mais si fluet. « Le vent souffle aujourd'hui, disait le grand frére Mohand, accrochez Arezki, il risque de s'envoler.» aucun ouragan ne l'avait emporté: Dommage! Il n'eut pas couvert toute la famille d'opprobre. Il n'y'avait pas d'école à Ighzer naturellement, mais il y en avait une à Tasga oû on avait enovoyé Arezki chez une vieille soeur de sa mére, pour se débarasser de cette petite fille qui ne servait à rien et qui, quand on lui confiait quatre ou cinq brebis à faire paître, revenait les yeux rouges d'avoir pleuré: c'était trop pénible. De Tasga Arezki revenait pour les vacances. Comme il ne savait rien faire on lui demandait rien. Il faut dire il était peu encombrant: on le déplaçait comme un meuble. Si quelqu'un avait besoin de le place oŭ Arezki s'etait par hasard assis il n'avait qu'à le toucher à l'épaule. Il était poli. Il disait toujours oui à tout… Il

[8] Ibid. p. 8.
[9] Ibid. p 8.

lisait les lettres des ouvriers de France et y répondait … il était devenu pour tout le village: Arezki-nnegh, notre Arezki … essayer d'en faire tout de même un homme, malgré ses yeux doux, sa voix morte, sa peau rosée … Le pére appelait tout le monde à déjeuner. Si il manquait Mohand ou Tamazouzt on les attendait, on savait oŭ ils étaient et ce qui les retenait. Mais nul ne s'inquietait de l'absence d'Arezki…[10]

(Arezki when he was young, nothing could tell that one day he would end up this bad; the traits of a little girl, a big body that grew up too fast but slim «The wind blows, used to say the older brother Mohand, hang Arezki, he could be blown away.» But no hurricaine took him: Too bad! He would not have covered the entire family of shame. There was no school at Ighzer naturally, but there was one in Tasga where Arezki was sent to an old sister of his mother, to get rid of this little girl who was useless and to whom, when we entrust him with four or five sheep to herd, came back with red eyes of crying: It was too hard. From Tazga Arezki came back for his holidays. Since he was not good at anything, he was never asked. The truth is that he was never burdensome: He could be moved like a piece of furniture. If somebody needed the place where Arezki sat down, he could just be given a tap on the shoulder. He was polite. He used to say yes to everything. … He used to read letters of the workers from France and answers them. … He became for the whole village: Arezki-nnegh, our Arezki … Nevertheless trying to make a man out of him, despite his warm eyes, his dead voice, his pink skin … The father calls everyone for lunch. If Mohand or Tamazouzt is missing, he would wait for them, he knew where they were or what kept them. But nobody would worry of Arezki's absence.)

This rather long description of Arezki informs the reader of the protagonist's state of mind and to certain points gives explanations to what made the adult Arezki. His childhood was not an ordinary one; he was 'the little girl' everybody wanted to get rid of. In a male society, Arezki is clearly out of place since a boy is supposed to work hard out in the field, doing a man's work, but it was too difficult for him, given his frail build. His family did not rely on him for anything, and mocked him. The narrator sarcastically wonders how 'this little girl' has become the man defying his father. The reader notices that it is exactelly this lack of consideration from his immediate surrounding that led Arezki to be the kind of adult he is. The only talent he was admired for was his capacity to read and write letters for the people of Ighzer. It is no surprise then to see Arezki embracing the only field he could excel in and gain recognition and admiration out of it.

[10] Ibid. p.12.

He became Arezki of everybody; that makes up for his flaws in other domains. The 'piece of furniture' becomes 'un savant au village'[11] (the scholar in the village). The more education he acquires, the more he strays away from the village's social code and morals, ending up trapped.

In the first chapter, Mammeri exposes some of the traditions of Upper Kabylia Arezki finds appalling, and thus chooses to stand against them. Arezki's old brother Mohand is dying, and as the custom stipulates, he has to marry his widow who has three children that need to be taken care of. The father who stands for tradition has prepared a life plan for his children. In a very signifying passage, the narrator relates to the reader the father's plan:

> Tout était rigide tout était simple aussi: la coutume de nos ancêtres a l'intransigeance sereine de la vérité. Tout ce qui n'est pas elle est erreur. Arezki devait épouser Mekiossa apres la mort de Mohand, Sliman se marierait dans le clan des Ait-Wandlous, parce que c'était ainsi depuis des siècles.[12]
>
> (Everything was rigid everything was simple too: the custom of our ancesters has the serene intransigence of the truth. All that is not it is mistake. Arezki must marry Mekiossa, after Mohand's death. Sliman marries into the clan of Ait-Wandlous, because this was the case for centuries.)

The beliefs that the father holds on to are unquestionable among the community. He is unable to see that the rigidity of this tradition will lead to the eventual downfall of his family. In a conversation with Meddour, Arezki confides to him that he would rather commit suicide immediately than marrying his brother's widow.[13] Mammeri hints at some archaic traditions that are heavy burdens on the characters' shoulders. Sliman, Arezki's younger brother is not allowed to marry Yakout, the woman he loves, because she belongs to another rival family of the Ait-Wandlous. She is the daughter of Raveh Ou-Hemlat, the village mayor, and to whom Sliman's father has not spoken for thirty years.

[11] Ibid. p. 12.
[12] Ibid. p. 23.
[13] Ibid. p. 80.

In a conversation between the father and Ravah Ou-Hemlat we notice a high respect that the two have for each other. The narrator says that 'le père sentit se desserrer l'étreinte autour de sa poitrine: qu'il fait bon avoir affaire à des hommes'[14] (the father felt loosing the grip around his chest: how it eases off to deal with men). The dialogue between the father and the mayor presents two men that have no personal conflicts but still are enemies because their families have been so for centuries. Mammeri depicts how daily matters in Ighzer seem to be dealt with in the same way as they were centuries ago, as if Ighzer is caught in a time loop. In the second part of the first chapter, the narrator speaks about the curse that the father thinks he inherited since Azouaou, his grandfather, exterminated the race of Hand, Toudert's grandfather. Mammeri indeed relates beforehand a somber and tragic feud involving the ancestors of Toudert and Arezki's father, and the latter wants to resume the drama by killing Toudert, his cousin.

The origin of the crisis is that Toudert told the Komisar, the colonial administrator, that the father bore a grudge against the French administration and that his son Sliman had enrolled in a nationalist Party against the French administration. Toudert is portrayed as the villain, the 'scum'[15] that spent his entire childhood in harsh conditions.[16] After his father's death he worked very hard to achieve his goal, and gain status in society. Toudert seeks to become the village 'Amin', regardless of how he can obtain it. As the narrator says, 'la bassesse des autres c'etait pour Toudert une condition d'existence'[17] (the lowness of others was for Toudert a condition for his existence.). It is this trait of character that pushes the father to wish to kill Toudert, and annul the three hundred years curse. The feud is used by Mammeri as a reminder that Ighzer is frozen in time, stuck in a devastating code of morals. Mammeri points to the uselessness of such traditions that bring nothing but archaic attitudes and death to society. The errors of the past are still repeated nowadays, and no actual lesson is learnt from them. Mammeri clearly

[14] Ibid. p. 22.
[15] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 60.
[16] Ibid. p.60.
[17] Ibid. p.65

disapproves of this blind adherence to customs, and this disapproval is dramatised in the character of Arezki, his mouthpiece. This latter commits himself to learning to escape this strict tradition, but finds himself unable to cope with his surrounding and incapable of understanding the mode of life of the people of Ighzer.When he was young Mammeri wrote an article about the Berber society, describing it as:

> close et irrèductible… Telle m'apparaĩt la sociètè berbère oŭ j'ai grandi et dont les principes de vie ont été les premiers que l'éducation m'ait jamais inculqués. Il fut un temps oŭ j'appliquais ces principes et les vivais tout naturellement car ils étaient les seuls que je connaisse … A coup sŭr je ne les vois plus maintenant comme je les vivais alors … Car bientôt dix ans de culture occidentale m'ont totalement changé d'atmosphère … Il fallait avec douleur m'arracher après l'avoir longtemps chéri (…) à tout le stock de vérités que l'ont m'avait inculquées et dont j'etais forcé de reconnaĩtre la fausseté ou le leurre … je l'ai fait parceque ces vérités que l'on m'avait apprises me semblaient maintenant illogiques …[18]
>
> (closed and irreducible … This is how the Berber society appears to me, where I grew up and in which the principles of life were first that education ever inculcated to me. There was a time when I applied these principles and lived by them naturally as they were the only ones I knew… Certainly, I no longer see them now as I used to live them then … For now, almost ten years of western culture have totally changed my atmosphere … I had to pull away from them with pain after I had for long endeared them (…) from all the stock of truths that I have been inculcated about which I had to acknowledge the falseness or the lure… I did it because these truths that I had been taught appear to me now illogical …)

Arezki then expresses the author's viewpoint about the rigidity of the Berber customs which, he believes, lead to disharmony among people. Arezki is unable to identify himself with this tradition, and clearly feels a sense of loss to its usefulness in his society. Arezki is sent to Tasga, mostly because of his rebellious attitude in his home village. There, he is put in contact with a new culture, which he assumes is less aggressive and more humane, where he feels liberated and valued. His rejection of the values of his society, and his refusal to comply with his father's order to marry his brother's widow stem from the wide gap between what Arezki learns at school from Mr Destouche, 'the

[18] Cited in Amhis-Ouksel, Djoher. ***La voix des ancêtres, une lecture de «Le Sommeil du Juste» de Mouloud Mammeri***, Alger, Casbah éditions,(2010), p. 35-36.

anarchist'teacher of Tasga, and the harsh realities he has to endure in Ighzer. On two occasions when Arezki came back home during vacation, the father decided to beat him, because the first time he came with a long hair and the second he came wearing shoes. Such things are unacceptable for the father, as they are in defiance of the traditional way of life. Arezki has constantly to feel uneasiness among his people, an awkward position in the family's picture that made his departure a necessity for both him and his people. After the incident at the public place and the discussion that followed with his father, this latter shot at him because he could no longer stand what this 'piece of furniture' ended up to. The father is both relieved that he missed his son but also that he drove him away. Arezki, like the epic heroes has to leave and go on in a journey in which he learns that reality is diffferent from what it looked like in Ighzer, but also different from what he reads in his books and lessons of philosophy.

Arezki who is stuck in Ighzer, this river with multiple currents, indulges himself in education in Algiers at the 'Ecole Normale d'instituteurs', and explores new horizons. In a letter he writes to his 'master', M. Poiré, his philosophy and pedagogy teacher, he acknowledges that he owes him to be born into life. The 'disciple' venerates his teacher to the extent that everything that is not mentionned in his books is systematically wrong and should not exist. In the same letter, Arezki relates to his teacher about the time he used to come back home during vacation and how his father always scolded him and repproached him with being dead to things:

> Mort au monde? Mais c'est vous qui l'êtes. Je sais moi, des choses dont votre sagesse ne se doute même pas: j'ai lu les livres, un monceau, et si dans la masse de livres, que j'ai lus, ni Ighzer ni Hand ni votre misère ne sont cités, ce n'est pas malédiction, c'est justice: vous n'en valiez pas la peine! …Votre sagesse fossile, votre monde, votre pauvre petit monde, si vous saviez comme je m'en moque, Oh, là, là, si vous le saviez![19]
>
> (Dead to the World? But it is you who are. I know things that your wisdom doesn't even realize: I have read the books, a lot, and amidst all these books that I have read, no Ighzer, no Hand, nor your misery are cited: it's not a curse: it is justice: you are

[19] Mammeri . ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p.93.

not worth it!... Your fossile wisdom, your world, your poor little world, if you just know how I don't care about them, if you just know.)

The thoughts Arezki shares with his master translate a total denial of his village and people. He reduces them to a state of complete inexistence as they are not mentioned in his books so they ought not to exist and are not worthy of attention. Mammeri here pushes the discord to a higher level, since in the passage above, it is not just Arezki the provocator who is speaking, but also the writer who draws us to ponder on this situation of conflict, as the passage is an introspection into Arezki's mind. Arezki seems to have cut all ties with his village and their beliefs, and undertakes to prove himself as a free individual. He feels the need to cry out, to rebel. Arezki needs to show everyone his' new science':

Il fallait qu'ils l'apprissent un jour. Ma neuve science me pesait. Je brulais de l'ardeur de la communiquer à d'autres. Il fallait pour cela commencer par déblayer les obstacles. Tous se moquaient de ma peau de petite fille, de ma voix frêle. S'ils avaient entrevu le quart de la folie de détruire qui me prit la derniere année, ils m'auraient lapidé comme Satan. Détruire, couper, pourfendre, renverser, je voulais tout renverser. Il me devint impossible de le cacher plus longtemps[20] …

(They had to know about it one day. My new science was a weight on me.I was dying of the desire to communicate it to others. For that, I had to get rid of the obstacles. Everyone joked about my skin of a little girl, of my frail voice. If they had just caught a glimpse of part of my craze to destroy that occurred to me last year, they would have lapidated me as Satan. Destroy, cut, assail, tip over, I wanted to turn everything upside down. It became impossible for me to hide it any longer…).

Arezki seeks to get rid of the image of the little girl that he was given, and clearly plagued his life. This inferiority complex drives him to the edges by questioning and negating all that caused his psychological and social malaise. In a detective novel, Arezki would easily be a sociopath that brings death and sorrow to those surrounding him. It is the lack of understanding and communication that urge the hero to flee his surroundings.

[20] Ibid. p.93.

But as mentioned above, Arezki seems to be the author's mouthpiece as well, still one should not misinterpret Mammeri's endeavour; he is not against tradition, and certainly does not call for a total rejection of it. Indeed, Mammeri is among the rare writers who devoted a great part of his career to retrieve ancient poems, stories and even customs of Berber people and also of other regions of Algeria[21]. His publication of *Les Isefra, poèms de Si Mohand ou Mhand* in 1969[22], and his work as the Director of the Centre of Anthropological, Pre-historical and Ethnological Researches (CRAPE), from 1969 to 1979 place him among the most fervent writers concerned with the values of the past and tradition. In an interview, he claims that:

> [La tradition]… est souvent presentée comme une chose morte, c'est le contraitre, quand elle est vécue, elle est continuellement renouvelée, chez nous … il y a une espece d'ambiance, le vrai traditionaliste innove en répondant aux nouveaux problemes. Il s'agit toujours de reintegrer le code pour le mettre en prise sur la vie réelle.[23]
>
> (Tradition … is often presented as something dead, it is the opposite, when it is lived, it is continually renewed, in our society… there is a kind of atmosphere, the genuine traditionalist innovates by confronting the new problems. It is about always reintegrating the code in order to adjust it to the real life.*)*

Actually, what Mammeri seems to say above is that every society needs to look back to its past and try to understand it. One can never evolve when trying to erase his culture, for it lives in us and we carry it willingly or not through our paths in life. Instead of negating or rejecting it, Mammeri believes traditionalists should revise it to meet the challenges of the day. The use of tradition that the reader is introduced to in the novel is

[21] Mouloud Mammeri oeuvered through his life to dig into the Algerian culture for the sake of revealing it. His researches in ethnology and anthropology passioned him, and as he stated it in an interview 'je suis d'une société 'ethonologique', et j'avais un désir de la comprendre …' an interview cited in (Mouloud Mammeri oŭ la musique des mots). He published studies about the Berber culture. He published ***Ahlil du Gourara***:a compellation of poems and songs of the Saha region published in 1985. He published the first book about the Berber Grammar (***Tajerrumt***) in 1976.

[22] This collection of poems of 480 pages is a very known and praised book of poetry in Maghrebian Literature. It embodies the poems of Si Mohand ou Mhand, a late nineteenth century poet, who composed a novel genre of poetry talking about love and loss. The specificity of ***Isefra*** is that Mammeri published the Berber text next to the French translation.

[23] Cited in Berrichi. ***Ecrits et Paroles***. op cit, p. 39.

burdensome and stifles the people. Arezki the protagonist can not identify himself with its tenets. He confides in Meddour his friend that:

> Tu comprends, j'en avais assez d'étouffer à Ighzer, de mourir à petit feu, un peu plus chaque jour, jusqu'à celui où dans l'indifférance de tous j'eusse, quitté la scène comme ça, sans histoire, sans avoir joué le plus petit bout de rôle. En plein XX[e] siècle ! Un scandale, pis … un crime ! [24]…
>
> (You understand, I had enough of choking in Ighzer, to die slowely, a little more everyday, until the one where in indifference to everybody I would have left the scene in this way, uneventful, without having played the least role. Right in XX[e] century! A scandal, worse … a crime…)

Mammeri pinpoints the consequences that the non-negotiable and strict use of tradition would entail. It is systematically going to alienate the young people who are centuries away from that custom, but still seem to bear the consequences of them as if they were of yesterday. The impossible love of Sliman and Yakout, the 'insensentive' custom of marrying the brother's widow culminate to a state of suffocation, and eventfully brings upheavels on the village of Ighzer. This lack of communication unleashes the destructive' storm' on the village; the narrator states:

> Ce n'est que longtemps après qu'on s'aperçut que les calamités qui se déchaînèrent par la suite sur Ighzer pendant des années provenaient toutes de lui et que cette balle, qu'on avait crue vaine, avait été comme le caillou qui déclenche l'avalanche ; nulle force ne fut capable d'en arrêter les suites…[25]
>
> (It is only a long time after that it was noticed that the calamities that were unleashed on Ighzer for years arose all out of it, and this bullet that was thought to be vain, was like the stone that triggered the avalanche; no force was capable of stopping what came next…)

This prophetic passage at the beginning of the novel depicts the danger of the absence of tolerance and the rigidity of the father. The missed shot that drives Arezki away shows that the single act of one individual is going to cause the destruction of his

[24] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 79-80.
[25] Ibid. p. 13.

whole community. It reveals how Mammeri held a strong respect for his people's values and customs. Indeed, we observe in the novel that what affects one member will ultimately concern the whole community. This same course of action is noticed in other African societies, and many African writers fictionalized this topic. Chinua Achebe's oeuvres; *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* for instance tackle this issue of intra-communal relations. Achebe depicts the villages Umuofia and Umuaro, respectively, destroyed by uncompromising individuals such as Okonkwo and Ezeulu; stuck in their traditional shell, they are unable to accept change. It is this 'unreasonable' use of tradition that leads the young people like Arezki to seek some other more 'humane' values and principles to believe in, and are attracted to the lure of the western ideas. They indulge in all that can bring them sense in life as they find themselves alienated from the core. The result is like 'the stone that triggered the avalanache' eveutually creates a neo-colonial society that is not able to discern the good from the bad and become like a blind that lost out the light.[26]

2- Baako the 'been-to', and the Expectation of a Neo-Colonial Materialistic Society:

What Mammeri points at in *Le Sommeil du Juste* concerns the dangers individuals that estrange themselves from society and tradition would face. It does not tackle the consequences this alienation begets, and the kind of societies it generates, but the reader understands its ominous and warning calls. Had it not been for its different writer, country and social and political backgrounds, Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments* would be a perfect sequel to *Le Sommeil du Juste*. The Ghanaian writer fictionalises the post-independence Ghanaian society entangled in the scourge of neo-colonial [27] ethos through a display of an

[26] Ibid. p.51.

[27] Neo- Colonialism: is a term coined by the first president of independent Ghana Kwame Nkrumah in his book ***Neo-Colonialism: the Last Stage of Imperialism***, published in 1965. Nkrumah stated, that though African countries gained their independence, the ex colonial powers still exert their hegemony: political and economic over the newly

extensive materialism. Ayi Kwei Armah expressed his malaise about the state of things Ghana was confronted to. In *Fragments*, he catalogues a Ghana that lost its 'way'[28]. The characters roam in confusion and disorder because of their unquestionable and total veneration for the Western ideas and commodities, and their neglect and disdain for tradition and ancient ways. It is their imitation or what Bhabha calls mimicry in the derogatory sense of the word that triggers this dissoluteness.

In *Fragments*, Baako notices to his dismay that the only language his society understands and focuses on is that of money, the new sport in contemporary Ghana. Indeed, the author exposes how the Ghanaian society is obsessed with material gain, and the total readiness of the people to bargain their own safety for the sake of money. Araba, Baako's sister gambles her baby son's life to have more luxurious gifts. In the Akan tradition, the newly born has to pass a mandatory week before he can be considered as being actually born, and a ceremony labeled 'outdooring' is celebrated on the eigth day. In the novel, Efua, Baako's mother and Araba decide to hold the ceremony in the fifth day, as it falls on the weekend after payday. Despite the warnings of Naana, Baako's grandmother and the novel's repository of tradition, and who tells of the dangers that the child may encounter, the call remains unheard. In the Akan tradition:

> After the birth, the child is kept indoors for seven days; it is then held to have survived seven dangers and is worthy to be called a person, if it dies before the 8th day, it is considered as having never been born and thus has no name. The ''Kpodziemo'' or ''going out ceremony'' at which the child is named takes place on the 8th day after birth[29]

Regardless of the fact that she has had five miscarriages, and unfearful of the deadliest consequences that an early outdooring may engender, Araba, like Efua, thinks

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independent states. This hegemony is perpetuated through the new leaders, those Fanon named the 'National Bourgeoisie'. Ever since, Neo- Colonialism has encompassed sundry meanings. In this study, it is the exploration of the blindfolded mimicry of the West that affected Ghana in the aftermath of its independence that will be dealt with.

[28] It is the word used by Armah in his fourth and fifth novels: *Two Thousand Seasons* (1974) and *The Healers* (1978) to describe the ideal path leading to true African values and principles lost due to the colonial enterprise.

[29] Manoukian, Madeline. ***Akan and Ga Adangbe Poeple***, London: African Institute, 1980, p.89.

that ‘an outdooring ceremony held more than a few days after payday is useless’[30] It is not the rejection of tradition that is pointed out here; it is indeed its perversion that Armah holds to be problematic. This disrespectful application of tradition for the sake of material gain seems to be the scourge of modern Ghana specifically, and Africa in a larger sense. Baako, the novel’s protagonist denounces this practice, but is unable to counter it. In a sarcastic tone, Baako mocks his mother’s and sister’s eagerness ‘to make money out of the child’[31], but does not stop the ceremony from being held, even if Naana informs him it is his obligation to do so. The ceremony is transformed into a mere occasion to grab money as it is vividly illustrated by Efua, when she calls for donations:

> It’s time now for each and every person present on this happy occasion to rise up and give a generous donation in appreciation of the birth of this happy child. I will call on you, and you will all come here to the front and give from the bottom of your heart. I will call the honorable VIP guests first, the rest later. First … the Honorable Mr. Charles Winston Churchil Kessie, Protocol Branch, Ministry of External Affairs, please step forward and show your appreciaton.[32]

Efua’s portrayal in a grotesque posture, and the charity event that the ceremony becomes, show the extent to which post independence Ghana pays attention to rank and social status. Indeed, these ‘honorable’ guests are more important than the ‘rest’, the less fortunate. Though both types of people are jointly invited, the VIPs enjoy more consideration than the others. This caricatural scene serves as a means to expose the materialism pursued by the Ghanaian society. This lack of a genuine observance of tradition is demonstrated at the very opening of the novel. Naana, Baako’s grandmother recounts, in one of the novel’s flashbacks, how the libation ceremony which is intended to bid the departured one farewell is perverted by Foli, Baako’s uncle. In a libation ceremony, the talker is supposed to utter special incantations, susbsequently followed by a pouring of ‘schnapps’. Foli says the ‘perfect words, with nothing missing and nothing

[30] Armah, ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 88.
[31] Ibid. p. 88.
[32] Ibid. p. 185.

added that should not have been there.'[33], but he alters the tradition when 'he only let go of little miserly drops'[34] . Naana is outraged by Foli's attitude and rights the wrong commited by him. She thinks that 'the spirits would have been angry, and they would have turned their anger against [Baako]. He would have been destroyed.'[35], had she not poured the suficient quantity of the drink. It is important to point out here that what Armah is portraying in *Fragments* is a Ghanian society that 'is not caught between Africa and the West, but between the West and a vulgarized Westernized Africa, and reviles the place he returns to [Ghana] only insofar as it imitates the one he has fled from [the West]'[36]. Armah depicts the widespread imitation of the outcoming goods, and the use of traditional disguises to secure 'material gifts, luxurious artifacts'[37] It appears then, as Naana tells toward the novel's end that 'the baby was a sacrifice they killed to satisfy perhaps a new god they have found'[38]. Materialism is the 'new god' to which sacrifices, such as Baako's well being or the child's are offered. In the novel, the urge for material possessions is associated to a need to be a Westerner as 'Materialism and Westernization dance hand in hand'.[39] On his way back to Ghana, Baako meets Brempong, the novel's epitome of neo-colonial material spirit. Brempong and his wife are firstly described as 'a hand 'and 'a wig'. The narrator refers to them as commodities, as parts and not full-fledged human beings. As Neil Lazarus states:

> The lives of characters like Brempong in the novel are wholly consumed with the ambition to become Black White poeple, to root, to destroy all traces of their own African heritage and to ape the behavior of the European expatriates. Yet it is not only the powerful who play at being Europeans: for nearly every character casually described in *Fragments* seems to be obsessed with either being regarded as White or

[33] Ibid. p. 5
[34] Ibid. p. 5
[35] Ibid. p.8
[36] Wright, Derek. **''Ayi Kwei Armah and the Significance of His Novels and Histories''**, in *The international Fiction Review* 17.1 (1990), pp. 31, https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/ifr/article/download/.../15105, (Accessed on April 7th, 2014).
[37] Frazer, Robert. ***The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah : A Study in Polemical Fiction***, (1980), London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, p. 33.
[38] Armah. ***Fragments,*** op cit, p. 199.
[39] Larson, Charles. ***The emergence of African Fiction*** (1978), London: Macmillan Books, p. 153.

> Westerner. An American way of life has become fashionable in the streets of Accra, wearing wigs and garish makeup are prerequisites for being seen fashionable[40]

*H*enry *R*obert *H*udson Brempong is unmistakingly a caricature representing the new Ghanaian élite. Indeed, his initials HRH stand for the British royal title 'His Royal Highness', while his Akan surname Brempong means nobility or Royalty. Armah overtly deflates his character 'serv[ing] to reduce or destroy [his] self-esteem or confidence'[41]. Brempong 'function[s] as [an] archetypal figure who bring[s] the tensions and conflicts in the community to life'.[42] Brempong symbolizes the keen worshipper of 'the new god'. During his voyage back to Ghana, Brempong comes equipped with two German cars and a 'refrigeration plant' for his mother as a Christmas gift. She 'has always wanted to have a whole bull slaughtered in her yard for Christmas'.[43] This passage highlights again the theme of the perversion of tradition, as the slaughtering of a bull for Christmas is clearly nonsensical, and on the verge of the absurd. He tells Baako that 'it is no use … going back with nothing.' [44] Baako who returns with a guitar and a typewriter is thus coming 'empty handed like a fool'[45] Brempong's bragging about his brand new cars, lighter and tape recorder, increases in Baako a nauseating feeling during his return trip. Brempong reminds Baako of his own family which 'is always there, with a solid presence and real demands'[46]

Baako knows what 'a been to' implies in his society, but still, resents the function. In his first meeting with Juana, the Puerto Rican psychiatrist and his upcoming lover, Baako confides that 'it's not confusion. I know what I am expected to be' but 'it's not

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[40] Lazarus, Neil. ***Resistance in Postcolonial African Fiction***, (1990), New Haven and London: Yale University Press, p. 85.
[41] Amala, Peace Ibala. **''Inflationary and Deflationary Characterization in the Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah''** in *Research on Human and Social Scfiences*, Vol 3, NO17, 2013, pp. 32, www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/RHSS/article/download/.../8550, (Accessed on January 25th, 2014).
[42] Gikandi, Simon. ***Reading the African Novel,*** (1987), London: James Currey, p.24.
[43] Armah. ***Fragments*** , op cit, p.53.
[44] Ibid. p. 53.
[45] Ibid. p.45.
[46] Ibid. p. 102.

what I want to be.'[47] Baako's consciousness of his misfit figure in his society drives him to go 'against a general current ', and subsequently, leads to his madness at the novel's ending. Baako reminds us of the Man, the anonymous protagonist of Armah's first novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* who is disheartened by the unbridled corruption that affects every part of the post independence Ghana. He struggles amid warring forces to remain an honest and decent human being. He is reminiscent of Modin in *Why Are We so Blest?*, Armah's third published novel, who is caught in a conflicting situation where he is both rejected by the discriminative Western academics and by African people as well. Indeed his offer to volunteer in the 'Congherian' liberation bureau located in Afrasia, an imaginary country which stands for Algeria, is rejected on the basis that he is westernized and has an affair with a Western woman. Armah's protagonists feel 'a loneliness from which [they were] finding it impossible to break, of the society [they] had come back to and the many ways in which it made [them] feel [their] aloneness'.[48] Armah dramatises the dark vision of Ghana that has lost its way, and where the ambition to become White extends to the physical appearance too. The advertizing panel on Araba's room wall pictures this obsession for whiteness:

> The calendar itself was a small thing suspended from a very large color picture advertising something called AMBI-EXTRA skin lightening cream. In the center foreground stood a couple of Africans with successefully bleached skins looking a forced yellow-brown. Around them several darker Africans stood in various poses, all open-mouthed with admiration of the bleached pair.[49]

This need to be White and thus to 'destroy all traces of the African heritage', as Neil Lazarus points out, is highlighted, and helps to grasp the mood of the novel. 'The forced yellow-brown' couple on the advertisement are clearly not in an advantageous look. Indeed, they seem more like what Ejet Komolo called 'one bleached mess of Western

[47] Ibid. p. 103.
[48] Ibid. p. 102.
[49] Ibid. p. 87.

acquired values'[50]. The exuberant reception of Brempong at the airport, the showing off of his possession, the advertisements of creams and cigarettes and the British foreign songs taught at Radiant Way International Day Nursery, where Baako's mother works, show the extensive indulgence and blind consumption of what is Western. Brempong warns Baako of this fact, when this latter informs him that he intends to work for Ghanavision as a script writer. Baako is counting on his qualifications and certificates to secure a job when Brempong tells him that:

> It's not like that at all. You don't understand. Look, you don't know those who decide. I know them. If you were an expatriate, a white man, it wouldn't matter. You'd have things easy, even without real qualifications'' Brempong let out a long breath. 'But when you present yourself with your black face like their own, there's no respect. You'll see.[51]

Brempong's function in the novel seems more than a mere representation of malpractices in society. He tries to prepare Baako for the conduct to follow in Ghana if he wants to succeed. Brempong is the role model for Baako to follow in this materialistic society; he is the new hero, the new king. Baako, eventually, seems to realize this when he tells Juana of the old and the new heroes:

> The hero idea itself is something very old. It's the myth of the extraordinary man who brings about a complete turnabout in terrible circumstances. We have the old heroes who turned defeat into victory for the whole community. But these days the community had disappeared from the story. Instead, there is the family, and the hero comes and turns its poverty into sudden wealth. And the external enemy isn't the one at whose expense the hero gets his victory; he's supposed to get rich, mainly at the expense of the community.[52]

In the above passage, Baako explains the difference between the old heroes' category and the new kind that he fails to understand and relate to. He is the Promethean

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[50] Komolo, Ejet. **'' Ayi Kwei Armah's Cargo Mentality A Critical Review of Fragments''** in *Dhana*, Vol. 4 NO.2 (1974), pp. 88.
[51] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 47.
[52] Ibid. p. 103.

figure who wants to convey his knowledge to the community through his screen plays. When Asante-Smith, the Director of Ghanavision hears that the subject of Baako's screen play 'The Root' is about Slavery, he discards it as having 'nothing to do with our people's culture'. He says that they are 'a free independent people. We're engaged in a gigantic task of nation building. We have inherited a glorious culture, and that's what we're here to deal with'[53]. When Baako adds that 'Slavery is a central part of that culture', the reader understands that the 'glorious culture' Asante-Smith refers to is the Western and not the African one. Asante-Smith asks Baako about other works, and is eventually disappointed to hear about 'The Brand', a play concerned with modern Ghana that is caught in the whirlpool of the neo-colonialist spirit. It shows the greedy elite ready to climb on the shoulders of the 'Oppressed' to get to the top. It caricatures in an extensive melodramatic way Ghana as a jungle, and the elite as monsters ready to crush the flesh and bones of those below them. Asante-Smith, as his double name implies, parodies the intellectual who 'has the sweetest tongue … for singing his master's praises. And it doesn't matter to him even when the masters change. He can sing sweetly for anybody who dey for top'.[54] Baako is disappointed by the attitude of the Ghanavision's director. He quits the conference room only to witness another traumatic event, of the greedy officials who take television sets that were initially meant for people in the inner lands. The reader understands the futility to broadcast screenplays like Baako's, given the assumption that the poor people who are meant to watch them are denied this possibility. Baako is caught in this devouring 'Cargo mentality'; he is neither able to follow nor to resist; thus, it alienates him from his surrounding: society and family. He starts writing things for himself which leads his mother to interpret it as a sign of madness and puts him into an asylum. As Derek Wright says

> In *Fragments*, Armah's vision has darkened, the more aggressive and intolerant conformism of modern Ghana in this book demands offering for the altar of its materialism and, since its sins against humanity are deadlier than the corruption of the

[53] Ibid. p. 147.
[54] Ibid. p.46.

first book, a heavier price than the man's passive endurance must be paid for their purgation.[55]

As Derek Wright suggests above, Baako's madness seems to be 'the heavier price' Ghana has to pay because of its disregard of the indigenous culture. The embrace of the western culture at the expense of the native one is a recurrent theme in Armah's novels. Indeed, in *Two Thousand Seasons*, a historical novel, King Koranche rejects Akan traditional life and sends his son Prince Bentum to be educated in the slave castle at Paonce, where he is later baptized George Bradford. The theme reappears again in *The Healers* with the Fante chiefs who anglicize their names. In *Why Are We So Blest?,* there is a clear preference of the White woman over the Black one, inspite of the psychopathy of the former. In these novels, the protagonists are, like Baako, solitary individuals trying to make themselves heard. Baako is neglected to some other con artists such as Akosua Russel the 'blood-sucker'[56] who makes her way to the top, regardless of her knowledge that she 'is no writer, …, [but] She doesn't really care'.[57] Akosua Russel is the representative of the fake artists who 'find a way to make some money without working'[58]. Baako notices the desolate state of his society in which nothing works and ends up burning his manuscripts. Armah depicts the ugly realities that the Ghanaian society witnesses due to the neocolonial ethic that has perverted the hitherto structured traditional frame, resulting in a blurred image: neither White nor Black. The blindfolded mimicry portrayed in the novel which results in the splitting and the perversion of the society is supported by a structure which deepens its loss and frustration. *Fragments*, as its name suggests, is a complex multi layered novel in which the form echoes the message. The seemingly fragmented structure of the novel hints to its complex and multi facetted interpretations.

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[55] Wright. **''Ayi Kwei Armah and the Significance''**, op cit, pp. 33.
[56] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 116.
[57] Ibid. p.117.
[58] Ibid. p.117.

3- **Narrative Structure in Armah's *Fragments*:**

Ayi Kwei Armah is 'l'enfant terrible' among the African writers as he has been criticized by his fellowmen for many reasons and on many occasions. Some hint to his ''non-African'' characters; others to his excessive use of vulgar and scatological scenes, and others to his somewhat extravagant and complex use of language. Chinua Achebe, The alleged father of African Literature, claims that Armah does not refer to Africa in his novels, at least not the one Achebe lived in. He stated that 'Armah is clearly [an] alienated writer' and that 'there is enormous distance between Armah and Ghana'[59]. Achebe made this statement in regard to the protagonist of *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah's first published novel, he finds unlikely to exist in an African society. The Man is portrayed to be alone and with no family ties which Achebe considered improbable, given the communal shape of African societies. Furthermore, Achebe pointed to the extreme use of scatological language and scenes, and to Armah's resurgent Western modernistic style, which confuses the reader and makes the message oblique. Achebe thought that the mission of the African writer, if any, should be to enlighten and to teach the masses which for him Armah failed to do.

In the same stance as his first Novel, Armah's *Fragments* exhibits an unusual texture that went without much surprise against the general current of the African *oeuvres* of the time. The very title of the novel teased his fellow counterparts, presenting an elusive style that led many critics to hold the assumption that Armah's first three novels: *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born, Fragments,* and *Why Are We So Blest?* are written in a modernistic western style. They hint to their keen resemblance to the works of some pillars of western stylists such as James Joyce, which Armah denied and rejected, stating that he has never read a single work of the Irish writer. Charles Larson, who held the

[59] Morell, L. Karen. Ed. *Chinua Achebe, Kofi Awoonor, Wole Soyinka at the University of Washington*, Institute for Comparative and Foreign Area Studies, Seattle: University of Washington Seattle, 1975. p. 14.

latter claim said that '*Fragments* is undoubtedly a very personal novel, beautifully written, illustrating that Ayi Kwei Armah is the major prose stylist of the second generation of Anglophone African writers, and the most significant Ghanaian novelist to date'[60]. In his *The Emergence of African Fiction*, Larson argues that:

> [The] Ghanaian Ayi Kwei Armah tends to regard himself as a novelist only accidentally African. On occasion Armah has gone to rather great pains to make it clear that he is writing Literature first, and that the Africanness of his writing is something of less importance. With few exceptions, Armah's two novels [*The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and *Fragments]* – and especially the second one- would seem to support this theory, for there are very few''Africanisms' in his work, and his protagonists become alienated men – lonely isolated individuals …[and his] novels fall into mainstream of current Western tradition, and his protagonists are not very different from a whole line of Western literary anti-heroes: Julian Sorel, Huckleburry Finn, Stephan Dedalus or Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man[61]

It is Charles Larson's neglect of the particular traits of Armah's African characters and African cosmogony, as aspects pervasive in the novels that led Larson to consider Ayi Kwei Armah as a writer who belongs to Western canon. Larson claimed that the textual structure of *Fragments* is obviously Western, which pushed Armah to publish his groundbreaking article *Larsony or Fiction as Criticism of Fiction*, published in 1978, which is a rejoinder to Larson's statements. Armah objects to Larson's unscholarly methods by not stating the sources of his information which is not Armah's; as he denied all contacts with Larson or other critcs, and that he has never given any interview about his work. Armah explains that the idea of *Fragments* sprang out of a conversation with his older brother about life in Ghana, and is thus not indebted to any other literary works or literary traditions. Larson held the assumption of indebtedness because of the dedication mentioned by Armah at the novels's first page to 'Ana Livia' who is a character in Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* which constituted evidence for Larson of Armah being influenced by James Joyce.

[60] Larson, R. Charles. Cited in **Books Abroad**, Vol. 44, NO. 4 (Autumn 1970), p. 707.
[61] Larson. ***The Emergence***, op cit, p. 258.

One could easily question Larson's statements of Armah's 'non African writing and characters', as the reader is struck by the singleness and intricate narrative style. The novel comprises thirteen chapters; a reminder of the thirteen seasons in the Akan cosmogony. In *Fragments,* Armah intentionally divides the novel into thirteen chapters to impart an African character to the story, in an attempt to unifiy two different and antagonistic ways: Western and African. Robert Frazer states that 'Armah's second novel is probably his most unified, structurally as well as thematically'[62]. Indeed the structure echoes the theme of the cyclical vision of life represented by Naana, her belief in the continuity after death and the subsequent rebirth and regeneration of the spirits are made clear through the narrative style. The first and the closing chapters of the Novel are narrated by Naana, illustrating the novel's atmosphere of the Akan traditional framework and the traditional African story teller, the griot or the linguist. Thus the fragmentation hinted to by the title is misleading as the reader is confronted to a tale in which a vision of wholeness is crafted into it. In the first chapter, the reader meets Naana, one of the narrators of the novel and a guardian of tradition. The creation of Naana as a narrator is for thematic aims, as'this mother figure encloses the story of the son who falls a victim to the unresolvable tension between the two value systems: Western and African, in the sense that her voice is heard in the beginning and the end of the novel'[63]. Armah seeks to produce 'the effect of restoring the lost balance by placing the story of Baako's rapid decline into madness, with the context of traditional ideology… [which] contains a cyclical world view'[64]. Indeed, the novel oscillates between two movements: cyclical and linear, and these are not meant to produce an effect of confusion and fragmentation in the western modernistic sense, but actually helps to understand Armah's vision of history and the message he wants to impart. It is this seemingly distorted way of narration that mistakingly made Larson encompass *Fragments* into mainstream modernist works. It is

[62] Frazer. **The Novels** , op cit, p. 30.
[63] Gillard, Garry. **'' Narrative Situation and Ideology in Five Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah''**, in *Journal of the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies*, Number 33, 1992, http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/readingroom/litserv/SPAN/33/Gillard.html, (Accessed on January 24th, 2015).
[64] Ibid.

the failure to read this novel in African terms in general and Akan ones particularly that spurred the various criticisms to it. The first and the last chapter both entitled Naana give a sense of wholeness to the novel, and Naana, the homodiegetic narrator[65], strengthens the metaphor of the novel through the function of the narrator. The beginning of the novel reads:

> EACH THING that goes away returns and nothing in the end is lost.The great friend throws all things apart and brings all things together again.That is the way everything goes and turns round. That is how all living things come back after long absences, and in the whole world all things are living things. All that goes returns. He will return.[66]

This passage illustrates the message of the novel in two different ways. First of all, it casts light on the main theme of the novel, namely that death is not an end in itself, and that the world is in constant rebirth and regeneration and transformation of things. Second, as far as the structure is concerned, this passage gives us the first hint to the cyclical narration that will serve the novel's ends. Naana does not doubt the return of Baako; it is as obvious as her own existence. This certainty that Naana displays is contrasted with Efua's doubts. In chapter two, Efua goes to see the false prophet to insure that her son is returning. She believes in a prophet, who pretends beholding powers, but who is portrayed leaving the beach in a brand new Mercedes car with a chauffeur; in contrast, Naana's beliefs emanate from her faith in the ancestral spirits.

Armah's juxtaposition of the first and second chapters is indeed an apposite device that translates a highly artistic style. Chapter one deals with Naana's vision, that of the traditional and the somewhat neglected member of the older generation, while chapter two introduces Juana, the representative of the younger generation. As the reader notices through the chapters, these two characters function as the two facets of attitudes that Baako needs to integrate in his life. Juana speaks for the modernity which is accompanied

[65] A term in Narratology coined by the French literary critic Gerard Genette which means that the narrator is a character in the story as well.
[66] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 1.

by high morality, healthy conditions and so liberty, while Naana stands for the spiritual and traditional framework. The two characters echo Bhabha's idea of the complementarity between the traditional and modern life. Armah does not believe in the total obedience to tradition, which is fully transparent through Baako's character, but seems to say that the two visions are not systematically antagonistic to each other, and could be reconciled. What Charles Larson assumed to be Armah's 'near fatal drowning'[67] in *Fragments,* reveals to be his most major force in mastering a perfect synthesis of the two visions. Regarding *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* Larson thought that the writer 'might have burned himself out in the mere process of its creation'[68]. Larson's obvious lack of discernment was what provoked Armah's statement that Larson 'leapt beyond the bounds of moral racist thinking and into pure undisguised superstition'[69]. What is obvious here is that Larson's reading of Armah's works is done from a western perspective, neglecting thus the African one through which the novel is truly to be appreciated.

Each of the novel's thirteen chapters is subtitled; a feature which appears to conform to the traditional western novel, had the titles been translated into English. In fact, the choice of Armah of not translating the Akan words into English gives the novel the 'Africanness' Larson is denying the novel. Furthermore, the division of the book into thirteen chapters serves to link the two views, the traditional and the modern as it combines between Akan cosmogony and a western structural unity. In The last chapter entitled Naana, as is the case for the first, Naana concludes by saying 'I am here against the last of my veils. Take me. I am ready. You are the end. The beginning. You have no end. I am coming'[70]. This concluding passage brings together the Akan cyclical view of history with a structural unity through the title of the chapter, which offers the needed textual evidence of Armah's crafting skills.

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[67] Larson. ***The emergence***, op cit, p. 268.
[68] Ibid, p. 268.
[69] Armah, Ayi Kwei. **'' Larsony or Fiction as Criticism of Fiction''** in *Positive Review, Nigeria,* (1978), pp. 12 .
[70] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 201.

Another intriguing aspect of the narrative method in *Fragments* is its illustration of Baako's psyche through a recurrent usage of flashbacks, interruptions and constant oscillations which help to put on paper what is actually happening in the protagonist's mind. As a character, Baako does not converse much with the surrounding characters, to the exception of Juana. In chapter five entitled, 'Osagyefo', the reader hears of the first encounter between Juana and Baako in the office of the former. The intimations that Baako makes to Juana are done for professional purposes which make the revelations very probable and pertinent. Baako comes for a 'routine checkup'[71]. It is then, that the reader learns in detail about Baako's earlier nervous breakdown in the United States. Armah uses the complex narrative style to grasp Baako's state of mind. In chapter nine entitled 'Dam', Baako suffers from an excruciating fever, while he is writing in his notebook about the Cargo Cult, the unnamed narrator informs us that Baako is writing without trying to understand. The narrator states that 'the softness of the tail end of his [Baako] thoughts displeased him, but he felt too tired to argue with what he had written. Later, certainly, he would go back to it and see'[72]. This sentence informs us of the aim of the repeating back and forth shifts in the novel. Baako needs to internalize the events happening to him in order to give them sense in his mind. He keeps going back to earlier events in order to understand their significance. One instance that can support this claim is the belated revealing of the death of Baako's nephew that occurred right after the 'outdooring' ceremony but only mentioned in chapter eleven. Many critics consider this omission, if one may say so, as a grave infringement to the verisimilitude. In this context, this belatedeness is logical, as it helps for the self- teaching process of Baako, if the novel is to be read as a *Bildungsroman*. The pattern of going back and forth in the narration is needed to show Baako's changing state of mind, and the confusion he feels among his own people. Thus the narrative structure goes hand in hand with the message of the novel. Kirsten Holst Petersen states that:

[71] Ibid. p.101.
[72] Ibid. p.161.

> The mechanical arrangement of chapters into time sequences coincides with the major - and opposing world views in the book, which could be described as the traditional African and the modern Western. The form of the book can therefore be said to not only reflect, but be of an integral part of its message and meaning.[73]

In *Fragments*, Armah manages to balance form and content to best convey his message, in which the two worlds: spiritual and material, recurrently overlap and constitute a confusion of values in which Baako is entangled. The reader notices the discrepancy between the story line and the way the events are presented in the novel. The first chapter introduces an external anelpesis[74], in which Naana informs the reader about Baako's farewell party. Chapter two and three happen in a simultaneous time, introducing two other important characters of the novel; namely Juana, the Puerto Rican and Brempong, a 'been to' whom Baako meets on his return trip to Ghana. The colossal importance of these two chapters lies in the introduction of the two characters who respectively will instruct Baako along his path in the novel, and juxtapose the linear modern view to the traditional cyclical one. The character of Brempong puts forward the corrupt visions in contemporary Ghana which Baako dreads, while Juana represents the character who 'was concerned with salvation still'[75]. She is a character with whom Baako feels 'a desire for contact with something he loved growing keen and terrible in him [Baako] as if his person would simply explode if he didn't go [to her place]'[76]. The structural occurrence of the two chapters thus, is of a thematic significance. After Baako's return, a welcome ceremony is dedicated to him, but is related, only briefly, seven chapters later, in chapter ten, whereas Brempong's welcoming is dealt with exhaustively. This choice of narration can be explained by the fact that Armah intentionally wanted Brempong's party to outweigh Baako's. It is made to accentuate the importance of

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[73] Petersen, Holst. Kirsten. ***''Loss and Frustration : An Analysis of Ayi Kwei Armah's Fragments''***, In Wright. ***Critical Persepectives on Ayi Kwei Armah***, Washington: Three Continents Press, 1992 , p. 217.
[74] In narratology: a device in which an event which happens before the story starts, is narrated.
[75] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 123.
[76]Ibid. p. 133.

material gain and the spirit of the 'cargo cult' in contemporary Ghana. The telling of Baako's party takes one passage only:

> The arrived one had been invited to sit down, rest his tired soul and let a hungry body fill itself. The three cocks selected and brought by Fifi for the feast were white, so what could have been better? The drinks were to be the imported kind and the happy tongues around struggled with strange European names calling out the foods, struggled and conquered, and then the foolish one asked why all these fripperies, and after that the laughter lost its joy and there was no feast, nothing, as he had so blindly told the laughing ones, nothing to celebrate.[77]

This passage is of a capital importance as it shows how the form echoes the meaning in *Fragments*. The rather sober and nonchalent tone of the narrator suits the vacuity and lack of warmth in Baako's welcome party. A single passage dedicated to the return of the novel's protagonist would seem rather strange, had it been not for thematic aims. By contrast to Baako's party, Brempong's is vivid and rendered alive by the characters participating in it. The point to stress here is that people like Baako are of least importance in a materialistic society that does not 'need what's in a head.'[78] Chapter four, five and six are described in a linear way, describing the birth of Araba's short lived son, its successive outdooring and Baako's appointment at Ghanavision, which leads him to meet Juana, the psychiatrist for the compulsory checkup required by Baako's employer.

What is worth noticing is that the important and crucial events of the novel are all narrated through flashbacks. The first important flashback is the revealing of the death of Araba's baby. The meeting of Baako with Asante-Smith constitutes the climax of the novel ends up with the refusal of his two manuscripts 'the Brand' and 'The Root', which crushes Baako's hopes and triggers his descent to hell and his second breakdown. Another important flashback is the telling of the death of Skido, the lorry driver whose character fictionalizes the harsh neglect of humanity and life in general in modern Ghana. Skido tries to embark on the ferry boat for almost three days without success, since the

[77] Ibid. p. 175.
[78] Ibid. p. 190.

policeman prefers to let pass buses and governmental cars before him, who is carrying essential foodstuff destined for rural poor people. The scene in which both Baako and Juana are witnesses depicts the carelessness of the government for lives epitomized by the engineer. The peculiarity of this scene, as far as narration is concerned, is that it is a flashback inside another flashback. The death of Skido sums up all the malpractices occuring in Ghana, and aims to awaken the consciousness of the people to the disastrous situation that Ghana endured in the aftermath of its independence. Another striking aspect of Armah's narration is the accumulation of images and scenes through marked intervals that function as premonitory signs. In chapter two for instance, Juana drives away from the hospital toward the outskirts of the town, where she comes to a horrifying scene of the dog's killing. Several men form a circle around the dog causing the latter's execution. This scene resembles the one where Baako is chased after in the streets, where he is depicted like an animal which is caught by ropes and brutalized with stones thrown at him. In a surreal scene, the narrator decribes Baako who is trying to run away for the second time from being caught:

> He [Baako] stopped. A small shower of stones fell not far from him, and a couple hit him, then there were no more. The first of the pursuers were near, and now that he was theirs they were hesitating about taking him. Two or three of the children who had followed him, however, seemed entirely free of the general diffidence, intent only on reaching him with new stones and their hands. But before they could get to him a frightened shout stilled them, its meaning petrifying them each for long moments at the point he'd reached. 'Stay far from him. His bite will make you also maaaaad! To this another, closer voice added in sage, quiet tones, 'The same thing happens if he should scratch you.'[79]

The above passage which occurs in chapter nine revives the somewhat resemblant scene in chapter two. The long description of the the dog's death is better understood when we contrast it to the above scene. It offers an understanding of chapter two and the crucial significance of Juana's wandering through the inner lands. Baako is like the mad

[79] Ibid. p.170.

animal that endangers the safety of the population. The irony implied by Armah is that in fact it is society that endangers the well being of the people. The deaths of Skido and the dog echo the psychological troubles Baako endures. The vivid details of the two incidents function as illustrations of the despair and disintegration happening in the country. Death and destruction are leitmotifs in the novel, and help to understand the inner state of the protagonist. As mentioned above, the repeated use of flashbacks translates the way Baako deals with his personal experiences. In an impressionistic style, the narrator describes Baako in the mental Asylum in chapter ten:

> ONE REPEATED THOUGHT took his mind and sped through his head like frames carrying an unchanging accusation: right, right, they're right, right, right. In the beginning there was a mother's expectant, happy smile and a sweet voice telling the arrived one about a mansion fit for him. Like a newborn fool he had seen no need to go off into huge mansions and inflate himself to fill the space.…They were right, right, right about his willingness to look for something not so far from themselves … Right, right, right. That refusal of ritual joy certainly spoke to them of some horrifying inner shrinking, of a soul measuring everything…[80]

The narrator is substituting himself for Baako, as he utters the words that are in Baako's train of thoughts. This narrative style strengthens the novel's general drift, and conveys Baako's inner turmoil. The fragmentation and lack of understanding that Baako feels is pervasive everywhere in the novel, and well rendered throughout the complementary combination of form and content. In chapter nine, Baako writes about the 'Cargo Mentality' in a close and small lettering, in a way to show Baako's confusion and lack of cohesion in thoughts that were crowding his mind. By contrast, Baako's screenplays are exposed in bold type. Armah wants to demonstrate the faith and conviction Baako has in his work, as it 'consumed more of him in its conception, and he had hoped to make something good and complete out of [them]…'[81]. His need to enlighten and instruct his people filled him with hope and self confidence, but after

[80] Ibid. p. 175.
[81] Ibid. p.148.

having been disillusioned; it is quite the opposite character who wrote later the Cargo mentality.

As said, Armah uses the form as an integral part of the novel's significance. He uses words and expressions that benefit the coherence of his novels. Narration in *Fragments* appeals to the consciousness of the readers by means of a careful handling of the style. The narrative mode adopted by Armah offers the reader subtle clues to the meaning, and so the plainly didactic mode is avoided.

4- Letters as Form of Communication in Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste:*

The concern of any writer is to produce enough effect to convey the meaning intended through various means. Mouloud Mammeri is, as Tahar Djaout declares, a traditional stylist[82]. According to Djaout, it is the profundity and the density of Mammeri's oeuvre that is pervasive over innovation. Mouloud Mammeri had a deep 'admiration for Racine'[83] the seventeenth century French playwright and poet. Indeed, In le *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Mammeri uses letters which is an aspect that is indebted to seventeenth and eighteenth century literatures. There are six letters exchanged among the characters in *Le Sommeil du Juste*. Letters reminds us of the epistolary novel of that period which was the predominant subgenre of the novel.

Le Sommeil du Juste is not an epistolary novel as such, but this extensive use of letters invites the comparaison. The epistle, the Greek word for a letter, is obviously the most suitable way of communication. It implies an addresser and an addressee, thus it refers to an act of communication between two people, but not only. Indeed, the letter engages a triangular relationship: addresser, addressee and the reader as well. It helps to create intimacy in the story due to its personal content. It expresses innermost emotions, thoughts and ways of thinking of the characters through subtle and genuine tools. A letter

[82] Djaout. ***Mouloud Mammeri***, op cit, p. 9.
[83] Ibid. p. 9.

enhances verisimilitude that is primordial for an 'oeuvre engagée'. As Mammeri stated 'comment un ecrivain algérien peut-il décrire la réalité algérienne sans être par cela même engagé ? Il n'y a pas de peinture indifférente.'[84] (how can an Algerian writer describe an Algerian reality without being committed? There is no indifferent painting.) *Le Sommeil du Juste* illustrates the authentic spirit of Algeria during and after the Second World War. The letter form makes up for the lack of communication among the characters in the novel. With a closer look into the dialogues present in the novel, the reader feels that though the characters speak to each other, they do not understand each other, but through the examination of the six letters, one gets in touch with the unsaid in the dialogues. In *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form*, Janet Gurkin Altman defines epistolarity as 'the use of letter's formal proprieties to create meaning'[85]. This definition applies to the novel as it is the use of the letters that informs us of important events, it brings the characters together and it strengthens the themes.

As mentioned above, there are six letters in *Le Sommeil du Juste* which the study of each one presents an interesting facet of the novel. The letters are respectively: the one of the Father to sliman; the one of M. Poiré to Arezki; the answer of this latter to M. Poiré; the letter of Sliman to Arezki; the letter of Mme Maurer to Arezki and finally the letter of Elfriede to Arezki. What follows is an examination of each of the letters appearing in the novel which will be carried out in connection to the study of Mammeri's thematic development.

The first letter is the one of a father to his son which makes it of family concern, and thus peculiarly important as it stresses what can be called a generation gap. It foregrounds the role of the Father, the guardian of tradition, addressing his son Sliman the representative of the young generation. Sliman left Ighzer to work on a farm in Bouira, and the Father writes to him a letter in which he complains about the harshness of life in the village, and eventually summons Sliman to return home. The letter accomplishes two

[84] Ibid. p. 31.
[85] Altman, Gurkin. Janet. ***Approaches to a Form***, Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP (1982), p. 4.

important functions. First of all, it gives the reader details about the life in Ighzer after Sliman's departure. Secondly, it introduces us to the innermost thoughts of the Father:

> Cette guerre a tout brouillé. Nul ne sait plus oŭ est la Voie : on ne respecte plus rien, et tout est égal à tout. Alors j'ai froid parce que mes os sont vieux et mon cœur aussi et que mon cœur a toujours eu l'habitude de dire que le bien était le bien et le mal était le mal. Mais maintenant le mal et le bien sont confondus. Ton frère Arezki est mobilisé. Il va bientôt partir… Reviens à la maison, même si tu n'as pas d'argent du tout. J'aime mieux te voir ici, car ainsi je saurai que tu continues comme nos aïeux de distinguer le bien du mal.[86]
>
> (This war has blurred everything. No one knows where the way is: Nothing is respected anymore, all is the same. So I am cold because my bones are old and so is my heart and my heart has used to always say that the good is good and the bad is bad. But now the bad and good are conflated. Your brother Arezki is mobilized. He will leave soon… Come back home, even if you don't have money at all. I'd rather see you here, because then I'd know that you continue like our ancestors to distinguish bad from good.)

This excerpt of the letter informs us about the socio-economic context of the novel. The Second World War has brought famine and despair to the village, and the collapse of the traditional values that the Father has lived by up to then. The father shares his loneliness and concerns with Sliman. What is worth mentioning here is that, had not there been this letter, the Father would have never uttered these words to Sliman. Indeed, before this latter's departure, a discussion between the father and Sliman takes place in which the father is unable to communicate with his son, and can not express his mind though his son is leaving for an indeterminate period. The only farewell words spoken by the father are 'Je te pardonne en cette vie et pour l'autre'[87] (I forgive you in this life and the other). The letter is filled with fatherly emotions as opposed to the stark tone of the discussion. Mammeri focuses on the communicative assets of letter writing which substitutes the obvious lack of the physical communication.

[86] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 53.
[87] Ibid. p. 41.

In fact in Berber society, the father is not supposed or expected to be understanding and responsive to his children as he stands for severity and strict order. Through the letter form, the father laments the desolate state of his village and states his need for his son. Inspite of the precarious financial situation of the village, the father shows no interest in the economic advantage that the city represents, and he insists that Sliman returns home anyway. The first letter sums up the novel's thematic concern: the contrast between the old and the new, but most importantly, It shows the relevance of Mammeri's use of this form of expression which is to create a kind of a substituted communication among the characters.

The second and the third letters should be examined together since the second one is the letter of M. Poiré to Arezki, and the third is the answer of this latter to his teacher. M. Poiré. 'He accomplishes his seduction of Arezki and Meddour through his teaching of justice for all, solidarity and democracy. These two students are considered superior and receive the accolade of 'disciples.''[88] This letter puts in contact the colonizer and the colonized, and discloses the hypocrisy of the former. He salutes the courage of his 'children' to fight in a war that he himself flees. The narrator says:

> Dans Alger bombardé, M. Poiré considérait comme de son devoir de mettre à l'abri sa famille : 'Le sage ne fuit pas les dangers mais il ne les affronte pas inutilement. Cette maxime que je viens moi- même d'appliquer je suis sŭr, mes chers enfants, que vous en sentez l'à-propos pour la grande épreuve que vous allez non pas subir mais affronter. Sans doute allez-vous vous étonner de me voir défendre cette guerre, moi qui si longtemps devant vous ai combattu la guerre, toutes les guerres.'[89]
>
> (In the bombarded Algiers, M. Poiré considered it was his duty to put his family into safety: 'The wise does not flee the dangers but does not face them purposelessly.This maxim I myself applied now I am sure, my dear children you feel the use for this great ordeal that you will not endure but face. Surely you will be astonished seeing me defending this war, me who has for long in front of you fought the war, all wars')

[88] Bensemmane, M'hamed. **''Mouloud Mammeri's Le Sommeil du Juste as a Counter-Vision of Colonial Humanism''** in *The Journal of African Studies*, Vol.3, 1998, pp. 73.
[89] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 80-81.

This letter exposes the false humanism of the Western teaching that purports to shape the colonized in the image of the colonizer. It reveals the assimilationist purposes of the French schooling in Algeria, and the lack of consideration of the teacher who sends his 'disciples' to fight a war that is not theirs. Though being priorly informed by his 'disciples' that they would come and visit him, M. Poiré prefers to leave Algeria for his own safety. Nevertheless, the two 'disciples' are eager to express their blind esteem for the 'master'':

> L'amour, l'admiration, l'enthousiasme étouffaient les deux disciples; les mots étaient trop faibles pour rendre l'essence de cette voix magistrale. Elle donnait un sens à leur vie, elle les haussait au niveau d'une humanité supèrieure ; leurs gestes, leurs actions allaient être enfin à l'échelle du monde, leur vie cesser de ne vouloir rien dire.[90]
>
> (The love, the admiration, the enthousiasm choked the two disciples; the words were too weak to render the essence of this magisterial voice. It gave a sense to their life; it elevated them to the status of a higher humanity; their gestures, their actions would at last be known worldwide, their life ceased to be meaningless.)

This passage reflects the degree of indoctrination and subordination of the colonized, as the disciples are worthwhile only through the eyes of the Other. M. Poiré's eight page letter offers the reader a better understanding of the novel as a whole. The letter is the 'pamphlet' that the disciples seek for. The teacher gives instructions, rules of conduct and guidance through which Arezki and Meddour are to consider the war. The reader notices the satirical tone of this letter, as Mammeri seeks to convey the great influence of the colonial system on the indigenous population and subsequently to demystify the colonialist discourse. In an answer to M. Poiré, Arezki replies on a glazed paper to manifest his highest consideration for his teacher. This rather long letter is told by the narrator in its entirety, contrary to the previous letter to highlight Arezki's subjugation. In this letter Arezki expresses his deepest feelings to the teacher who 'brought him to life'. Arezki states that before M. Poiré, he did not exist:

[90] Ibid. p. 81.

> Je vous devrai, mon cher maître, d'être né à la vie. Car avant vous je n'existais pas… Et puis vous êtes venu, mon cher maître, et je vous ai connu. Vous brisâtes les portes de ma prison et je naquis au monde qui sans vous se fût écoulé à coté de moi… je vais à cette guerre avec la ferveur même que j'apportais à boire vos paroles comme un assoiffé… Je vous promets, mon cher maître, que je m'y battrai sans faiblir pour le triomphe d'une cause que je sais être, malgré vous, la vôtre.[91]
>
> (I owe you, my dear teacher, to be born. Since before you I did not exist … then you came, my dear teacher, and I knew you. You broke the doors of my prison and I came to the life that had it not been for you, would have passed me by… I go to this war with the same fervor with which I drank your words like a thirsty man… I promise you, my dear teacher, I will fight without weakening for the triumph of a cause, that, I know, is, whatever you think, yours.)

This third letter gives us insights into the protagonist's mind, and is of a thematic significance as well. Arezki replies in a dignified style which is archaic and obsolete to stress the awkward position of Arezki in this acquired culture. Already in the first letter, the public letter writer explains to Sliman that the one who wrote this letter does not know French well. Arezki, indeed, is caught between two worlds he can not identify himself with, and the oldfashioned language stresses the ideological yoke Arezki is entangled in. He is the individual whom Fanon refers to in his writings i.e. the colonized who is neither welcomed in the colonizer's world nor in his own. The French schooling does not liberate Arezki, but it encloses him in the very 'prison' he tries so hard to escape from. The use of this letter is pertinent as it renders vividly the theme of the 'evolué' who embraces fully the French culture but is unable to cope with it. Arezki sacrifices his life for a battle which is not his and for the humanist ideals of liberty, equality and brotherhood that deny him. The language of the letter reveals the 'sly civility' of the French schooling and its inadequacy in real life situations.

The fourth letter is a plot mover depicting Sliman who is back in Ighzer, while Arezki is in France. At this point, the storyline seems to reach a dead end, had it not been for Sliman's letter to Arezki that puts the events into motion again. In the letter, Sliman

[91] Ibid. p. 82-83.

informs Arezki, and the audience as well, that Mohand, the eldest brother is seriously ill, and the Father has lost his mind, because of the loss of his properties to Toudert. Sliman has to marry his brother's widow, while he intends to go to France for work. The tone Sliman uses in this letter is detached and informative, which has as a sole utility to bring back Arezki to Ighzer. Sliman's letter reveals that the end of the war did not bring changes to Ighzer, and the same misery and despair still linger in the village.

The fifth and the sixth and last letter introduce two characters that Arezki met when he was enlisted during the war: Mme Maurer and her daughter Elfriede. Arezki receives the two letters while he is in prison awaiting his trial. The two letters concern the life of Arezki in Europe which is a part of his life he is no longer interested in. He reads the letter of Mme Maurer in an indifferent way, in which she informs Arezki that:

> Le fiancé d'Elfriede, que nous croyons tous mort, est revenu. Quand vous étiez chez nous souvent j'ai compris que vous doutiez. Voyez comme il ne faut jamais désespérer de la Providence, puisqu'elle vous fait en même temps, Elfriede et vous, retrouver le bonheur. Tous les deux vous êtes mes enfants (votre mère ne m'en voudra pas, n'est-ce pas ?) … Le reste Arezki le relut deux fois mais il ne sut jamais ce que Mme Maurer y disait.[92]
>
> (Elfriede's fiancé, whom we all believed dead, came back. When you were amongst us, I often understood that you were doubting. See how you should never lose faith in Providence, since it makes both Elfriede and you and at the same time regain happiness. Both of you are my children (your mother would not mind, would she?) and everyday I pray for you too… The rest Arezki read it twice, he still did not know what Mme Maurer said.)

This part of Mme Maurer's letter refers to the exclusiveness of the Western world. When he was in France, Arezki was romantically involved with Elfriede, but Mme Maurer seems to discard this aspect and insensitively announces the return of the 'lost' fiancé. The reader notices the lack of interest Arezki manifest towards Mme Maurer's letter, when compared to the letter of M. Poiré, which speaks of the colossal change that occurs in Arezki's thinking. He tries to forget this part of his life that is now

[92] Ibid. p. 164-165.

unintelligible. Indeed, Arezki reads twice the rest of the letter, but fails to inscribe a meaning to it. France becomes a strange world for him, from which all ties are cut. The letter of Mme Maurer reveals thus, the change of position of the protagonist who moved to a total disenchantment about the French values.

The last letter in *Le Sommeil du Juste* validates the previous assumption concerning Arezki's disillusionment. It is the letter of Elfriede Maurer to Arezki, Which the latter does not even open, and tosses instead. Arezki's refusal to read Elfriede's letter stands for his total rejection of that part of his life. This idea highlights Mammeri's coup de maĩtre, as it reveals that Arezki has awaken to the falsity of the French discourse

The letters are important purveyors of meaning; they establish intimacy, relate characters to each other and here help to reflect the tensions in communities between family members or at intercultural level. So, in *Le Sommeil du Juste*, the use of the epistolary dialogue plays a premordial role, and is a characteristic of Mammeri's oeuvre as a whole. *La Colline Oubliée, L'Opium et le Baton* and *La traversée* contain letters which are masterfully crafted within the stream of the narration. The letters help to demonstrate the feeling of estrangement and alienation that the characters felt. Indeed, the lack of communication is a by-product of the sense of despair and non belonging which is pervasive in Mammeri's novels.

To conclude, every writer develops his privileged own tools to render optimally the message he seeks to impart. It is this special treatment of the novel's events that create the worth of any literary work. In their novels, Mammeri and Armah expose what went wrong in their respective societies. Mammeri accuses the rigid tradition that failed to appreciate the demands of the young generation. Mammeri does not entirely reject the old values, but it is their obscurantist, outdated aspects that Mammeri seeks to disavow. In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, it is this aspect that estranges and alienates most of the characters, most importantly Arezki, the protagonist. With the same concern, Armah depicts the harmful and destructive impacts of an extensive neo-colonial consumerist society. *Fragments*

presents a post-independence Ghana that lost its way to progress. The protagonist Baako is at odds with a community engaged in a frantic race for material gain. He is neither able to understand his society nor capable of amending its dysfunctions. Arezki and Baako, two elements promising positive change are outcasts in their respective communities. The two writers picture desolate and despairing environments, which inhibit progress, justice and democracy in their countries. The readers are struck by the growing and pervasive negative images drawn, and which stand for the socio-political realities of Algeria and Ghana. Despite the somewhat pessimistic outlooks of the novels, the writers believe in positive outcomes. Both novels are replete with images of regeneration and better prospects through characters, themes or techniques developed to offer a glimpse of hope for a better future.

CHAPTER THREE

Salvation and Redemption in Mouloud Mammeri's *Le Sommeil du Juste* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*

African writers have dealt with the uneasy relationships that have characterised the colonizers and the colonized in their countries during and after the period of occupation. Indeed, writers like Mouloud Mammeri and Ayi Kwei Armah expose the young heroes' problematic relationships, as they are, torn between social expectations and their own inner beliefs. The writers seek to demonstrate that in their societies hope is not totally annihilated. In the first place, they set out to disclose the atrocities committed by the European colonialism in Africa socially, economically and psychologically. For Chinua Achebe 'the most fundamental theme' for an African writer should be to show that:

> African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans: that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty that they had Poetry, and above all, they had dignity. It is this dignity that African People all but lost during the colonial period and it is this that they must now regain…The writer's duty is to help them regain it by showing them in human terms what happened to them, and what they lost.[1]

Achebe points to the mission any African writer should accomplish; African culture should be reborn again from the ashes of colonialism. African writers persist to believe that hope and dignity are 'all but lost' in their societies, and paths for a healing and regenerating process are possible. This chapter focuses on the repercussions that education and the subsequent estrangement will have on the writers' initiative to validate the omnipresence of African culture and values. It attempts to highlight the writers' beliefs in redemptive actions in their societies. This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first is entitled **Arezki's bookburning and his maturity process in *Le Sommeil du Juste***. The second one is named **Naana and Juana as agents of communal regeneration in *Fragments***. This chapter seeks to show the positive outcome the two novels usher to. Both writers believe that inspite of their western education, the protagonists can be positive actors in their societies. The two writers' endeavours differ,

[1] Achebe, Chinua. **''The Role of the Writer in a New Nation''**, 1964 (in Killam G. D ed: ***African Writers on African Writing***, London: Heinemann, 1973, p. 7.

and their enthusiasm is contrasted, but still they both share a common positive outlook for the future.

1- **Arezki's Bookburning and his Maturity Process in *Le Sommeil du Juste*:**

It is often held that *Le Sommeil du Juste* bears various characteristics to the Bildungsroman.[2] In Mouloud Mammeri's novel, Arezki is portrayed in a conflict with his family circle and his father particularly. In *An Old Form Revitalized: Philip Roth's Ghost Writer and the Bildungsroman*, W.C Hendley states that the hero is in 'an uneasy relationship with his father'[3]. As is the case in most novels of this genre, the point of disjuncture between the protagonist and his family starts in his childhood. It is this incapacity to adhere to the family's expectations that drives Arezki away. Arezki, like many other young North Africans, is drafted in the French army during World War Two. In the third part of the novel entitled 'l'ANGE', Arezki is portrayed leaving for Europe to participate in the war. When he is drafted in Algeria, Arezki lives some traumatic events that will shatter all his previous beliefs. In his diary, 'a refuge of humanity', according to M. Poiré, Arezki writes about his unfortunate incident in the refectory. The sergeant refuses to serve Arezki before the European comrades arrive, and this is considered an insult to him. What is worth mentioning here is the attitude of the other non European infantrymen.They are expecting a move from Arezki. The narrator says:

> Arezki se retourna. Devant les cuisines il y avait un gros tas de bûches ; les tirailleurs de toutes les corvées, abandonnant leurs plats et leurs bouteillons, s'étaient saisis chacun d'une bûche. Un grand bronzé disait à chaque instant dans le dos d'Arezki : 'toi, parle, parle seulement, puisque tu sais parler. Le travail c'est nous qui allons le

[2] A subgenre of the novel first introduced by the German philologist Karl Morganstern. Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe is the forrunner of this genre, with the publication of ***Wilhelm Meister's Apprentenceship***, in 1795. According to Goethe, the Bildungsroman 'includes the idea of reciprocal growth in which the individual and his environment are engaged in a process of mutual transformation, each shaping the other, until the individual has reached the point where he or she experiences a sense of harmony with the environment, because Goethe places the individual rather than society at the center of the Bildungsroman.' Gohlman, Susan. Ashley, ***Starting Over, the task of the Protagonist in the contemporary Bildungsroman***, New York: Gerald Publisher (1990), p. X

[3] Hendley, W. Clark. **''An Old Form Revitalized Philip Roth's Ghost Writer and The Bildungsroman''**, in *Studies in the Novel*, 16, (1) (1984), pp. 89, http://www.jstor.org/stable/29532257, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).

faire…' La plupart se taisaient. Quelques-uns appelaient de loin les camarades.'Toi, parle, parle seulement' répétait le grand bronzé[4]

(Arezki turned around. Next to the kitchens, there was a stack of logs ; the infantrymen, of all duties, abandoned their plates and canisters, and each one took a log. A tall tanned man was saying constantly at Arezki's back 'you, talk just talk, since you know how to talk. The work will be done by us…'The majority became quiet. Some others from afar called their mates 'you, talk, just talk' repeated the tall tanned man)

Arezki is expected to play the role of a leader, as he is an intellectual, and thus, able to talk and speak for the ones who cannot, but he is not fully aware of this. When he sees the reaction of the infantrymen, Arezki is scared and finally backs off. The tanned man is disappointed in him and spits in front of him, calls him a 'coward'. It is the subsequent event with the officer cadet Lemarchand that trigger his change, and his decision to rebel. Arezki is reminded in a harsh way that 'the rules' stipulate that even his rank is equal to that of the European soldier, he has to obey him. The protagonist sees that the moto of liberty, equality and brotherhood he strives for, and that made him enroll in the war in the first place, is in fact a mere slogan. He is arrested fifteen days for his insubordination which makes Arezki discover the wide chasm existing between reality and the books he has spent all his youth reading. In his diary, he addresses his master in the following terms:

Il me semble avoir été lâché dans la jungle, sans dents pour mordre, sans armes, pis gêné d'intelligence, encombré d'innocence et de scrupules quelques chose comme la victime rêvée, l'agneau du sacrifice [5]

(It was like I was released in a jungle, without teeth to bite, without weapons, worse, hindered with intelligence, stuffed with innocence and scruples, something like the perfect victim, the sacrificial lamb.)

The shock of the experience makes Arezki realize the inadequacy of the education he received, and that he has been 'mystified'. He learns that in reality he is not the Man

[4]Mammeri . ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 86-87.
[5] Ibid. p. 94.

M. Poiré has so much lectured him about, but only an 'IMANN', the term he finds assigned to him in the military documents. Arezki looks in his books for this word for five days while he is in prison without success:

> Imann, mes frères, il n'y a nulle trace de vous dans tout ceci. Vous êtes morts,bien morts, si morts qu'il faudrait pour vous tirez de la tombe une force plus qu'humaine…[6]
>
> (Imann, my brothers, there is no trace of you in all this. You are dead, utterly dead, so dead that an inhuman force will be needed to pull you out of the tomb…)

Arezki realizes that in real life there are the IMANN and the others, namely the Europreans. The shock it provokes in him is deeply felt in his diary. 'J'ètais un Imann comme le ciel est bleu, la République indivisible et notre acier victorieux …'[7] (I was an Imann as the sky is blue, the Republic indivisible and our steel victorious…). This sudden and brutal coming round signals utter changes in Arezki, therefore he names the books he has admired for so long potions that serve to make see life in rose-coloured glasses[8].

In Bhabhaesque parlance, Arezki is the perfect mimic man who wants to identify himself with the 'other', and wants to equal him. When he was in the primary school in Tizi Ouzou, Arezki worked harder than his other friends. He says in his diary that 'un an je me suis couché à minuit, quelque fois plus tard; les veillles de compositions je ne dormais pas … Mon orgueil rentré croissait avec une science que je croyais infaillible'[9] (For one year I slept at midnight, sometimes more ; at exams' eves I did not use to sleep … My pride grew with a science I thought was infallible). Arezki has been in contact with the French culture from his tender years, and has been delighted by what it represents. He identifies it with civilization with a capital 'C'. It is indestructible and humane; but it is only later in life that Arezki, first handedly, understands that the 'colonial discourse wants

[6] Ibid. p. 95.
[7] Ibid. p. 94.
[8] Ibid. p. 98.
[9] Ibid. p. 91.

the colonized to be extremely like the colonizer, but by no means identical'[10]. It is this deceptive revelation, or to use Bhabha's phrase, 'sly civility' of the French discriminative attitudes while stationed in the army base that makes Arezki reconsider his hitherto belief. It is in the night before his departure for Mers-el-Kébir that Arezki in a colonial bar burns a whole box containing all his books. In what Eric Sellin calls 'the bookburning episode', Arezki

> destroys the books which have once freed him and alienated him from the culture of his village. The mere fact that Arezki burns his French and other foreign books is in itself interesting, but it is especially interesting if we consider the titles of the works burned. They constitute portions of a typical lycée program … [they] sum up European cultural values.[11]

As a 'formidable revolt'[12] against the injustices he was victim of; an act that is unmistakably highly symbolic as it illustrates Arezki's disgust of the double standard and 'hollow rhetoric'[13] of the French schooling. The books Arezki burns are very indicative of the author's intention: Montaigne, Molière, Shakespeare, Homer, Montesquieu, Pascal and Racine amongst others. It stands as Sellin notes for a typical curriculm taught in the French school, indeed on the box the inscription 'école normale de Bouzareah' can be read. The colonized is made to parrot the colonizer's way of life and ideas only. It is this ambivalent signifier in the colonial discourse that engenders the colonized agency or resistance. Arezki constitutes both 'resemblance and meance' since the act of burning the books is a rejection of the French education, and it is therefore a threat to the authority of the French culture.

Mimicry for Bhabha, and as Arezki explicitely embodies it, is a positive concept that produces progressive active agents in society. Indeed, for Bhabha, 'mimicry has the

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[10] Hudart. ***Homi K. Bhabha***, op cit, p.40.
[11] Sellin, Eric. **'' Arezki's Bookburning in Mouloud Mammeri's Le Sommeil du Juste''** in *The International Fiction Review*, 10. No.1 (1983) pp. 4. https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/ifr/article/download/.../14672, (Accessed on April 4th, 2015).
[12] Ibid. p. 4.
[13] Ibid. p. 4.

effect of undermining the authority'[14] of the colonizer. In his renowned PhD thesis *Le theme de l'alienation dans le Roman Maghrébin d'éxpression Française: 1952-1956*, Isaac Yetiv elaborates on this phenomenon of mimicry in the Maghreb. He argues that the French colonizer:

> veut à tout prix 'franciser' les indigènes. Il y réussit très bien. Cest justement cette réussite qui devient la source de certains maux. Le Maghrébin 'evolué', 'francisé' demande l'assimilation et l'intégration. Et ceci lui est souvent refusé[15]
>
> (wants absolutely to frenchify the natives. He succeeds very well. It is precisely this success that becomes the source of some pain. The Maghrebian 'evolué', made French asks for assimilation and integration. And this is most often denied to him).

What Yetiv takes as 'some pain' caused by the non-integration into the colonizer's cercle, is for Bhabha what allows the colonized's resistance to materialise. It is true that the colonized is torn and frustrated by the closed doors of the colonial life, still it equips him with the weapons that will enable him and genuinely liberate him. The French schooling gives Arezki the very basis to eventually resist the acculturation. Lounas, a character that stands for the fight for freedom in *Le Sommeil du Juste*, tells Sliman that Arezki is 'un égaré .Un jour il reviendra et, tu vois, quand les égarés reviennent, ils sont plus purs que ceux qui ne sont jamais partis, parcequ'ils sont plus déchirés' [16](he is lost. One day he will return, and, you see, when the lost return, they are purer than those who never left, because they are more torn). Mammeri is not against the colonizer's culture or ideas per se. In fact, *Le Sommeil du Juste* is held by many critcs as an autobiographical novel as Arezki's path resembles much Mammeri's. He thinks that the immersion into the 'Other''s culture does not systematically alienate the colonized. In an interview with Tahar Djaout, Mammeri says:

> Ceux qui, sous pretexte d'engagement, crient à l'agression idéologique de l'Occident et au néo-colonialisme culturel, ceux qui prônent le plus véhementement un retour

[14] Loomba. ***Colonialism /Postcolonialism***, op cit, p. 178.
[15] Cited in the ''**Review : French Language North African writer''**, George Joyaux in *African Studies Reviews*, Vol. 15, No.1 (April, 1972), pp. 148, http://www.jstor.org/stable/523551, (Accessed May 20th, 2015).
[16] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p.51.

> aux sources… comme si l'on pouvait vivre en retournant, ou même seulement en se retournant… sont souvent les plus idéologiquement aliénés, comme si la fureur du cri les rachetait de la dépendance. Ils n'ont pas assez maîtrisé, assez transcendé les concepts de l'Occident pour au besoin s'en détacher, les repenser, les faire vivre…[17]
>
> (Those who on the account of commitment, cry out to ideological aggression of the West and to cultural neo-colonialism, those who advocate most vehemently a return to the sources … as if one could go back or merely turn around, … are often the most ideologically alienated, as if the the furious cry could make up for the dependency.They did not master enough, transcend enough the Western concepts to come off them when necessary, to rethink them, to make them live…).

It is significantly informative to read Mammeri's statement in the light of Bhabha's theory, as Mammeri seems to share Bhabha's idea that opposing sides would ultimately have no functional outcomes. For Bhabha 'neither colonizer nor colonized is independent of each other. Colonial identities on both sides of the divide- are unstable, agonized and in constant flux'[18] . The act of refuting the colonial legacy is not going to propel the colonized toward a better future. Mammeri stands on the side of reconsidering the question under the scope of the culture of the colonizer since it is not possible to work out any solution without considering the latter; given the fact that Colonialism is a historical factor that can not be erased. The call for negating the colonial past because of the stigma of neo-colonialism, and the dream to return to a mythical past are nonsensical aims. Mammeri did not think that embellish the past would be a shrewd attitude, and that the Algerian reality was what it was so to change it would be synonym of betraying it.[19]

Mammeri's point of view converges with Armah's regarding this issue. In *Fragments*, one easily notices that Armah's protagonist contends with the neo-colonial attitudes of the Ghanian society, but still does not conform to a rigid use of tradition. Both writers seem to call for a sensible use of both positive sides of tradition and modernity. It is what Bhabha calls the 'in-betweenness' or the 'interstice' of cultures. As for Bhabha, it

[17] Djaout. ***Mouloud Mammeri***, op cit, p. 28.
[18] Loomba. ***Colonialism/Postcolonialism***. Op cit p. 178.
[19] Djaout. ***Mouloud Mammeri***. op cit, p. 20.

is more than evident that cultures are not pure, or let us say, independent of each other. When two cultures are in contact, they become related. It is as Hélène Cixous states that 'I am not of the neither one nor the other. I am rather on the side of *with*, inspite of all the difficulties, and confusion this may bring about'.[20] Cixous, who has been another influence on Bhabha, believes that choosing a side is not appropriate. According to both of them, it is historically and linguistically untrue to assume that cultures are self-sufficient and develop somewhat uniquely. It is this in-betweenness, or what Bhabha terms the 'Third Space' that gives the means for the colonized to express themselves.The hybrid people possess a faculty that elevates them; they are familiar with two sets of cultures or more. Hybridity is thus an 'empowering' aspect which is a recurrent feature in Mammeri's oeuvre. In his novels the protagonists pass through a:

> journey to self-understanding a psychological transformation that originates in a physical experience, has already appeared in Mammeri's previous works. Mokrane *(La Colline Oubliée*), Arezki (*Le Sommeil du Juste*) and Bachir(*L'Opium et le Bâton*) all embark upon the journey that leads them away from the mountain villages of their birth. At first, untoutored and ill-prepaired. They return home wiser and more mature.[21]

The maturity process described above reveals Mammeri's belief in the enhancing powers of a hybrid culture. He does not associate it to a systematic alienation from one's society. It is actually the opposite, as Bourdieu and Wacquant argue in their article *The Odyssey of Reappropriation*, Mouloud Mammeri 'begins where so many others would have ended…He records the poems they [traditional poets] craft …' aided with the means of the colonial language 'enbl[ing] one to reappropriate one's renounced culture supplied

[20] Cited in **'' A study of the notion of Bhabesque's Hybridity in V.S. Naipaul's *In a Free State''*** Al Dehdari, Bita Darabi,& Mehdi Sepehrmanesh in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sience*, Vol. 3 No. 3 (February 2013) pp. 136, http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_3_February_2013/12.pdf, (Accessed on May 15th, 2015). (emphasis in the original).

[21] Mortimer, Mildred. **''Independence Acquired : Hope or Disillusionment?''** in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol.21, No.2, Dictatorship and Opression (Summer 1990), pp.48, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3819278, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).

by the very culture that imposed renunciation'[22]. In his actual life, the language of the other becomes by this process as Farid Laroussi states it 'an ideological Trojan Horse'[23]. Given the autobiographical texture of Mammeri's novels, as said above, Mammeri like the protagonists of his novels embraced the French culture and excelled in it, and ended up serving him as a' liberating instrument'[24]. Though in *Le Sommeil du Juste*, the protagonist does not use the colonial culture as a subversive weapon yet, Mammeri hints to the full potential Arezki will represent in the future.

Through the character of Arezki Ait-Wandlous, Mammeri shows the reaction, or to use Gayatri Spivak's term, the agency of the colonized towards the domination and false pretensions of the upheld 'sueprior' culture of the colonizer. The burning of the books serves as a 'liberating instrument' that wakes Arezki up to the true realities of the colonizer. His inability to find in his books the meaning of the acronym 'IMANN' leads him to burn them. The culture he has worshipped for so long refuses to acknowledge his existence, so he symbolically purifies his soul from it through the bonfire. Arezki's failure to be integrated in the culture of the colonized makes him re-evaluate the worth of this culture at all. This culture costs him twenty years of prison for a crime he did not commit. The judge, as Arezki complains, is more preoccupied by rendering justice than looking for it.[25] Arezki most of the time seems lost amidst the current, and does not possess the required self-awareness that could have equipped him with better solutions. He does not possess the strength of Bachir Lazreg in *L'Opium et le Bâton*. Indeed, doctor Lazreg passes from a state of complete negation of his culture to a fervent committed militant and a fighter in Algerian army force . After the bookburning episode, and his disillusioning experiences, Arezki still looks for 'the path among [the IMANN].[26] He seeks to join the

[22] Bourdieu, Pierre & Wacquant Loic. **''The Odyssey of Reappropriation''** in *Ethnography*, Vol. 5, No. 4 Special Issue : Pierre Bourdieu in the Field (December 2004) pp. 618-619, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24047857, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).
[23] Laroussi, Farid. **''La généalogie imaginaire de la littérature Algérienne Francophone''** in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (1999), pp. 56, http://www.jstor.org/stable/486387, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).
[24] Djaout. ***Mouloud Mammeri***, op cit, p. 49
[25] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 174
[26] Ibid, p. 120.

'party' in France first, and then is pushed into militancy by Sliman when he comes back to Ighzer.

As mentioned above, Arezki is never decisive in his positions throughout the novel, but his actions and his salient criticism in addressing M. Poiré in his diary forshadow a more engaged and trenchant Arezki. Though the denouement of the novel is a slightly ambiguous about Arezki's future, it discloses the treacherous and the pretentious ideals of equity and justice of the colonial discourse. This being said, Mammeri leaves wide open the door of interpretations to the readers and the critics concerning the subsequent commitment of Arezki in the communal life of Ighzer. He is imprisoned wrongly for twenty years, which helps to exacerbate his grudge and disappointment in the colonizer. The author, through his protagonist, is somewhat voicing his own dissatisfaction and discontent towards the French culture, but does not fundmentally call for its renouncement. He argues that Bachir Lazreg is in the middle of two cultures that he does not want to part with any. They form the two dimensions of his personality. One has to do with his authenticity as being Algerian the other appeals to his universal being. The one is in fact complementary to the other, and do not exist in exclusive terms.[27] This assumption about doctor Lazreg seems valid for all Mammeri's protagonists as they follow the same path. The French culture though with its menacing winds of alienation, serves for the discovery and the defense of the native culture.[28] Mouloud Mammeri uses the tools of the acquired culture and its language to regain his dominated culture. His protagonists are the mouthpieces illustrating the author's view and beliefs in the positivity of a hybrid culture. Jacque Derrida, a major influence on Bhabha, argues that:

> a language can be marked, unmarked, and remarked in multiple ways depending on location (or the absence of one. Thus, the French spoken and written by Algerians is

[27] Payette, Andre. **''Mouloud Mammeri : La Colline Oubliée – Le Sommeil du Juste – L'Opium et le Bâton''** in *Liberté*, Vol. 13, n° 3, 75 (1971), pp. 60-61, http : // id.erudit.org/ iderudit/ 30731 ac, (Accessed on April 7th, 2014). (My translation).

[28] Lounis, Aziza. **'' Du Village de Tasga au Village de Zitouna où la Quête de la *Mémoire''*** in *Littérature et Oralité au Maghreb* Vol. 15/16 1e & 2e (Septembre 1992), pp. 100. (My translation).

> not the French of France; it is another French, a new language specific to its site of expression, to the experience of the one who speaks it.[29]

The above quotation demonstrates the subversive tool the Algerian novels of French expression become in disclaiming the hegemony of the 'superior' culture. In fact the appellation of Algerian Literature of French Expression speaks for the expropriation of the colonizer's language by the Maghrebian novelists. Indeed, the Maghrebian writers: Driss Chraibi from Morocco, Albert Memmi from Tunisia, Mouloud feroun and Kateb Yacine from Algeria, to mention only a few, disclose in their writings a common idea to 'smash the syntax and morphology and even the spelling of the French language, aim[ing] at destroying its Cartesian logic'[30]. The Algerian novelists of French expression then undermined the authority of the French culture by appropriating their language and transforming it. As Croisy argues, 'every language when used in a new context is a new language.'[31] Indeed, in *Le Sommeil du juste,* the burning of the books 'is tantamount to an exorcism, it cleanses his body and soul of the remnants of French culture and delivers him from the demon of western civilization…'[32] It is crucial to mention that this 'exorcism' is only possible after the disclosure of the empty and superficial discourse of the colonizer's culture. The hybrid individual revives his native culture from the amnesia that the clonizer's culture dragged it into.

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[29] Croisy, Sophie. **''Algerian History, Algerian Literature and Critical Theories: An Interdesciplinary Persepctive on Linguistic Trauma and Identity Reformation In Postcolonial Algeria''** in *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Fall 2008), pp. 89, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41210007, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).

[30] Yetiv, Isaac. **'' Iconoclasts in Maghrebian Literature''** in *The French Review*, Vol. 50, No. 6 (May 1977) pp. 862, http://www.jstor.org/stable/389443, (Accessed on May 22nd, 2015).

[31] Croisy. **''Algerian History''**, op cit, pp. 88.

[32] Yetiv. **''Iconoclasts''**, op cit, pp. 862.

2- Naana and Juana as agents of communal regeneration in Armah's *Fragments*:

Most African writers share Chinua Achebe's belief that the role of an artist is to spot the wrongs in his society and reform them. The writers depict critically the changing modes of life of their societies; they seldom embellish them, but always seek ways out of their allegedly negative impacts. Writers like Mammeri and Armah take the urge to reform their societies as a mission, and do not think that hope is a bygone feeling. Though Armah is taken by some critics to be a somewhat pessimistic writer, his novels abound with images and characters that eventually may lead to positive outcomes for the Ghanaian society. His portrayal of the post independence Ghana is bleak and critical but realistic. Armah somehow takes a moralizing stand to pinpoint the social scourges, but always present an optimistic image of the nation's renaissance, so dearly wished for.

In *Fragments,* Armah unleashes his anger at the neo-colonial ethos and the complacent comprador class of people who assume that 'a nation is built through glorifying its big shots…'[33] Like Isanusi, the protagonist of his fourth novel *Two Thousand Seasons*, 'Armah refuses to use his gift of eloquence to the service of the palace; is considered an outcast'[34] Armah is thus caught in 'the complex issue of fidelity to his vision, on the one hand and on the other, recognition of the need to serve society'[35] In all his novels, Armah shows a bitter vision of his society, but also redeems it with visions of hopes and regeneration through his characters. Women play a paramount role in Armah's novels. They are, as Derek Wright argues, either 'prophets or parasites'[36]. They can contribute to the happiness of the protagonists as they can cause their oblivion and loss. This is obviously due to the status of the woman in the Akan world, specifically

[33] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 133.
[34] Mamadu, Ayo. **''Reflection in a Pool : Armah's Art on Artists and the Arts''** in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 16. No. 4 Special issue on West African Fiction (Winter 1985) pp. 519, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3819474, (Accessed on May 21st, 2015).
[35] Ibid. p. 519.
[36] Wright. ***Critical Persepectives*** op cit, p. 49.

and in Black Africa in general. In the African cosmogony, women can be oracles, prophetesses or warriors in their societies. They can be actual leaders such as the queen Nana Ya Asantewa[37] .

In *Fragments: The Akan Background*, Derek Wright states that 'the maternal bond of kinship may be deemed stronger than the paternal one to the extent that it is, in some ways, more enduring'[38] It is the woman who perpetuates the lineage. Indeed:

> In the matrilinear society of the Akan, social obligations and communal status derive from the blood group. The maternal mogya provides for a solidarity with the extended family (and, through this, with the wider community), beside which the personal and clan ties of the paternal ntoro[39] are of secondary importance.[40]

The above quotation reflects the notable importance of women in the Akan world as determining the lineage and future of the clan. In *Fragments*, Armah epitomizes this through two primordial characters, namely Naana, Baako's grand mother and Juana his lover. In the novel, 'Naana and Puerto Rican Juana thus, partake in the process of healing and creation ….'[41] It is notable that for Armah 'the stress always remains on the woman as the fountain head of inspiration, love and fertility in the process of self-discovery'[42] it is on Naana and Juana as source of regeneration that this part will focus. It is chronologically important to start with Naana the grand mother, being the first narrator and due to her pervasive influence all through the novel as well.

By choosing to name his first and concluding chapters of *Fragments* Naana, Armah underlines the particular importance of this character and the novel's narrator. She

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[37] the queen mother of Ejisu, the traditional area of the Ashanti region in Ghana, who led an uprising against the British in 1900, during the fifth British –Ashanti War.

[38] Wright, Derek. **''Fragments : the Akan Background''**, in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 18. No2 (Summer 1984) , pp. 185, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3819252, (Accessed on May 20th, 2015).

[39] According to Wright, Mogya is the mother's blood and ntoro stands for the father's sperm.

[40] Williamson, G. Sidney. *Akan Religion and Christian Faith*, Accra: Ghana University Press, (1965), cited in, Wright. **''Fragments: the Akan''**, op cit, p. 187.

[41] Bhardway, Pallarvi. ***''The Wounded Psyche of Africa: Fragments''*** in *The international Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, Vol. 3 issue 6 (June 2015) pp. 49, http://www.theijhss.com/force_download.php?file_path=wp.../2015, (Accessed on February 10th, 2016).

[42] Ibid. p. 49.

permeates the novel with her wisdom, knowledge of tradition and awareness of the deadliness of the situation in post independence. The word Naana has a dual significance; it is the singular of 'Nananom' which represents the spirits in the novel and in the Akan Cosmogony, and a word which refers to grandmother in certain Anglophone countries. This duality in the word can be considered as implied by the author for reasons that will be discussed below.

Naana the narrator gives the novel a twofold significance since, first of all, it places the narrative within a subjective perspective and, secondly, it provides a wholeness and continuity amidst the seemingly fragmentary sequences of the novel. The reader contemplates the world of the novel through her eyes, and appreciates the ancestral bygone times she both presents and represents. She establishes a contrast and comparative instances of what Ghana was and what it has turned out to be. As a narrator, Naana presents the world of spirituality and tradition, without relegating the narrative to a mere folkloric tale. The role of the narrator enables Naana to dispense judgments on other characters, shaping thus the perception of the audience concerning the characters. She rebukes severely Foli, Baako's uncle after he attempts to cheat the elders at the libation ceremony, by calling him 'the thirsty drunkard, the pig'[43], her judgment brings some fallibility to her endorsed role, but it enables Armah to introduce his mindset concerning the characters without impairing the novel's credibility.

The first person narrator pattern of the first and the last chapters enables Armah to cast some of his criticisms about the materialistic and uncaring contemporary Ghanaian society. Naana is not the mouthpiece of the author, given the fact that Armah is not advocating a return to a traditional life style; nevertheless, her character voices some of the author's thinking, mainly the belief in the constructive spirit of traditions and customs. Naana thus is a homodiegetic narrator enabling Armah to speak up his vision, and still avoiding to be considered a lecturer or an essayist. In some passages of the last chapter,

[43] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p .5, 6.

Armah scarcely veils his resentment against the greed and lust of the contemporary society. Naana contends:

> The baby was a sacrifice they killed, to satisfy perhaps a new god they have found much like the one that began the same long destruction of our people when the elders first- may their soul never find forgieveness on this head- split their own seed and raised half against half, part selling part to hardeyed buyers from beyond the horizon, breaking, buying, selling, gaining, spending till the last of our men sells the last woman to any passing white buyer and himself waits to be destroyed by this great haste to consume things we have taken no care nor trouble to produce.[44]

Naana draws here a parallel between what happened to Araba's son and the hideous slave trade that brought destruction to Africa centuries ago. Through Naana, Armah speaks out his Pan-African project which will be developed in his later novels: *Two Thousand Seasons* and *The Healers*. The pertinence of the above analogy can solely emanate from a deeply cultured and scholarly mind. Armah criticizes the consumerist ethos of the contemporary Ghanaian society, and its unwillingness to produce wealth. His remarks on the sterile economy of Ghana come from his studies at Harvard University on the 'economies of continents, the politics of nations and the sociology and culture of peoples.'[45] Such an analysis thus can not be the one of an elderly and illiterate woman. It is the function of Naana as a narrator that provides the needed authorial distance for Armah to produce the neutrality and credibility of his political and social commentary in the novel. Besides her important and functional role as a narrator, Naana is a key character in the novel as well.

Naana is Baako's grandmother; a family bound which allows Naana to be involved in Baako's life. Naana represents the old world, the one of tradition and ancestral power

[44] Ibid. p. 199.

[45] Cited in Jonathan B. Fenderson. **'' 'Wherever I've Gone, I've Gone Voluntarily': Ayi Kwei Armah's Radical Pan-African Itinerary''** in *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 37, No. 4, Rethinking Pan-Africanism for the 21st Century (Winter 2008), pp. 51, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41069284, (Accessed on May 21st, 2015).

that became senseless and ineffective for the new world of modernity and consumerism. Igor Kopytoff argues that:

> The relation of the ancestors to their living kinsmen has been described as ambivalent, as both punitive and benevolent and sometimes even capricious. In general, ancestral benevolence is assured through propitiation and sacrifices; neglect is believed to bring about punishment.[46]

Naana's concerns about Baako's safety make her apply all the rites of the libation in the appropriate manner in contrast to Foli's neglect of them. She has a deep faith in 'those gone before'[47] and in their 'power of the anger'[48]. In spite of her old age, she is denied the prominence she is entitled to, and becomes a heavy burden to her family; a thing that is moved like a piece of furniture.[49] From the beginning of the novel Naana is depicted as dispossessed of her role as a guiding figure because she is blind. This endows her with premonitory powers like the prophetess of old times, who is able to see clearer than the unblind people around her. She is 'a person no more'[50] but a mere 'pregnancy that will make another ghost.'[51] She warns her relatives of the dangers that would befall them. In her initial monologue, she foresees the upcoming downfall of her grandson, and sees that 'only the strong ones can fail to be understood and still survive.'[52]

Although she is the guardian of tradition in the novel, she is still unable to manage her way out of the corruption surrounding her. She nevertheless tries to keep strong ties with Baako, and the two are portrayed as having a close relationship, and seem to understand each other. During Baako's departure trip to the United States, Naana insists on being in the same car as her grandson, as 'there had been many things in [her] for him,

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[46] Kopytoff, Igor, ***«Ancestors as Elders in Africa», Perspectives on Africa. A Reader in culture, History and Representation***, (1997) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Limited, p. 412.
[47] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 3
[48] Ibid. p. 8.
[49] Ibid. p. 1.
[50] Ibid. p. 2.
[51] Ibid. p. 7.
[52] Ibid. p. 2.

but they were not things [she] could say, and so sitting close to him would be good.'[53] This speaks for the psychic link she has with him since they are able to communicate without speech. On their way to the airport, Naana hears an Afro-American song in the radio that she thought she 'knew what the words were saying…'[54] Baako is the only one catching Naana's flow of thoughts when he says 'their people were Africans.'[55] She knows that 'all that goes returns'[56], but that 'a traveler just returned from far journeys started years ago... [is] a new one all again'[57] Her analysis of her environment and her society is strikingly insightful, as she can see 'things denied to others;'[58] but if disclosed she will be destroyed like the witches of the past

Naana's role as an ancestor, does not mean she parts with the modern world altogether. The dual significance of the word Naana which stands both for ancestry and for the western term 'grandmother' refutes the aforementioned idea. Indeed, Armah does not use the characters' names randomly. All through his novels, the names of the characters bear significance to either their status in the novels or to the themes of the novels, and embody a double significance. In Akan language, Baako means 'one', while Onipa means 'human being, or humanity', which shed some light to the significance of his character as a solitary individual. It is the same pattern in his other novels; to cite only *Why Are We So Blest?*, the name of Solo Nkonan means'lonely stranger', while Modin Dofu signifies in Akan 'I am called a man who loves', while the one of Aimée reads in French as 'the one who is loved'; the character naming is a reflection either to a characteristic in the character or a lack of it, but more importantly provides some insights into the novels.

[53] Ibid. p. 9.
[54] Ibid. p. 9.
[55] Ibid. p. 9.
[56] Ibid. p. 1.
[57] Ibid. p. 3.
[58] Ibid. p. 2.

Though Naana is described as rejecting the materialistic side she calls 'heavy earth'[59] , she is not completely unwishful for the likely economic prosperity that Baako may bring with him. She says:

> I too have had my dreams for his return, and they too have been filled with things rest to tired flesh heavy things, things of heavy earth. I have also dreamed of riches and greatness for Baako, and they were not for him alone.[60]

In the light of the above passage, the reader understands that it is not money or the luxury that Naana rejects in contemporary Ghana, but it is its blindfolded and inconsiderate usages that appal her. She hopes that Baako will bring riches 'not for him alone' but for the whole community. It is undoubtedly the vision of modernity represented by the likes of Brempong that Naana abhors since no good things can result from such frantic race for wealth, as the death of Araba's son, and that of Skido at the bridge are sinister reminders of.

Naana takes it as her responsibility to insure the safety and protection to her relatives, and thus 'everything she does is done exclusively in the personal service of the protection of the household, especially the male progeny from the erratic behavior of her daughter Efua.'[61] Her inability to prevent the outdooring ceremony speaks for the precarious state that tradition holds in the mind of the likes of Efua and her daughter. In an emblematic passage, she remonstrates about:

> The laughing of false laughter, strange quarrels and whisperings and the foolish pride surrounding the bringing out of each new gift, and the new confusing turbulence of wind turned on inside the house that day, I was powerless before the knowledge that I had come upon strangers worshiping something new and powerful beyond my

[59] Ibid. p. 2.
[60] Ibid. p. 3.
[61] Riche, Bouteldja. **''Women, Men, Tradition and Modernity in Efua Sutherland's New Life at Kyrerfasa and Ayi Kwei Armah's Fragments''** in *Revue Campus*, No. 7, pp. 72, http://www.ummto.dz/IMG/pdf/Women_Men_Tradition_and_Modernity_in_Efua_Sutherland_s.pdf, (Accessed on January 27th, 2016).

> understanding, which had made all the old wisdom small in people's minds, and twisted all things natural to the service of some newly created god.[62]

Naana speaks of the 'confusing turbulence' of the electric fan that Kwesi, Araba's husband offers her after her delivery as it is customary in the Akan world. It is highly symbolic that this European product causes the death of the baby. The other striking occurence is that Naana is able to see that the presence of such an item in front of a newborn baby does not augur well, but fails to save the child from the greed of the mother and the grandmother because of her solitary action. She asks for Baako's help who as the uncle, 'the child is [his] to look after,'[63] but Baako refuses such a task and retorts that 'the world has changed'[64] and that the child belongs to the parents; the argument that startles the old woman as she neither agrees, nor understands her grandson's reluctance to carry out his duty.

Despite the large display of despair and disbelief that Naana has toward her society, she thinks that hope will ultimatelly surface again. The belief in the cyclicality of things suggests a continual rebirth and regeneration, and promises Baako her help and protection after her death. She 'will protect him if [she] can, and if [her] strength is not enough [she] will seek out stronger spirits and speak to their souls of his need of them.'[65] For Naana, the power that the ancestors hold is as evident as the sun that sets each night, only to rise again the next morning. This analogy with the sun makes Naana's belief in this cyclicity extremely rational, and 'redemptive in the sense that her death is a transition from a destructive social realm to one that fulfils her dream of being reunited with her ancestors.'[66] Death for Naana is only the announcement of another rebirth in the world of spirit, and thus not fatality and not a harbinger of total defeat and surrender. On the

[62] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 198-99.
[63] Ibid. p. 98.
[64] Ibid. p. 98.
[65] Ibid. p. 198.
[66] Gikandi. ***Reading*** op cit, p. 86.

contrary, in the Akan cosmogony, it is Naana's death that can assure the protection of Baako.

Through Naana, Armah imparts the conviction that the link with the past will be likely to foster progress and redemption for the society. Naana seeks to establish this link with Baako but the latter delays in his responsiveness. In the eighth chapter entitled 'Nsu', when Baako burns his plays manuscripts, after his disappointing meeting with Asante-Smith, Naana is dismayed by Baako's behavior, and asks him to explain to her the subject of his unused plays, to which he answers that he 'will … but not today.'[67] While he was typing his theory about the 'cargo cult', he wondered about the significance of the 'true dead going back to the ancestors, the ritual dead… Ask Naana later, try to find what she sees and knows of this'[68]. The point here is that Naana could have saved Baako, had he listened to her. However, this is an assumption that can hardly be considered, as Armah is somehow vague about its possibility. It is more than arguable though that the novelist believes in the full potential the past represents. As Derek Wright suggests:

> There is in the novel a reluctance to believe in total loss and waste, given its most positive expression in Naana's faith in an energy- conserving cycle of being. Nevertheless, it remains uncertain whether any painful redemptive knowledge has accrued either to family or community from the spectacle of Baako's disintegration.[69]

Wright is justified in his suggestion that Armah believes in the usefulness of the past, but still does not seem to advocate it as a mythical solution for the malaise of the contemporary Ghanaian society. It would have been a naïve attitude to try to retrieve a bygone past which Armah is undoubtedly aware of, still he seems to believe that 'understanding the links with the past in the end leads to progress'[70]

[67] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 154.
[68] Ibid. p. 157.
[69] Wright. **'' Ayi Kwei Armah and the Significance ''** op cit, pp. 34.
[70] Wright. ***Critical Perspectives***, op cit, p. 56.

The choice of Armah to envelop his novel in this circular pattern supports the idea that his 'aspirations [are] to demonstrate the sense of an unexpected renewal after a period of death in life.'[71] Armah uses several images about nature and its constant renewal, such as the ones of the bird and the flower. Ode Ogede remarks that 'the central puzzle embodied in these images is the idea of cyclical regeneration, of a beauty to be born out of ugliness…'[72] In his novels, Armah portrays aspects of cyclical regeneration and purification sparking on the horizon. At the end of *The beautyful Ones*, for instance, the Man, the novel's protagonist is purified by the sea water; his immersion in it and his emergence at the sea shore signals his absolution and repentence from his misdeed of helping Koomson, the minister who epitomises corruption, to escape after a *Coup d'état*. Armah ushers in Nature's unchangeless and everlasting state as catalyst for the regeneration and renewal in the Ghanaian society.

Naana's role as a visionary is Ghana's best promise for a brighter tomorrow, and is Armah's seemingly solution for Africa as a whole. Indeed, in his later novels, namely *Two Thousand Seasons* and *The Healers*, Armah develops this theme of the visionaries as saviors of the community. He displays their power in healing the wounds of the community, both literally and figuratively, as he portrays the deadly consequences incurred by the non respect and the neglct of their roles. *Fragments* can be considered a precursor for the mentioned novels regarding this theme, and Naana's role in the novel is Armah's assertion that the past should not be completely disregarded and renounced.

The incantatory and spiritual tone of the first chapter is contrasted by a second one which plunges the readers headlong in the contemporary Ghanaian society. It introduces another character who seems strikingly antagonistic to Naana's, namely, Juana who is an expatriate psychiatrist from Puerto Rico, and who came to Ghana as 'part of the

[71] Ogede, Ode. ***Ayi Kwei Armah, Radical Iconoclast Pitting Imaginary Worlds Against the Actual***, (2000), Ohio: Ohio University Press, p. 26.
[72] Ibid. p. 30.

cure'[73], but soon enough she realizes that 'she was here in another defeated and defeating place'[74]. The fact that an entire chapter is dedicated to her own thoughts and appreciation signals her prominent place as a 'narrative agent' and one of the main characters of the novel. In *Reading the African Novel*, Simon Gikandi notices that the role of Juana as a narrator is most frequently overlooked by the critics, despite the fact that 'most of the key sections in the novel are reflected through her mind.'[75] It is through Juana's frequent drives into Accra and the countryside that images of decadence and falsity are portrayed. Besides the fact that the description is made by a foreigner, which gives a touch of objectivity to the depiction, Juana is a psychiatrist who is in a position to deliver accurate and trustworthy analyses of her souroundings. Juana's 'aimless drive[s]' do not serve as Armah's way of presenting the scenery onty, but for her 'own long unease' she felt after a failed marriage in her country. She has come to Ghana in a kind of quest for finding herself:

> Juana had come this way for the drive out before, several times when after long days spent closed in, in the town and the hospital itself, all the boredom and the loneliness and a disgust she could not hold under inspite of all the power of her will, all this created inside her a feeling of attraction, a certain love for being out on the road. Several times, driving along it, letting herself go and pushing the little car to go faster and faster, she could reach back to a feeling that perhaps there would be some meaning waiting for her at the end of a long and aimless drive, that it wasn't true that every important thing that was worthwile had run slowly out of her life.[76]

The passage above presents Juana who daily faces the destruction and the alienation of people, but is not resolved, yet to admit that it is all there is in life. The town represents for her a prison where she is closed in and a large hospital 'that could break any spirit' that is 'her job to try and repair'.[77] Juana notices that it is the people's inconsiderate rush for the town's commodities that sickens them. Her need for speed reveals her continual

[73] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 118.
[74] Ibid. p. 12.
[75] Gikandi. ***Reading***, op cit, p. 90.
[76] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 14.
[77] Ibid. p. 15.

search for somethinng at the end of the road that she desperately looks for, or it has ‘to do with the fact of thinking less and seeing less while driving slowly’[78].

Along her driving, she depicts in a bleak way government buildings, infrastructures and social spots. She sees the large and paramount buildings of the western banks: Barclay and Standard Banks, and notices the ominous silence of the Parliament house which is a symbol of its inefficiency and uselessness. She describes the ‘neglected old church’ which speaks of the lack of spirituality in the contemporary society. The vividness with which she describes the settings make the readers understand the extent to which the town and the countryside alike cause ‘disturbances’ in the minds and souls of the people. Images of civil unrest and confusion permeate Juana’s discriptions, as she witnesses two incidents reflecting the worthlessness of life and humanity as a whole in this modern society. While she is driving, a little boy has nearly been run over by a tanker, whose driver remonstrates with the boy’s mother in a severe and offensive way. The driver seems utterly deaf and insensitive to the mother’s apologies, and with ‘his anger plain in his face’[79], he sums up the carelessness and lack of compassion that people have for each other. This incident with the tanker remindes Juana of a useless and gratuitous killing of a dog; she has seen earlier on that day. In a five page description, the narrator depicts the killing of a dog by a group of men which is of a major importance to the plot, as it forshadows Baako’s own entrapment and his confinement to a mental institution.

The portrayal of the dog and its owner is a cry out of the injustices and the wrongs that affect the modern society. With a trained eye, Juana examines the real causes of such frustrations, and manages to understand that the man with the inflated scrotum ‘needed something like the first killing of the dog for reasons that lay within and were far more powerful than the mere outside glory open to the hunter with his kill.’[80] As a psychiatrist,

[78] Ibid. p. 26.
[79] Ibid. p. 22.
[80] Ibid. p. 19.

Juana provides the readers with political and social comments that Naana could have never been able to.

The characters of Naana and Juana seem to be antagonistic to each other, as the former is elderly and superstitious while the latter is young and scholarly. As the reader advances in the narrative, he notices that the two women have much in common instead. The two women are able to see the phony behaviors of those surrounding them. On Baako's departure for the United States, Naana is blinded by the excessive city lights and wonders if the others were 'thinking this was the world, and this the night'.[81] A similar contention is made by Juana, concerning the superficial and the hollow attitudes of people in Accra. She denounces the fake façades of the buildings and the tendency of the passers by to glance at what glitters only. She notices how the 'newcomers passing through, who looked at everything and said how picturesque and beautiful it was. They were right. Only the surface was visible to them, and the sun here could make anything shine'.[82] Like Naana, Juana understands the depravation and despair of the people she sees 'so completely seized in danger and so many different kinds of loss'. Life is

> A long stretch of danger with both ends unknown, the only certain things being the constant threat and the presence of loss on a way lined with infrequent, brief, unlikely hopes and once in a long while such unexpected miracles escapes from the edge of the unknown.[83]

Amid the despair that surrounds her, the several ominous signs like 'life is war' or 'Save Me Oh God', or her affirmation that 'the real crime now was the ignorance of past crimes'; she believes that 'the hope of constant regeneration'[84] still exists. It is this belief in the prospect of a better tomorrow that her character stands for. Unlike Naana she does not isolate from her surrounding, and retreats into solitary existence. There is 'the human

[81] Ibid. p. 10.
[82] Ibid. p. 24.
[83] Ibid. p. 23.
[84] Ibid. p. 30.

touching the hunger for which continued in her in spite of everything.'[85] Being a psychiatrist, there is this curiosity in her to know 'what visions people lead their lives by, or by what visions life leads them. And survival. A matter of adopting a narrower vision every time the full vision threatens danger to the visionary self.'[86] The capacity to preserve herself protects her from sinking in the quagmire of her corrupt environment, and enables her to have a positive influence in Baako's life. 'She has gone through her baptism with fire – she has learnt the meaning of defeat. Baako on the other hand, begins his journey into the landscape of chaos from a point of innocence, unaware of the deathly nature of the apocalypse.'[87] Juana brings into evidence Armah's belief in possible redemptive action in his society.

During the first meeting of Juana and Baako in chapter five, the reader is introduced to Baako's inner thoughts when he is in session with Juana, while a close connection between the two characters is established as well. Baako is attracted by the intellectual complementarity he lacks within his family, mainly his grandmother Naana. Baako has 'an intense desire to have her [Juana] hear what he was beginning to tell her'[88] which he is unable to do with Naana because 'he find[s her] so sad'[89], while Juana helps to 'renew the interest he had lost in holding on.'[90]

During their numerous rides around the country, they notice more destruction and confusion to which the two object. Juana shares with Baako 'the ghost of a missionary', as she is upset about the situation of the sanitary sector, and deplores the carelessness the doctors display:

> The doctors here know things are a mess. But they accept it. Like some hopeless reality they can't even think of changing, except to make the usual special arrangements for Senior Officers, friends, what have you. They told me I was wasting

[85] Ibid. p. 13.
[86] Ibid. p. 31.
[87] Gikandi. ***Reading***, op cit, p. 90.
[88] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p.102.
[89] Ibid. p. 97.
[90] Ibid. p. 189.

> my time talking of a changed approach. A couple them got very hostile and said I was wasting their time..[91]

Juana's statement reminds the reader of the misfortunate incident at the hospital, and the lack of consideration Baako was a victim of as he was not a Senior Officers. Juana's analysis is without surprise to Baako or the audience; as the desolate state of the administration has already been exposed, but it reveals Juana's readiness to fight this corruption. Her moral standards single her out from the other doctors and nurses, and make of her 'the craziest optimist [Ocran has] ever met.'[92]

The love affair between Juana and Baako is a manifestation of the possibilities of renewal in life and a brighter future for Ghana, as their physical contact seem to support, plead for the necessity for more human relationship among people. Their sexual intercourses are a sort of 'replacement [Baako] had found for the understanding which had just now eluded him.'[93] The use of sex as a way to express public and personal frustrations is a common leimotif in Armah's oeuvre. Juana 'shares the positive vision of Naana and provides a silver lining in the sordid drama of greed and spiritual mutation.'[94] Naana seeks the spiritual link that will insure the continuity and well being of the community as a whole, while Juana looks for the mental and actual social contact that people need in order to attain a state of an inner peace. It is important to understand that 'the meaning of her [Juana] life remained in her defeated attempts to purify her environment, right down to the final, futile decision to try to salvage discrete individuals in the general carnage.'[95] Juana's 'defeated attempts' to help the others from adversity make her different from the other characters in the novel, and therefore she is Baako's best chance for hope.

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[91] Ibid. p. 134.
[92] Ibid. p. 111.
[93] Ibid. p. 123.
[94] Bhardwaj, Pallavi. **''The Wounded Psyche''**, op cit, pp. 49.
[95] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 123.

Juana liberates Baako from the external pressures he has lived before, and thus experiences his second mental breakdown during her annual leave. In the asylum, he refuses to take his medicine until Juana asks him to after her return, as it opens for him a new perspective to be reunited with his love. In an interesting dialogue in chapter twelve, Baako is portrayed totally broken down, and thinks that the others 'are right' and that he is 'crazy'. He blames himself for not having played the national sport of the cargo purveyor, but Juana tells him that 'you're accusing yourself again. You're not a criminal. You were trying to do something. It isn't wrong just because people say it is.'[96] Juana imparts in Baako the courage to stand up again, and 'the resistance that had been so strong in his words was gone, and his body next to hers felt totally willing.'[97] He finds back his harmony with her and 'she gave him the pills when he asked for them.' [98] It is Juana's faith in Baako that will eventually give him the necessary strength to affirm himself in future. Though the novel is not explicit about that, Juana's 'prepar[ation of] the unused room'[99] for Baako after his discharge from the hospital is a sign of positive prospects for the protagonist.

As a young educated woman who is able to discern the inappropriate attitudes of people, Juana represents the appealing side of modernity. Juana's lucidity and acute observations help her to resist external pressures and build a resilience to face the current issues. She is appaled by the degree of immorality in people, and questions this urge in her to mend the disturbed minds, still 'her thoughts were of salvation,'[100] and this links her with Naana. Armah seems to argue that no society is able to achieve true development or success without taking into account both the traditional and the modern. Armah explicitely denotes the kind of modernity that is harmful for society, the likes of Brempong and Asante-Smith among others seem to embrace, and promotes the modernity

[96] Ibid. p. 190.
[97] Ibid. p. 191.
[98] Ibid. p. 191.
[99] Ibid, 194.
[100] Ibid. p. 22.

that reinforces the community with constructive characters like Juana, Ocran or Lawrence Boateng.

Indeed, the positive signs in the community are embodied by other characters, such as Ocran who stands for the artistic circle in the novel, and advises Baako to carry on his quest. As Ayo Mamadu suggests, Armah 'thinks of the artist as a repository, or more or less, of history and culture of his people, hence a man able to appreciate the significance of the single individual signal or event because he can relate it to the whole.'[101] The position of art offers redemptive proprieties in society since it is able to give 'the men something they didn't have.'[102] In the first chapter, Naana hears a song in Foli's car and notices that the collective 'voices' of the women made the man's cries 'almost sweet.'[103] This demonstrates that redemption can only emerge through collective and common action of the people, and thus hope, for Ghana in particular and Africa on a grander scale, will surface only if people decide to collaborate. In the libation ceremony, Foli's words to the ancestors support this assumption, when he says that 'a human being alone is a thing more sad than any lost animal. And nothing destroys the soul like its aloneness.'[104] The same idea is reiterated by Juana when she states that 'salvation is such an empty thing when you're alone.'[105] The novel underscores the importance of a communal action that both Juana and Naana echo. Society needs the wisdom and the experiences of the ancestors as much as it needs to live in modernity to insure its survival.

Both *Le Sommeil du Juste* and *Fragments* present characters entrapped in a constant oscillation between tradition and modernity and are unable to cope with their respective environments. Arezki and Baako, though they have divergent points of view regarding their societies, present a common social malaise. Mammeri and Armah do not see the necessity to embellish the realities relevant to their societies or cultures which is an

[101] Mamadu, Ayo. **'' Reflection in a Pool''**, op cit, pp. 520.
[102] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 129.
[103] Ibid. p. 10.
[104] Ibid. p. 4.
[105] Ibid. p. 194.

important common point between them. The pictures they draw are stark, repellent and most of the time disturbing to the audience and their critics alike. Armah has for long kept distant from the elite and literary circle of his country. His recurrent criticism of Kofi Awoonor or Efua Sutherland, whom he parodies in *Fragments* in the character figures of Asante Smith and Akosua Russell respectively bring Awoonor to wonder Armah's motivation in writing, and argued that he 'particularly think[s] that Armah is much more concerned with the degree of despair, which at times is very relentless, much more relentless than is warranted by the conditions.'[106] The vision that Armah exposes in his novels is so bleak that his oeuvre falls under the stigma of pessimistic Literature which many would find unsuitable for an African continent engaged in paths of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The iconoclastic posture of Mammeri and Armah bring them to depict images of corruption and filth that are common practice in their countries, and are not new themes in African Literature. Indeed, other writers portray the consequences such phenomena have on on the social and economic situations. In *Petals of Blood*, Ngũgĩ depicts a country where there can be no working positions without offering bribes or without the help of an influential relative. The same idea reappears also in Achebe's *A Man of the People*, where professional qualifications are minor assets in front of nepotist practices.

It is against this confusing state of things that Armah formulates his opinions concerning the wrongs he pinpoints in his society. From almost sociological approach, Armah observes the conduct of people entangled in different situations and examines their reactions and behavior, and accuses the colonial encounter that fostered the malaise in his society. The neo-colonial consumerist ethos pervasive in *Fragments* is a result of the acculturation that the people endured. In spite of the harmful effects of the colonial encounter, Armah is not calling for a return to a mythical past as a Manichean attitude,

[106] Cited in ***''Loss and Frusturation''*** Kirsten Holst Petersen In Wright, Critical Persepectives, op cit, p. 224.

but seems to echoe Bhabha's way of thinking regarding the necessity to find the 'third space' that will enable efficient solutions to the continent's turmoil.

In *Fragments*, Juana represents what is life-rewarding in modernity, and signals the beginning of Armah's Pan-African project. She is a Puerto Rican who has spent most of her life in America but 'some of [her] people also came from [Africa.]'[107] This vision of the unity of Africa and its people will be exhaustively exploited in his later novels. It is highly significant that the chapter dedicated to Juana is subsequent to the one of Naana which speak of the complementary roles of the two in Baako's like specifically, and in the society in general. Juana shares Naana's belief in common action and human collaboration, and after the latter's death the audience looks for Juana as a potential replacement. Baako is able to rely on the help of Naana from the other world, and on Juana's love and support in actual life. At an allegorical level, Baako who stands for the young and confused Africa is at the crossroads of tradition and modernity; therefore will be in need of both forces to aspire to a bright and peaceful future.

In the same vein, In *Le Sommeil du Juste*, Mammeri endeavours to get rid of the archaic and non efficient traditional practices that are inhibiting progress in his society, and are responsible for disastrous consequences. Like Armah, Mammeri holds the colonization responsible for the dismay faced by the people since the setting of *Le Sommeil du Juste* is during the high day of the French colonization of Algeria. The idea sought by Mammeri is to point out the danger of the negative appreciation of one's culture. Since Arezki can not relate to his culture, and is unable to grasp, he negates it and becomes an Aroumi.[108] Mammeri wants to emphasize the importance to preserve the native culture, and cleanse it from what burdens it and retain what is susceptible of enhancing and enriching it.

[107] Armah. ***Fragments***, op cit, p.33.
[108] A word used in Algeria to refer to a French man.

As Mammeri demonstrates, a culture that promotes superstition and backwardness is likely to cause damage to its owners. Mammeri goes through the pros and cons of the native and the colonial cultures in *Le Sommeil du Juste*. Mammeri echoes the Bhabhaesque notion of hybridity since it enabled him to transcend his being, and use the culture of the' Other' to find a space of negotiation to utter his own culture.

Despite the bleak images the two writers portray in their novels, they are not likely to be read as pessimistic writers. They hint to a hope in future which is distant but its existence is tangible. Independent nations can work out solutions to obviate their current problems, which is the common vision both Mammeri and Armah seem to corroborate.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation tried to probe the social position of the African hero who is entrapped between two cultures, one he disavows and another in which he finds disappointments. It sought to show the young African appalled by the chaotic environment of his society, but to which he cannot stand up to. This study examined the reasons and the motives that tend to exclude, if one may say so, the young African from his immediate surrounding: family in particular and social setup in general.

The common denominator of this rejection turns out to be the colonial encounter which lures the young hero to its principles and values. He embraces wholeheartedly this culture in which he believes, and which seems to be free from all vested interests. This study has attempted to demonstrate that despite the foreign, or more correctly, the colonial education he receives in schools, the African hero turns out to be a valuable asset in identifying the needs of his country, and expresses his willingness to share in the struggle for its development.

Le Sommeil du Juste and *Fragments* put into action two young educated protagonists who have strained ties with their families because of the education they have received. Arezki a young man criticized most of the time by his family seeks refuge in what appears to him a humane and permissive French culture, while Baako returns to his family after five years of absence spent in the United States to work for the amelioration of the general situation of his society. Baako plans to make films for Ghanavision to fulfil his high-held aspirations. Though Mammeri and Armah proceed differently, the central idea implied is the same. In their novels, both writers demonstrate that colonial education is not necessarily alienating, and point to the effectiveness of a hybrid culture as argued for by Homi Bhabha.

Homi Bhabha sustains that being endowed with a double culture is 'empowering', contrary to what used to be proclaimed in postcolonial studies. For him, the colonial situation produces a mimic situation in which the colonized is attracted to the culture of the 'other', but does not lead to the complete erasure of his initial culture.

Besides the fact that the colonizer does not allow a complete and equal recognition of the colonial subject which makes him diffrent, it allows the colonial subject to aspire to a higher status. The hybrid no longer identifies himself with the colonized nor the colonizer; he is in an 'in-between' or in a 'third space' position. It is this aspect that Bhabha finds empowering in the concept of hybridity. Bhabha believes that the 'Third Space of ennuciation' gives back recognition to the colonized people as it provides them with knowledge and power to understand their societies.

It is accepted that colonialism is not a reversible phenomenon which would disappear by rejecting all the western values that the African societies were permeated with for centuries. The African writers are aware that there is no 'time machine' to roll them back to a mythical past; even so, the past they would be back to can not constitute a solid ground to cope with all the challenges of nowadays' globalized world.

Mammeri and Armah seem to agree with Bhabha's theorizing concerning the capacities the young individuals represent. Both *Le Sommeil du Juste* and *Fragments* portray protagonists who are misunderstood intellectuals aspiring to positives changes in their societies. In spite of the fact that the panorama of the novels is different, the authors present analogue situations in which young intellectuals are victimis of an uncompromising society.

As far as *Le Sommeil du Juste* is concerned, it is Arezki's awareness that for the French he is never meant to be more than an 'IMANN' which triggers in him the need to go back to the sources. His actual return to Algeria symbolizes the figural return to the once renounced culture, which should not be misinterpreted as a quest to retrieve the past; an action both the author and the hero are scornful of. This return trip and his enrollment in 'le parti' prefigure an eventual transformed Arezki on quest for a cultural reappropriation. During his trial, Arezki accuses the French culture guilty of making him 'see life in pink'. His judge is shown actually as the culprit of the drama that has befallen him and his society at large. The 'book burning' and the trial serve as reminders of his

position, and strong motives to claim the nationalist values he formerly negated under the seduction exerted by his French teachers.

In his diary, though Arezki says to M. Poiré that Elfriede, his French girlfriend, has bought back almost all the books he burnt, he has ceased to accord to words more value than they are worth. Arezki re-evaluates the French culture and is able to pinpoint its false discourse which is the milestone of Bhabha's argument. Through imitating the Colonial discourse, the colonized identifies its uncertainty and frailty; and it is what entitles the colonized to a powerful position where to express his identity. As I have argued in the previous chapters, Mammeri thinks that the only way to articulate one's culture is through breaking away from the colonial one; a process which is not possible without understanding its principles and mechanisms.

The reader notices the positive changes in Arezki's character at the end of the novel, since his eventual imprisonement positions him with the side of his fellow IMANN. He recognizes the values of his culture through acknowledging the accuracy of his father's thinking. Arezki admits that:

> Le pére, qui n'a jamais fréquenté l'Université, est plus perspicace que M. le juge, puisqu'il sait que je suis né avec mon destin comme tous les Imann, parce que tous naissent des les limites toujours étroites que des accidents stupides, aidés de la stupide volenté des hommes, ont fixées à l'ampleur de leurs gestes.[1]
>
> (Father, who has never been to the university, is more perspicacious than the judge, since he knows that I am born with my destiny like all the Imann, since all are always born within narrow limits that stupid accidents, helped by the stupid will of men, fixed the extent of their motion).

In this passage, Arezki identifies with his father with the ideas he has long learned to disregard and with his destiny as an IMANN. This passage ushers in the hope that a new society is likely to emerge from the darkness of 'la nuit coloniale'.

[1] Mammeri. ***Le Sommeil***, op cit, p. 171-72.

In the same perspective, in *Fragments,* Armah does not display explicitly a brighter optimism regarding the Ghanaian society; still he encloses some aspects that can be assumed as harbingers of better tomorrows. Equipped with a western education, Baako seeks to instruct his society with moral values that may insure a prosperous future. The two plays, he writes, illustrate the possibilities of social progress that they exhibit. Baako is the hybrid subject that Homi Bhabha theorises about, and who probes the ills of his society. Baako, like Arezki, discards some of the traditions in his society; yet, he eventually recognizes the important link with the past epitomized by Naana when he says to Juana that the elderly lady 'was right'.[2]

In the two novels, the focus is on the necessity to preserve the cultural heritage of a society. It underscores the prayers and wishes of the African writers who are aware that 'any tree without its roots is doomed to die'.[3] This need to talk about the past is not an attempt to ressurect it, but is a must for the continuity of life. Thanks to the education he receives, the African hero appears as an agent of change. He is not deprived of his identity, but his position as a hybrid individual gives him the necessary tools to restore the values of his native culture long mauled by the colonizer. Thus, hybridity:

> is a concept that confronts and problematises boundaries, although it does not erase them, as such. Hybridity always implies an unsettling of identities. It is precisely our encounters at the border where self and other, local and global, Asian and Western meet, […] Hybridity, the very condition of in-betweeness, can never be a question of simple hand shaking, of harmonious merger and fusion.[4]

This quotation highlights what the two authors have undertaken to portray in their novels. 'The condition of in-betweenness' that Arezki and Baako share does not set them in a 'harmonious' position in their society, still it 'does not erase [the boundaries]', and

[2] Armah, ***Fragments***, op cit, p. 190.
[3] Mammeri, Mouloud. ***Poémés Kabyle*** Anciens. Cited in Medjeber, Samil. **''Le Message de Mammeri a-t-il été bien entendu et compris ?''**, https://www.kabyle.com/articles/message-mammeri-t-il-ete-bien-entendu-compris-22363-20102013, (Accessed on May 28th, 2016).
[4] Ang, Ien. **''Together in-between beyond diaspora, into Hybridity''** in *Asian Studies Review,* 27, (22), pp. 149-50, https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/156957/Ang_Together-In-Difference_ICS_Pre-Print_Final.pdf, (Accessed on April 7th, 2014).

thus does not cut them off from their culture. It is important to notice that hybridity is a phenomenon which imposes itself naturally in a globalized world; and thus it exceeds the hitherto strained connection between colonized and colonizer. The world has evolved to encompass in one sphere all cultures and all identities, as it is a by-product of the 'high-tech' world. We notice that 'people belonging to such cultures of hybridity have had to renounce the dream of

or ambition of discovering any kind of 'lost' cultural purity, or ethnic absolutism'.[5]

Hybridity is still a controversial concept in post-colonial circles. It is as if acknowledging its usefulness or ineluctability would be a disgrace to the dignity of 'Third World' people. Actually, the very appellation of the Third world calls for its in-betweenness and its median situation. African writers have treated this phenomenon as an aberration for some and as a blessing for others, but its existence has never been disregarded. It is a concept whose pertinence will have to be negotiated in relation to the development of the continent.

[5] Hall, Stuart, et al. ***Modernity and its features***, Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press, 1992, p. 310.

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ABSTRACT IN ARABIC

العقول المعارضة والدعوة إلى التغيير الاجتماعي:

البطل الافريقي في السبات العميق لمولود مولود معمري و الاجزاء ل اي كوي ارما

دراسة مقارنة

الملخص:

هذه الاطروحة عبارة عن مقارنة بين عملين ادبين لكاتبين , الجزائري مولود معمري و الغاني أي كوي ارما, تهدف الاطروحة لتبين الطريقة التي تناقش من خلالها الروايتين السبات العميق ((*Le Sommeil du Juste*)) و الاجزاء ((*Fragments*))لمسالة التثاقف , هذه الدراسة تعتمدعلى نهج ما بعد الاستقلال , مفاهيم التقليد, الازدواجية و التهجين على وجه الخصوص , كما طورها الباحث الهندي هومي بها بها .

في رواياتيهما , الكاتبان يظهران الكيفية التي يتعامل بها الافارقة مع ثقافة المستعمر لاعادة صياغة ثقافاتهم التي شوهت من طرف الاستعمار. الروائيين يشيران الى الفرص الهائلة التي يمثلونها في بلدانهم الافارقة المثقفين . هذه الدراسة تحاول ان تبحث في الرؤى المتقاربة للروائيين حول الخصائص البنائة المحتوية في تعليم سليم. فيما يخص الروايتين, التعليم المشار اليه هو تعليم المستعمر, لانه هو الذي كان متاحا في بيئة مستعمرة . على الرغم من ان السبات العميق و الاجزاء يعرضون بيئتين مختلفين الى ان صلب الموضوع هو واحد: تعليم المستعمر لا ينتج بالضرورة اشخاص متثاقفين.

هذه الدراسة تنقسم الى ابواب ثلاثة :

الباب الاول يحتوي على الادوات النضرية التي يتسنى لنا من خلالها دراسة العملين الادبيين . الباب يتعرض الى مفاهيم التقليد, الازدواجية و التهجين كما بادربها هومي بها بها , الذي يدعي ان التقليد الذي حاول المستعمر اطراءه كوسيلة للسيطرة على المحتل

ينتج حال من الازدواجية حين يدرك المحتل كل الاكاذب و الخدع الموجودة في الخطاب الاستعماري . و الذي ينتهي بخلق اشخاص مهجنة مقوات بالمكانة الخلابة المميزة المتاحة من طرف المثقفين .

الباب الثاني يبحث في الروايتين على الطريقة التي ينتهجها الكاتبيين لتحديد الاسباب التي تحدث التذمر الذي يشعره الابطال و المجتمعات على حد سواء . في (السبات العميق) معمري يحمل المسؤولية للتطبيق المجحف لتقاليد , في

حين ان في الاجزاء, أي كوي ارما يلوم المادية المتفاقمة لمجتمع تباعي, يتطرق هذا الباب ايضا الى الوسائل الادبية المعتمدة من طرف الكاتبين لاظهار الضرر الموجود في المجتمعات.

الباب الثالث يتعامل مع الطرق المتعددة التي يشير اليها الكاتبين انها موجودة لانقاذ المجتمعات الافريقية من كارثة التثاقف , رؤية الكاتبين في الروايتين تظهر اقناعهما ان الحل يوجد في بطن المجتمعات بحد ذاتها . الادبيين يشيرون الى اعادة نظر عميقة و جذرية في المعتقدات و التصرفات التي تسير بلدانهم