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The representation of indigenous characters in Albert Camus's *The Stranger* and Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night*

تصوير شخصيات الأهالي في رواية «الغريب» لألبير كامو و«فضل الليل على النهار» لياسمينة خضرا

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ملخص

يحاول هذا المقال تحليل التصوير التحقيري لشخصية الأهالي في رواية «الغريب» لألبير كامو و «فضل الليل على النهار» للروائي ياسمينة خضرا، من خلال مفهومي "المانوية" لفرانتز فانون، و"الجماليات المانوية" لجان محمد عبدول. تسَلِّط هذه الدراسة الضوء على التمثيل المجهول للأهالي الجزائري في نص كامو، الذي يقدم الشخصيات الجزائرية تحت اللفظ العام «عربي»، دون الإشارة إلى أسماء معينة، مما يمنحهم وجودًا مُعتَمًا أشبه ما يكون بخلفية منعدمة الأهمية. وعلى خلاف كامو، يلتزم نص خضرا بإعطاء شخصيات الأهالي حضورًا فعليًا ودقيقًا، حيث يتعمق في تصوير تفاصيل سكان حي «جنان جاتو». لكن هذا التمثيل المفعم بالحياة والحضور لا يمنع من تجلي صفات تحقيرية، ليجعل من الأهالي شخصية مشوهة جسديًا وأخلاقيًا، مُعبرًا بذلك عن تأثير الأدب الاستعماري في تصوير الكُتاب للسكان الأصليين. تسهم هذه الدراسة في النقد الأدبي ما بعد الكولونيالي من خلال إبراز التأثير المستمر للنمط المانوي في السرديات الاستعمارية. ومن خلال موازاة تصوير كامو للأهالي مع تمثيل خضرا، تقدم الدراسة تحليلًا مقارنًا يُظهر كيف يخضع تمثيل خضرا للبنية المانوية. كما أن تصويره المشوه للسكان الأصليين يبرز استمرارية أنماط التمثيل الاستعماري حتى ما بعد الحقبة الاستعمارية.

الكلمات الدالة: عربي؛ كامو؛ خضرا؛ شخصيات الأهالي؛ المانوية؛ التصوير التحقيري.

Abstract

This article attempts to analyze the pejorative representation of the indigenous Algerians in Albert Camus's *The Stranger* and Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night,* through Frantz Fanon's Manicheanism and Abdul JanMohamed's

Manichean Aesthetics. The present research examines the anonymous representation of the native characters in Camus's text which portrays them as nameless shadows without a significant presence. Khadra's text, on the other hand, gives life and presence to the indigenous characters through a well-detailed and nuanced description. However, Khadra's portrayal of the residents of Jenane Jato proves to be distorted sending connotations of physical and moral deformity which brings forward the influence of colonial fiction. This study contributes to literary postcolonial criticism by highlighting the enduring influence of Manichean patterns of representation in colonial narratives. Through juxtaposing Camus's portrayal with that of Khadra, the study offers a comparative analysis that reveals how Khadra's representation obeys a Manichean structure. His distorted depiction of the indigenes highlights the persistent structures of colonial representation beyond the colonial era.

Keywords: Arab; Camus; Khadra; indigenous characters; Manicheanism; pejorative representation.

Introduction

In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon (1963) sums up the perception of the native and the settler in the colonial world, where both exist within a strict binary order: "while the native, bent double, more dead than alive, exists interminably in an unchanging dream. The settler makes history; his life is an epoch, an Odyssey. He is the absolute beginning" (p. 51). In truth, the colonized, the native, the *Arab*, the black or the indigenous has long captured the imagination of fiction writers since the advent of colonialism. Pro- and anti-colonialists alike made of the colonized their focus to voice their views about the colonial institution; hence the representation of the indigenous in colonial literature paints the colonized as wicked, savage and inferior.

The French Algerian Albert Camus and the Algerian Yasmina Khadra make of Colonial Algeria a compelling setting to communicate the realities of French colonialism through fiction. While both *The Stranger* and *What the Day Owes the Night* examine colonial Algeria from two different perspectives—Camus from the perspective of a *pied-noir* experiencing existential indifference, and Khadra from that of a westernized indigenous Algerian navigating identity crisis—they actually shed light on the existing division between the indigenous and the European Algerians. Camus, born in Algeria to European parents, was colonial by background; as a *pied-noir*, Camus claimed his Algerian identity much like the indigenous population: "The Algerian French are likewise, and in the strongest meaning of the word,

natives" (as cited in Prochaska, 1990, p. xvii). His writings, namely *The Stranger* and *The Plague,* are characterized by a striking silence of the indigenous people, whom Camus refers to as Arabs. Conversely, the landscape receives a particular attention, reflecting Algiers and Oran as "a land of sun, warm breezes, and the pursuit of soccer, swimming, and leisure on the beaches" (Karklins, 1999, p. 8). Khadra, who considers Camus a literary father, offers a detailed representation of the colonized community, shedding light on the social reality of both native Algerians and settlers during the process of decolonization and after independence. However, Khadra's indigenous characters are often portrayed through images of physical and moral deformity, as documented by the narrator Jonas.

The present study attempts to examine the representation of the indigenous characters in Albert Camus's *The Stranger* and Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* through the lens of Manicheanism. Camus portrays the Arab characters as blurred and indistinct, while he pays the indigenous scenery a more pertinent attention as he delves into Meursault's existential crisis. While exploring the indigenous characters in depth, Khadra's narrative presents the Arabs as both physically and morally disfigured and distorted within the setting of Jenane Jato. Excluding the central character Jonas and his adoptive father Mahi—westernized Algerians living amidst the European community—the indigenous community is tied up with connotations of evil, filth and disgrace.

The striking absence of the Arabs as fictional characters in *The Stranger* resonates with Camus's intention, as reflected through the narrator Meursault, to erase the indigenous people from the setting. Khadra's narrator on the other hand, associates the Arabs with inferior images of filth, contempt and darkness in contrast to the Europeans who are associated with brightness. Why does Camus's text insist on representing the Arab characters as nameless beings and why are the indigenous Algerians associated with derogatory representations in Khadra's narrative? This study explores the reasons behind the pejorative representation of the indigenous Algerians, as reflected in Camus's and Khadra's narratives.

While previous research has explored the anonymous representation of indigenous Algerians in Camus's *The Stranger*, this study offers a comparative analysis by juxtaposing Camus's portrayal with that of Khadra. Although Khadra avoids the collective label "Arab," his representation resonates with the Manichean pattern of colonial discourse. The significance of this study

lies in its efforts to highlight the enduring legacy of colonial aesthetics in shaping literary depictions of indigenous characters. It demonstrates that the structures of colonial representation continue to influence literary portrayals of indigenous people beyond the colonial era, as illustrated in *What the Day Owes the Night*.

1. Conceptual framework of the study

1.1 Manicheanism

The representation of the indigenous community in both texts will be explored and analyzed through Manichean Aesthetics, a postcolonial concept which was first introduced as Manicheanism by the scholar and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon and then further explored by Abdul JanMohamed in his book *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* (1985). The term postcolonial here refers to the discursive and material effects of European imperialism on colonial societies (Ashcroft et al., 1998, p.2). Manicheanism is a product of colonial discourse which polarizes the colonial context into a duality of absolute good and evil (Ashcroft et al., 1998, p. 134): the colonizer is good, while the colonized stands for evil. Hence, the vice of the colonized necessitates the virtue of the colonizer to be contained and tamed. Moreover, the colonizer, who is in constant quest to take over the natives' territory and to claim it as his rightful property, strives to promote inferior images of the natives to justify his conducts. To explain the Manichean structure of colonialism, Frantz Fanon (1963) asserts that in a colonial world, the native comes in contrast to the values of the colonizer's enterprise. In other words, the colonized represents the negation of values. Thus, this negation of values necessitates the exclusion of the native:

> *The colonial world is a Manichean world. It is not enough for the settler to delimit physically, that is to say with the help of the army and the police force, the place of the native. As if to show the totalitarian character of colonial exploitation the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil. . . The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil.* (p.41)

In his book *Black Skins White Masks*, Fanon (2008) unravels that Manicheanism is rooted in "the remotest depth of the European unconscious" (p.146). Fanon further explicates how the native is perceived by the European psyche and that by analyzing the collective unconscious of the dominant within the binary structure of colonial Africa. He reiterates that the collective

unconscious of the European associates the natives of Africa with only one pejorative depiction where the "Negro" stands exclusively for "lower emotions, the baser inclinations, the dark side of the soul" (p. 147). Fanon's analysis contends that within colonial Africa, the native is a reflection of absolute evil and a symbol of ultimate wretchedness as the psychiatrist comments that "all birds of prey are black" (p. 147).

Based on this analysis, Fanon (1963) argues that the colonial world rests on an inevitable Manichean Allegory because it is divided into two different compartments where the colonizer and the colonized subsist within two opposed communities. This Manichean universe is described as a world "cut in two" and "inhabited by two different species" (pp. 39-40) who are constantly in opposition. The native segment, Fanon highlights, is part of the colonial world but never complementary to the European one; the two sections exist within one Manichean reality but prove unable to reconcile. Both worlds are meant to obey a rigid binary opposition where the colonizers' community is continuously dominant. The world of the colonized, on the other hand, must be subjugated because their evil is embedded and it may prevail if not contained (p. 38). In the colonial world the native, Fanon comments, is the wretched of the earth; he is the source of chaos and the irreversible enemy of values who must be fought and exterminated. The European colonizer regards the native society as an abyss of darkness and the native as a corrosive; deforming element whose main mission is to destroy virtue (p. 41).

1.2 Manichean aesthetics: Manichean structure in colonial literature

JanMohamed (1983) relies on Fanon's concept of Manicheanism to explore the Manichean structure in colonial fiction. He states that the divisive line between absolute good and evil represents a pertinent fictional criterion for portraying the native characters in any colonial romance. Native societies in colonial fiction, thus, are depicted within the Manichean allegory of good and evil, "[i]n fact, the colonial mentality is dominated by a Manichean allegory of white and black, good and evil, salvation and damnation, civilization and savagery, superiority and inferiority, intelligence and emotion, self and other, subject and object" (p. 4). JanMohamed's Manichean Aesthetics examines the mechanisms of the Manichean structure through a set of colonialist texts whose authors had thoroughly experienced the "generic aspect" (p. 6) of colonial society, above all the social colonial structure that characterized those societies. The influence of the colonial

institution is central to understanding the Manichean structure that lies at the heart of the fictional works we intend to analyze in this paper. In truth, JanMohamed contends that colonialist literature simultaneously embodies aesthetic and ideological discourse; hence, Manichean aesthetics serves as a significant framework for analyzing and depicting colonial realities (p. 6).

Manichean allegory is employed in colonial fiction to emphasize the moral and physical distance between the colonizer and the colonized. As a matter of fact, the Manichean structure underlies every relationship in colonial societies, feeding representations of degradation and subjugation. African colonial fiction produced by European authors tends to represent the blacks as shadows of the whites, and the natives are treated as "uncivilized pagans", an allegory that depicts the European as civilized and cultured. Furthermore, the natives who succeed in espousing the colonizer's culture are referred to as bad imitations of Englishmen (JanMohamed, 1983, p. 35). European authors express a violent antipathy towards the indigenous population in order to impose the colonial order, which governs the dialectic relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Accordingly, separating black from white in fiction indicates the thick line of separation between good and evil societies. As Fanon had already explained how the black/native embodies a strong allegory of evil, a pure European community necessitates the exclusion of the natives, who are referred to as deforming elements, as mentioned earlier. Manichean patterns in colonial literature function in order to reflect the binary order implanted in colonial societies, where the former stands as the only framework to imagine and identify the ruled communities. As affirmed by JanMohamed, the removal of the natives "restores the society to its "pure" state of Manichean opposition and equilibrium between good and evil" (p. 35).

The Manichean representation of the native in colonial fiction is implemented through the lens of binary opposition, for Manichean Aesthetics operates within a framework of constant dialectic oppositions between the colonizer and the colonized. That is to say, colonial literature tends to depend on rhetorical strategies to emphasize the binary oppositions present in colonial societies: black/white, native/settler, savage/civilized, and evil/good, etc. These strategies often utilize the native landscape to demonstrate the evil nature of the colonized. The setting belonging to the native resonates with evil connotations; the native is evil too because he is an extension of his damned, hostile, dark, exotic, and threatening

environment, which accentuates the setting of the colonizer as blessed, bright, and safe. His very presence stretches from a setting that comes in direct opposition to civilized Europe (JanMohamed, 1983, p.35). The binary opposition savage/civilized runs through colonial fiction as a fixed criterion to document the social realities in native topography.

Manicheanism is equally reflected through the representation of the Other. JanMohamed (1983) notes that within the Manichean structure, the native is constructed as the "other" under the gaze of the colonizer "self." In truth, this allegory "that lurks behind [colonial romances] is essentially" Manichean; therefore, the otherness of the native functions hand in hand with his inferior representation to highlight the Manichean order in these romances (p. 43). In the same regard, JanMohamed points out that otherness maintains the distance between the white colonialist and the black other; it does symbolically suppress his evil presence from the colonial scene when referred to as a subhuman creature: "For the colonialist mode of perception, blacks are evil primarily because of their otherness, because of their difference from Europeans" (p.32). JanMohamed then reiterates that the representation of the Other "originates in colonialist ideology but results in a feature typical of racial romance: the black characters are simultaneously archetypes and stereotypes" (p.32). In order to explore the Manichean aesthetics embedded in *The Stranger* and *What the Day Owes the Night*, this article intends to implement the concepts of Manichean Allegory, Binary Opposition, and The Representation of the Other, which are developed by JanMohamed to explicate the mechanisms of Manichean Aesthetics in colonial fiction.

2. The anonymous representation of the indigenous characters in Camus's text

2.1 The collective label "Arab" in *The Stranger*

Albert Camus's *The Stranger* provides a solid Manichean structure as the author explores the central character's existential crisis. The indigenous characters are barely present in Camus's narrative, and the former are reduced to the collective label "Arabs" which makes their presence as characters rather flat and indistinct. In truth, the absence of the indigenous Algerians in the novel resonates with a hidden will to suppress the "Arabs," the reader can hardly perceive the existence of the indigenous characters, who are reduced to shadows. Indeed, whenever the word "Arab" makes presence in the narrative, no name follows: "an Arab nurse in a white smock"

(Camus, 1958, p. 6). Camus's choice to leave the indigenous unnamed emphasizes the otherness of these characters, who fall into the category of a collective label. "I saw some Arabs" (p. 32) "the second Arab" (p. 32) "two Arabs in blue dungarees" (p. 35) are allusions to the anonymity of the indigenous presence in Camus's narrative. Carroll (2007) notes that the *pied noir*'s inclination to ignore the existence of the indigenous Algerians stems from a repressed violence and a rooted hatred towards the Arabs, who are referred to as anonymous in an attempt to suppress their individuality. The label *Les Arabes* is thus employed as an interchangeable component of collectivity and a manifestation of the settlers' racism towards the colonized other (p. 23). In the same regard, Saadallah (1996) states that the label "Arab" was engraved in the popular colonial culture, including the *pieds-noirs'* popular tales. Based on the original text of Emanuel Sivan, the word "Arab" is a derogatory generic label used to refer to all the indigenous Muslim Algerians, regardless of their different ethnicity, including Arabs and Berbers (p. 58). Moreover, the label suggests that the Arab is a strange being, unworthy of proper treatment because he belongs to some low-grade race (p. 58).

O'Brien (1970) sheds light on the question of "nameless Arabs" by analyzing the representation of Indigenous Algerians in *The Stranger* and *The Plague*. O'Brien, who firmly believes that the frail presence of the indigenous inhabitants of Oran in *The Plague* is in fact an extension of the indistinct representation of the Arabs in *The Stranger,* notes that the Arabs as documented by Meursault are faceless, nameless, and silent. Camus's tendency to blur the indigenous characters is equally manifested in his second novel *The Plague,* which witnessed the striking suppression of the Arabs of Oran. O'Brien states that the indigenous characters are not only confined to the anonymity feature employed in Camus's narrative, but they further cease to exist (p. 52). In truth, the Arabs in *The Stranger* departed from the scenery of the novel after Meursault had been arrested. In other words, the Arabs are usually utilized as muted characters to support the plot of the narrative. O'Brien's comment, that in Camus's fiction "the Arab question is abolished" (p. 53), unveils the structure of Manichean Aesthetics that is implemented in Camus's text. More to the point, the idea of a pure colonial society discussed by JanMohamed is manifested in Camus's attempt to clear out the Arabs from the scenery of French Algeria. The indigenous characters only make a fleeting appearance: at the beach and a few scenes before that on the street, "lounging against the tobacconist's window" (Camus, 1958, p.32). Yet, the Arabs remain strangers and obtrusive to the scene, feeding images

of exclusion and otherness as Camus's narrator indicates, "they [the Arabs] were exactly as before, gazing in the same vague way at the spot where we had been" (p.32). Meursault's description accentuates the indistinct perception of the indigenous people from the settler's stand; the gaze of the *Arabs* seems to perpetuate connotations of some vague intention, most likely a bad one.

2.2. Vague characterization as a means of asserting French identity

O'Brien (1970) argues that the vague presence of the Arabs can be understood in relation to the author's will to remove the indigenous characters from the landscape in order to stress the French identity of Oran, as he states as follows: "Since [Camus] wanted to situate his fable in a city which he knew, Oran, and since that city contained a large Arab population, these Arabs had to be removed in order to make that notionally French city a really French one" (p. 55). Based on O'Brien's claim, it is worth stating that the murder of the Arab at the beach by Meursault is an allusion to the *pied-noir*'s will to eradicate the indigenous people and preserve French Algeria as a pure settlement. The murder scene in *The Stranger* literally symbolizes the repressed desire of the French Algerians to remove the Arabs because their presence represents a violation of the *pied-noirs*' territory. Furthermore, the appearance of the natives in Camus's fable perpetuates implications of peril; the gaze of the vague, unnamed Arabs foreshadows an upcoming threat, which is then manifested at the beach through Meursault's friends Masson and Raymond. The two men quickly react to stop this danger as they both enter into physical confrontation with two indigenous men: "The distance between us and the Arabs was steadily decreasing. When we were only a few steps away the Arabs halted. Masson and I slowed down, while Raymond went straight up to his man. I couldn't hear what he said, but I saw the native lowering his head, as if to butt him in the chest" (Camus, 1958, p. 35).

Carroll (2007) notes that the expressed violence of the *pieds-noirs* against the natives at the beach is in truth a response to the violation of the settler's space by the Arabs (p. 2). In this regard, Kassoul and Maougal (2006) note that "[i]n the work of Camus, crossing space is symptomatic of incursion into the territory of the other, the different one, the enemy." That is to say, the Arab presence in the European territory brings down the binary order embedded in French Algeria, threatening the solid Manichean structure that

governs the relationship between natives and settlers (p. 164). It happens that topography in colonial societies engenders a system of exclusion in human relations and functions according to a pattern of separation. By stepping into the beach, the indigenous men invade the European topography; therefore, they make an incursion “into protected, forbidden, interdicted territory” (Kassoul & Maougal, 2006, p. 164). On top of that, the presence of the Arabs in the French compartment makes them guilty “of domiciliary violation” (p. 164); hence, the practice of violence is herein permitted and explicitly justified. It is further explained by Kassoul and Maougal that the Arab with the knife in his hand for protection represents a foreign and threatening presence, for it betrays the pattern of separation set in the first place. The indigene must remain in their compartment while the settler circulates freely because he is “the master of place, of all places” and if “an Arab takes it in his mind to go to the beach, it’s to die there” (p. 164).

2.3 Celebrating the Algerian landscape at the expense of its people

Camus celebrates the scenery at the expense of the indigenous characters who serve as “background for the portentous European metaphysics” (Said, 2000, p. 264). It is worth mentioning that the Algerian landscape in Camus’s *The Stranger* has been given more pertinence than its local people. The focus placed on the scenery emphasizes the suppression of the indigenous population and communicates the author’s will to claim Algiers as a European city. The use of words such as “the sun”, “beach” and “sand” run all over the narrative like key words to indicate how the *pieds-noirs* are strongly connected to *their* landscape. Indeed, it is under the blazing sun of Algiers that Meursault kills a nameless indigenous man. Besides, it seems that the sensations of Meursault are intertwined with the elements of the landscape and the atmosphere around him:

> *Then everything began to reel before my eyes, a fiery gust came from the sea, while the sky cracked in two, from end to end, and a great sheet of flame poured down through the rift. Every nerve in my body was a steel spring, and my grip closed on the revolver…I shook off my sweat and the clinging veil of light. I knew I’d shattered the balance of the day, the spacious calm of this beach on which I had been happy. But I fired four shots more into the inert body, on which they left no visible trace. (Camus,1958, pp. 38-39)*

In the same vein, Kassoul and Maougal (2006) emphasize that the Algerian landscape is more prominently present than its native people who are either missing or anonymous figures, making a furtive, shadow-like presence at best—when they do not meet a tragic end like the Arab murdered in *The Stranger* (p. 150). As to the landscape, Kassoul and Maougal affirm that it is represented as "Eden" in Camus's fictional Algeria, it is bright, silent, and almost unpopulated, because the indigenous people are barely present. Camus's Algeria is of a "bordering luminosity" that "resembles blindness", which obliterates indigenous characters and turns them into sightless beings (p. 150).

Nevertheless, the silence that characterizes Camus's *Arabs* is clearly distinct from the silence that envelops the Algerian landscape. Silence is celebrated in Camus's rhetoric, reflecting his deep influence by the Hellenic culture. Defined as the tendency of the Greek culture which emphasizes the pursuit of intellectual, beauty and nobleness in thought and action (Smith, 2011, p. 2779), Camus's Hellenism is expressed through the appreciation of beauty as a simple ideal communicated through nature. This connection to beauty is utterly manifested in approaching the land in his colonial fiction. The indigenous people, on the other hand, are presented according to fixed parameters that trigger connotations of threat. To illustrate, Kassoul and Maougal (2006) explain that the Arabs are either wrapped in their burnous to hide themselves in summer, or armed with a knife at a relaxing place such as the seashore. The Arabs in Camus's imagination "jealously guard their silence" making of their furtive presence a more threatening one (p. 264). Moreover, the silence of the indigenous autochthones is not for contemplation; rather, it is a threatening element that upsets the harmony of Camus's nature—incarnated in the celebrated Algerian landscape or the settlers' compartment—and provokes evil and murder (p. 265).

It is of capital importance to state that Camus employs silence as a double-edged weapon to stress the Manichean structure *The Stranger* embodies, it is through a fleeting, silent presence that the indigenous characters are represented as dangerous, evil, Arab others as Kassoul and Maougal (2006) introduce: "The world of Camus is a Mediterranean ghetto, where the Arab has no place. A sun-bathed ghetto, established on the basis of race" (p. 7). The Arabs who dwell within Camus's imaginary colonial Algeria are reduced to savages who require to be tamed by the colonial system, they need to embrace the values of freedom and democracy, as understood by Camus, in

order to fit into the modern, civilized society of settlers (p. 155). Therefore, the image of the silent, absent, savage Arab persists in the colonial fiction of Albert Camus in the 40s and the 50s as *The Stranger* reveals: "The aesthetic image of the Arab, armed with his knife (The Stranger, 1942) … allows us to read between the lines the image of a dangerous, barbarous man, more worrisome than worried" (Kassoul & Maougal, p.155).

3. The distorted image of the indigenous characters in Khadra's text

3.1 Moral and physical deformation of the inhabitants of Jeanne Jato

Contrary to Camus's "alleged *literary failure* to give an individual voice or identity to Arab characters" (Carroll, 2007, p. 20), Khadra succeeds in bringing life to the indigenous characters in his narrative. The natives in *What the Day Owes the Night* have an articulate presence; they are given a distinct identity and an expressive voice. However, the negative representation of these characters is reminiscent of colonial fiction. Except for the protagonist Jonas and his uncle Mahi, who make integration into the European community, the native Algerians are much closer to a subhuman race. The reader can glimpse the moral and physical distortion of the indigenous population through the narrator's omniscient lens. Hence, the indigenous characters Bliss, Peg-leg, the barber, and El Moro convey both physical and moral deformity, making the reader reluctant to sympathize with them. Bliss—devil in Arabic, as the name suggests—is the incarnation of evil; he is both cunning and greedy. He looks more like a devil, with "a goatee beard that made his chin seem abnormally long" and "a huge, bald misshapen head" (Khadra, 2010, p.21). Khadra presents the broker as some sort of a "predator" who wanted to eat his customers alive; Bliss is "a vulture waiting to grow rich on other people's misery" (p. 20). This wicked image of Bliss resonates with Fanon's notion of the Manichean world; that is to say, within colonial societies where binary oppositions govern the two poles of struggle, the native is nothing but a source of evil that must be contained or abolished. Accordingly, Bliss's wickedness, as painted by Khadra and his narrator Jonas, reminds the reader of the deeply rooted Manichean allegory of the colonial world: "the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil" (Fanon, 1963, p.41).

Peg-leg, an ex-soldier who lost his leg in the war, is another manifestation of the native's wickedness as portrayed in *What the Day Owes the Night*. The

ex-soldier is said to be a paedophile having sick intentions towards children. Bliss's words— "if you're so keen on war, why don't you [go] to Spain instead of hanging around here drooling over little boys" (p. 56), warning Peg-Leg to stay away from Jonas—reveal Peg-leg's moral corruption and his willingness to hurt children. This idea is actually expressed in Sivan's *Colonialism and Popular Culture in Algeria*, which sheds light on the colonial popular culture in colonized Algeria by referring to the attitudes of the *pieds-noirs* towards the Algerians. This paper uses Saadallah's translated text of the historian Emanuel Sivan, where the latter posits the indigene or the Arab as having intense homosexual inclinations, which may constitute in this respect an eventual danger to children, especially European ones (Saadallah, 1996, p. 81).Even though he is not inclined to malice, the barber nonetheless mirrors images of deformity; his physical ugliness seems to make him unworthy of his majestic unattainable desires as he leads a pitiful life in the native quarter of Jenane Jato: "The silver of mirror reflected the disparity between his lowly body and his grand desires: he was short, scrawny, and so stooped he was almost a hunch back, as ugly and as poor as Job himself" (Khadra, 2010, pp.54-55). As to El Moro, one of the thugs in Jenane Jato, it is no different. Despite his huge body and muscled arms, the gangster has got a disfigured face. He has "a leather eye patch that covered a gaping socket" (p. 41). It is obvious that the dwellers of Jenane Jato share the common criterion of deformity. Whether morally deformed, physically flawed, or even both, the disfigured representation of these characters evokes images of apathy, disgust, and danger, which Fanon (1963) associates with the native perception in the European collective unconscious (pp. 41-42).

To illustrate, Fanon (1963) contends that the Manichean structure is chiefly meant to dehumanize the native, to refer to him as a living creature rather than a human being (p. 42). The natives described in the above section seem to have emerged from some evil abyss or an inferior spot of the living. The indigenous Algerians' deformity in Khadra's text can be read in accordance with Fanon's analysis of the image of the colonized as perceived by the colonialist. The Black, the native, the indigene, or the Arab is a deforming element whose chief intention is to bring moral and physical harm to his surroundings (p. 41). He would naturally enjoy bringing down an order of well-established beauty and morality. Furthermore, the dehumanized native is more like an animal, Fanon argues, as the former is often associated with bestiary adjectives. He is a beast in the eyes of the colonizer and thus must be treated as one (p. 42). Deprived of their humanity, the residents of Jenane

Jato are reduced to images of savagery and inferiority. Despite Khadra's detailed and nuanced portrayal of each character of them, stressing their individuality, the aspect of collective identity ultimately dominates: "…those hysterical masses, those faces bereft of all humanity, those distended bodies which are like nothing on earth, that mob without beginning or end" (Fanon, 1963, pp. 42-43).

The tragic fate of Younes/Jonas's family highlights the dissolution of the indigenous characters as they fail to survive in Jenane Jato. In fact, these characters are not physically or morally distorted as Issa the father demonstrates; he is reluctant to give up on his principles despite the difficulties he comes across in the new city. Jonas's mother, on the other hand, struggles to protect her children in a new environment, as she constantly feels uncomfortable among her neighbours. Nevertheless, they all meet a tragic end except Jonas, who survives by making full integration into the European City of Río Salado. The mental breakdown of Issa, the tragic demise of his wife, and the deteriorated health of their daughter showcase how the native quarter drowns its dwellers into an unavoidable fate of darkness. While they do not surrender to factors of deformity, Jonas's family members make their annihilation. It is worth stating here that the native landscape affects its people, and reduces them to disfigured beings. This further showcase that the indigenous dwellers of Jenane Jato are an extension of their wretched landscape.

3.2 The landscape as a site of Manichean oppositions between colonizer and colonized

Khadra grants a special importance to the landscape; the native quarter and the European city are thoroughly described to highlight the binary order which sets the worlds of the colonized and the colonizer apart. While Jenane Jato evokes connotations of inferiority, evil, misery, filth, and danger, Río Salado comes across the reader's imagination as "Eden", an incarnate of blessing and brightness. The power of Jenane Jato in Khadra's text lies in its ability to stress the inferiority of the indigenes, which is a strong manifestation of the distorted representation of the native Algerians in *What the Day Owes the Night*. Jenane Jato is portrayed as "a slum of scrubland and shacks" with "a stifling clay-red wasteland of dust and filth that clung to the walls of the city like a malignant tumour" (Khadra, 2010, p. 20).

In fact, the atmosphere at Jenane Jato is one of profound disgust and degradation. It resonates with the wretchedness of its local residents. The

impoverished, dark, and chaotic slum appears as though it has stretched up from the depth of hell, condemning all its inhabitants to a life of endless misery (khadra, 2010, p. 20). Khadra's narrative portrays the indigenous people as disfigured, ghost-like beings as if they have been expelled from hell. They are depicted as damned, sinful, with no hope for redemption, emphasizing their dehumanized representation. Indeed "[t]he town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the Negro village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute… The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire" (Fanon, 1963, p. 39). Fanon's words vividly unravel the perception of the native town in colonial societies. He showcases how the landscape and the people are ~~as~~ complementary and ~~as~~ intertwined, both evoking images of wretchedness and inferiority.

This comes in contrast with Río Salado, a beautiful, neat, and lighted city whose "streets were bordered by neatly trimmed ficus trees . . . there were . . . leafy squares where children could play…their rosy faces were not pitted with the marks of damnation" (Khadra, 2010, p. 62). In truth, the binary opposition is made visible through the divergence of the landscape between Jenane Jato and Río Salado. The European city, as Fanon (1963) explicates, "is a brightly lit town" (p. 39), which Khadra highlights by using the two opposites day and night to showcase the indigenes as melted in the darkness of their own environment. The settlers, on the other hand, rejoice a delighted and peaceful life in the European quarter. Fanon's statement that "the settlers' town is a town of white people, of foreigners" (p. 39) shows the solid mechanism of Manicheanism in the colonial world. This further showcases the role of the landscape in *What the Day Owes the Night* to reveal the deep dissimilarity between the indigenous and the Europeans.

Conclusion

After looking at the representation of the indigenous in both Camus's *The Stranger* and Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night,* the analysis has shown points of similarities and divergences regarding the two authors' perception of French Algeria and that through the lens of Manicheanism. The indigenous in Camus's narrative are barely present, anonymous as they are; they appear more like shadows than human beings. Besides, the generic label *Arab* is employed as a derogatory term which treats the Algerian Muslim community as one single, undifferentiated entity. Nevertheless, Khadra's indigenous community is of an articulate presence; his multifaceted

depiction—including Jonas's family members and the wretched residents of Jenane Jato—transcends Camus's generic representation, offering more depth and presence to the native Algerians. Khadra chose to respond to Camus through *What the Day Owes the Night,* as he notes in *Le Matin,* where he criticises Camus's approach of keeping the native Algerians apart, like phantom-like figures (Le Matin d'Algérie, 2010, para. 3).

However, the physical and moral deformity which characterizes the residents of Jenane Jato reduces them to low-grade, disfigured beings. This dehumanized image of the colonized is much closer to Camus's, who insists to present the native characters as vague dangerous people while he places more focus on the scenery. The unnamed *Arabs* in *The Stranger* are an allusion to claim the European identity of French Algeria by symbolically erasing any indigenous presence on its landscape. The distorted depiction of the native quarter and its inhabitants in Khadra's narrative is a manifestation of the rigid binary order imposed on colonial Algeria that divides the compartments of the colonizer and the colonized,-symbolized by the allegory of day and night. Khadra's efforts to demonstrate the wretched life of the indigenous Algerians serve to communicate the Manichean order in French Algeria through fiction. This further highlights the impact of French colonialism, which dehumanized the natives and buried them into darkness. Moreover, Khadra's admiration of Camus, as the former asserts (Le Matin d'Algérie, 2010, para. 5), is undoubtedly manifested in his celebration of the Algerian landscape. More to the point, the vivid portrayal of Río Salado, where the indigenous make no presence, brings forward Camus's inclination to rejoice the Algerian landscape at the expense of its native people.

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