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The Theme of Betrayal in Two Postcolonial Novels, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and Mouloud Mammeri's *L'Opium et le bâton* (1965)

موضوع الخيانة في روايتين كُتبتا في حُقبة ما بعد الاستعمار، "حبة قمح" لنغوغي وا ثيونغو(1967) و"العصا والعفيون" لمولود معمري (1965)

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الملخص: يتناول هذا العمل البحثي رؤى اثنين من الروائيين الأفارقة في فترة ما بعد الاستعمار، وهما "نغوغي وا ثيونغو" و "مولود معمري"، حول قضية الخيانة كما تم تصويرها على التوالي في عملين بارزين في فترة ما بعد الاستعمار، "حبة قمح" (1967) و "العصى والعفيون" (1965). روايتان ترتكز أحداثها حول حركتين تحريريتين معروفتين، "الماو ماو" في كينيا، و "جبهة التحرير الوطني" في الجزائر. يُعد موضوع الخيانة أحد الموضوعات الشائعة في الأدب الأفريقي ما بعد الاستعمار، مما يعكس الإرث المعقد والدائم لكل من واقع الاستعمار وحقائق ما بعد الاستعمار وخيبات الأمل. وبهذا المعنى، تهدف هذه الدراسة البحثية إلى التعمق في استكشاف أشكال الخيانة المختلفة، بما في ذلك الخيانات الشخصية والمجتمعية، بالإضافة إلى خيانة مُثُل التحرر، في الروايتين المقارنتين من خلال خطابات وسلوكيات الخصوم الثلاثة الرئيسيين، "كارانجا"، "موجو" و "الطيب".

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخيانة (السياسية)، الجبن، حبة قمح (*AGW*)، العصا و العفيون (*LOB*)، (ما بعد) الاستعمار، كارانجا، موغو، الطيب

Abstract

This research work examines the visions of two postcolonial African novelists, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Mouloud Mammeri, about the issue of betrayal as respectively portrayed in their two prominent postcolonial works, *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) and *L'Opium et le bâton* (1965), two novels which are about two well-known movements of resistance, Mau Mau in Kenya and FLN in Algeria. The theme of betrayal is one of the common themes in postcolonial African literature, reflecting the complex and enduring legacies of both colonialism and post-colonialism realities and disillusionments. In this sense, this research study aims to profoundly explore the various forms of betrayal, including personal and communal betrayals, in addition to betrayal of the ideals of liberation, in the two compared novels through the discourses and behaviours of three main antagonists, Karanja, Mugo and Tayeb.

Keywords : (Political) Betrayal, Cowardice, *A Grain of Weat* (*AGW*), *L'Opium et le bâton* (*LOB*), (Post-)Colonialism, Karanja, Mugo, Tayeb

1. Introduction:

This research work is intended to examine the issue of betrayal in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (hereinafter *AGW*) and Mouloud Mammeri's *L'Opium et le bâton* (*LOB*), in Berber *Tahcict d Uaakkwaz*1. An attempt is made to explore both authors' visions about the issue of betrayal, which can be regarded as one of the lasting traumas in postcolonial African literature due to its emotional and psychological effect on individuals and communities. This matter indeed will be clearly approached through the discourses and actions of three significant round characters involved in the two compared novels: Karanja, Mugo and Tayeb. In these novels, as we shall see, Ngugi and Mammeri clearly depict how during the colonial era and after the perverted independence, contrary to some workers and peasants in Kenya and Algeria who contribute significantly to fighting the forces of occupation, others, such as the latter characters, Karanja, Tayeb and, to some extent, Mugo, keep adhering to the hegemonic project of Western Imperialism. We will also attempt to examine how the new African leaders, instead of using their position in power to construct and form an ideal society out of the present chaos, they proved their inability and unwillingness to identify with Africans. This is basically due to their slavish adoption of European paradigms which necessarily constitute another significant bertrayal at the time of independence. Thus, our research is not to explore the causes that motivated these hostile characters to side with the enemy, but rather to examine the supremacy of the Western civilization and its hegemony on their conducts, including the appalling consequences that this entailed, mainly for both Kenyan and Algerian populations.

2. Personal Motives (Collaboration) Versus Political Commitments (Liberation):

Colonial oppression and repression refers to the systematic domination, exploitation and control of indigenous peoples and territories by colonial powers. In return, popular resistance and revolt emerge as a form of collective resistance against these injustices and inequalities as a way to affirm their cultural heritage, reclaim their autonomy and assert their dignity in the face of cultural domination. However, people under colonization in Kenya

and Algeria were torn between answering the call of the armed revolution and cooperating with the colonial masters. Thus, those who joined the maquis, the freedom fighters, are portrayed as heroes, who play a leading role in taking conscious actions and hence displaying political commitment as a key factor in fighting the colonial forces in Africa, whereas others, cowards or traitors, shamefully endorse the hegemonic project of European colonialism.

At the centre-stage of Ngugi's and Mammeri's narratives under consideration, these two categories of characters can be distinguished. James Ogude describes one as "progressive" and another as "retrogressive".[2] Each of them pleads for and assumes two totally different causes, according to their different class needs. Indeed, the former seek to restore the virtues and the collective morals of their nations, as expected by all the national forces that contributed to the departure of the European settlers, and the latter seek to perpetuate the values of the old colonial order by siding with the ex-colonial lords to exploit people in Africa.

In this context, on the one hand, the characters siding with the movements of liberation are individuals whether allegorical figures politically committed to the peasant cause, whose death, as claimed by André Viola, Jacqueline Bardolph and Denise Coussy, gives ample evidence of their dedication to the "*political ideals, to the point of supreme sacrifice*,".[3] or ordinary people acting in conjunction with the freedom fighters. On the other hand, there are "conspirators" who, to secure their basic needs, collaborate with the colonial masters. By referring to Ronald Robinson, Edward Said argues that the Europeans could not expand their empires outside Europe [Africa and Asia] without the collaboration of the local populations,

"[without the voluntary or enforced cooperation of their governing elites and] without indigenous collaboration, when the time came for it, could Europeans have conquered and ruled their non-European empires. From the outset that rule was continuously resisted; just as continuously native mediation was needed to avert resistance or hold it down.".[4]

Noticeably, the struggle between the coloniser and the colonised forces people to take sides and this is clearly indicated in Ngugi's and Mammeri's novels. The latter touch on the fact that in

wartime there are only two camps for the whole members of the community. As Lt Delécluze makes it clear to Dr Bachir Lazrak: « *... tout le monde joue à visage découvert ! Il n'y a que deux équipes et pas de spectateurs. Ainsi chez vous, Belaïd est dans une équipe, Ali est un égaré, mais pour Ali, Belaïd est un traître. C'est aussi bête que cela!* »5 He adds that in Tala everybody plays openly, whether you are with the "Fellaghas" or with the French colonizers, there are two camps and almost nothing more. In the same vein, Kihika insists on the fact that all those who do not take the movement oath are indirectly collaborating with the despotic colonial regime, and hence they are accused of opposing the nationalist movement. This validates Fanon's assertion that "*[e]very onlooker is either a coward or a traitor.*"[6] Undoubtedly, the duty of both movements of liberation, FLN and Mau Mau, is to have respectively all the Algerian and Kenyan masses behind them.

James Ogude contends that in his realistic description of the postcolonial realities, Ngugi reduces the Kenyan people to two polarities: patriots and traitors.7 In fact, the struggle for a legitimate cause gives birth to freedom fighters and to a few traitors that we intend to call national "heroes" and "anti-heroes" respectively in this research paper. The former, notably Kihika, General R. and Lt Koinando in *AGW*, and Amirouche, Ali Lazrak and Ramdane in *LOB* devote their lives to the liberation of their peoples and lands, whereas the latter, Mugo, Karanja and Tayeb, opt for the betrayal of the national cause. Ngugi explains that in *AGW* people who fought for independence fall into various groups. There were

"those who thought the white man was supreme and divinely willed, and thereby all that they worry about is to work, to cooperate with the master. There were others who supported the independence movement and who took the oath. Of these some fought to the last but others, when it came to the test, did not live up to their faith and ideals. They gave in. Finally, there were those whom we might call neutrals – the uncommitted. But these soon find that in a given social crisis they can never be uncommitted. You know the saying: He who is not with us is against us".[8]

It must be noted that for both authors even those who seem to be indifferent towards the political issues of their communities are

forcibly involved in the struggle in one way or another. Of course, some others are left in limbo, not knowing which side to affiliate to. Thus, as Ngugi puts it, the group for liberation was split into sub-groups. Some went to the maquis and took up arms aiming at concretizing the aspirations of their people whose fate is necessarily considered to be in their hands as leaders. Others remained in the villages and supported the revolution. The group that supported the colonizers was also made of sub-groups. A number of them literally held arms to fight against the liberators; others, owing to an inferiority complex that "has been created [in their souls] by the death and burial of its local cultural originality,"[9] remained unarmed but brutally exercised support to the colonial regime. The best examples are Mugo and Karanja in *AGW* and Tayeb in *LOB.*

3. Karanja, Mugo and Tayeb: Agents of Political Betrayal:

As James Ogude observes, *AGW* is built around a shared sense of guilt and betrayal. He argues that "*betrayals operate at two levels: the public betrayals in response to a repressive political structure and personal betrayals emanating from self-interest which is further compounded, in certain cases, by personal histories of fear and inadequacy.*"10 In fact, though most of the main characters in *AGW* are marked by either a personal or political betrayal. Mugo, Karanja, Gikonyo and Mumbi make choices. Each of them, somehow, betrays his friends, his community, and thereby his nation during the Mau Mau "uprising", whereas in *LOB*, the theme of betrayal is limited to the cruel behaviour and discourse of the traitor of Tala, Tayeb.

The relationship existing between personal and public betrayals or private and political betrayals is parallel to what Ngugi seems to argue, as Abderrahmane Arab quotes in his *Politics and the Novel in Africa*:

"Private betrayal is no less important than political betrayal. Linkage exists through a web of treachery and intrigue. Mugo betrays a friend and the movement. Karanja is also a traitor. He joins the troops of repression and seduces Mumbi. Gikonyo feels guilty as he confessed the oath, and thus betrayed the movement.".[11]

It is worth noting that although the betraying characters are predominated by a feeling of guilt of betrayal, it is Mugo who "*becomes a beacon of light for the others in this guilt-ridden world*," as observed by Sarala Krishnamurthy.[12]

However, it is Karanja who can be considered as the cruelest and the most arrogant character in the novel compared to Mugo.

3.1. KARANJA: the "Idealized Negro"

Karanja is the archetype of political betrayal. He is hated and held in contempt by everybody for his destructive roles as "the hooded self" and a rapist. Karanja, a childhood friend of Kihika, falsely accused of having betrayed him, is the embodiment of the African who has sided with the white man. He bitterly resents being an object of content and mockery. However, he does not spare effort to dehumanize his clansmen:

"[W]hat Karanja resented most was not the missions or their triviality, but the way they affected his standing among the other African workers. But on the whole Karanja would rather endure the humiliation than lose the good name he had built up for himself among the white people. He lived on that name and the power it brought him.".[13]

Indeed, Karanja is obsessed by the power of the white-man and the notion of "whiteness" which, in Fanon's view, represents purity, justice, truth and virginity. It also symbolizes civilization, modernity and humanity.14 In other words, Karanja, who is enslaved by his inferiority, can as well be portrayed as "the idealized Negro, the noble savage," to use Ziauddin Sardar's terms.15 That is why before leaving Kenya, Karanja was strongly recommended by John Thompson, giving him a letter listing his qualities of faithfulness, integrity and courage: "*You can wholly depend on him.*"16 Indeed, very soon these qualities turned out to be true, and Karanja quickly became a trusted servant of the white people at Githima to the point of being nicknamed Ka-Thompson (by Mwaura). Worse still, we are informed in the novel that "*[a]t Githima, people believed that a complaint from him was enough to make a man lose his job.*"[17] Though Karanja is not guilty of betraying Kihika, he has betrayed his people, which is an

unforgivable traumatic crime. As his mother Wairimu's early warning pinpoints: "*A man who ignores the voice of his own people comes to no good end.*"18 Obviously, Karanja has sold the Movement and the Oath secrets as the price of remaining near Mumbi, the wife of his friend Gikonyo.

3.2. MUGO: As Guilty as Sin

As for Mugo's betrayal, it is particularly due to the loss of his parents and his relationship with his cruel aunt, Waitherero, who derided him at every opportunity. Mugo wanted to be left alone, left to his isolation and to pursue a quiet life. As he bluntly puts it to Mumbi, "*I wanted to live my life. I never wanted to be involved in anything*."19 "*To his community,*" he is described as "*a hermit: a holy, quiet, self-sufficient, moral man. In reality he is as guilty as sin.*" "*He has grown into a tormented and isolated man, morose and self-doubting.*"20 "*He is a strange man.*"21 His isolation thus is tragic. In this respect, Georg Lukács argues that loneliness is the very essence of tragedy, for the soul that has attained itself through its destiny can have brothers among the stars, but never an earthly companion.22 However, when Kihika shot the District Officer, Colonel Robson, he went to Mugo's hut. Kihika entrusted him: "*We want a strong organization. (…) I often watched you in old Thabai. You are a self-made man. You are a man, you have suffered. We need such a man to organize an underground movement in the new village.*"23 Obviously, as mentioned in the novel, each word of Kihika confirmed Mugo's suspicion that the man, Kihika, was mad,24 and indeed, the latter has left Mugo no choice but to denounce him (Kihika) to the new District Officer, John Thompson.

Definitely, Mugo is a traitor, but he can also be regarded as a victim. Due to his poverty and lack of a national consciousness, he decides to betray Kihika. As Eustace Palmer points out, Mugo's betrayal "*stems not from jealousy but from fear that Kihika and the kind of action he proposes threaten Mugo's hopes of success and liberation from a life of squalor*".[25]

3.3. TAYEB: "*A god Down Earth*"

Tayeb in *LOB* acts in the same way towards his French masters, lieutenant Delécluze and captain Marcillac. For instance, in setting the guard towers:

« Tayeb découvrit vite qu'il avait là un bon moyen de chantage et d'humiliation et il finit, qu'il fît neige ou grand soleil, par envoyer qui il voulait où il voulait, aussi souvent qu'il lui en prenait envie. (…) Il découvrit bientôt que la lâcheté et la peur (non plus les siennes, celles des autres) ne connaissaient pas de bornes. (…) Il pouvait frapper, punir, humilier; rien n'y faisait; chez tous le désir de vivre était le plus fort et ils avalaient tout sans se plaindre. »26

Even Mammeri confirms Tayeb's cruelty, for he experienced the two world wars of the twentieth century, noting that he, himself, witnessed the events narrated in his third novel, and that they were inspired from true historical facts of the Algerian life, "*[T]he novel is made by its form. This form is my creation. (...) As for Colonel Amirouche and Tayeb, the scornful person hated by all the villagers of Tala, I knew them before the war of liberation.*"27 In a similar way, the "amîn" of the village begs the dead and Tala's ancestors for pardon as he knows that the whole village can be destroyed by the French army because of Tayeb, the "harki" of the village.

Moreover, as is customary in peasant communities, when someone wants to take revenge on his opponent or his enemy, he offends his reputation and honour, especially when it concerns women. Tayeb, qualified as a 'god' on earth,28 admonishes Tasadit, wife of Ali Lazrak, for collaborating with the forest fighters:

« Ce n'est pas ta sœur que tu vas voir, c'est tes frères, (il ricana) tes frères au maquis! Parce que tu es leur agent de liaison, tu transportes leurs messages… et **tu couches avec eux comme une chienne** en rut que tu es (…) **Qui est le père de ton enfant? Hein? Où est-il? Tu baisses la tête?... comme si tu avais honte… mais tu n'avais pas honte le jour où on te l'a fait… dans la forêt… tu ne sais même pas qui !**

Les femmes détournaient la tête, pour ne pas regarder Tasadit ni Tayeb et parce que chez nous on ne parle jamais ainsi à une femme. »29 (Emphasis added)

By treating Tasadit like a woman of ill respect before the villagers, Tayeb is trying to demonstrate that the "Fellagha," notably her husband, Ali Lazrak, are dishonouring their wives and relatives. For him, as women of Tala are acting in complicity with the forest fighters, the question of (common) honour becomes nonsense.

4. (Imp)Possibility of Healing

Noticeably, Ngugi and Mammeri show clearly how these collaborators, more particularly Mugo and Tayeb, who turn themselves into the lackeys of the colonizers, feel a kind of shame and regret towards their unforgivable wicked deeds to their people. On the other hand, Karanja is the cruelest character who epitomizes the worst form of political betrayal, through his words and actions associated with hate, jealousy and inhumanity. Thus, the emotional impact of the former two characters' betrayal motivates them to search for an opportunity of healing, whereas Karanja does not feel guilty about it.

4.1. KARANJA

Karanja, the "idealized Negro," as previously described, comes into contact with the white world, his self-esteem evaporates. The entire purpose of his behaviour is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and hence hope to be accepted as a man.30 Thus, Karanja, who sells his soul to his "white supremacists," would rather opt for exile, wandering alone on streets, than regret his evil deeds. In fact, Karanja had not felt guilty, as we are informed in the end of the novel. "*When he shot them [freedom fighters], they seemed less like human beings and more like animals. At first this had merely thrilled Karanja and made him feel a new man, a part of an invisible might whose symbol was the whiteman.*"31 Indeed, Karanja is depicted as irredeemable after his betrayal of his people during the Emergency. As aforementioned, before his white officer, John Thompson, leaves Kenya, he approves of his good qualities, and his allegiance to the white man must be recognized. However, in the end, Karanja has been abandoned and humiliated by the colonizers he has served

all along the period of the armed resistance. In this connection, one can cite another striking scene which consists in Karanja throwing a stone on Dr Lynd's dog. In fact, this unnoticed incident is politicized: "*'I am ashamed of you, utterly ashamed of you!' she said, putting as much contempt as she could into her voice… 'I would never have thought this of you – throwing stones at my dog.'*" Commenting on this racist event, Ngugi writes: "*To the settlers, dogs ranked infinitely higher than Kenyans.*"32

On that subject, the belief in a radical difference between the two, Karanja and his master(s), the colonizer, creates a feeling of inferiority or "dependency complex" of the colonized, which, as clearly detailed by Fanon in his famous book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, is the correlative to the European's feeling of superiority. In other words, "*[i]t is the racist who creates his inferior*."33 Thus, regarding the above statement, it seems clear it is a relation of power, of domination, and of hegemony34, to borrow from Edward Said. It might be read that the alleged army of imperialists is the ineradicable distinction between the superiority of the colonizer and the backwardness and inferiority of the colonized, the division between savagery and civility. In short, the attitudes, beliefs and values of the colonial oppressors are internalized in the minds and behaviours of the colonized individuals and communities. Therefore, an inferiority complex is inculcated into Karanja's psyche through the mechanism of racism, dynamics of power, oppression and cultural hegemony, and thus black people, to use Fanon's words again, end up being (culturally) alienated, and emulating or equaling their oppressors.[35]

4.2. TAYEB

In the same vein, Tayeb was not treated differently by the French soldiers when they decide to demolish the village. "His captain",[36] does not hesitate to destroy the whole village, including his own house:

« *Je vous donne une heure pour évacuer Tala. Dans une heure le village sera détruit… au canon!*
Sa lèvre supérieure relevée découvrait ses dents comme s'il voulait mordre. Tayeb traduisit puis s'adressant au capitaine:

- *Et ma maison, mon capitaine?*
- *Bien, quoi? Tu es de Tala toi aussi, non?* »[37]

However, we are informed in the novel that in depths of his understandings, Tayeb realizes that his fate is inevitably linked to that of his village dwellers he harshly contributed to their torture, displacement, and persecution alongside the colonial enemy. Moreover, unlike Karanja, who shows no regret, Tayeb suggests to Ali's widow to give a quiet family funeral to her martyred husband:

« Il tournait autour de Tasadit comme un gros bourdon désemparé. – Alors, Tasadit, hein? Ma soeur Tasadit, aide-moi, je vais l'emporter dans les champs… avec toi… Ce soir tu diras à Smaïl de convoquer les hommes de Tala pour qu'ils l'enterrent… pour que les chacals ne le dévorent pas… Donne ! Il se baissait déjà vers le cadavre pour le prendre… ».[38]

4.3. MUGO

Mugo's confession at the end of the novel can be considered as a sacrifice since it constitutes the seed that will bear its fruit in the renewed society. Thus, Mugo becomes another model; different from that of a hero of resistance worshipped for his bravery during the war of liberation alongside Kihika, but rather that of a man with enough courage who, during *Uhuru* celebrations, stands in front of the crowd and confesses his sin. The crowd is all set to lynch him but a sane voice prevails:

"He was a brave man, inside," he said. "He stood before much honour, praises were heaped on him. He would have become a Chief. Tell me another person who would have exposed his soul for all eyes to peck at. (…) Remember that few people in that meeting are fit to lift a stone against that man. Not unless I – we – too – in turn open our hearts naked for the world to look at".[39]

Therefore, it seems that Ngugi does not fully blame Mugo for betraying Kihika to the colonial authorities as much as he does for Karanja. He views that Mugo's courage at the trench when he saves Kihika's would-be pregnant wife, Wambuku, and his owning up of his crime when he could easily have let Karanja take the blame and suffer for it are mitigating circumstances. In other words, in doing so, Mugo has sacrificed himself so as Karanja may live, and

believes that he has atoned for his betrayal. In addition, at the end of the novel, we see how Mugo's self-sacrifice makes Gikonyo become less stubborn towards his wife Mumbi who, herself, and other people from Rung'ei accept and appreciate such an outstanding act of bravery and applauded it. Meanwhile Mugo's confession to the village has finally lifted the burden of guilt from him. He saves himself and discovers his irrevocable links with other people of his community:

"As soon as the first words were out, Mugo felt light. A load of many years was lifted from his shoulders. He was free, sure, confident. (…) There was nothing on the walls: no visions of blood, no galloping footsteps behind him, no detention camps, …".[40]

In that way, G.D. Killam sees this as "*a cleansing rain, symbolizing his regeneration, a baptism for a new life.*".[41]

In some cases, all these traitors of their friends and communities, whether for personal or for political reasons, are primarily individuals who have been, in one way or another, victims of the tense war circumstances. However, as will be discussed, unlike the new leaders of the nation, who every day that passes side a little more resolutely with the exploiters[42], Mugo, Karanja and Tayeb betray for survival, and become outsiders in their own societies. They are still closer to the masses despite their complicity with the oppressive colonial regime. Mugo, for example, is a traitor as well as a victim. Due to his poverty and lack of a national consciousness, he decides to betray Kihika. As Eustace Palmer points out, Mugo's betrayal "*stems not from jealousy but from fear that Kihika and the kind of action he proposes threaten Mugo's hopes of success and liberation from a life of squalor.*"[43]

After all, as General R. gravely pronounces it to Mugo: "*Yours deeds alone will condemn you.*"[44] Obviously, no one escapes from his own actions. Those brave fighters who gave their all and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice so as are gloriously honoured and celebrated, whereas those who, by force of circumstances, openly betrayed their people and worked with the

oppressors to save themselves, were at last obliged to face their guilt and lose everything, such as Karanja, Mugo and Tayeb.

5. Another Political Betrayal: Colonial Legacy After Independence in *AGW* and *LOB*

In the last part of our study, we intend to investigate how Ngugi and Mammeri, who raised the issue of betrayal, which brought further upheaval to their countries, are also profoundly preoccupied with the greater challenge of how to build a modern nation after the war. Worth to be noted is how both authors reveal the postcolonial state of political turmoil where Mau Mau and FLN fighters are still subalternised, and those who collaborated with the colonizers, respectively the "home guards" and "harkis", as explicitly stated by Ngugi, are promoted to the rank of MPs and leaders of the new nations, such as the case of Thabai's MP and Jomo Kenyatta, the first elected President of Kenya. In fact, both populations were soon disappointed to see that there was no clear sign of social betterment and, more generally, of utopian visions of the future.

An issue which is overtly displayed in Karanja's, Mugo's and Tayeb's conducts, who have been deeply influenced by respectively John Thompson and Lt Delécluze, had always internalized European white man's discourse of power and his impact on the local political authorities. Indeed, the legacy of the colonizers' supremacy has been left to the "nationalist" leaders, and this is also another serious betrayal with indelible effects on the Algerian and Kenyan individual and collective memory.

When Thompson declares "*We are not beaten yet… Africa cannot do without Europe*"[45], he means that de-Europeanizing the African space will come to no fruition, and in saying so, he propagates dependency, as defined, though criticized, by Ali Mazrui. In his view, the Africans are greatly "indebted to Western modernity," and hence they cannot administer nor build their nascent nations without it.[46] Apparently, this statement confirms Ngugi's beliefs that the social, political and economic structures of British colonial rule were retained in independent Kenya, as Karanja clearly asserts it: "*The coming of black rule would not, could not mean, the end of white power.*"[47]

For most Kenyans and Algerians, things have not changed much: "*There has been a change of masters, but, like new leeches, the new ruling classes are often greedier than the old*,"48 to quote

Memmi. As for Edward Said, the contemporary under-developed nations are independent but, in many ways, as subjugated and dependent as they used to be when ruled directly by former European powers.49 To "problematize" the "politics of time," to quote Gikandi, in his novel,[50] Ngugi further questions a number of true-lived issues hidden at the moment of independence, such as the meaning of freedom for Kenyans after the Mau Mau long-term anti-colonial struggle, or else whether independence really signifies the end of colonialism. From the moment of "Uhuru", as illustrated by Gikonyo in an ironic verbal exchange with Mugo, KANU, Jomo Kenyatta's political party, bade good-bye to revolution and embraced neo-colonialism:

"You have a great heart. It is people like you who ought to have been the first to taste the fruits of independence. But now, whom do we see riding in long cars and changing them daily as if motor cars were clothes? It is those who did not take part in the movement, the same who ran to the shelter of schools and universities and administration. At political meetings you hear them shout: Uhuru, Uhuru, we fought for. Fought where? They are mere uncircumcised boys. They knew suffering as a word."[51]

Gikonyo desolately argues that those who did not suffer the pain of colonial torture, detention camps and dire poverty during the "hard times" of Emergency are the ones who, at the time of "Uhuru", are enjoying its achievements, notably holding key positions of responsibility. Thus, decolonization is revealed as an "empty shell" to use Gikandi's words.

Like Ngugi, in this connection, Mammeri, known for his humanistic and utopian vision too, believes in a nation where all its ethnicities must take an equal part in its various institutions. Moreover, Mammeri wished that, in the days following independence, the cultures of the different Algerian ethnic groups would be officially recognized, and thereby their coexistence, based on a process of mutual participation and cultural experiences, would necessarily enrich each other. However, in 1974 even ethnology and anthropology, which interested in minorities' concerns, were regarded as colonial sciences by the Algerian authorities. In other words, Mammeri believes that the new African states, resulted from the European bourgeoisie, are based on the

notion of the sacred sovereignty of a centralized State. In his posthumous letter to Dr Lazrak, Ramdane, a political activist, writes about his vision for the nascent Algerian nation-state:

« Je savais bien que je n'allais pas arriver jusqu'au bout… Aussi c'était trop beau!... Je ne la verrai pas, votre Indépendance… mais je pars avec des visions dans les yeux… et je te laisse. Tu seras mon exécuteur testamentaire. Je te laisse ma fureur, ma volonté tronquée – injustement, mon exigence que la cité des hommes enfin se réalise… Si tu me trahis, tu seras un salaud… (…) Explique à mon père que si sa race meurt avec moi ce n'est pas l'essentiel… L'essentiel c'est ce pour quoi je meurs… »[52]

In view of his pulmonary tuberculosis, Ramdane makes his last will and testament about the future of Algeria after independence. He reminds Dr Lazrak – that he often labeled as "petit-bourgeois anarchist!"[53] – about the ideals of the Algerian Revolution that all the Algerians fought for, claiming not to "reroute" them, to use Rachid Mimouni's word (borrowed from his well-known *Le fleuve détourné*), and that their significant sacrifice must not be in vain. Because he knows that he will not be there when independence takes place, Ramdane insists on preserving the nascent nation, its future and its truth. He further reminds Dr Lazrak that the real meaning of independence, which lies in establishing a modern nation for all the Algerians, is the great unfinished business of the new nation-state's leaders. In fact, in his words, even the degeneration of his ancestral values and traditions, unquestioningly represented by his father, *amîn* of Tala and its elders, is less important compared to the great sacrifice of those killed for emancipation. In other words, Ramdane claims the establishment of a truly independent nation, where the "city of men" is built; social equality and material improvement are shared by all the individuals. It must be noted that Ramdane's vision for the future is also, indisputably, that of Mammeri. However, "The republic was so beautiful under the empire,"[54] and the "rosy tomorrows" that were promised turned out to be false hopes.

In *LOB*, Mammeri clearly puts emphasis on the inaccurate idea of rejecting the armed struggle by the Algerian intellectuals, who used to study in the French schools and universities. In fact, fairly before being actively involved in the armed revolution, Dr Lazrak said that the choice of armed struggle is a makeshift job, «

c'est du bricolage. Ça ne tiendra pas. »[55] For him, an indigenous resistance against the supremacy of a powerful European army is a descent into insanity. For any attempt of rebellion against the French military forces is nipped in the bud and stopped. He believes that the freedom fighters will undoubtedly regret for having sided with the movement, whereas those who co-operated with the French will be, by means of unconstitutional ways, promoted as MPs. However, the doctor is quite conscious that those who sided with the colonizer won't be removed from the political scene. Obviously, postcolonial African single parties do not create a state that reassures the ordinary citizens, but rather one that rouses their anxiety:

« … Ce sera encore une fois le grand cirque… Ça durera quelques semaines, puis un jour les Romantiques jetteront dans un coin leur fusil de chasse pour rentrer chez eux, les innocents iront en prison, et les malins auront des licences de café maure où seront nommés députés au cours d'une élection truquée de plus… »[56]

In light of the foregoing, it is clear that the utopian paradigms and aspirations generated and embodied in the anti-colonial resistance were not projected in the post-independence era, where modern and democratic societies were expected to be reconstructed. Thus, "*the ceremony of 'uhuru' is like warm water in the mouth of a thirsty man*,"57 as Ngugi aptly observes.

However, both authors, in their respective works, would prefer a community of formerly oppressed peasants and farmers, all striving toward an ideal community free of the practice and legacy of colonial rule. Besides, Ngugi's and Mammeri's revisionary attempt in comparison with the ancestral collective values and traces of their nations touches upon the handing down of these values from older people to younger generations, including the handover of power in postcolonial time.

According to both novelists, there is no possibility of healing from indelible traumas committed against African societies by European (neo-)colonialism unless all forms of the latter's interference are rejected, and hence Africans can ensure their right to self-determination and find common ground between the different national forces, without exclusion, to cooperate and work on possible ways out. That is in fact what is referred to in the end

of *AGW* when Gikonyo said to Mumbi, "*Let us talk about the child,*"58 deciding to break his obdurate silence with her. Obviously, Gikonyo alluded to Kenya's tomorrow, the day after Uhuru. As for Mammeri, he also suggests the adoption of new models to avoid ethnic and fratricidal conflicts between the different Algerian (ethnic) groups, and give each community the opportunity to administer and participate, through its own natural development, in building the entire nation. As political independence in the Third World countries came along with its own ills, autocracy, corruption, tribalism and violation of human rights, Mammeri insisted, a few years after independence, on the urgent need for the Third World writers to help to breathe a new life into their young nations, safeguard their national unity and restore their human values and traditions which were acutely oppressed during the colonial domination.

6. Conclusion:

In some cases, all these traitors of their friends and communities, whether for personal or for political reasons, are primarily individuals who have been, in one way or another, victims of the tense war circumstances. However, unlike the new leaders of the nation, who every day that passes side a little more resolutely with the exploiters,59 Mugo, Karanja and Tayeb betray for survival, and become outsiders in their own societies. They are still closer to the masses despite their complicity with the oppressive colonial regime.

However, it has to be stressed that the issue of people who sided with the enemy, the loyalists and the "harkis," still remains decades later, "the wound that never heals," to use Vincent Crapanzano's words.

7. References:

1- It is worth mentioning that *AGW* and *LOB* are respectively Ngugi's and Mammeri's third novels, and both are a logical continuation of their first two works. Ngugi states that *AGW* was written in 1965-66 and published in 1967. Qtd in Dianne Schwerdt, "An Interview with Ngugi," *Ngugi wa Thiong'o Speaks: Interviews with the Kenyan Writer*, Ed. Reinhard Sander & Bernth Lindfors, Oxford: James Currey, 2006, p. 279. Whereas Mammeri started writing *LOB* a few years before independence and published it in 1965.

2- James Ogude, *Ngugi's Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation*, London: Pluto Press, 1999, p. 136.

3- André Viola et al., *New Fiction in English from Africa West, East, and South*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998, p. 107. – By political ideals, we mean, one must be willing to die to self, whether or not a physical death is required. The death of Kihika and Ali Lazrak is a legacy to other freedom fighters. 3- Edsall Nicholas C. Toward Stonewall : Homosexuality And Society in The Modern Western World. Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press ;2003. Page 69.

4- Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1993, p. 262.

5- (*LOB*, 67)

6- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington, Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1967, p. 199.Ibid, page 76.

7- James Ogude, op. cit., p. 74.

8- Alan Marcuson, "James Ngugi Interviewed by Fellow Students at Leeds University" *Ngugi wa Thiong'o Speaks*, op. cit., p. 32.

9- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, London: Pluto Press, 1986, p. 18.

10- James Ogude, op. cit., p.74.

11- Abderrahmane Arab, *Politics and the Novel in Africa*, Algiers: OPU, 1982, p. 297.

12- Sarala Krishnamurthy, "An Exploration of the Theme of Guilt and Redemption in *The Guide* by R.K. Narayan and *A Grain of*

Wheat by Ngugi wa Thiong'o," *NAWA Journal of Language and Communication*, Polytechnic of Namibia, 2007, p. 107.

13- AGW, p. 33.
14- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Charles Lam Markmann, London: Pluto Press, 2008, p. xiii.
15- Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv (Foreword to the 2008 edition by Ziauddin Sardar).

16- AGW, p. 137.

17- Ibid., p. 51.

18- Ibid., p. 196.

19- Ibid., p. 161.

20- Ibid., p. 11.

21- Ibid., p. 43.

22- Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel: A Historico-Philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*, Trans. Anna Bostock, London: The Merlin Press, 1988, p. 44.

23- AGW, pp. 189-90.

24- Ibid., p. 189.

25- Eustace Palmer, *An Introduction to the African Novel*, London: Heinemann, 1972, p. 31.
26- LOB, p. 121

27- Interviewed by *Révolution Africaine*, n°128, «Ce sont les témoignages qu'il faudra consigner,» Algiers, July 10, 1965, p. 11 (Translation is mine).
28- Exactly like Karanja, who, "*as a chief, could make circumcised men cower before him, women scream by a lift of his finger?*" (*AGW*, 136), «*... Tayeb, était devenu pour Tala l'image vivante de son destin, et ceux qui avaient encore le cœur de plaisanter disaient : 'En haut il y a Dieu et en bas Tayeb'*» (*LOB*, 121-2).

29- LOB, p. 295

30- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, op. cit., p. xiii.
31- AGW, p. 223.

32- Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary*, London: Heinemann, 1981, p. 33.
33- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, op. cit., p. 69.
34- Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin Books, 1995, p. 5.

35- Frantz Fanon, op. cit., p. xiii – Foreword to the 2008 Edition.
36- "*Tayeb knew that Delécluze was a lieutenant; he called him 'my captain' by sycophancy.*" (*LOB*, p. 99)

37- LOB, p. 367.

38- Ibid., p. 378.

39- AGW, p. 202.

40- Ibid., pp. 204-5.

41- G.D. Killam, *An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi*, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1980, p. 63.
42- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, op. cit., p. 134.

43- Eustace Palmer, op. cit., p. 31.

44- AGW, p. 230.

45- Ibid., p. 144.

46- In the same way, Fanon argues that "*[t]he national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labor; it is completely canalized into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket.*" (Ibid., pp. 149-50).

47- AGW, p. 35.

48- Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized*, trans. Robert Bononno, Univ. of Minnesota Press, Oct. 2006, p. 4.
49- Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 19.
50- Simon Gikandi, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o*, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 100.

51- AGW, pp. 60-1.

52- LOB, p. 307.

53- Ibid., p. 38.

54- Interviewed by Chris Kutschera. Quoted in Boussad Berrichi, *Mouloud Mammeri: Ecrits et paroles*, vol. II, Algiers: CNRPAH, 2008, p. 74.

55- LOB, p. 42.

56- Ibid., p. 43.

57- AGW, p. 208.

58- Ibid., p. 213.

59- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, op. cit., p. 134.