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**Identity Quest in Yasmina Khadra's
What the Day Owes the Night (2008) and
Meja Mwangui's *The Mzungu Boy* (2011)**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Master's degree in Literature and Civilization

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Abstract

The purpose of our research under the title **Identity Quest in Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* (2008) and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy* (2011)** is exploring the common existed affinities between the two aforementioned novels. Our comparative study emphasises on the theme of colonialism, which deeply affected the African nations particularly Algeria and Kenya. Hence, in this regard we have tackled the issue of colonialism and identity in both novels, where Y. Khadra and M. Mwangi portrayed and exposed the same dilemma that their colonized countries suffered from. Moreover, we shed light on Homi Bhabha's notion of hybridity since we have found that both works treat this concept, through the two main African characters **Jonas** and **Kariuki** who are hybrid boys. To reach our objective in the present research, we appealed to both the Postcolonial and New Historicist theories, and to make it more significant, we have injected a dose of **Homi Bhabha's** hybridity.

Key words

Colonialism, Colonial enterprise, Culture, Hybridity, identity, Newhistoricism, Postcolonialism.

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DEDICATION

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to all people, who continually provide me with moral, spiritual, emotional, and financial support. I would not accomplish my targets without your encouragement and motivation starting by:

- *My Family **LAHIANI** I would like to thank every member of my beloved family, my source of inspiration and love.*
- *I dedicate this thesis to my lovely parents for nursing me with affection, love, who are the source of my success and achievements, best gift sent from God.*
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- *To all people who know me well and have encouraged me to achieve my goals, succeed in my studies and conduct this research, I appreciate every step and word or effort.*

DEDICATION

“ To All persons who still believe in Good, Bad, Tears of each night, Sun, Rain, Disappointments, Hell, Paradise, Evil, Angles, Light, Darkness, Success and Failure, Changes and Better days, to all sincere persons, who love for real, smile despite their sorrow, laugh at silly jokes, for those who eat greedily, You are my Favourite Lyric of my pretty Addictions”

Here I am screaming again and saying my favourite quote : “The quickest way to acquire self-confidence is to do exactly what you are afraid to do”

*This dissertation is dedicated first and foremost to **myself**. I never expected in a million years that I would arrive at this level of my life. I also dedicate this to **God** blessings, help, faith, miracles. I also dedicate it to all people who said “**Asma**, you cannot”. A special feeling of gratitude goes to my loving parents. **My Mom**, who has always stressed about me and not only gave me moral and emotional support but instilled in me a tireless work ethic and persistent determination to be whatever I wanted to be in my life without limitations, you are the most beautiful word I ever altered “MOM”. **Daddy** I know that you will never be able to read this, you have always been my motivator, and my inspiring. All words are unfair to say **I LOVE YOU**, you are the first man I fell in love with, so proud to be your copy. I could not have achieved my current level of success without a strong support from my family, my lovely aunts **Malika** and **Bahia**, both have been my best cheerleaders. To all my family **Mouzai** and **Bouchireb**, uncles, aunts, Also my grandmothers, neighbours. I’m thankful to my friends and my friends on social media, with a special thanks to our gorgeous supervisor **Ms. Houria Halil**. I would like also to congratulate all my class’s students for their graduation. Remember, the most beautiful thing in this existence is the joy of victory and success. Oh God, do not deprive anyone of it, **Asma** will smile someday at these sincere words*

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General Introduction

General introduction

Literature is a term used to describe written and sometimes spoken works, it came from the Latin word 'Littera' that denotes writing formed with letters. Generally, it refers to imaginative and creative works including poetry, prose, drama and other forms. Hence, literature has many goals like transmitting knowledge, where the author can communicate with his readers through exploring his culture, emotions, and perspectives.

Moreover, each continent is characterized by a special literature, which is generally shaped according to some criteria like origins and culture. For this, we have the African literature as a sample of the existed types in the world. It consists of the body of works in different languages and several genres, ranging from oral to written colonial languages (English, French, Portuguese and other languages). Oral literature includes history, songs, proverbs, folktales, stories, and other expressions, and are commonly used to educate and entertain children. All these expressions serve to remind the whole African communities of their ancestral customs and traditions. The poignant slave narrative such as the interesting narrative of both *life and adventures of Olandah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa*. *The African* (1789) was the first African written works that gained attention in the West, these works described the horrors of slavery and slave enterprise. After the World War II, African writers like: Wole Soyinka, Kateb Yacine, Mouloud Feraoun, Assia Djabbar, Chinua Achebe and Negugi Wathiong'o. They led their countries to gain independence, through their writings whether poetry, short stories or novel by following the Western models. All these authors shared the same themes for instance, the clash between the indigenous colonized and colonizer, as well as the reconsideration of the African past and the hope for an independent continent.

African literature was a serious subject of discussion in the literary works. In fact, it has been evaluated negatively by the Western writers due to its remarkable weaknesses in many of

its different angles. Besides, according to many scholars, the African literature lacks the foreign style, which should be presented in the African criteria. Henceforth, it received many critics. Charles E Nnolim in his book *Issues in Africa* (2010) described the multiple issues existed in African texts as the following:

That the multitudinous nature of African literature has always been an issue but really not a problem although it is oral base has been used by expatriate critics to accuse African literature of thin plots, narrative structures superficial characterization. African literature also, it is observed mixed grill: it is oral: it is written in vernacular or tribal tongues, written in foreign tongues: English, French, Portuguese and within the foreign languages in which it is written, pidgin and creole further bend the already bent languages giving African literature a further taint of linguistic impurity. African literature further suffers from the nature of its 'newness' and this created problems for the critic, because it is new, and its critics are in simultaneous existence with its writers, we confront the problem of 'instant analysis'. (2010: ix:x).

According to Charles E Nnolim's quote, we notice that the African literature has many weaknesses in terms of its narrative structures, thin plot and its blind imitation of the Western's criteria.

In the same vein, Simon Gikandi in his book *Encyclopedia of African literature* (2003), criticized the African literature as being inferior in most of its sides including its boring discussed topics and its bad style as follows:

The African literature has the sense of being simultaneously old, almost timeless in its themes and forms, and new, the latest addition to global literary culture, written and oral literature in Africa is now associated with the continent's drive for freedom from foreign domination and the search for common identity ; yet the most powerful and compelling literary texts are associated with some of the most catastrophic events

in the history of the continent most notably slavery and colonialism
(2003 : x i).

Simon Gikandi, argues that the African literature is dominated and evaluated according to the Western criteria. Thus, the major discussed themes in the African literature are about the issues of colonialism and identity.

As well as, the harsh conditions of colonialism pushed the African writers to express their position vis-à-vis colonial enterprise in their writings and their determination to affirm their identity by getting rid of the colonial power. Indeed, the most African known worked are: Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Alan Paton's *The Beloved Country* and Negugi Wathiong'o's *Weep not Child* that can be considered as the best examples of militant literature. Among the African figures whose authors are known for enhancing the need of preserving the African identity and their country's heritage are Meja Mwangi and Yasmina Khadra. Both writers use literature to fight the colonizer by employing their literary genius against the Western domination that worked for centuries in destroying the African identity and history. In addition, both of Meja Mwangi and Yasmina Khadra acted as examples to be followed in their anti-colonial protest.

As we assume, both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi used the colonial languages French and English respectively, as a weapon to fight for the affirmation of their independence and identity. Both novels *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy* share the same goal that is the need of correcting the African image, which is distorted by the Europeans.

While in our comparative research, we will focus on revealing the important method that both writers followed through showing the clashes between two opposed cultures, the one of the colonizer and that of the colonized. Even though, the means of fighting and the languages

are different; they have common affinities and one objective that is the recovery of the African culture and identity. Furthermore, we assume that both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi made a great step forward in challenging the colonial enterprise and the affirmation of both Algerian and Kenyan identity.

In this present research, we will try to reveal how the two authors emphasize on demonstrating the dual identity in both concerned novels, through the two main protagonists Kariuki in *The Mzungu Boy* and Jonas in *What the Day Owes the Night*, who are deeply influenced by the Western culture. Thus, our main objective in this dissertation is to find out the common existed affinities between the two characters, who shared many similar features.

In the view of conducting our comparative study, we attempt to examine the issues of the two African literary works in relation to colonialism. We will try to find out the similar characteristics between *The Mzungu Boy* and *What the Day Owes the Night*.

To start with, we have noticed that both of Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi were victims of colonialism. In other words, they underwent the same conditions. Therefore; this research will try to clarify the way in which both authors tried to make their people aware of their history, culture and identity. In fact, we will focus on analyzing two different novels written in different colonial languages, from different countries and societies, but they share similar goal, that is the recovery of one's identity.

Our present work is a comparative study of the two African novels *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy* that attempts to show the effect of colonialism on the African identity and culture. "*Ce Que Le Jour Doit à La Nuit*" (2008) by an Algerian writer Yasmina Khadra was originally written and published in French and then translated into English *What the Day Owes the Night* by Franck Wynne and published by Heinemann in (2010). The other selected novel for our research is *The Mzungu Boy* (2011), originally published as *Little White*

Man by a Kenyan writer Meja Mwangi. Both authors focused in their works on presenting the goal behind the arrival of the white missionaries in Kenya and Algeria. Besides, both of them resist and defend their continent's identity and culture, using their pen to transmit a noble message to the next generation.

We have always been attracted by the African literature, and inspired by different African writers like Kateb Yacine, Assia Djebbar, Chinua Achebe, and too many others. Consequently, we are highly motivated to conduct this research.

The literary greatness of Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*, makes the works receive a host of critiques, claims, assessments from different perspectives. The latter can be the outset of our attempt to conduct this comparative study. We will try to focus more on the most worthy critics that fit our analysis and concerned research from our perspectives.

Yasmina Khadra's novel has received critics in French language more than in English. Benamara Fatiha and Tahrichi Mohamed in their article « Le système des personnages et la quête identitaire du protagoniste dans le roman *Ce Que Le Jour Doit à La Nuit* » (2020) aim at analyzing the impact of the French colonialism over Algeria. Also, they claim that the character Jonas is determined by the harsh conditions of his colonized country. Thus, he was too affected in his life (2020:01). Here it is captured as the following “*What the Day Owes the Night* shows certain determinism. It seems that the socio-historical conditions of the colonized Algeria left their imprints on the octants of the narrative and the events related” (Ibid).

In the same vein, the two previous scholars attempted to demonstrate and explain both the role and significance name of Jonas, where they reveal the importance of this character in the novel, and valorize his name, due to its references to the name of the prophet, who has patience and courage. In this light, they confirmed it as the following :

Younes est un nom masculin qui assure deux fonctions à la fois : le héros narrateur et le sujet de toute l'histoire.

Ce nom qui n'est pas choisi fortuitement par l'auteur, est caractérisé par certains traits : un nom suscitant chez le lecteur une certaine compassion et pitié, un nom du prophète Younes qui souffert dans les ténèbres du ventre du poisson, même si les péripéties de la vie de Younes / Jonas semblent n'avoir aucun lien avec celle de Younes prophète (2020 : 6).

Younes is a masculine name that serves two functions at the same time/ the hero narrator and the subject of the whole story. This name, which was not chosen by chance by the author and characterized by certain traits, a name arousing in the reader a certain compassion and pity, a name referring to the name of the prophet Younes, who suffered in the darkness of the fish's belly. Even if the twists and turns of Younes / Jonas's life seem to have no connection with that of Younes the prophet (Trans ours).

To back up all what had been said by Tahrichi Mohamed and Fatiha Benamara, we conclude that the protagonist Jonas plays an essential role in the novel since he assumed two functions of being the protagonist and the main subject in *What the Day Owes the Night*.

Yasmina Khadra described and varies spaces in his novel like Paris, Oran, and other. Fatima Zohra Bouchakour in her article « Representation spatiale et identitaire chez Yasmina Khadra dans *Ce Que Le Jour Doit à La Nuit* » (2018) criticized positively the role of Yasmina Khadra in his novel, where she claims that Y. Khadra is sincere and honest in describing the difference spaces in his novel and, that the behind goal of this variation of spaces is to provide a certain harmony to the story as well as to make the reader closer to the reality and the clarity of the texts.(2018:52). She asserts her point of view by saying:

In *What the Day Owes the Night*, Yasmina Khadra varie les espaces dans son roman de sorte à donner un décor à chaque événement nouveau. Les descriptions des lieux sont très minutieuses.

Il tente de dépeindre le plus fidèlement possible les espaces qu'il convoque afin de donner une image assez nette et précise au lecteur » (2018 :52).

Yasmina Khadra varies the spaces in his novel to give a backdrop to each new event. The description of the places are very careful, he tries to portray as faithfully as possible the spaces he summons in order to give a fairly clear and precise image to the reader.(Trans ours).

The topic of discrimination is existed in *What the Day Owes the Night*, where the Africans are treated unequally by the French people, who imposed their colonial barbarism in the native's lands. Ekbaï Khalifa in his article « Une écriture narrative de l'Algérie coloniale » (2017) aim at describing the injustices and the savagery of the colonial enterprise, which eventually spread discord among the Algerian people. Moreover, he shed lights on racism that dehumanizes the value of the colonized people, also he proclaims that the racial speech is used in colonialism and even in narrative texts (2017:13). He affirms his stand point as follows:

Le racisme et la configuration thématiques au niveau axiologique. Le discours racialist disséminé dans les propos des colonisateurs, tout au long du récit, dévalorisé et la colonisation et ses sujets (2017 : 13).

Racism is the thematic configuration at the axiological level, racial discourse is disseminated in the words of the colonizer throughout the narrative devalues and colonization and its subjects (Trans ours).

the phenomenon of racism is presented in the novel *What the Day Owes the Night*, where Arabic people community are persecuted and mistreated by the French community. The Algerian people were dehumanized so they lost their indigenous identity and language.

The other novel that we have selected to be put under study *The Mzungu Boy*, has also received a host of critiques from different stand points. Meja Mwangi describes the injustices of the war where the British colonists destroy Kenya. Elizabeth Galwa in her article « Windows

on the world » (2009) aimed at analyzing *The Mzungu Boy* novel, where she argues that Meja Mwangi treated the theme of the social illegality and intolerance of the white missionaries toward the natives, she carries on to proclaim that this novel is a coming age of story, where the protagonist grows and passes from childhood to adulthood (2009:129). To clarify here is an extract from Elizabeth's article "Global perspectives claims Mwangi in his novel, deals directly with the realities of racial intolerance and social injustice. Indeed, who argues that this novel is a poignant coming of age story, set at a critical time in Kenyan history" (2009:129).

In fact, Meja Mwangi narrates down the difficulties of his country through Kariuki who fights for the Kenyan independence. Besides, in this regard Wori Walker reviewed *The Mzungu Boy* novel in his article under title « The Mzungu Boy review » (2005) where he asserts that this novel transmits one of the most powerful lessons in Africa history and the harsh reality of the colonist, who practices violence in Kenya, in addition to this he argued that the relationship between the Kenyan character Kariuki and his friend Nigel, suggests a problematic since both of them are from different race and countries (2005:01).

The author Meja Mwangi generally discusses subjects about colonialism and his own experiences. His difficult situation pushes him to express his emotions and fighting for liberty, using his militant literature defense in order to get rid of the white ideology in Kenya. Hence, many experts commented on Meja's works as being interested, in this regard Harriet Mc Guire in her article « The Mzungu Boy writing lively stories, set in colonial and postcolonial Kenya » (2005) argues that Meja Mwangi's writings is a dramatic and fast peached as a screen play providing a vivid sense of rural youth's life.(2005:01). In other terms Meja Mwangi's works are worthy of attention since they give lively picture of the rural life, where this writer endure his experience of colonization.

After reviewing the two works, we have come to the conclusion that the African novels *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy* have not been taken similarly under study from our perspective. Our goal in this research is to analyze the quest of identity in both novels. We tend to analyze the quest of identity in the two concerned novels in order to disclose the factors, which lead to the loss of identity. Hence, to attain our aim through the work, we have adopted both of the postcolonial and the new historicist theories, and hybridity's concept as well that we believe will fit our objective while conducting this present comparative research.

Postcolonial theory deals mostly with colonialism's issues and its effects on the colonized's nations. In fact, the study of controlling power of representation in the colonized countries began in the 1950's with the work of Franz Fanon and reached a climax in the late of 1990's with Edward Said's *Orientalism*. At the same point, this theory accompanied the rise of globalization theory in 1990's that used the language of postcolonial theory in studies of the cultural globalization in particular. (Ashcroft.B, 2017).

On the other side, we have new historicist theory, which is a form of literary theory. It aims to understand the intellectual history through literature and literature through its cultural context, which is developed by Stephen Greenblatt in 1980's.

At last, hybridity's concept is developed by Homi Bhabha, it attends to describe the hybrid notion that is existed between the colonizer and the colonized, through having the mixture of the two opposed cultures.

In this comparative research, we intend to divide the work into two main chapters. The first chapter will be devoted to the historical sketch of Kenya and Algeria, where we will provide our readers with the socio-historical background of *The Mzungu Boy* and *What the Day Owes the Night*. Next, we will deal with the two biographies of both writers Meja Mwangi and

Yasmina Khadra. Besides, we will provide the synopsis of the two novels, as well as the two summaries of both new historicist and postcolonial theories.

In brief, our conclusion distinctly will display our analysis. This final step stands to be a scheme of our work, sequentially from the beginning to the last point. Therefore, we are going to sum up the whole research by providing some relevant answers to our suggested problematic.

Chapter One

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

“If you do not know history, then you do not know anything, you are a leaf that does not know its part of a tree”.

Micheal Crichton, (2016)

Our present comparative study is not about a mere history of Africa nor Algeria and Kenya in particular rather our aim is to analyze carefully some historical facts linked to the period where Yasmina Khadra’s *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi’s *The Mzungu Boy* have written and published. Indeed, we tend to make a reference to some essential movements and events that took place in the same period when the two concerned novels were produced. This will lead us to trace our objective to conduct such a current topic.

This chapter emphasizes on providing an insight to realize how both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi use some methods and strategies to preserve the African identity and culture that is strongly related to their own identity. Moreover, they work hard to make the whole African community aware of the real image of the colonizers.

Accordingly, this part deals with the historical sketch of Africa. In order to put our study into a context we should highlight the socio- historical context of *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*. Then, we shift to treat the biographies of both authors. In addition to this we attempt to provide the synopsis of the two novels. At last, we will offer the readers a brief summary of the two chosen theories and hybridity’s concept that we trust would suit our target.

1. The Historical Sketch

The scramble for Africa starts with the Berlin Conference (15 novembre 1884- 26 february 1885). In this period, the Europeans partitioned Africa into spheres of influence like protectorates, colonies and free-trade areas. The borders designed by the Europeans had barely settled in Africa and had little knowledge of the geography and ethnic composition of the area (S Mechalopolos, Elias Papaioannou:2011). The scramble of Africa was the division of the African continent that was exploited by the invaders from all its different resources.

Both Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy* deal with the histories of Algeria and Kenya. The first part of the novel *What the Day Owes the Night* deals with the historical event of May 8th 1945. Meja Mwangi's novel as well deals with the British colonization in Kenya and the Mau Mau revolt.

2. The Socio-Historical background of both Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*

Algeria has an ancient and a rich historical background that cannot be ignored. It is known by its natural resources including diamond, oil, and other funds. Algeria was savagely exploited by the French colonizer and distorted in many ways.

The ancient Algerian history knew many civilizations, among them the Berber one which was previously composed of small tribes, then it was extended to larger groups. The Berbers were the original inhabitants of the Maghreb. The Amazigh or Imazighen (Free people) are the names they use to refer to themselves. As the Imazighen's civilization was established, three distinct Imazighen kingdoms arose as the Mauri in Morocco, Massyli in Tunisia, and the Maseaesli in Algeria. By the 2nd century before CE, Massyli and Maseaesli had combined into the kingdom of Numidia. Indeed, when Rome fell into civil war (130-30 B C E), warring roman

factions sought the aid of Imazighen's kings to help them, to take control of the empire in 24 CE, the Imazighen Kingdom of Numidia.

Later, after the emergence of Islamic religion many Islamic states ruled Numidia for instance: Fatimids, Hammadids until the arrival of the Turkish Othman, who changed the name Numidia and renamed it Algeria. Unfortunately, the Turkish control of Algeria was brought to an end, with the beginning of the French colonization in 1830 until 1962.

The French colonists causes damage in Algeria, where he exploited all the resources of the natives, indeed, he managed to destroy the cultural heritage as Robeya Khatoun in her article « Analysis of the causes of the independent movement of Algeria » (2014) affirmed that harsh reality through describing the horror of the French invader, who blur the Algerian identity and removed its existence. She argues her point of view as follows:

France fanned out across the globe in search of profits and in the process subjugated vast regions of Algeria, pillaging the land, destroying old cultures, displacing local languages, transforming ancient customs. They played with people of Algeria as if they were playing with pieces on a chess board that could to be captured and removed off the board (2014:80).

However, the history of Algerians fighting against its enemy France is too long to explain and illustrate. As a result we are going to focus mainly on the most fundamental events that are mentioned in the novel *What the Day Owes the Night*.

Furthermore, Brooke Durham in his article « An analysis of the self identification of Algerian novelists Mouloud Feraoun and Yasmina Khadra and their French education » aims at analyzing *What the Day Owes the Night*, and attempts to clarify the socio historical background of this novel as the following:

Yasmina Khadra decided to situate his novel *What the Day Owes the Night*, during the period of the past generations. This novel begins in the 1930s, chronicles the American forces entry

into Algeria in the 1940s, during the World War II. The novel covers the 1950s and 1960s leading up to and during the Algerian War of independence, ends in 1962, and resumes in 2008 in the final chapter (2013:239).

Even though, the novel *What the Day Owes the Night* is written after the independence of Algeria, Yasmina Khadra makes a return to the past and attempts to illustrate an essential event that is the massacres of May 1945.

In addition to this, the event of May 8th 1945 was a nightmare in Algeria, where more than 45,000 Algerian martyres were killed in that harsh massacres. The Algerian people left their home to demonstrate and celebrate their victory by caring the Algerian flag in a saved and secured atmosphere. However, things come upside down, the French colonizer does not keep his promise and he took the opportunity to shoot on the Algerian people. As a result many martyres died in that bloody event in different parts of the country including, Setif, Algiers, Constantine, Bejaia, Guelma.

Besides, the massacres of May 8th 1945 were considered as the initial path of the Algerian war against the French colonizer. As Joshua Cole in her article « Massacres and their Historians Recent Histories of State Violence in France and Algeria in the Twentieth Century » (2010) affirms the harsh brutality of the French invader, where she confirmed that the event of May has often portrayed as a true beginning of the war for the Algerian independence (2010:109).

These massacres were one of the reasons of getting independence, the Algerians were convinced that what is taken by force cannot be taking back only by force as well.

In spite of, the catastrophic of the massacres 8th May 1945, Algerians did not give up, they fought the French army with commitment and bravery, until they affirmed their own liberty and independence in 1962.

Overall, even though France colonized and dominated Algeria, Algerian martyrs were real examples to follow for their bravery, power, and resistance. They realized their dream and got the independence in 1962 after a long hard fight.

Meja Mwangi's novel *The Mzungu Boy* is set in Kenya during the 1950s when Kenya was under the British rule. Furthermore, among the important movements existed in that period of colonization is the Mau Mau rebellion in 1952. Which seeks to rid the land of the British colonizer and give the country back to the Kenyans. Since, the novel is set in the period of colonialism, we attempt to focus on the history of colonialism in Kenya and particularly explaining the Mau Mau movement, which will help us to accomplish our research.

The colonization of Kenya by Britain is dated from 1901 until 1960. The British settlers exploited all the Kenyan's resources including oil, lands, farms and so on. The colonists forced the indigenous farmers and herders into infertile land or made them work on European-owned farms and plantation. The British rule in Kenya was characterized by racism, unfair labor, and injustice practices.

Kenya was a victim of European imperialism in the 19th century. The bad conditions of the Kenyans pushed the Mau Mau to rebel and fight the British army since it was an emergence to get rid of the invaders.

The Mau Mau Uprising (1952-1960), also known as the Mau Mau revolt who participated against the British colonizer in Kenya (1920-1963). They are anonymous members who preferred calling themselves the military title Kenya Land Freedom Army (KLFA).

According to many scholars, during the 1950s, there was a sustained Mau Mau's rebellion by the Mau Mau against the colonial rule. The members have supposed pledged to slaughter Europeans and drive them out of Africa. The British war against the rebellions was ruthless and justified by charges that the rebels were terrorists. The British created detention camps for

people suspected of being associated with the Mau Mau, including the children, and the elderly. Though many Kenyans were innocents, they were forcibly removed from their homes and put into the camps.

Initially, the Kenyan ethnic group that was affected by the British land grabs the most started protests against colonization peacefully. However, by the mid 1950s, they became more radical and conscious, that they could not achieve independence through peaceful means. Members who joined the Mau Mau movement, whether they were actually from the Kenyan tribe or not, were required to take an oath of allegiance.

Though women's participation in the war is remarkable, the Mau Mau members seem to ignore their continual support and help in the revolutionary fighting. According to Julius Gathogo's article « Mau Mau war rituals and women rebels in Kirinyaya country of Kenya » (2017). He confirmed that the Mau Mau revolt neglects women's role in the revolutionary war, but he attempted to prove and valorize the essential efforts made by women, who devoted their life to be side to men, through preparing the food to Kenyan soldiers. Also, he affirmed that women make a supported challenge to the state to be successful (Julius: 2017). To put what have been said before, by Julius clear we conclude that no one can ignore the women's position in the society since they succeeded to impose themselves among men.

At last, the Mau Mau's rebellion brings out victory in Kenya through getting rid of the British's dogma. As Hilda Nissimi in her article « Mau Mau and the decolonization of Kenya » affirmed that "The Mau Mau ghost influenced each such factors, playing part in constructing the liberal state of mind that is said to have made the British leave Kenya (2006:03). Moreover, she claims that these fighter members left their imprints through influencing the political system. Hence, they successfully changed some policy changes in Kenya (Ibid:03).

To put it simple, the Mau Mau fighters contributed to get rid of the colonizer and make back the country's land to Kenyans.

3. The Biographies of Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi

3.1 Yasmina Khadra's life, literature, influences

a) Education career

Mohammed Moulessshoul is an Algerian army officer, and a novelist who writes in both French and Arabic languages, he was born in the Southern part of Algeria in the province of Bechar on January 1955. Mohammed Moulessshoul, is better known by the pen name Yasmina Khadra, he adopted his wife's name to avoid Algerian military censorship. Like other Algerian whose primary education began after independence. Moulessshoul had the chance to be educated in the Arabic language. At the age of nine, his father sent him to l'école des cadets de la révolution (revolutionary cadet school) of El Mechouar in Telmcen, in the West of Algeria. This school was devoted to orphans of the war of independence, but his father insisted on placing him in it, to serve his country. During his stay at this school, in the absence of other leisure activities, he had access only to books. Yasmina Khadra, declared that from his childhood, he admired poetry and middle Eastern literature (K. Bentoumi:2020). Indeed, he was born to a well-known family of poets in the Sahara, in the tribe of Doul Menia, which Yasmina Khadra is always proud of (Bentoumi Karima: 2020: 159). In 1975, Moulessshoul passed his baccalaureate exam and joined l'académie militaire de Cherchell (The military officer's Academy of Cherchell). Later on, he left the school in 1978, and engaged in the combat units as lieutenant.

Brooke Durham in his article "An analysis of self-identification of Algerian novelists, Mouloud Feraoun and Yasmina Khadra and their French education" (2013), described how Yasmina Khadra started his first writings, when he was at school, as it is captured in this following verse

In 1996, Khadra wrote his first text, a re-adaptation of *The Petit Poucet* in Arabic, he submitted his story to his teacher, who replayed it to the one of the lieutenants earned him a spot on the list of 'rewarded' or the student who performed well. During the soccer game at local stadium on Saturday afternoon. Also, Yasmina Khadra revealed that during his few years as a cadet, that he performed good well in his Arabic classes, until he entered middle and high school at Koléa (Brooke Durham: 2013:237).

Despite Yasmina Khadra's failure in his French classes, he received more encouragement and rewarding from his French teachers. Contrary to his Arabic teachers, who ignored and took offense to the fact that a young boy attempted to produce traditional Arabic poetry.

b) Writing Career

Brooke Durham in his article "Analysis of self-identification of Algerian novelists Mouloud Feraoun and Yasmina Khadra and their French education" (2013). Attempted to analyze Yasmina Khadra's writing career, where he captured an extract from writer's journal "L'écrivain" about the first experience of Yasmina Khadra, who was fascinated by his literature works. Here is an extract from Yasmina Khadra's stand point as follows:

. It was while reading *Le Petit Poucet*, that the light came on and I received a revelation. The verb was a gift from above, I was born to write in reading this beautiful book, thumbing the splendidly illustrated pages, dazzled with profound affection. I was incurably fixated; i had to write books, I was fascinated by words. This assembly of dead characters who arranged between a capital letter and a period. Suddenly, came back to life, became sentences and demonstrated strength and spirit (Durham,2013:236-237).

Y khadra, was an officer in the army, but this did not prevent him from writing and publishing in Algeria, under his real name before the outbreak of the civil violence, in the 1990s. In 1984, he published *Houria*, with the state owned Algerian publishing house ENAL. In the same year, he published *Amen* in Paris under his real name. He also published "*La Fille du Pont*" *The Girl of the Bridge* in 1985, *El Kahira-Cellule de la Mort* in 1986, and *Le Privilege*

du Phénix (The Privilege of the Phoenix) in 1989, all with the same publishing house, ENAL. These three works were later republished by another Algerian publishing house, Chihab. Indeed, in 1993, Khadra received funding from UNESCO via the international fund for promotion of culture. His transnational career work took off from here. Khadra's first work in the Morituri Trilogy was published in 1997, with the Paris based publishing house Baleine. The novel was republished with Gallimard in 1999 and received trophy 813 for the best francophone thriller in 2006. Furthermore, Morituri was followed by "*L'Automne des chimères*" (*Autumn of the phantoms*), and *Double Blanc (Double White)*, released in the same year 1998. *L'automne des dimères* was awarded by the German international prize for the Noir novel in 2002. *Les agneaux du Seigneur* was another novel by Yasmina Khadra. That was published in 1998. This was followed by "A Quoi rêve les loups" (Julliard, 1999) translated into English as *well dreams* by Toby. By the official end of the civil violence in 2000, Khadra decided to retire from his position after 36 years of service in the Algerian Army. He left Algeria with his family and traveled to Mexico. In 2013, Yasmina Khadra shifted his writing from talking about Algerian society problem to Issrael-Palestine conflict and *The condition of women* (K.Bentoumi:2020). He gained international recognition for "*Les Rinondelles de Kaboul*" *Swallows of Kaboul* published in 2002, followed by "*L'Attendant*", (*Attack*) in 2006 and "*Les Sirènes de Bagdad*" published in 2006. Furthermore, Khadra increasingly wrote works which emphasized on reconciliation between people and nations (k, Bentoumi:2020). In 2008, he published *Ce que le Jour doit à la Nuit*, which was adopted later to a film in 2012, after 6 years, Khadra published "*On attendent les Singes*" (*What the Monkeys are waiting for*) 2018. This novel was then republished in Algeria by Casbah. *Khalil* is another novel by Yasmina Khadra that is about the terrorist attack, of 13 novemeber 2015 in Paris. *Le Sel de tous les Oublis* is a new recent novel, which was published by Yasmina Khadra in 2020.

Karima Bentoumi in her dissertation “Contemporary Arabophone and Francophone Algerian Literature and its National and International Conditions of Production” (2020) appreciates and valorizes Yasmina Khadra’s position in the literary world. Here is the verse that confirms her point of view:

Yasmina Khadra is more popular and prolific than any other Algerian author’s currently writing. He attends national and international book fairs, such as Frankfurt, Sila livre Paris, Quebec, Sharjah, and he also attends conferences with scholars and academics, always accompanied by his translator on his journeys to non Francophone countries. Yasmina Khadra crossed borders easily for the promotion of his works, this makes him travel to more than ten countries in one month (2020:176).

3.2 Meja Mwangi’s Life, literature, influences

a) Education Career

Meja Mwangi is a Kenyan novelist. He was born in the town of Nanyuki in central Kenya on 27 december 1948. An interview with Bernleth Lindfords in Autumn 1979, who asked him:

“When and why did you begin writing?” Meja Mwangi replied by saying: I began writing around 1965 or 1966, when I was in Secondary school at Nanyuki, my home town. I wrote because, I had a story to tell, that story recently published *Taste of Death*. The latter dealt the Mau Mau from the point of view of some body, who took part in the movement. It is not actually a historical novel, but it is based on historical events, or more or less a true story, and I thought that this experience ought to be shared with other Kenyans, particularly just after independence. Mau Mau was a very important event in Kenya’s history, and I still feel that is so far not enough has been written about this crucial stage of our development. Unless, it is written now, it will fade from our memory, so it is very necessary, that it will be recorded today by the generation, that lived through it. (Kunatipi:1979:68).

Throughout, his professional career Meja Mwangi declined to use his given name, David Dominic Mwangi, instead preferring the nickname of Meja (Major) given to him by his mother. As a child, Mwangi had first-hand experience living throughout “The Emergency”, the common term for the colonial administration degree of martial law. Mwangi’s home town of Nanyuki housed a major base for British soldiers, and his mother was a domestic worker for the British families in Nearby Nyeri. Moreover, he attended Nanyuki secondary school and turned fifteen years old just two weeks, after the Kenyan independence in 1963. The two of Mwangi’s adult novels, *Carcass for Hounds* (1974) and *Taste of Death* (1975), as well as his most powerful children’s stories specifically treat the Mau Mau experience. Later, Meja Mwangi, moved to Nairobi in 1970, where he unsuccessfully sought admission to the university of Nairobi. He hoped to study journalism and television broadcasting, but instead he embarked on a career of practical experience in the film industry, that would later give way to writing. In 1972, Mwangi worked for the French broadcasting corporation and later as a film librarian for the British Council in Nairobi. He also worked on the set for a number of major films shot in Kenya, both local and Hollywood productions. Mwangi studied science briefly at Kenyatta College in the early 1970s, he participated in the influential international writers program at the University of Iowa in 1975 and 1976, and he attended Leeds University England in the 1990.

b) Writing Career

Throughout his writing career, Meja Mwangi wrote many books that deal mostly with the issue of colonialism. After his serious novels about Mau Mau and urban blight, he switched publishers to crank out a series of popular titles. He published one novel, *Assassins on Safari* (1983), and his writing has been translated into twelve European languages, as well as Korean and Swahili. *The Last Plague* (2000) won the Jomo Kenyatta prize for literature, but only after Mwangi had first arranged for the release of its German translation as a way of motivating a slow-moving Nairobi publisher to get the English edition into print.

Meja Mwangi has a rich literature background in his writing career. His first novel, *Kill me Quick*, was published in 1973 and received the Jomo Kneyatta Prize for Literature. Closely followed by the equal famous novel *Carcase for Hounds* (1974) and *Going down River Road* (1976). According to Jane Duran in his article “Oliver Cromwell and Black Marxism”, these two novels are social protest literature (2001:39).

Meja Mwangi writes about the Mau Mau rebellion in his novels including *The Taste of Death* (1975), which was about a young teenage Kenyan boy who wishes to join the revolution in the period of colonialism. But he does not understand the implications of what is all about. After having written and carry on this way, Meja Mwangi writes his first film project *The Bushitrackers* in 1972 then followed by several thriller novels: *Bread of Sorrow* (1987), *The Turn of Snake* and *Weapon of Hunger* (1989). At the same year, he writes some remarkable children’s books particularly award winning *Little White Man* (1990). That was re-issued as *The Mzungu Boy* in 2005. It was set in the build up to Mau Mau Uprising in 1950, and Kenya’s struggle for independence. This novel won the major awards in Germany, France, Canada, and the United States. This was followed by the publication of another children book *Hunter’s Dream* (1993), it was translated into several languages. Meja Mwangi also, published *The Last Plague* in 2000. His most recent books *The Boy Gift* in 2006, followed by *The Big Chiefs* and a dramatic adoption of *Mama Dudn*, *The Inseet Women* (2007). At least, Mwangi’s most recent novels are *Power and Blood* and *The Blood Brothers*, are published in the same year 2009.

In brief, as we assume Meja Mwangi has a great writing career, he is even a prolific writer. He stills writing about the African identity and preserving it. Thus, he won many international awards that make him an example to follow by the new African generation writers.

4. Synopsis of the two novels

4.1 *What the Day Owes the Night*

The action of the novel *What the Day Owes the Night* originally *Ce que le Jour doit à la Nuit* is located between 1930s and 1962s in Algeria. The story turns around Younes a ten years old young Algerian boy narrator and protagonist of the novel, who lives with his parents and sisters. After the arson of their harvest, they are ruined and have to leave their land to look for better conditions in the city of Oran in Algeria. Younes's father cannot meet his son's needs, especially his school requirements. Furthermore, the bad conditions during the French colonization of Algeria pushed his father to entrust his son Younes to his brother, a wealthy pharmacist married to French woman, who both integrated into the French community. Younes was welcomed by his uncle Mahi and his wife Germaine, a christian woman who embraces him lovingly and named him Jonas. Jonas's blue eyes and angelic physic help him to be quickly accepted by the French community. Hence, he integrates a community of Roum is that means French people living in Algeria and he bears the French identity.

Life goes on until the day when his uncle Mahi leaves Oran to settle in Rio Salado, there Jonas grows up among three young boys, a Jew, a Corsican, and a French man with whom he became the inescapable comrade. He discovers with them the joys of life, and shares their dreams of privileged adolescents who neither the convulsions of expanding Arab nationalism nor the World War II disrupt. One day, a beautiful French woman named Emilie appears in the city, where Jonas and his friends lived. Emilie entails all the lusts with which the four friends fall in love with her. She loves Jonas who is always keeping avoiding her, because he is still keeping the promise, that he gave to the mother of Emilie ' Cazenave' with whom he had an intimate relationship before. Jonas does his best to keep Emilie's love away. He lived in two different worlds and cultures, his own culture and that one of the French colonizer, and he was

hesitated to choose between his Algerian community and his lover Emilie who possesses the identity of the French colonizer.

Later on, Emilie got engaged to Simon one of the four young friends though she does not love him. Time runs until the outbreak of the Algerian war (1954-1962). Because of the violence of the war in the village of Rio Salado, Simon was assassinated by the Fellagas. Jonas comes to look for Emilie but she pushed him away. In 1962, with the independence of Algeria, the colonists left the country. Thus, friends separated and moved away to both shores of the Mediterranean. In 2008, the hero Jonas at the age of 80 years old, returned to France (Marseille) because his lover Emilie had just died. He spent a harsh period due to the loss of his lover. Before Emilie died, she left to Jonas a letter, where she wrote her apology. It is Michel Emilie's son who welcomed Jonas and his friends, whom he had such a glorious and unforgettable souvenirs. At last, it is at the airport of Marseille, that this story of love, friendship, and hatred comes to an end.

By the end of the story, Jonas decided to return to Algeria, where he faced many obstacles, and discovered the real misery of his family, also the injustice of the French colonizer.

4.2 *The Mzungu Boy*

The Mzungu Boy novel follows two young boys, an African boy named Kariuki and his new English friend Nigel. Both of these characters explore the forest and the rivers surrounding Kariuki's village in Africa, getting into a lot of obstacles and troubles along his way. Growing up in a village in central Kenya in the 1950s, Kariuki has a lot of duties and responsibilities to accomplish in his life. Including helping his mother in getting firewood, fetching water and too many other tasks. Kariuki's life changed after he meets Nigel, the young grandson of Bwana Ruin. Nigel is a white boy, who fascinated Kariuki since Nigel introduced to him the life's style

of the white people. Then, both Nigel and Kariuki become inseparable friends, regardless their origins and culture, they accepted each other. Even though, Kariuki is forbidden from partaking in the most of the activities that Nigel enjoys like hunting on Bwana Ruin's land, this does not stop the two boys from meeting each other and spending time together.

During the stay of Nigel in Kenya, he quickly gains the name 'The Mzungu Boy'. One day, Nigel and Kariuki have hunting expeditions where they take an impressive challenge, hunting old mosses. A few days later, the two boys venture out again, this time with Bwana Ruin's fierce attack dogs, salt and pepper. Unfortunately, the team is no match for the giant warthog. The chase moves into the dense forest, and the boys are separated from each other. Nigel was injured, and as a consequence he goes home. Whereas, Nigel does not come back home, this pushes Bwana Ruin to call the British army to search him. When Kariuki goes to search for him, he finds him captured by the Mau Mau rebels. Kariuki saved Nigel but when they try to escape they both get captured by that members. Though, the latter want to kill them both, Kariuki's brother Hari frees them. When Kariuki and Nigel arrive to the plantation, they go to Bwana Ruin's estate to find that the British soldiers have killed Kariuki's brother Hari, as he tried to escape and flee from the Mau Mau fighters.

Finally, Kariuki runs out of the town filled with emotions, when he knows that his brother Hari was killed then Nigel finds him and relieves his pain.

5. Theoretical Background

5.1 New Historicism

Theories in literature have such importance and value in formulating the relationship between the author and his novel. Furthermore, they develop the significance of race, class, and gender for literary studies. Literature helps authors to express their different perspectives and opinions, also defending their claims.

Taking into consideration the two chosen novels to be under study, *The Mzungu Boy* and *What the Day Owes the Night*, we think that postcolonial and new historicist theories are evidently the most suitable approaches that will help us to accomplish our present research. The origins of the New Historicism theory emerged in the early of 1980s, which was initiated by Stephen Greenblatt. This theory is mainly the result of the concepts and ideas of literary analyses and interpretation that have been assimilated from various post-structural theorist especially Louis Althusser's marxist ideology. Michel Foucault's discourse and power, the central concept in deconstructive criticism and Clifford Geertz's anthropology (Xioatang: 2021:1075).

In 1960s and 1970s the post-structural intellectual revolution challenged the old historicism on many different features and established a new set of assumptions which are included as follows,

Firstly, history is always narrated and the past is always in the form of representations, so the first sense is untenable. Secondly, there is no single history; only discontinuous and contradictory histories. Thirdly, the past is not something, which comforts us as if it were a physical object, but it is something we construct from the already written texts of all kinds of which we construe in line with our particular historical concerns. Finally, history is always a matter of telling a story about the past, using other texts as our intertexts and literary works should be regarded as texts among other texts. (X:2021:1076).

Actually, there is no precise definition of the New Historicism theory, due to its several studies. Each scholar has his own perspective and proper perception of analyzing this approach. However, generally, New Historicism is a school of literary theory, which is influenced by the structuralist and poststructuralist theories. It seeks to understand intellectual history through literature and literature through its cultural context. Nasrullah Mambrol depicts the difference between new and old historicism, when he declared that new historicism envisages and practices a mode of study, where the literary text and the non- literary context are given 'equal

weighting', whereas old historicism considers history as a background of facts to the 'foreground' of literature, while the old historicism is concerned with the world of the past.(Nasrullah Mambrol: 2016).

In other words, old historicism provides the background and the context of a story without taking into consideration the different points of view, contrary to new historicism that is subjective in providing the history of both literary and non-literary texts.

In addition, among the aims of the new historicist approach is combining both of imaginative and real texts. Hence, both of literary and non-literary texts are inseparable. In this light, Sonja Laden in her analysis « Recuperating the archive anecdotal evidence and question of Historical realism” (2004) affirmed the previous idea as follows:

The critical practice of New historicism is a mode of literary history whose ' Literariness' lies in bringing imaginative operations closer to the surface of non-literary texts (Laden 2004 :4).

Stephen Greenblatt is a leader of new historicism. His study inspires other early new historicists, for instance: Louis Montrose, Walter Benn and others. He had used the term, ' a cultural poetics for new historicism ', but this last is more academic and useful in formal literature. The birth of New Historicism as a literary critical phenomenon is generally linked to the publication of Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance and self-fashioning* in 1800.

The new historicist theory is characterized by many features, which are illustrated by Aram Vesser in his book *The New Historicism* (2013) illustrates the five fundamental features of the new historicist theory as the following:

Firstly, that every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices. Secondly, that every act of unmasking, critique and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks filling prey to the practice it exposes. Thirdly that literary and non-literary texts circulate inseparably. Also, that no discourse, imagination or archival gives access to unchanging truths nor

expressions inalterable human nature. Finally, as emerges powerfully in this volume, that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism, participate in the economy they describe (Vesser, Xi).

In other terms, the New Historicist approach focuses on the cultural context, where any literary or non-literary works were written rather than focusing on the structure of the text itself. Moreover, these works are the product of several and different networks of social practices. Hence, they are not solitary forms.

To sum up, New Historicism theory aims to understand the work through its historical and cultural context. Also, it examines how the writer's time affects the work and how the work reflects the writer's time.

We have chosen this theory, because it reflects the historical circumstances in which both concerned novels are written. Both Meja Mwangi and Yasmina Khadra share the same experience that is writing their literary works in the period of post independence also, describing the injustices of the western colonizer in their works.

Furthermore, we consider the two novels as historical documents since they are evidently reflecting the historical events of the Mau Mau revolt 1952 and 8th May 1945. These events are the first essential factors that contribute in getting the independence of Algeria and Kenya.

Even though, both of *The Mzungu Boy* and *What the Day Owes the Night* are complicated novels due to the flash backs and disorder events, they provide us with the suspense and the curiosity to carry on the whole story.

5.2 The Postcolonialism Theory

Since the 1980s, a lot of novelists, dramatists, and poets have been marketed as postcolonial writers. Their works have a relationship to the subjugating forces of imperialism and colonial expansion. In sort, postcolonial approach has arisen primarily since the end of the World War

II from regions of the world undergoing decolonization. Works from such regions in the 20th and 21st centuries, for instance the Indian subcontinent, Nigeria, South Africa, and several parts of the Caribbean, are considered as colonized regions (Andrey Golden: 2015).

Postcolonial theory is a deeper approach, which is generally dealt with colonialism in the 70s. Datta G. Sawant in his article « perspectives on postcolonial theory Said Spivak and Bhabha » (2015) attempted to define this previous theory as being a critical approach, which focuses on the colonial experiences from the colonized society's point of view. Also, which must be referred to colonialism, history, language and other that are important in shaping the postcolonial studies (2015:01). Among the most famous African writers, we have Edward Said, who is known for his *Orientalism's* book which discusses the matter of colonialism in the third world. D, G Sawant, also portrayed orientalism in her article, where she states that Edward Said's orientalism is the founder stone of postcolonial study that discusses the imbalance between the West and the East by showing the superiority of the West over the East. (2015:02).

This means that, Edward Said's work focuses on the two opposing Worlds and cultures. As well as, he demonstrates the superiority of the West over the inferior and uncivilized East.

There are some linked words that have relation with the postcolonial theory and literature. At first, *Orientalism* by Edward Said, who described it as the way of seeing the two differences between the West and the East. Secondly, we have discourse that means any thought communicated by speech. Thirdly, *Mimicry*, Homi Bhabha uses this term to refer to the blind imitation of Western ideology, literature and life's style. Next, the *Other* which refers to the feeling of considering a person, subject, text out of the focus and the colonized is the Other. Finally, *Hybridity* which is used mostly by Bhabha who shows the the combination of cultures and identities between the colonist and the colonized.

We have chosen postcolonial theory, because it is suitable for our topic ‘The Quest of Identity’. Both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi’s works are considered as a postcolonial novels, since that both authors evoke via their works the post colonial period and the aftermath of colonialism. On the other hand, they used their literature as a weapon to ensure back the Western views about the colonized countries.

5.3 Hybridity’s Concept:

Hybridity has been more associated with the work of Homi K-Bhabha, whose analysis emphasizes more on the relation between the colonizer and the colonized. Nasrullah Mambrol in his analyses « Homi Bhabha’s concept of Hybridity” argues that,

Hybridity is one of the most widely employed and most disputed terms in postcolonial theory, it refers to the creation of new trans-cultural forms within the contact zone produced by the colonization (Nasrullah, 2016).

That is to say, this concept generally has a strong relation with postcolonialism, because one of the reasons that led to hybridization is colonialism’s impact.

Moreover, hybridity mostly is defined as the mixture of two opposed cultures, the one of the colonizer and the colonized. As a consequence, it creates a new culture. As Amar deep Singh asserts that,

Hybridity refers to any mixing of East and Western culture and commonly refers to colonial subjects from Asia or Africa, that have found a balance between Eastern and Western areas (A, deep, Lehigh: 2009).

Differently saying, the matter of hybridity put the colonized under oppression so they lose their identity.

In fact, hybridity has several forms including linguistic, racial, religious, cultural and many other types. In our treated novels, *The Mzungu Boy* and *What the Day Owes the Night*, we have many illustrations of Hybridity like, the religious hybridity, where the white missionary spread

his Christianity among the African people, through using education as a mean of gaining the African's confidence.

There are many terms and expressions that have a strong relation with the concept of hybridity including mimicry, which means the colonized's imitation to the Western's habits and culture. As Nasrullah clearly affirmed it,

when the colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'Mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those habits. Rather, the result is a 'Blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quite threatening (Nasrullah: 2016).

As a result, the aftermath of the colonizer's abusive imitation of the Western's values and attitudes lead to serious damages, as the moral decay in the colonized society.

To sum up, hybridity's concept fits our present research, and helps us to realize our goal. The content of both concerned novels, including the two protagonists, Jonas in *What the Day Owes the Night*, and Kariuki in *The Mzungu Boy* have two different cultures, as a result, they suffer from hybrid identities.

Conclusion

In this first chapter, we dealt with socio-historical background of the two African novels, we introduced the circumstances of both novel's publishing, then we moved to present short biographies of both African authors. Next, we provided brief synopsis of the two works. Finally, we chose the relevant theories, which are postcolonial and new-historicist theory and the concept of hybridity that serve our present research.

Accordingly, our objective through dealing with this chapter lies on the importance of introducing both African novels, and providing the two essential historical events of 8 May 1945 and the Mau Mau revolt 1952 that described the Algerian and the Kenyan history.

Chapter Two
Identity Crisis in both Yasmina
Khadra's *What the Day Owes the*
Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The
Mzungu Boy

Introduction

In this chapter, we will discuss the two fundamental issues that are presented in both concerned novels. Hence, our goal in doing so is to depict and to shed some light on the issues of identity and colonialism in Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*. In this regard, we cannot directly move to illustrate these problems without providing some brief and relevant explanations.

In fact, the majority of the African writers dealt with the subject of identity in their literary works. The terms of colonialism and identity fall in the same circle and go together hand in hand. To be more precise, it is worth stating that among the aftermaths of colonization, the loss of identity is unavoidable.

As we assume in the two works under study, Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi made a great challenge in reconsidering the African past and testimony. They held that making use of their militant and revolutionary literature was the only potent weapon to fight and recover the true African identity. Moreover, these two African authors lived the same experience under the colonial enterprise. That is why both of them took their pen to show their nostalgia of their ancestral culture and history.

Before going so far, it is convenient to give a brief meaning to colonialism. Hence, according to historians, colonialism is a policy of acquiring full or partial control over another country. This occupation can be a direct military control by exploiting it economically. The latter concerns mainly the exploitation of the natural and human resources of the colonized country. To illustrate more, the French colonization over Algeria, from the beginning of 1830 till the end of 1962 is a real example of colonialism.

To back up, what has been said previously according to Margaret Kohn, colonialism is a practice of domination which is hard to distinguish it from imperialism, where this last draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty or indirect mechanism control. In other words, both of colonialism and imperialism have nearly the same

goal. However, the only nuance between the two concepts is that imperialism generally used to indicate an indirect control of one country over another country (M.Kohn:2006). That is to say, the dominance, in imperialism is not military but rather economically or diplomatically and why not culturally.

Accordingly, we may affirm that colonialism and all ways of dominance create a real dilemma in the colonized mind. This dilemma pushed the African writers like Negugi Wathiong'o, Chinua Achebe, Kateb Yacine and others to tackle some essential related themes specific to their situation, such as the Quest of identity, to defend their origins and culture on the one hand, and to build a generation that will be responsible for the preservation of its dignity and belonging.

In fact, one of the strategies used by the colonizer to expand his dominance is education. The colonist imposed his language among the colonized citizens. The latter unconsciously leave their own native language in favor of the introduced European languages, the colonizer's languages. In addition to, this through education the invader was able to control the minds of his victims, particularly the young generation who trusted the colonial barbarism. Due to the innocence of these young children, they easily submitted the colonizer's order. For the colonist, these native children are like white page, which permit to the colonizer to complete and consolidate all his beliefs and identity in the young's thoughts. Henceforth, they bear the colonial doctrine as a primary ideology.

The African identity was distorted mainly through expanding and wide spreading the culture and the traditions of the white missionaries. As a result, Africans suffered a lot since they stated to lose all what belonged to them. Hence, they found themselves in the margin, or wavering between two different worlds. In this context, Serap Turkmen affirms in his article « Identity in the Colonial Lands: a critical overview of the postcolonial theories » (2003) that

Identity is one of the indispensable components of colonialism, if we consider colonialism as a body; identity constitutes its spirits, while the economic exploitation is its corporal body, the colonizer coming to the virgin lands with the feeling of colonial desire and obsession to have cheap profit in his heart finds himself ready to defame the inhabitants regard them as the Other (2003:189).

To make the quote clearer, we can state that identity and colonialism complete each other, they cannot be separated since the major reason behind the distortion of identity is the impact of colonialism. In addition to what has been said previously, Liza Amalia and Kathrine Clayton, in their article « The identity issue of the colonized and the colonizer in cloud Nine by Carl Churchill » (2020) add that;

It is clear, why post-colonial scholars focus on the colonized as they are victims of colonialism, however, the colonizer must also face complex issues of identity, when arriving in the colonial place” (2020 :7).

The quote denotes that the colonized is not the only victim that colonialism may have the colonizer also is affected by the tradition and the culture of the colonized.

Even though, the colonizer considered himself superior and much more civilized, he can imitate as well the native’s life style, without being aware of that. As we have the example of the white boy Nigel in *The Mzungu Boy*, who imitates his African friend Kariuki in his traditions and way of thinking.

In a nutshell, we can consider that the African society suffers from identity’s crisis, which is destroyed by the foreign colonialists. Such matters need a long time to be fixed. Even after the end of colonialism, the third world is still under the foreign control. Hence, many African countries are victims of hybrid identities, which became such a serious problem that needs to be solved as soon as possible.

1. The Aftermath of Colonialism and identity issues

1.1 Colonialism in both *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*

The theme of colonialism is widely demonstrated in both Yasmina Khadra’s *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi’s *The Mzungu Boy*. Both these novels are post-colonial works that stand

as a strong reaction to all the forms of Western dominance. Moreover, both these African authors made of their militant literary works examples, to the whole world and particularly to the African community, of fighting, resistance, and commitment to consider back the African heritage and identity. In other words, they are engaged in a literary war to valorize again the culture, the identity, and the history of their continent. Besides, both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi express their deep sorrow about their countries that were subject of oppression for many years.

The novel *What the Day Owes the Night* revolves around the French colonialism of Algeria. In fact, this invader destroyed everything in Algeria and spread the horror among Algerians. Yasmina Khadra goes to illustrate this in his novel especially he portrays how Algerians were shocked when the French military forces bombarded The City of Oran. The following passage is the testimony:

The city of Oran was in a state of shock. The whole population had gathered on the docks and was standing aghast at the burning barracks. Many of the ships had been on fire, since the first bombing raids, and thick clouds of black smoke, now shocked the city and veiled the mountains. What had happened was all the more shocking, because the warships the British had bombed, has been in the process of laying up, the French having signed an armistice with Germany two weeks earlier (Khadra:2010:222).

In the above passage, the impact of the French colonialism engendered a remarkable damage on Algeria, because Algerians experienced serious traumatic wounds that remind them about the tragic trace of the French invasion.

Furthermore, one of the bad experiences that Algerians underwent during the colonial period is the massacres of the 8 May 1945. While Algerians celebrated the end of WW II, i.e., their independence, carrying their national flag, the French army started shooting the Algerian citizens unmercifully. As a result, many demonstrators died in those harmful scenes. Yasmina Khadra, provides enough description of this event in his following passage:

As 8 May 1945 dawned, and the whole world celebrated the end of their nightmare in Algeria, a new nightmare appeared, devastating as a plague, monstrous as the apocalypse itself. Popular celebration turned to tragedy. In AinTimouchent, near Rio Salado, marches for Algerian independence were brutally suppressed by the police. In Mostaganem, riots spread to the surrounding villages, but the horror reached its height in the Aurés and in the Constantine province, where the police, aided and abetted by farmer colonist's turned militians, massacred thousands of muslims (2010 :311 :312).

Malika Rahal in her article « Algeria non-violent resistance against French colonialism 1830s-1950s » (2013) Claims that

French colonization in Algeria was one of the most intense colonial encounters of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries the severity of the socio-economic disruption caused by the colonial regime and the harsh conditions of the French colonization in Algeria (including the massacres of May 1945) limited the range of possible forms of collective activities (2013:26).

Malika Rahal, in the above, wants to show the impact of colonialism on Algeria that led to the obstruction of all Algerians' daily life activities including the deterioration of the economic situation.

As a matter of fact, Algerians were victims of discrimination and contempt. In *What the Day Owes the Night*, the narrator and the protagonist Jonas was affected and deeply hurt, when he saw his Algerian friend named Abdelkader who is blamed by his teacher and his classmates, and make fun of the Arabic students. Hence, Yasmina Khadra shows very clearly this racism vis-à-vis the Algerians through the first narrator Jonas in his following:

From a dim corner of my memory, where I had thought him buried, came an image of Abdelkader, red with shame standing at the front of my primary class. I could picture him screaming in a fair, as the teacher twisted his ear and hears Maurice's voice explode in my head: 'because Arabs are lazy and shiftless sir'. (Yasmina khadra:2010:515).

In *What the Day Owes the Night*, Algerians felt disgusted because of the fake promises of the French General De Gaulle who pretended that he understood their issues. Jonas, as the narrator

claims, “De Gaulle does not understand a fucking thing about our suffering, referring to the General’s famous statement to the Algerians on 4 June 1958 ’I have understood you” (Ibiid:608).

On 9 December 1960, the General De Gaull hold a meeting in AinTimouchent, where the Algerian citizens felt really disappointed and shocked, due to De Gaull’s discourse that was totally against the Algerians’ objectives. Yasmina Khadra demonstrates their disappointment in this passage :

The cars come back from Ain Timouchent. They had left Rio Salado, that morning in a fanfare of horns, waving the tricolour ; they returned like a funeral cortege, their flags at half-mast. A pall fell over the village. Every face bore the signs of mourning for a hope long since doomed, a dream they had tried to keep alive, with prayers and incense. Algeria was to be Algeria (Yasmina Khadra:2010:611).

This passage shows that, even though the French colonizer was strict and severe in his rule, Algerians resisted and fought bravely under the famous slogan ‘Algeria for Algerians’.

In fact, what we notice in Yasmina Khadra’s novel is that most of the important events happened during the French rule of Algeria have been portrayed with success. During the declaration of the Ceasefire in Algeria on 19 March 1962, Jonas comes back to the city of Saint Hubert to look for his lover Emilie, he found that many people died, so he could not see his beloved. Thus, he thought that, she was killed during the war. Jonas witnessed that harmful scene and described it by saying:

I knocked on every door in Saint-Hubert without success. The city was in chaos, the ceasefire declared on 19 march 1962, had sparked off the last pockets of resistance. Knives were pitted against machine guns, grenades against bombs, bystanders were killed by stray bullets and as I advanced through the horror and the stench of death, Emilie seemed to move further away. Had she been killed in a bomb blast, by a stray bullet? had she been stabbed and left to bleed to death in a deserted stain well ? (Ibiid:617).

Furthermore, after a harsh period of injustice, killings and massacres, Algerians got their independence and freedom on the 5th of July 1962. Yasmina Khadra, in his novel, does not miss this important event and he tries to portray the joyful atmosphere, the glorious celebration of such a precious victory of the Algerians against the French rule. It is shown in this coming extract from Khadra's novel *What the Day Owes the Night* through the narrator and the protagonist Jonas:

I walked through the teeming streets, through the singing and the shouting, beneath the fluttering green and white flags as the trams changed and clattered past. The next day, 5 July, Algeria would have an identity card, a symbol, a national anthem and a thousand other things, still to devise. On the balconies; women whooped and wept tears of joy, children danced in the squares (Yasmina Khadra:2010:632).

Despite the fact that, Algerians got their independence and liberty, they still do not have such a complete and fixed identity and cultural heritage. The reason behind this is the French strong impact on the Algerians, especially when they imposed on them the French identity, without considering the gravity of the issue, especially for the coming future generations.

After discussing Yasmina Khadra's novel, the time has come to Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy* to be put under scrutiny. In other terms, *The Mzungu Boy* also bears many hints that push us to consider him that it tackles the issue of colonialism.

In 2011, Meja Mwangi published his novel *The Mzungu Boy*, as a post-colonial work which was a response to the injustices of the white missionaries. He portrays the Kenyan victims under the British colonizers, using the character Kariuki, who struggled to gain freedom according to the novel's story. Moreover, the novel is set in Kenya, during the British invasion in the 1950s. Meja Mwangi describes the harsh conditions of Kenyans, under the oppressive rule of the British plantation owner named Bwana Ruin, who treated the Kenyan farmers as slaves and forced them to work their lands as tenant farmers giving the majority of fields to the British colonists. Kariuki the narrator, felt disgusted, due to the mistreatments of the Kenyans. To show his position towards this decadent situation of the Kenyans in the passage below:

I knew that, the white farmers lived a good and rich life in the big far houses, while the Africans, who labored for them, lived a life of slavery in their crumbling village huts. I knew white people did not like black people and treated them little better than donkeys and much worse than their dogs. I knew that, they sent black people on detention to faraway islands, where they died of Malaria and other diseases (Mwangi:2011:141-142).

According to the above passage, we notice the impact of the British colonizers, who used the Kenyans as objects for their own interests. Consequently, many Kenyans died of many different diseases.

As far as Meja Mwangi's novel is concerned, we are compelled to put our focus on the significance of the title that is a reflection of the white colonizer's effect on the character Kariuki. The Mzungu boy means the white boy that refers to Nigel, who belongs to the British community. He is even the close-friend of Kariuki. Though the relationship of both characters is good enough, it creates many problems for Kariuki on whom Nigel exercised a great influence. In other expression, Kariuki endorses the white colonizers in their traditions and culture. In spite of that, Kariuki's life is filled with racism, prejudice and inequality. This racism is shown mainly at school where his white master and his classmates beat him without any reason. He described his teacher, as a very severe man, that he had never seen before in his life, when he says "I told him about my school, I tried to tell him about our much feared head master (MejaMwangi:2011:74).

The introduction of Christianity in Kariuki's village, Nanyuki, provokes a real problem that is clearly discussed in Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*. Kariuki goes to the Catholic Church each Sunday, where he was taught by the Italian priest called father Mario, who was in charge of all the catholic schools. Kariuki is surprised by the white fathers who consider themselves as the people of God. Hence, these beliefs push Kariuki to ask his white friend Nigel, if they are true, as follows:

Kariuki: "Was it true that all white, were rich and had big farms and many cars? Was it true, that they were the only true people of God?"

Nigel replied, “Don’t be foolish, where do you get such stupid ideas from?”

Kariuki said “From school” (Meja Mwangi:2011:103).

In this passage, we deduce that the British colonizers and white missionaries used Christian religion as a weapon or strategy for maintaining their culture and reinforcing their colonial power in Kenya cause pain and harmful traces to the natives by threatening them and taking away their close friends and loved-ones. Moreover, their ultimate objective is to make an end for the traditions of Nanyuki’s village, also distort and suppress the Kenyan’s identity and traditions.

In fact, the effect of culture is exchanged between both of the colonizer and the colonized. As we notice in this novel, Nigel, the white boy, appreciated everything, that is related to Kenyan traditions and he learned many habits from his friend Kariuki. When Nigel ate for the first time a traditional Kenyan food named Ugali, the Kenyans in the village were surprised. Meja Mwangi described that surprise moments through Kariuki’s eyes as follow:

The day he ate Ugali at my mother’s hut was a historical event in our village. Nigel liked it and asked how it was made,Kariuki replied “With Maize flour and water”. (Meja Mwangi:2011:105).

According to the above passage, we observe that both of the colonizer and the colonized, are affecting each other indirectly, through adopting each other’s culture and attitudes. Consequently, they found themselves torn between two different worlds.

The oppressive conditions, lived by the Kenyans under the British rule, push the members of the Mau Mau to revolt and fight the British colonizer. As the Mau Mau Uprising gained progress, the British colonists declared a state of emergency. They went to search for those rebel groups, who fortunately escaped to hide in the forests, but the white soldiers arrested one member of the Mau Mau and Kariuki narrates in the following passage the situation:

As I left to go back to the village, Bwana Ruin came to inform us that the soldiers had completely lost their quarry, but they had found one terrorist and wanted our assistance in identifying him (M.Mwangi:2011:215).

When Kariuki and Nigel, saw the face of this arrested man, they were astonished, because he was Kariuki's brother named Hari. Kariuki expressed his pain, when he saw his brother Hari killed by the British soldiers by saying:

I nodded when I tried to smile, tears come back to my eyes, I shut my eyes tight and saw Hari lying dead on the ground with bullet holes in his chest. The sobs came again and I clenched my teeth until they had passed, "He was my best friend" he said to Nigel (Mwangi:2011:221:222).

Actually, Kariuki discovered the brutality of Bwana Ruin, who made the decision to kill Hari. Besides, the final pages of the novel *The Mzungu Boy*, described Kariuki's unforgettable moments, with his dead brother Hari, as the following:

I had told him everything about me and Hari. Hari had taught me to fish, Hari had taught me to hunt, Hari had taught me everything I knew (M.Mwangi: 2011:222).

Hari is not the only victim of the injustices, even the father of Kariuki was arrested by the white soldiers, who were preparing to take him away, without any reason. This event also affected badly Kariuki and his mother who were astonished and upset. In this concern Kariuki states, "I had never seen my mother weep, she had suffered enough in her life" (Mwangi:184).

Even though, the Kenyan people get their independence in 1963, the colonizer's crimes cannot be forgotten, since they left their traces everywhere. One of the important scars left in Kenya is that the old generation and the future one find it hard to figure out easily their origins and native culture.

1.2 Identity in *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*

In this comparative study, we will analyze the issue of identity, and how it is progressed through the literary novels of both postcolonial authors Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi. It is obvious that

the African literature dealt with the theme of identity's crises, because the African novelists underwent similar experiences under the colonial rule.

There are too many ways to define the term identity. This concept is a series of disciplines and features, including name, race; ethnicity, religion, language, culture and so on which eventually contribute in the identification of people's problems of identity. In order to examine identity's issue, we have to shed light on the major problem of colonialism, which absolutely paved the way to the destruction of African identity. Also, we aim to highlight the existed process of hybrid identities of Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night* and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*.

Yasmina Khadra, in his novel understudy, presents the dilemma of losing identity's control, through the protagonist Younes who is an Algerian young boy, adopted by his French uncle, who renamed him Jonas. This character struggled in his life, he is in trouble whether to behave as an Algerian or as a French man. When Jonas was in the city of Rio Salado with his uncle, he asked himself a lot of questions, about his real belonging, and wondering about his origins. Yasmina Khadra demonstrates Younes's confusion as follows:

How had I managed to live without this part of my birthright? I should have to come here regularly to fill the gaps in my identity. Rio Salado and I, no longer spoke the same language, how should I speak now? When I lived in Rio Salado, had I been Jonas or Younes? Had I simply been tolerated integrated biddable? What had stopped me from being myself, forced me to identifying with the society I was growing up in and turn my back on my own people? (Khadra:2010:474:475).

From the above, we notice that Jonas the protagonist entered with an internal conflict with himself about the matter of bearing dual identity. Moreover, these two existed cultures and languages pushed him to ask himself, what had stopped him to be himself. As a result, this duality's conflict drives Jonas to have a psychological frustration, and a disgraceful life.

Khalfaoui Benaoumer and Dr Sari Mohamed Latifa in their article « L'écriture Romanesque comme réconciliation du couple infernal, dans Ce que le Jour Doit à la Nuit de Yasmina Khadra »(2016) state that,

Le narrateur, qui est le personnage central, est le symbole d'une dualité révélatrice se traduisant par les deux prénoms qu'il porte : Younes pour les siens et Jonas pour les français : nous sommes donc en présence d'une incarnation vivante d'une synthèse communicative incarnation qui suggère une double identité constitutive, se référant aux nombres de générations ayant vécu le colonialisme, la guerre de libération et l'indépendance, et ce en dépit des réactions que cette dualité culturelle l'interculturalités a pu enfanter de positions de rejet on l'acceptation. (2016 :11 :12).

The narrator, who is the central character, is the symbol of a revealing duality reflected in the two first names he bears :Younes for his own and Jonas for the French. We are therefore in the presence of a living embodiment of a community synthesis, incarnation which suggests a double constitutive identity by referring to the numbers of generations having lived colonialism, the war of liberation and independence, and this in spite of the reactions which this cultural duality“inter-culturality”, could give birth to positions of rejection or acceptance. (Trans Ours).

In other words, Jonas's dual identity, suggests the abusive effect of the French colonist, who suppressed the natives' cultural heritage. This cultural duality can be whether accepted or refused by the colonizer.

Actually, the identity issue is shared between the colonizer and the colonized. The colonist is also considered as a victim of identity's shift because he is affected by the social milieu of the native through taking up some of the colonized's habits. When the colonizer arrives to the colonial lands, his alienation led him to waste his identity, as Serap Turkmen asserts, “on arriving, he goes into a sudden shift of identity” (2003:195).

Yasmina Khadra, in his novel shows the French racism and hatred over the Arabic citizens. Jonas had a good relationship with his French friend named Isabelle, but after she discovered that Jonas is an Arabic and his name is Younes not Jonas, she blamed him as follows:

Why did you lie to me? She screamed that simply stood there looking confused. Why? Jonas replied “I have never lied to you”. Isabelle haven’t you? Your name is Younes isn’t it? Younes? So why do you named calling yourself Jonas? Everyone calls me Jonas, what difference does it make? it makes all the difference! We are from different worlds Monsieur Younes! She said implacably, when she had got her breath back. (Khadra:2010:213-214).

Obviously, the last sentence said by Isabella “We are from two different world Monsieur Younes” hurt and broke Younes’s heart. Thus, he discovered to what extent he was wrong, to believe in the French enemy, who destroyed his country and distorted his identity.

Furthermore, Yasmina Khadra clearly talked about Jonas’s nostalgia to his country and family. He felt himself bored and isolated in Rio Salado. Hence, he wanted to come back to Oran where he lived once:

I thought about moving back to Oran, I was miserable in Rio Salado. I thought about trying to trace my mother and sister. I still missed them terribly. (Yasmina Khadra:2010:452-453).

Despite that, Jonas bears dual identity. He never forgot his country, which was destroyed by the French invader. He helped the injured Algerians during the War by offering them the necessary supplies from his uncle’s pharmacy. When Jonas was asked to tell the truth of the Algerians fighters, he neither betrayed them, nor revealed their names.

Actually, among the main factors that led to Jonas’s personality destruction is the radical change of his name from an Arabic name “Younes” to French one Jonas. When Jonas’s uncle’s wife changed his name to Jonas, Younes try to remind her that his name is not Jonas:

My name is Younes, I reminded her. Germanie gave me a tender smile stroked my cheek and whispered: Not anymore my darling (Y.Khadra:2010:118).

Germanie insists to call him Jonas and Younes accepted his new name and the French culture as well. The sentence said by Younes “I was a different person”(Khadra:2010: 119) affirms the identity’s shift and the embracing of the new culture.

Yasmina Khadra as a postcolonial novelist, attempts to transmit the different social problems lived by the Algerian citizens, through using the protagonist Younes who suffered and torn between two opposed cultures and two opposed worlds.

In the final pages, of *What the Day Owes the Night*, Yasmina Khadra demonstrates the national spirit and fidelity of Younes, who chose his country Algeria, instead of his French beloved Emilie. Though, Younes loves his girlfriend, he realizes that his country is irreplaceable. This hero left France and returned to his mother country, where his family lived that night, I took the boat back to Algeria and not until today, I set foot in France again.(Khadra:2010:651).

On the other hand, Meja Mwangi’s novel *The Mzungu Boy* also covers the subject of identity quest. The Africans rebelled against the colonial regime, because they start to lose the components that forge their own identity. If we contemplate the employing of traditions in both novels, we have to recognize the value of using such motifs, like customs, so that we became more aware of our civilization.

In the process of exploring the concept of the African culture. We attempt to shed light on the traditions, as a method through which both African writers revise the African past and consider the future of their people. In addition, these authors focus on history, since it is the essence of the identity’s recognition, also through history people can reveal their own customs, language, culture and others. As we assume, knowing about history, make people conscious of their indigenous culture. The two African works call the attention to the identity, and beliefs, which are enormously found to be used for the sake of portraying the characters’ destiny and the future of the African nation.

Colonialism disoriented the African destiny and destructed its history. In *The Mzungu Boy*, Meja Mwangi shows how the character Kariuki is influenced by his white friend Nigel. Both Kariuki's father and brother warned him to not follow nor imitate the white boy, but he was too fascinated by the British world. As a consequence, he has tendencies over the Western culture. When Kariuki and Nigel start to know each other, Kariuki asked him "Where do you came from? and Nigel replied "England". Kariuki reacted:

I knew England, everything we used was made in England, from the pencils and the rubbers, we used at school to the hoes we used in the gardens. They were all made in England but, I had no idea where England and suggested, we might go fishing there one day. (Mwangi:2011:43).

From this above passage, we notice to what extent Kariuki is attracted by England. He describes it as the most powerful in all directions of life. However, the British colonized Kariuki's country, he has the curiosity to learn the Western's traditions. As we assume, the character's reaction is a sign of identity's shift and adopting the new culture.

In *The Mzungu Boy*, Meja Mwangi asserts that, if the Kenyan people missed the church, they will be considered as sinners,

So we went to church on Sunday, in the head masters's book, there was no sinner greater that missing church...We went to church every Sunday (Mwangi:2011:100).

The Kenyans from Nanyuki's village believe in everything said by the white men, like missing the church is a sin. Besides the white missionary successes to persuade the Kenyans through wide spreading the fake convictions and beliefs.

Even Rudyard Kipling, in his poem "White Man's Burden"; illustrates clearly the philosophy of colonialism, through expanding the concepts of civilization, Christianity, and commerce. These concepts, are used as justifications, by the colonizer to civilize the African people, who are inferior, and imposing on them Christian religion. However, the colonial enterprise has other objectives, as

establishing commerce in the African lands to exploit the benefits, and resources. Also, blurring the Africans' identity, and dehumanizing the natives by suppressing their history and past.

Furthermore, Esther Mueni Mwanzia, in her dissertation "The Role of Linguistic Deviation in Meja Mwangi's *Striving for Wind* (2005) attempted to describe the method of Meja Mwangi in his writing about the Kenyan issues. This is done through focusing on both English language and some Kenyan proverbs in order to transmit his noble message in transparency and fidelity to his own origins, Mwanzia confirmed it in the following words,

To encode some of the postcolonial realities affecting the Kenyan society, Mwangi feels that the English language alone cannot adequately express the realities of his people, he therefore deviates from the English linguistic norms. Some of the ways in which he has done this, is through the use of Kikuyu and Kiswahili proverbs, idioms, witty sayings folk songs, and vernacular transcriptions (...). This linguistic deviation helps the author to create a text, which reflects the Kenyan identity (Mwanzia:2005:49).

To make it more clear, the passage above means that the writer Meja Mwangi does not only rely on the English language, to express the Kenyan identity, but also he prefers to transmit his emotions through using some proverbs from the Kenyan vocabulary, which helps him to narrate the realities of Kenya as it is.

The effect of the British colonialism on the Kenyan people brings out many issues like identity's crisis and cultural conflicts. The character Kariuki seems to be addicted to the British traditions. Thus he falls in a serious dilemma which is bearing a dual identity at the same time.

2. The cultural Clash and Identity Crisis

2.1 Duality and Hybridity in *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*

The concept of hybridity is obviously appeared in both *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*. Regarding Bhabha's notion of hybridity, we recognize that both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi undoubtedly succeeded to incorporate this concept in their post-colonial works through

employing the two main characters Jonas and Kariuki, who seem to have a hybrid identity. In this chapter, we examine how colonialism stands as the first factor in destroying the cultural patrimony of both the Algerian and the Kenyan nations.

In fact, the issue of hybridity gives rise to the identity crisis where many colonized people were victims of identity's struggles. They take up the colonial identity unconsciously. Hence, they fall in hybridization where they imitate the colonial ideology and doctrine. In this concern, Homi Bhabha proclaims that, "Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effect" (Bhabha: 1994:112).

To make it simple, due to the consumption of the identity's pioneer, the natives became hybrid and lost the basic components that forge their own identity.

Additionally, hybridity intimates the mixture of the two opposed cultures where both of the culture of the colonizer and that of the colonized created an area to establish a new culture. The latter is derived from this combination. *The location of culture* by Homi Bhabha (1994) dealt with the matter of hybrid identity of the oppressed people under the colonial barbarism. Homi Bhabha attempted to give the real picture of the colonial enterprise. He went further to describe the effects of hybridity on the natives, as he affirmed it in his book that "hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal" (Bhabha:1994:112).

In this light, the concept of hybridity affects the historical property of the African continent, which is regrettably abolished by the western colonists. In this regard, both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi attentively treat this matter of hybridity in their literary works, which give the impression of being as the reflected mirror of describing the bitter reality of the hybrid Africa.

Accordingly, Jonas, in *What the Day Owes the Night*, left Algeria at an early age to live in France with his uncle. He was welcomed by Germanie and accepted by the French community.

Yasmina Khadra narrows down the realities of the French colonist who blur the identity of the colonizer through Jonas, who suffered from the divided self and marginalization due to the change of his name by Germanie. She changes his name from Younes to Jonas without getting permission from him. Therefore, when she saw him at the first sight, she directly called him with a French name Jonas instead of his Arabic name: “Jonas” she said choking back a sob “ Jonas” if you know how happy this makes me” (Khadra: 2010:117). As we assume, the first step made by Germanie signifies the initial distraction of Jonas’s personality and identity.

Moreover, Jonas became a hybrid character because of his constant contact with his French people who influenced him. In this novel, we notice that the existed process of cultural hybridity started when this character is affected by the French culture like their life style, food, traditions and so on and so forth. While Jonas arrived to his uncle’s house, Germanie insisted to change Jonas’s clothes and wanted him to wear the new outfits that are made in France, Yasmina Khadra asserts this change as follows:

Germanie: Let’s get rid of these old rags, shall we Jonas?

Jonas: I did not know what to say, I watched her pale hands working, removing my fez, my gandurah, my threadbare vest, my rubber boots, I felt like a bird plucked of its feathers (YasminaKhadra: 2010:119) .

Jonas’s silence to Germanie’s offers and suggests the acceptance of the new life style and eventually indicates the beginning of the cultural hybridity’s notion.

Before going so far, we have to shed light on the important concept mimicry, which is used mostly by Homi Bhabha, who certainly links it to hybridity and colonialism. In fact, mimicry means the repetition and the imitation of the western culture and attitudes by the colonized people. Henceforth, the aftermath of this blind imitation causes many problems like losing the ethical attitudes. Yasmina Khadra obviously demonstrates how the colonial power affects Jonas’s behavior through bringing him to their Christian world, where everything is permitted and seen normal. Jonas imitated his

French friends in their culture and even in their immoral behavior. For instance, he had a sexual relationship with a French woman named Madame Gozenave. Then when he practiced such unethical act, Yasmina Khadra asserts the immoral decay of Jonas in the following:

Since my encounter with Madame Gozenave, my mind was else where, it was sounding the depths of euphoria, that seemed endless and eternal, this was my first experience of being a man, my first taste of sexual discovery....I still feel madame Gozenave's fingers moving (Khadra:2010:300).

According to the above passage, we deduced that the French colonist succeeded to dominate Jonas's thoughts and behaviour through using mimicry as a strong strategy to reinforce his dominance and impose his beliefs.

The identity formation in Jonas seems to be shared between the French and the Algerian cultures. This character struggled a lot in his life. He could not reveal what direction to follow. His hesitation played an essential role in Jonas's life. It is difficult for Jonas to solve his identity's issue which stands as a barrier to construct his own life. As a result, he felt disoriented and misplaced in this world. Regarding what have been said before, Said Khelfaoui Benoumeur and Dr Sari Mohamed clearly show this identity's struggling in their article under the title " L'écriture Romanesque comme reconciliation" (2016) by claiming that, "Par cette double presence, le personnage suggère une continuelle alternance entre deux cultures qui le déchirent" (2016:12)

Later, Yasmina Khadra shows in his novel the ideological tendencies of Jonas over the French world through his continual adoption of the French culture. Jelloul is a character in this novel and an Algerian fighter against the French colonial region. He is always blaming Jonas for his life style, which makes him strange among his Algerian friends. While Jonas hears Jelloul calling himself a dog, he was astonished:

Jonas 'Why do you call yourself a dog?

Jelloul 'you would not understand you are one of us, but you live like one of them. When your whole family depends on you for money, when you have to support a half-crazed mother, a father who had both arms You are no longer a human being (Khadra:2010:318).

Taking into account what have been said by Jelloul, we deduce that though all his social issues, he fights for independence and he assumed a big responsibility of his family. After that, Jonas realized the courage and the passion of Jelloul and said, "Jelloul's words unsettled me, and I realized that though he was not yet twenty, he had an inner strength and maturity (Khadra: 2010:318).

Subsequently, due to Jelloul's efforts and support, Jonas recognized what is the importance of his country, which is destroyed by the French invader. Thus, Jonas broke down the barriers and participated in the war. He also helped the Algerian injuries through giving them enough supplies from his uncle's pharmacy. Through time, Jonas revealed what is meant by an Arabic citizen lived in the French style. Hence, he woke up from his dream that drove him wrong for a long time, and he turned a new page of his life.

To back up what have been said previously, Durham Brook affirms the essential role of Jelloul in raising up the awareness of Jonas,

Jelloul's character was particularly significant because through this character, Yasmina Khadra brought attention to Younes growing awareness of what it meant to be Arab or European in Algeria and his struggle to define himself. (B.Durham:2013:245).

After discussing Yasmina Khadra's novel, the turn has come to Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy*, to be under inspection. *The Mzungu Boy* also bears many indications that urge us to reveal in it the theme of hybridity.

In *The Mzungu Boy* Kariuki, the Kenyan young boy is also a hybrid character. In fact, he is born in a society that is entirely believed in sacred conventions and customs. Kariuki and his white friend Nigel have a good relationship, which is getting progressed more and more. Both of them influenced the other through introducing their cultures in the forest of the white men Bwana Ruin. Hence, their

relationship suggests the existed traces of cultural hybridity, where every one of them created an area to exchange their multiples thoughts and traditions. Moreover, in a short period of time, both of these characters accepted each other though they differed in their races. They mostly go to swim and hunt together where each one of them tried to learn something new. Let us consider an evident example of the cultural hybridity that is shown in a traditional Kenyan food named Ugali, which was eventually loved by the White boy Nigel. Meja Mwangi asserts it as follows:

I don't know word got out that the little white man was eating Ugali in Kariuki's mother hut. It may have been the amazed Jinis who passed it on to the village boys, who then brought along the whole village to see for themselves. (Mwangi:2011:106).

Furthermore, in this novel Meja Mwangi attempted to demonstrate the innocence of both Kariuki and Nigel who share between them the sincerity and adventures that make them social character. They received experiences from their social milieu, where they created the space for borrowing words from their own cultures. Hence, they established hybrid environment. To make all what have been said evident, Elizibeth Odhiambo, in her article "Hybridity in Meja Mwangi's *Little White Man*" (2013), confirms this founded social hybridity between the two characters when she states, "Hybridity thus becomes a site for social reconstruction from which the two characters emerge wiser and more enlightened through practical experience" (2013:273).

In other words, both Kariuki and Nigel get closer to each other through enduring the same social experiences. As a consequence, their relationship brings out the social hybridity. Besides, Kariuki's acceptance to go to the church with his friend Nigel proves the strong impact of the white missionaries, who succeeded to gain the confidence of the boy Kariuki. Thus, he has positive views of Christianity. In fact, the aim of the colonial enterprise was to exploit the innocence of Kariuki because he is too young to understand the behind goals of the invader.

Kariuki's conversion to Christianity suggests the existed issue of the religious hybridity. He is torn between two different cultures and religions. Hence, he became a hybrid character who

regrettably sacrificed his life to learn the Western ideologies without knowing the negative sides of his conduct. In the church, the white priest attempted to convey fake convictions so as to persuade Kariuki and other Kenyans. For instance, the priest urges the Kenyans to believe that the white people are generous and never tell lies. This pushed Kariuki to ask his friend Nigel whether these information are true “was it true that they could not lie and did not steal?” (Mwangi:2011:103). Nigel refused to believe in such stupid convictions even though he is a white man.

Afterwards, in *The Mzungu Boy*, Meja Mwangi employs words from his Kenyan vocabulary for example *The Mzungu* and *Ugali*. Meja Mwangi challenges the white character Nigel, who is not from Nanyu’Ri’s village to understand the name *Mzungu*, which was given to him. In fact, the author urges Nigel to seek alone about the meaning of the *Mzungu* that in reality means the white. Henceforth, as we assume, Meja Mwangi’s mining of both Nanyuki’s culture and the English language signifies the existed concept of linguistics hybridity in his work, which means that this writer created a site of hybridity where he mixed between two opposed languages through using words from Kenyan culture within his novel, even though it is written in colonial language “English”.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, this chapter dealt with the issue of colonialism, where both the Algerians and the Kenyans underwent the same experience of colonization, also both authors fight the colonial regime with their postcolonial and militant literature. Next, we explored the issue of the mixed-identity, which is in fact the outcome of the brutal dominating powers, where we shed light on the two protagonists Jonas in *What the Day Owes the Night*, and Kariuki in *The Mzungu Boy*. The two characters shared affinities especially when it comes to losing their true identity, which was stolen by their colonists. Finally, we attempted to discuss the other matter of hybridity, where the two characters endure the same case of being hybrid boys due to the colonialism’s impacts.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The analysis of our present research, Yasmina Khadra's *What the Day Owes the Night*(2008) and Meja Mwangi's *The Mzungu Boy* (2011), aims to describe the Kenyan and the Algerian societies which endured the same experience under the colonialism control. The two African writers emphasize on exploring the concept of identity in their post-colonial works. Hence, they confess about colonialism's impact on the African communities that are directly exposed to several cultural tendencies and different conflicting ideologies. As a result, the changes brought by the colonial enterprise presented many obstacles for the Africans especially when it comes to their ancestral culture.

In our comparative study, we introduced how the issue of colonialism changes the social doctrine of the native people. Thus, their identity shifted from its very basic roots. This identity shift is well illustrated in both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi's works. The latter purvey the truth of the white missionaries who altered the African's destiny and their future.

In the introduction of this present research, we made a list of critical reviews of the two African novels *What the Day Owes the Night* (2008) and *The Mzungu Boy* (2011); through which we have examined the literary worthiness and both of the perfections and the imperfections of these two novels. Then, we have put them under scrutiny. At last, we come to an end that even though both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi's works received a host of critiques from different standpoints by different scholars like; Tahrichi Mohamed, Benamara Fatiha, Fatima Zohra, Wori Walker, Elizabeth Odhiano and others, these literary works have not been taken under study together from our perspective. Henceforth, we assume that our work is an original research.

After exposing the theme of the research and providing the necessary information, we moved to the first chapter that is considered as the theoretical phase of our research. In this chapter, we attempted to provide the socio-historical context of both novels *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy*, whereby, we made reference to the circumstances where the two works were written and published. Alongside, we afforded the two biographies of both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi, where we went through studying their writing and education's career.

After this, we attempted to provide the two synopses of the two concerned novels, in order to make the reader in a situation, where he can guess the context of our current research. At last, we have provided explanation about the relevant theories of New Historicism and Postcolonialism, which are generally go together. Since our topic focused more on the issue of identity and colonialism, we have chosen the postcolonial theory. Also, the historical events of the novels pushed us to explore the new historicist theory. Moreover, the two works share the theme of hybridity. Hence, we are motivated to investigate Bhabha's concept of hybridity as well. All these theories helped us to make our research relevant and significant.

After discussing the theoretical phase in the first chapter, we provided brief definitions of colonialism and identity, which are in fact the introduction for our practical stage. Colonialism brought many problems to the native people like exploring all their economical resources. Thus, we dealt with the issue of colonialism in both *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy* where we shed lights on the Algerian character Jonas and the Kenyan boy Kariuki, who shared the same experience with their colonial powers, the French and the British, respectively. Moreover, we attempted to afford enough illustrations from the two novels about the historical events of 8 Mai 1945 and The Mau Mau revolt 1952, which paved the way to independence. In addition, we

supported our research through giving strong extracts from the two novels which described the brutality and the horror of colonialism.

The aftermath of the colonialism is having dual identities. For this, we treated the issue of identity in both concerned novels where both Jonas and Kariuki faced the similar matter, which is finding themselves bearing two different identities the one of the colonizer and that of the colonized. Both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi portrayed this divided self in these characters who are exposed to marginalization and damage. At the end of both novels, both of Jonas and Kariuki regretted their blind believing in the white missionary and recognized the importance of being an Algerian and a Kenyan. Hence, their regret suggested the initial signs for disclosing their identity's issue. At the end, we explored hybridity where we attempted to show this concept through the two main protagonists Jonas and Kariuki, who are hybrid characters in their societies. Their strong relationship with their strange friends led them to suffer from hybridity at its different types like cultural, religious and linguistic ones. We tried our best to support our research with suitable examples from the two novels about the existed of the hybrid notion in both Jonas and Kariuki.

In brief, by the end of this comparative study, we deduce that both *What the Day Owes the Night* and *The Mzungu Boy* share some affinities that encourages us to treat the topic of "The Quest of identity" in both literary works. Besides, both of these novels portray the colonial misery in the Algerian and the Kenyan case. Both Yasmina Khadra and Meja Mwangi used their literature as a weapon to fight against the colonial enterprise and denounce it. As we assume, though both writers have not influenced each other, they succeeded to establish a fictional story with imaginative characters within a real story of colonialism, accompanied with true and real historical events.

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Résumé

Le but de notre recherche sous le titre **The Quest of identity in *What the Day Owes the Night*** (2008) de Yasmina Khadra et ***The Mzungu Boy*** (2011) de Meja Mwangi est d'explorer les affinités communes existant entre les deux romans concernés. Notre étude comparative porte sur le thème du colonialisme, qui a profondément marqué les nations africaines en particulier l'Algérie et Kenya. Par conséquent, à cet égard, nous avons abordé la question du colonialisme et de l'identité dans les deux romans, où Y. Khadra et M. Mwangi ont dépeint et exposé le même dilemme dont souffraient leurs pays colonisés. De plus, nous éclairons la notion d'hybridité d'Homi Bhabha puisque nous avons constaté que les deux œuvres traitent de ce concept, à travers les deux personnages africains principaux Jonas et Kariuki qui sont des garçons hybrides. Pour atteindre notre objectif dans la présente recherche, nous avons fait appel à la fois aux théories postcoloniales et néo-historiciste, et pour le rendre plus significatif, nous avons injecté une dose d'hybridité d'Homi Bhabha.

الملخص

الغرض من دراستنا تحت عنوان البحث عن الهوية في كلتا الروايتين ياسمينة خضرة بعنوان **What the Day Owes the Night** (2008) و **ميجا موانجي** بعنوان **The Mzungu Boy** (2011) هو استكشاف التشابهات الموجودة بين الروايتين المعنيتين. تركز دراستنا المقارنة على موضوع الاستعمار، الذي أثر بعمق على الدول الأفريقية وخاصة الجزائر وكينيا. ومن هنا تناولنا قضية الاستعمار والهوية في كلتا الروايتين حيث صور وكشف ي. خضرة وموانجي نفس المعضلة التي عانت منها بلادهم المستعمرة. علاوة على ذلك، قمنا بتسليط الضوء على فكرة هومي بهابها عن الهجين حيث وجدنا أن كلا العملين يعالجان هذا المفهوم، من خلال الشخصيتان الإفريقيتان الرئيسيتان جوناس وكاريوكي وهما يعانيان من الهجين الأوروبي للوصول إلى هدفنا في البحث الحالي، ناشدنا كل من نظريات ما بعد الاستعمار والتاريخ الجديد، ولجعلها أكثر أهمية، اعتمدنا مبدأ الهجين لهومي بهابها.