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**John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and  
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study.**

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Dedications:

*To:*

*My sweet parents, sisters and brother,*

*My grandfathers and grandmothers,*

*All my friends.*

*HASSINA.*

*To:*

*My Dear father,*

*My mother and grandmother, God bless them,*

*My brothers and sisters.*

*All those whom loved me and whom I love.*

*OUIZA.*

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## ***Abstract***

The aim of this study is to examine the issue of postcolonial language in John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971). Our major interest in this dissertation is to look for possible convergences between the Irish playwright John Millington Synge, and the Algerian playwright Kateb Yacine as postcolonial writers. Therefore, we have borrowed Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin's concepts of Appropriation and Abrogation from their book entitled: *The Empire Writes Back* (1989). In addition we have appealed to the concept of Cultural Identity as developed by Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall. As a result, we have concluded that in spite the distance that separated both playwrights in time and space, they used the colonizer's language and hybridized the cultural identity of their characters in a very similar way.

## **Introduction:**

This research is an attempt to explore the issue of language and cultural identity in postcolonial Ireland and Algeria. We intend to examine the way in which language is appropriated, abrogated, and how identity is hybridized in John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971).

Indeed, postcolonialism does not simply seek to tell the story of what happened after decolonization, but seeks a critical perspective on its ongoing, problematic legacy: as Young writes, "*Postcolonial critique focuses on forces of oppression and coercive domination that operate in the contemporary world: the politics of anti-colonialism and neo-colonialism, race, gender, nationalism, class and ethnicities define its terrain*"<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, postcolonial studies developed as a way of addressing the cultural production of those societies affected by colonialism<sup>2</sup>. Bill Ashcroft, et al. state in *The Empire Writes Back* (1989): "*We use the term 'post-colonial', however, to cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day.*"<sup>3</sup> It means that the term postcolonialism does not cover only the culture produced during colonization, but even the one produced after independence. In addition to this, postcolonial literature refers to all the literary works produced by the different colonized societies, before and after the political independence. So, it is a way of writing back to the colonizer.

It is significant to mention that many postcolonial playwrights emerged to denounce the colonial presence in their territories and oppose the colonizer's literary works. In fact, drama, as a literary genre, has a privileged role to educate the colonized societies especially through the theatrical presentation, either by using the indigenous language or the language of the colonizer. In this matter Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins (1996) argue:

“As a genre, drama is particularly suited to counter-discursive intervention and equally useful for its expression, since the performance itself replays an originary moment... thus counter discourse is always possible in the theatrical presentation of a canonical text”<sup>4</sup>.

In postcolonial literature, language is one means of resistance. As it was used in the daily life for communication between the common people, many playwrights used language in their drama to communicate either with people directly or even with the colonizer indirectly. In other words, postcolonial playwrights used language as way of writing back. Bill Ashcroft et al. see language as:

“The medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated and the medium through which conceptions of ‘truth’, ‘order’, and ‘reality’ become established such power is rejected in the emergence of an effective post-colonial voice. For this reason, the discussion of post-colonial writing is largely a discussion of the process by which the language, with its power, and the writing, with its signification of authority, has been wrested from the dominant European culture”<sup>5</sup>.

This was the case in different postcolonial societies like the former British and French colonies. Among those postcolonial playwrights, we can mention the Irish John Millington Synge and the Algerian Kateb Yacine. Despite their belonging to different continents and cultures, and enduring different colonial forces, they experienced the same effects of colonialism. The two playwrights relied on drama to express their experiences as being submitted colonized subjects. They write about the situation of their countries, and the way colonialism misrepresented their societies. Both authors received a colonial education, in colonial schools, therefore, they kept writing in the language of the colonizer; Synge in English and Kateb in French.

## Literature Review:

John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* is a one act play. It was the first of Synge's plays to be performed on stage at the Molesworth Hall, Dublin 1903. During its opening, the play caused a stir among audiences and critics, notably Irish nationalists<sup>6</sup>.

Thomas Stearns Eliot, an American poet, dramatist and a literary critic, views on Synge's plays: "*The plays of John Millington Synge form rather a special case, because they are based upon the idiom of a rural people whose speech is naturally poetic, both in imagery and in rhythm*"<sup>7</sup>. In addition, the character's language is laced with imagery, symbols and rhythm in a sense that the play could not have been written by anyone but an Irish<sup>8</sup>.

The Irish editor and co-founder of the nationalist newspaper "*The United Irishman*" Arthur Griffith has blamed Synge and attacked him for creating an unfaithful female character, and considered *The Shadow of the Glen* as un-Irish in its portrayal of Irish womanhood. For him the play does not reflect the real Irish woman. He asserts:

"Men and Women in Ireland marry lacking love, and live mostly in a dull level of amity. Sometimes the woman lives in bitterness—sometimes she dies of a broken heart—but she does not go away with the tramp".<sup>9</sup>

He immediately wrote a counter-play entitled *In a Real Wicklow Glen*, to show that no Irish woman would leave her husband, even if the marriage was loveless. He sees *The Shadow of the Glen* as "decadent", "corrupt", and "cynical".<sup>10</sup>

Joseph Holloway, an Irish architect and diarist criticized the Abbey theatre and regarded dubiously the attempts of Yeats and Lady Gregory to create an art theatre. Just as Griffith, he viewed Synge's plays as immoral and Synge's representation of Irish life as false, he states:

“His plays *The Playboy of the Western World* and *the Shadow of the Glen* are not a truthful or just picture of Irish peasants, but simply the outpouring of morbid, unhealthy mind ever seeking on the dunghill of life for the nastiness that lies concealed there...Synge is the evil genius of the Abbey and Yeats his able Lieutenant”<sup>11</sup>.

At the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Synge was considered as a traitor because of his works, however, at the beginning of the 21<sup>th</sup> century, critics started to see *The Shadow of the Glen* from a different angle. P. J. Mathews in “*The Synge Texts*” considers that Synge’s works have been mobilized in the pursuit of nationalists, feminists, Marxists and postcolonial critical agendas<sup>12</sup>. He argues that despite the fact that both Yeats and Synge were involved deeply in the Irish revival, and both contributed to the foundation of the Abbey theatre, there is a wide difference between how the two see revivalism. For him, Synge’s works are contradictory to the Yeatsian methods, and *The Shadow of the Glen*, is a counter version of female agency to that presented in *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902) by W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory<sup>13</sup>.

When it comes to the Algerian playwright Kateb Yacine, it is necessary to point out that the play *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971) has received less critical attention in French language, and very little in English comparing to his novels especially *Nedjma* (1956) which is universally studied and criticized.

The French writer Maurice Nadeau, acknowledged Kateb Yacine’s plays as being extraordinary and declared: “*On voudrait qu’il existât en Algérie beaucoup d’esprits, qui, comme Kateb Yacine allient les sens de la plus profonde poésie à une lucidité sans entraves*”<sup>14</sup>.

Bénamar Mediène, a professor at the Universities of Oran and Aix-en-Provence, and the writer of the account Kateb Yacine, *Le Coeur Entre Les Dents*. He was interested in the preoccupations of the immigrants in France. He sees *Mohamed prends ta valise* as a tragedy.

In his view, Yacine sees men, women, children, and employees as a lost people; their difficult situations in their countries and in the country where they immigrate make of their lives a misery. Therefore, Kateb Yacine wanted to write their stories in a tragic way because it is a tragedy<sup>15</sup>.

From the Islamists' point of view, the Egyptian Imam Sheikh El Ghazali in one of his sermons in Algeria, considered Kateb Kacine as a traitor because he writes in French and lives in the country of the colonizer, and an atheist by using improperly the prophet's name "Mohamed" in *Mohamed prends ta valise*. He was even against the burial of Kateb in Algeria. In this matter Anouar Benmalek, an Algerian writer, considered El Ghazali's words as an insult for the author he liked the most. So he responded him ironically in an article published in the weekly *Algerie-Actualité*, explaining that *Mohamed prends ta valise* is a play not a novel as El Ghazali thought, and that it was about the injunction made by the French racists to the North African immigrants to leave France not about religion or the prophet<sup>16</sup>.

Dr. Gada Nadia, a Senior Lecturer in African and Comparative Literature at the English Department of the University of Tizi Ouzou, in her Magister dissertation linked Yacine's shift from dramatic to epic theatre to the disillusionment that prevailed in post-independent Algeria. She identifies the Brechtian techniques in *Mohamed prends ta valise* such as the episodic plot with independent scenes, the use of sarcasm mixed with black humor, and the direct narration technique. For her, Kateb Yacine recalls the Brechtian methods and techniques in his plays in order to appeal to the audience thinking and reaction for social change<sup>17</sup>.

## **Issue and working hypothesis:**

From our review of some literary criticism of J.M. Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen*, it is obvious that the play has received different interpretations from several perspectives, but Kateb Yacine's plays, in general, gained less critical attention notably the play under our study *Mohamed prends ta valise*. The latter has received little criticism in English comparing to Synge's play *The Shadow of The Glen*. Although, the two plays offer many affinities in the way they used language, and cultural identity, they, as far as we know, have never been studied together.

This is precisely what motivated us to undertake this comparative study. Our assumption is that the two playwrights used the colonizer's language and hybridized the cultural identity in a very similar way.

To demonstrate this, we will rely on Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) especially to their concepts of Appropriation and Abrogation. We will also appeal to the concept of Cultural Identity as developed by Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha to achieve our aim.

As for the methodological outline to implement our research, our dissertation will be composed of a general introduction in which we review the literature about J. M. Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise*, state our issue and working hypothesis. In Methods and Materials section, we provide a brief summary of Bill Ashcroft et. al. *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) and Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha views of Cultural Identity, followed by a general synopsis of the two plays. In the Result and Discussion we present our findings before developing our argument. The dissertation ends with a general conclusion.

## End Notes:

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- 15- Omar Mokhtar Challal. *Kateb Yacine: L'homme Libre*, Casbah Edition, Alger, 2014
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## II. Methods and Materials:

### 1. Methods:

This part of our dissertation provides an insight on the theories we will rely on in our study. We have borrowed some concepts of great relevance to our work from Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back*, focusing on the concepts of "Appropriation", "Abrogation". We will also appeal to the concept of "Cultural Identity" as developed by Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall.

#### a. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back (1989)*:

Bill Ashcroft teaches at the University of New South Wales, Australia, Gareth Griffiths at the University of Albany, USA and Helen Tiffin at the University of Queensland, Australia. All three have published widely in post-colonial studies, and together edited the ground-breaking *Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (1994) and wrote *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998)<sup>1</sup> and *The Empire Writes Back* (1989). This latter was the first major theoretical account of a wide range of post-colonial texts and their relation to the larger issues of post-colonial culture, and remains one of the most significant works published in this field. This book is concerned with writing by those peoples formerly colonized by Britain, though much of what it deals with is of interest and relevance to countries colonized by other European powers, such as France, Portugal, and Spain.<sup>2</sup>

Ashcroft et. al. define the term Abrogation as: "*The rejection of a standard language in the writing of post-colonial literatures*"<sup>3</sup>. It is a way of writing through which the postcolonial

writers refuse to use the colonizer's language in a correct or a standard way. The concept is also defined as:

“The refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or correct usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning inscribed in the words”<sup>4</sup>.

The term Appropriation is used with abrogation, it describes the way in which postcolonial societies adopt some important elements from the culture of the colonizers and use them differently in their own culture and language<sup>5</sup>. Ashcroft's et. al. defines Appropriation as : “*The process by which the language is taken and made to ‘bear the burden’ of one’s own cultural experience*” and Abrogation as : “*A refusal of the categories of the imperial culture*”<sup>6</sup>. Appropriation is used to describe the ways in which post-colonial societies take over those aspects of the imperial culture – language, forms of writing, film, theatre, even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis – that may be of use to them in articulating their own social and cultural identities.<sup>7</sup>

An important notion in the appropriation and abrogation strategy is code-switching and vernacular transcription as it is viewed by Bill Ashcroft et. al.:

“...the most common method of inscribing alterity by the process of appropriation is the technique of switching between two or more codes [...]The techniques employed by the polydialectical writer include variable orthography to make dialect more accessible, double glossing and code-switching to act as an interweaving interpretative mode, and the selection of certain words which remain untranslated in the text. All these are common ways of installing cultural distinctiveness in the writing”<sup>8</sup>.

## **b. Cultural Identity:**

### **1. Homi Bhabha's concept of Cultural Identity:**

Homi Bhabha is an Indian theorist and a leading figure in contemporary cultural discourse; he was inspired by writers such as Salman Rushdie and Toni Morrison. He argued that postcolonial theory adopted the idea of hybridity to designate the transcultural forms that resulted from linguistic, political or ethnic intermixing, and to challenge the existing hierarchies, polarities, binarisms and symmetries (East/West, black/white, coloniser/colonised, majority/minority, self/other, interior/exterior...)<sup>9</sup>

*The Location of Culture* is Bhabha's seminal work in which he gives many of the definitions of the notion of hybridity and accounts of the diverse aspects of this concept. The following excerpt from *Signs Taken for Wonders* Bhabha (1994) defines the notion of Hybridity :

“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 (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the pure and original identity of authority). Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary and disseminatory or, in my mixed metaphor, a negative transparency.”<sup>10</sup>

To elaborate more on this definition, Bhabha adds: “ *It is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures or the two scenes of the book, in a dialectical play of recognition* ”<sup>11</sup>. The interpretation Werbner (2001) has of Bhabha's definition of hybridity, as

doubling up of the sign', a splitting' which is less than one and double,' is that the same object or custom placed in a different context acquires quite new meanings, while echoing old ones <sup>12</sup>.

Bhabha further defines hybrid as the transformational value of change lies in the rearticulating, or translating, of elements that are neither the one (unitary working class) nor the other (the politics of gender) but something else besides, which connect the term and territories of both) <sup>13</sup>. In other words; is a cultural exchange or mixture between several ethnic groups which creates a new form of identity, It can be religious, social, political or linguistic.

The cultural hybridities emerge in the moments of historical transformation; which means that it needs the encounter of two different or opposite sides; the colonizer and the colonized, the past and present as Bhabha states:

“The borderline works of culture demands an encounter with ‘newness’ that is not part of the continuum of past and present and present. It creates a sense of the new as insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent ‘in-between’ space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The ‘past-present’ become part of the necessity, not the nostalgia of living.”<sup>14</sup>

## **2. Stuart Hall’s concept of Cultural Identity:**

Stuart Hall is a professor of sociology at the Open University. He writes on politics, race and culture. He did extensive work on cultural identity. The aim of his theory is to examine why questions of cultural identity have acquired increasing in recent years in social and cultural theory as well as in a number of different fields of research in the social sciences, cultural studies and the humanities. For him the concept of identity has undergone changes through time. So, it is obvious that identity construction is a dynamic process which brings

change through time according to historical events. Stuart Hall sustains this claim by defining the term 'identity' as:

“A moveable feast formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural system which surround us. It is historically, not biologically, defined. The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent “self”<sup>15</sup>.

Stuart Hall distinguishes three different conceptions of identity; the Enlightenment Subject, the Sociological Subject and the Postmodern Subject.

### **1. Enlightenment Subject:**

It is based on the conception of human person as fully unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness and action, whose 'center' consisted of an inner core which first emerged when the subject was born, and unfolded with it, while remaining essentially the same - continuous or 'identical' with itself - throughout the individual's existence. The essential centre of the self was a person's identity. So this Enlightenment subjects were usually described as male identity.<sup>16</sup>

### **2. Sociological Subject:**

The notion of the sociological subject reflected the growing complexity of the modern world and the awareness that this inner core of the subject was not autonomous and self-sufficient, but was formed in relation to 'significant others', who mediated to the subject the values, meanings and symbols -the culture - of the worlds he/ she inhabited. Identity, in this sociological conception, bridges the gap between the 'inside' and the 'outside' 'personal' and 'public' worlds. The fact that we project 'ourselves' into these cultural identities, at the *same* time internalizing their meanings and values, making them 'part of us', helps to align our subjective feelings with the objective' places we occupy in the social and cultural world.<sup>17</sup>

### **3. Post-modern Subject:**

It is conceptualized as having no fixed, essential or permanent identity. Identity becomes a 'moveable feast': formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us<sup>18</sup>. It is historically, not biologically, defined. The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent 'self'. Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continuously being shifted about. If we feel we have a unified identity from birth to death, it is only because we constructed a comforting story or 'narrative of the self' about ourselves<sup>19</sup>. The fully unified and completed, secure and coherent identity is a fantasy. Instead, as the systems of meaning and cultural representation multiply, we are confronted by a bewildering, fleeting multiplicity of possible identities, any one of which we could identify with - at least temporarily.<sup>20</sup>

### **2. Materials:**

In this chapter we will provide a brief summary of the two plays: *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971).

#### **a) Synopsis of *The Shadow of the Glen*:**

*The Shadow of the Glen* is a one act play, set in an isolated cottage in County Wicklow. Nora the main character is married with an old farmer Dan Burke who pretends to be dead at the beginning of the play. A tramp comes to the house begging for food and shelter and Nora invites him to enter and take a sit. They both make a conversation about Dan and about a local Shepherd called Patch Darcy. She goes out to find Michael for help, so she asks the tramp to stay at home during her absence. Dan reveals to the tramp that he is still alive, and makes a conversation about his unfaithful wife, then he plays dead again upon Nora and

Michael's return. Dan confirms his wife infidelity and rises from the dead. Nora and Michael are surprised and frightened. At the end of the play Dan banishes his wife from the house so she leaves with the tramp, who promises her a life of freedom.

**b) Synopsis of *Mohamed prends ta valise*:**

*Mohamed prends ta valise* is one act play performed in factories and other industries in France. It reflects the causes of immigration of the Algerian workers before and after independence; the immigrants suffer from destitution of life and the humiliating status. Mohamed, the main character of the play went to work in France where he was exploited, rejected and denigrated, so Mohamed took his suitcase and returned to his country, where he was unwelcomed, deceived and exploited again. He made return trips between Algeria and France as it is the situation of all other immigrants of the time. Finally, he came back to Algeria to participate in the damage of the colonizers idols, and built a new Algeria.

**End notes:**

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- 10- Homi Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*, 159.160.
- 11- Ibid., 162.
- 12- Ibid., 136
- 13- Ibid.
- 14- Ibid., 10.
- 15- Stuart Hall, *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Blackwell Publishers, no date), 598.
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### **III) Results and Discussion:**

#### **a. Results**

Our study of John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends valise* (1971) has shown that there are affinities between them in terms of the use of language and in terms of representation of their cultural identity.

Moreover, this study has demonstrated that both writers used the language of the colonizer (English and French) in order to reach a wider audience, and to make the voice of postcolonial people heard by the colonizer. Indeed, they sought to liberate themselves from the cultural domination which violated their rights and used their language as object to fulfill their dreams. For this reason, we deduce that Kateb Yacine and John Millington Synge felt the same need to correct the image the colonizer drew of their countries through appropriating and abrogating the language of the center.

Our study of cultural identity in both plays has revealed that both authors created characters with a hybridized cultural identity. Synge's characters are Catholics who are at ease with the pagan reminiscences in their religious beliefs and Yacine's characters are not pious Muslims (They drink alcohol, they mock religion). In addition the characters in both plays are not heroes but simple folks with their weaknesses in front of temptation. For instance, the main female character goes with the Tramp in Synge's play and Aicha accepts the Mufti's proposal in Yacine's play. As a result, what distinguishes John Millington Synge and Kateb Yacine from the other postcolonial playwrights is the fact that both them represent their societies through giving their characters a hybrid identities in order to counter back the colonizer.

## **b. Discussion:**

In this part of our dissertation, we will discuss the kinship between the Irish and Algerian theatres as highlighted in Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971). The first chapter deals with appropriation and abrogation in both plays then we will discuss cultural identity in the second part of this discussion section.

### **Chapter One: Appropriation and Abrogation.**

Since language is one of the means of domination; the natives are mainly confronted to the loss of their native language. However, many colonized playwrights appropriate and abrogate the language of the center, and by doing so, they write back to the colonizer. Bill Ashcroft et. al. assert:

“ writers who appropriate colonial languages to their own use argue that although language may create powerful emotive contexts through which local identities are formed, and even as the use of non-indigenous languages may, as a result, appear to such communities to be less authentic than texts in indigenous languages, such languages do not, in themselves, constitute an irrecoverably alien form, and they may be appropriated to render views that are just as powerful in constructing anti-colonial texts. They may also affect further results that texts in the indigenous languages cannot do so easily, offering a different mode of post-colonial resistance to cultural hegemony<sup>1</sup>”.

Thus, John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903), and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971) are among the important postcolonial works that display well the use of colonial language. Both renounced the language of the former colonizer to write their novels and plays because the foreign language has become a useful means of expression, and one that reaches the widest possible audience.

## **1) Appropriation and Abrogation in John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903):**

The spread of the English language was due to the British colonization; it was a part of an imperialistic project to have more control and authority over the British Empire, and to eradicate the culture of the natives. In fact, Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins state: “*to name people and places in English, replacing any earlier constructions of locations and identity is to establish at least partial control over reality, geography, history and subjectivity*”<sup>2</sup>.

Ireland, as one of the most important English colonies, had lost its linguistic autonomy when the English language was imposed on Gaelic speakers, *forbidding people to speak their own tongue and replacing it by the imperial tongue is an effective method in the destruction of a culture*<sup>3</sup>. In fact, one of the major effects of the conquest of Ireland and its continued colonization over centuries was the suppression of the Gaelic language. The colonizer considered English as the language of science, development and civilization, superior to the native language of the colonized which they considered as babble.

The Celtic settlements in Europe were absorbed by Caesar's legions, destroying their language and culture, and imposing their own. Ireland was safe from the Roman Empire, and this event played a pivotal role in Irish Celtic history. Celtic Ireland survived the arrival of the Christians around AD 431, until the Flight of the Earls in 1607. The Gaelic language and culture was oppressed by James I of England”<sup>4</sup>.

The Irish Renaissance came to introduce some modifications into the imperial language to make it appropriate and suit the needs of the Irish people. The Irish revivalist J. M. Synge draws material for his literary works from the life of the peasants in the Aran Islands and Eastern Ireland. W. B. Yeats, one of the founders of the Irish literary theatre

(1899-1902), The Irish National theatre (1902-1904) and The Abbey Theatre (since 1904), advised Synge to live in the Aran Islands and employ his artistic genius in portraying its primitive life in his plays<sup>5</sup>.

The Abbey Theatre found its stability and gave Irish theatre a new spirit by enriching it with humorous realistic folk drama combined with symbolism and musicality<sup>6</sup>.

Accordingly, Synge's works immortalize a lifestyle of a disappearing Gaelic culture; he depicts their sufferings, perils and traditions<sup>7</sup>. His writing in English was due to the fact that the Irish National Theatre failed to produce pure Irish plays because English was the available language in Ireland, no one was speaking Gaelic anymore, and no audience for Gaelic plays. He used the language of the western peasants, which sounds English, but with an Irish intonation and syntax. He first used his language in his book *The Aran Islands*, based on real events, where he speaks about the rituals, culture, myths, folklores and legends of Ireland. In this respect, Ruchika Singh affirms:

“Synge by using this style, avoided the problem that many of the other writers within the Irish literary Revival had; most of them were no native Irish speakers, their Irish was indeed very poor [...] the Irish peasants helped him to establish a new sense of culture and linguistic identity in Ireland by transforming Irish folklore into art and by capturing the rhythm of the Anglo-Irish dialect”<sup>8</sup>.

John Millington Synge and many other revivalist like W. B. Yeats aimed to revive the old Irish language, traditions and culture, give a relevant image of Irish people and country, and challenge the hegemony of the colonial discourse that states that Ireland was less developed than Britain and needs to be civilized . Nicholas Grene praises J. M. Synge, Lady Gregory and W. B. Yeats for succeeding to create a truly Irish theatre by establishing the Abbey theatre. He quotes, in his *Politics of Irish Drama, Plays in Context from Boucicault to Friel* (1999), Brian Friel's claims:

“Apart from Synge, all our dramatists have pitched their voices for English acceptance and recognition... However, I think that for the first time this is stopping... We are talking to ourselves as we must and if we are overheard in America, or in England, so much the better”<sup>9</sup>.

According to Bill Ashcroft's et. al. Abrogation is a refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or 'correct' usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning 'inscribed' in the words<sup>11</sup>; he also defined Appropriation as the process by which the language is taken and made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience, or, as Raja Rao puts it, to 'convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own.'<sup>12</sup>

From the beginning of the play Synge indicated that the events of the play take place in Ireland in County Wicklow, where a peasant family lives, this is obvious through the conversation of Nora with the Tramp: “*Maybe that would do you better than the milk of the sweetest cow in County Wicklow*”<sup>13</sup>. “*What may would I live and I an old woman if I didn't marry a man with a bit of farm on it, and sheep on the back hills*”<sup>14</sup>. As we can notice, the sentences are grammatically incorrect, the characters are not speaking Gaelic because the audience could not understand them, their language seems to be English but rewritten in Synge's own way.

Through our analysis of the play, we have also recognized that J. M. Synge used unusual sentences, which does not exist in English, for example when Nora speaks about her husband: “...*but I'm thinking it's dead he is surely ...when he went to his bed, and he was saying it was destroyed he was*”<sup>15</sup>. The English correct structure of the sentence of can be “*I'm thinking it's dead he is surely*” can be of “he is surely dead”.

An additional obvious matter is the fact that the grammatical elements and the syntax of the language are not correct. The playwright did not follow the syntax of the English standard language and the correct conjugation of verbs. In fact, the distortion of the grammar

and syntax of the colonizer language is one of the ways in which the language can be appropriated and abrogated, and the following substances are suitable illustrations to the above arguments: for example the Tramp's conversation with Nora: "*is it myself, lady of the house, that does be walking round in the long night...*"<sup>16</sup> Or in Nora's words: "*There were great stories of what was heard at that time, but would anyone believe the things they do be saying in the glen?*"<sup>17</sup> another example, the Tramp speaks to Nora about Dan: "*it's a queer look is on him for a man that's dead*"<sup>18</sup>.

In his play, Synge's uses unusual sentences with incorrect conjugation of verbs, sometimes he didn't use verbs, other times he uses more than one verb in one sentence, as it is illustrated in the examples mentioned above. He ignored the grammar and the English language syntax which is a way of appropriation and abrogation. In this matter, the writers of *The Empire Writes Back* think that the postcolonial literatures, as it is the case of Synge's work *The Shadow of the Glen*, are cross-cultural which means that one culture mixed with another, and each one benefits from the other:

"This literature is therefore always written out of the tension between the abrogation of the received English which speaks from the center and the act of appropriation which brings it under the influence of a vernacular tongue, the complex of speech habits which characterize the local language"<sup>19</sup>.

Synge adapted the Code-Switching strategy in his play by inserting some proper nouns in *The Shadow of The Glen*; for example "Nora" is a common name in Ireland that cannot be translated, "Country Wicklow" a name of place in Ireland which also cannot be translated. these names, among others, indicate and refer directly to Ireland.

## 2) Appropriation and Abrogation in Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971):

The postcolonial language has become a subject of controversial discussion especially in post independent countries. For postcolonial writers the question of language is invariably connected to the Identity issue - so vital a concern in all postcolonial writings:

"Language is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture.... It (carries) the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world.... Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community or human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relation to the world"<sup>20</sup>.

Kateb Yacine's are that of a colonized individual, victim of linguistic and intellectual alienation. He was educated in a French school, unable to write in his mother tongue Arabic, he wrote in the French language, a situation he always found alienating, before returning to his native language through a popular theater, while keeping the nostalgia of a language that has overwhelmed him in the colonial school and whose rhythms and music have marked him forever<sup>21</sup>.

Indeed, we can read in this choice more than a need to distance himself from the instruments, the opportunity to be close to his Algerian readership; a thing which was not possible with the French language; the language of the colonizer. Kateb's *Mohamed prends ta valise* is inscribed in this category.

Algerian writers and playwrights were not able to publish their works in the Arabic language, because publishing houses were owned by the French. Arabic was taught just in Coranic schools in Algeria because the French language was the imposed language. One of the striking aspects of the play is the language in which it is written. The playwright's reliance on the informal language includes the use of some vernacular expressions. In other words, Kateb's appeal to Arabic language is not a mere exercise of style, it has many powerful social

and political implications involving a potentially undermine engagement with the long history of cultural domination in Algeria<sup>22</sup>. The transition from Arabic to French language was not easy for the young Kateb Yacine who lived in a colonial society where language and Arab culture were repressed by the colonial power.

Francophone writers from the Maghreb use some literary steps to illustrate the poetics of their native languages and to make the sonority of their maternal language felt. Kateb Yacine considered French language as a “Butin de Guerre”, a spoil he won from the enemy to fight him back. Kaoutar Harchi in her article about Kateb Yacine’s literature states:

“ C’est par l’appropriation, la conquête de ce “*butin de guerre*”, c’est-à-dire la langue française, que son exil, sa migration, ses longues absences du pays natal, deviennent intelligibles, s’inscrivent dans une logique collective de reconnaissance, se chargent d’un sens précis et fédérateur, celui de la légitimité de la lutte pour la Révolution par la Poésie ”<sup>23</sup>.

Since Kateb Yacine returned to Algeria to start theatre in the vernacular, he constantly defines his theatre as "Un Theatre dans La Langue du Peuple", a theatre in the language of the people. He argues:

“I have come back to what I always wanted to do: a political theatre produced in a language that is broadly accessible to the largest public possible. From now on, I am going to use two languages: French, but mainly vernacular Arabic." "If I want to be understood by the common people it is in their Language that I must address them"<sup>24</sup>.

Kateb Yacine as a Francophone writer uses the French language mingled with the vernacular Algerian language in order to be understood by the French as well as the majority of the Algerian people. He claimed: “*In so far as I am writing in French, it was obviously only for a peripheral group, the People who read this language*”<sup>25</sup>.

For Kateb, the Arabic language is the best means to engage directly the Cultural Revolution upon people who speaks that language. The claim that the language the playwright uses is the language of the people is rather debatable .He argues that he uses "The language of the people, the language of The Street"<sup>26</sup>. Some of Yacine's plays are unpublished because of their political context. The language used does not follow definite norms of spelling and grammar and required detailed knowledge of Algerian modern Arabic and French so that certain words and phrases could be deciphered. In this respect, Ashcroft et. al. claim:

“Such language use seems to be keeping faith with the local culture and transporting it into the new medium. Thus the untranslated words, the sounds and the textures of the language can be held to have the power and presence of the culture they signify – to be metaphoric in their ‘inference of identity and totality’<sup>27</sup>.

*Mohamed prends ta valise* represents the Algerian population that speaks French, but we can notice that the French language is not as the French spoken by the Algerian population, it is appropriated and abrogated. Yacine manipulated the language of the tyrant and tries to exercise his domination over the colonizer. In addition, in the whole play, we can notice that the characters speak a different language with a different tone unlike that language spoken by the French community. For exemple ; Mohamed said in his conversation with Le Cadi:

Et moi je n'ai pas d'épaules...  
C'est pas que je n'ai pas d'épaules  
J'ai un frère  
Mais mon frère  
N'a pas de nez! <sup>28</sup>.

Here, the main character's language shows his attachment to his country, it indicates his question of 'home' where he belongs to. Kateb uses clear dialectical expressions that are understood by all the Algerians. He wanted to say that he has no connections in the right places by using the word "épaules" which means in English "shoulders". The meaning of the

sentence is understood according to the context of the Algerian people. The same thing for:” N’a pas le nez” the word “nez” in French and “nose” in English, but for Mohamed and for the Algerian society it is a symbol of pride, dignity and honor.

Throughout our reading, we have also noticed that the grammatical elements and the syntax of the French language are not correct. The playwright did not follow syntax and the French standard or the academic conjugation of verbs; the following extracts are suitable illustrations to above arguments:

Le sergent chantant:  
Engage-toi pour l’Indochine,  
Tu t’rincera l’œil,  
Tu t’feras d’l’oseille!  
Tu d’viendras caporal,  
Tu distingueras  
Ta droit de ta gauche,  
Tu bouf’ras à la cantine  
Apéritif et mandarines!<sup>30</sup>.

As it is stated in *The Empire Writes Back*: “Language as medium of power demands that post-colonial writing defines itself by seizing the language of the center and replacing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place”<sup>31</sup>, it means taking the language of the center or the colonizer and reshape it in a way to become suitable to the colonized people. Thus, it is clear that Kateb Yacine proves himself as an Algerian postcolonial writer through the manipulation of the language in his play *Mohamed Prends Ta Valise* and the distortion of some French words such as the word “Tissue”<sup>32</sup> becomes “Tissor”, the word “Madam’Gaspar”<sup>33</sup> instead of “Madagascar”.

Kateb appeals to the Algerian vernacular where he uses poetic language, fragmented into small units which seem meaningless and incoherent sometimes: Aicha: “Y’a Mohamed: Y’a Zami Comme sa t’a parlé le roumi”<sup>34</sup>. He also intended to include some idioms used by the Algerians but in the French language; to illustrate, when Mohamed sings: Cousin, Prends

garde à tes Moustaches. Moustaches in English or in French is the same, but for the Algerian society they have a great significance, someone with moustache means that he is real man, just like the expression of the nose. Someone without moustache means that he is not a real man and has no dignity.

Code-switching is one way of appropriation and abrogation which means to write in the colonizer's language and insert some untranslated words or sentences which belongs to the mother language, in a way the colonizer does not understand the meaning, he should go back to the origin of the word, or a dictionary to find the meaning.

“Writers in this continuum employ highly developed strategies of code-switching and vernacular transcription, which achieve the dual result of abrogating the Standard English and appropriating an English as a culturally significant discourse.”<sup>35</sup>

In this case, Kateb Yacine used this technique in *Mohamed prends ta valise*, he inserts many Arabic words in the play, some of them have their equivalence in French but other do not have, they are pure Algerian words which represent the Algerian person not another else. In almost all bilingual speech communities proper nouns usually have no translation equivalent in the other language, but are used in both languages in a phonologically identical form. In this matter, Katab Yacine in his play uses Algerian proper nouns that have not an equivalent in French for example:

Les Arabes, silence !  
Vous etes mes invites!  
Aicha, apporte le repas!  
Mohamed, n'oublie pas le vin!<sup>36</sup>

Aicha and Mohamed are among the Arabic common names in Algeria (and in the Arab countries), also they are used in both Arabic and foreigner language. Indeed, there are in the play many other proper names such as: the name of places “Belcourt”<sup>37</sup>, and the names of some traditional clothes:

MOHAMED, au public:  
“je vous present la Gandourine  
Chaque gandoura y tient un role,  
l’un est en soie, l’autre en tissor,  
Tandit que moi je suis tout nu  
Je vous present la Gandourine.”<sup>38</sup>

In the example above, Kateb creates an Arabic word “Gandourine” which comes from *gandoura*, one of the famous cloths in the Algerian and Maghreb society. What is also notable is the capitalization of the word when he represents the cloth to the public to give it a great importance. Beside *Gandourine*, Yacine wanted to show the richness of the Algerian heritage by presenting their different traditional cloths “*Dans ton burnous rouge!*”<sup>39</sup>, “*Pour te faire une kachabia*”<sup>40</sup>. The word “burnous” refers to a thick hooded cloak worn by Berbers and Arabs in Northwest Africa, and “kachabia” is a wool garment or camel hair worn by farmers and banks.

There are a lot of words in the play which Kateb prefers to write in Arabic language such as “Beni-Gandour”<sup>41</sup>, “douar”<sup>42</sup>, “toubib”<sup>43</sup>, “halouf”<sup>44</sup>, “maboule”<sup>45</sup>, “couscous”<sup>46</sup>, “Sidi”<sup>47</sup>. Some of these examples have their equivalent in French; toubib means medicine, maboule means fou, and Sidi for monsieur.

**End notes :**

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## Chapter Two: Cultural Identity.

### Introduction:

J. M. Synge and Kateb Yacine were writing back in the colonizer's language to correct the negative image that the colonizer drew for their people. However, contrary to their fellow writers of the period, they do not oppose the colonizer a 'pure', essential national identity, but one which is hybrid, reconciled with the elements it has absorbed.

Irish and Algerian identities were fragmented and shaped due to the drawbacks of the wars which brought upheavals to both societies; the fact which led many Irish and Algerian playwrights as John Millington Synge and Kateb Yacine to make of their drama a way through which they represent the turbulent changes which were taking place in their societies.

Stuart Hall relates the term "identity" to the outcome of historical changes: "*It is historically, not biologically, defined. The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent "self"*"<sup>1</sup>. It means that one cannot have a fixed identity all life because identity is dynamic, it changes through time.

In this chapter, we will try to depict the hybridized identity on Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* and Kateb's *Mohamed Prends ta Valise*, through the analysis of some main characters on the two plays according to the sociological point of view of Stuart Hall about Identity, and Homi Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity. The latter consists of the interaction between two cultures which creates an 'in-between' culture. While Stuart Hall emphasizes in the process of transformation rather than the search for an originary culture<sup>2</sup>.

#### a. Cultural Identity in Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903):

As Ireland was under the colonial rule of Britain, the colonized (native Irish) were classified "as the repressed and rejected 'other' against the colonizer (Britain) which defined as an ordered self". The Colonizers justify their colonization by saying that it is their destiny

to enlighten the upward people, not for their own profit, but they were civilizing them. This story was told, and repeated by the colonizers, as a fact and to accept it as true. However, the colonial discourse generally is based on racial differences, and the black/ white dichotomy forms. In this case Brenda Murray affirms: “*justification for the mission of saying the Irish from themselves was based on conception of barbarism, ignorance, paganism, and inferiority*”<sup>3</sup>. This resulted in the marginalization of the Irish. Thus despite their whiteness, they were reduced into an inferior position for many centuries. It is this racial and cultural affinity between the Irish and their colonizer that pressed the latter to find a strong argument in order to justify their act, a significant difference that will make the Irish the ‘other’ of the British since the latter thought “to oppose the rural Celts or ‘democratic’ bush worker, to an urban, English colonizer”.

The beginning of 1890 marked the history of Ireland in general and of Irish drama in particular. After the death of Charles Stewart Parnell in 1891, Irish people lost faith in politics as the only way to establish their identity and they turned to literature and arts of the past. Many playwrights devoted their artistic talent to the revival of the old Gaelic language, folklore, and customs of Ireland. Indeed, they sought to preserve Irish culture which was threatened by the English colonizer<sup>4</sup>.

Among the playwrights who emerged in writing back to the colonizer, the Anglo-Irish dramatist, John Millington Synge. By living with the peasants in the Aran Islands and Eastern Ireland, he portrays different aspects of the Irish culture through dramatizing the perils, sufferings, traditions and rituals of the Irish people. He attended their funerals, listened to their patterns of speech and learnt about their mannerism. In doing so, he plays a major role in the preservation of the Irish identity that is almost disappearing<sup>5</sup>. Elif Ozcesmeci argues:

“The construction of an Irish cultural identity emerged at the end of the nineteenth century within the context of colonialism. For the nationalist movement in Ireland, a cultural representation was needed to establish an Irishness that was positive and different from Englishness. Several cultural practices were chosen to assert a cultural nationalism. Irish culture, particularly the Irish language and later Irish step dance, became a focal point for Irish cultural representation”.<sup>6</sup>

As a postcolonial writer, John Millington Synge shows his increasing attention in the rural life and culture of the Irish peasant, since the source of his plays are rural settings, especially the ‘Aran Island’, which “known as Aranmor, Irishman and Inishere, are about thirty miles from Galway, and are the setting and/ or influence for Synge’s play”<sup>7</sup>.

Synge’s dramatizes different side of the Irish identity in *The Shadow of the Glen* by portraying the Tramp, the dramatist observes that “The Tramp in Ireland is little troubled by the laws, and lives in out-of-door conditions that keep him in good humor and fine bodily health”<sup>8</sup> Thus we can say that the Tramp symbolized freedom from the frustrated life of the Irish people. The play is set in an isolated cottage at the head of a long glen in County Wicklow. Through the conversation of Nora, it is clear that it is a peasant family “*What way would I live and I an old woman if I didn't marry a man with a bit of a farm, and cows on it, and sheep on the back hills?*”<sup>9</sup>.

Synge did not give his characters an essentialist identity; he represents them as hybrids, basically the main character Nora who is, at the beginning of the play preparing the rituals for her supposed dead husband. In fact one of the Irish rituals is the practice of keening which is a tradition associated with women and forms a central part of the Irish ritual. The cultural significance of keening as a woman’s ritual can be established by tracing its genealogy in Celtic lore and its intrinsic link to Celtic spirituality. The first sounds of the keen in Ireland are attributed to Brigit, the Triple Goddess of Irish mythology<sup>10</sup>. Synge dramatizes

this ritual in *The Shadow of the Glen* through the ceremony of the wake which is one of the pagan activities in the Irish society, transmitted from the old beliefs and myths. This appears in the play when Nora is preparing for the wake:

[...] there are a couple of glasses on the table, and a bottle of whisky, as if for a wake, with two cups, a tea-pot, and a home-made cake. There is another small door near the bed. Nora Burke is moving about the room, settling a few things, and lighting candles on the table...<sup>11</sup>

After the death of the husband, the widow or the keening woman enters a kind of divine madness where she expresses her grief through her voice and body, a period of lamentation and sorrow<sup>12</sup>.

TRAMP: Filling a pipe and looking about the room. I've walked a great way through the world, lady of the house, and seen great wonders, but I never seen a wake till this day with fine spirits, and good tobacco, and the best of pipes, and no one to taste them but a woman only<sup>13</sup>.

From these quotations, we may understand that Nora did not perform the ceremony of the wake perfectly; she did not respect the rituals that a widow follow after the death of the husband, and the Tramp wonders why she does so. She is quiet, not lamenting and not keening as she, and every Irish widow supposed to do.

Syngé as an Anglo-Irish protestant questions faith in Ireland. Religion is seen as a system of beliefs in mystical forces, accompanied by rituals that aim at making life significant, a systematic pattern of values inherited and acquired by the members of a society<sup>14</sup>. Sapir argues that in some societies request individual behavior in their religious experience, but in other societies, the individual is subordinated to a collective symbol<sup>15</sup>.

*The Shadow of the Glen* depicts some instances of the fusion of faith in the Irish society. Nora and the Tramp speak about a dead priest named Patch Darcy, who both knew in the Glen. In their conversation, they referred to the Catholic Church where Darcy worked.

NORA: You knew Darcy?

TRAMP: Wasn't I the last heard his voice in the whole world?

NORA: There were great stories of what was heard at time, but would anyone believe the things do be saying in the glen? <sup>16</sup>.

On the one hand, the Tramp was astonished by the way Nora reacted to the death of her husband, on the other hand, he tried to convince her that what Darcy said was true: "*It was no lie lady of the house*"<sup>17</sup>. It is the same case with Nora, despite the fact that she believed in the Pagan rituals, or the wake, she listened to the stories of Darcy. It can be said that Nora's and the Tramp's identities are paradoxical and not unessential, they believed neither in the old Celtic Pagan beliefs nor in the Roman Catholic Church.

According to some structuralists and poststructuralists such as Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, we are enclosed in the language we inherit; we cannot think outside of it, and therefore it cannot express a different way of thinking and perceiving<sup>18</sup>. There are cultural specifications the colonizing cultures take from the colonized cultures, consciously or unconsciously. In fact, two cultures cannot interact through domination of one culture. Thus, hybridity enables the establishment of communication between those cultures. In this matter Stuart Hall asserts:

"It is the collision between differing points of view on the world that are embedded in these forms. . . such unconscious hybrids have been at the same time profoundly productive historically: they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new 'internal forms' for perceiving the world in words"<sup>19</sup>.

**a. Cultural Identity in Kateb's in *Mohamed prends ta valise (1971)*:**

Colonialism is said to be the first responsible for the disruption and destabilization of national and cultural identities. It is then inevitably necessary for every post independent society to defend and reconstruct its identity. The French colonization impacted the Algerian society in political, economic, cultural and social fields<sup>20</sup>.

Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* outlines the causes of immigration of Algerian workers before and after independence. In France the immigrants suffer from hardship of life. They spend their time moving from one place to another looking for job in order to survive, but the degrading status and racist scorn affects them deeply. Stuart Hall quoted Eliot's words which have an ironic resonance with the contemporary condition of third world migration:

[...] Relations are established with some native race and further by immigration from other than the original source. In this way, peculiar types of culture sympathy and culture-clash appear<sup>21</sup>.

At that period, French authorities used the Algerian immigrants as hostages to blackmail the Algerian government about oil, gas and other political question. Those impacts are also experienced by Mohamed as a colonized person and as an immigrant. He is considered as Diaspora who is separated from his home land. The separation happens because he wants to get a better life in France. However, when he moves to a new land, he has to be fit there. Mohamed uses two languages in everyday life, French and Arabic.

The use of language is used to reveal the condition and experience of his Post-colonial identities which may change through time and according to historical events because it is dynamic and fluid. For the postcolonial writer the question of language is invariably connected to the Identity issue, as it is quoted from the book *Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English Cambridge* :

"Language is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture.... It (carries) the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world.... Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community or human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relation to the world"<sup>22</sup>.

Thus Mohamed's language indicates the attraction between his homeland and new land which means that he is in-between two conditions; he belongs to the minority culture in France which makes him a victim of alienation and assimilation in the newland.

“The migrant culture of the ‘in-between’, the minority position, dramatizes the activity of culture’s untranslability; and in so doing, it moves the question of culture’s appropriation beyond the assimilationist’s dream, or the racist’s nightmare, of a ‘full transmissal of subject matter’”.

Since he lived in Algeria and in France, the Algerian Arabic culture and the French culture had simultaneously attracted Mohamed to have a hybrid Post-colonial identity. In this fact, Stuart Hall quoted Bakhtin view about the cultural hybridity:

“The . . . hybrid is not only double-voiced and double-accented . . . but is also double-linguaged; for in it there are not only (and not even so much) two individual consciousnesses, two voices, two accents, as there are [doublings of] socio-linguistic, consciousnesses, two epochs . . . that come together and consciously fight it out on the territory of the utterance. . . <sup>24</sup>.”

Kateb Yacine born between two cultures; The North African side, there will be tales and legends from Africa, and The Maghreb side, those of the Meddahs sang or told in public places or markets, popular Maghreb poetry " Spoken Arabic " called Melhoun (poetry set to music) and the rich Berber poetic tradition, the spokesman was Si Mohand, a Berber Algerian poet who Kateb Yacine regarded as one of his spiritual father<sup>27</sup> . In addition to this, the traditional songs and The Chorus have played a significant role in his play *Mohamed prends ta valise*.

CHEUR :

On descent dans la mine.

CORYPHEE :

On s'esquinte à la fonderie.

CHEUR :

On ramasse les ordures.

CORYHEE:

On remue la merde<sup>28</sup>.

Kateb Yacine as a postcolonial playwright who belongs to a hybridized society, created hybridized characters, as it is the case with the Mufti who is supposed to be religious figure, and tends to advice people and show them the right path, Kateb shows him as a drunken man, and the main character Aicha blames him for that “*Tu n’as pas honte, Toi le Mufti, Boire du vin?*”<sup>29</sup>. The Mufti answers ironically that there is a clause in the Coran allows drinking “*Il y a dans le Coran une clause secrète qui permet de boire aux muftis*”<sup>30</sup>. The playwright created a character that is an archetype of eccentric behavior undermines the people who use religion to keep and to protect their interest. In another situation, the Mufti harasses Mohamed’s wife sexually and intends to commit adultery. In return Aicha compelled to accept the advances to keep her job.

MUFTI :  
C’est bon ! C’est bon !  
Fais-moi souffrir,  
Fais-moi souffrir !

AICHA :  
Vite, cours, trotte, galope !  
Et je te donnerai mieux qu’un baiser !<sup>31</sup>

In this case, Bhabha refers to Hybridity as heresy, a transgressive act of cultural translation, and because of the misinterpretation of the Koran and the Islam, the Mufti can be considered as a blaspheme, he hides his corruption, cheat, and vices behind a mask called religion:

“Blasphemy is not merely a misrepresentation of the sacred by the secular; it is a moment when the subject-matter or the content of a cultural tradition is being overwhelmed, or alienating, in the act of translation. Into the asserted authenticity or continuity of tradition, ‘secular’ blasphemy releases a temporality that reveals the contingencies, even the encommensurabilities, involved in the process of social transformation”<sup>32</sup>.

When Mohamed enters and finds his wife on the back of the Mufti, as a reaction to the shocking scene and the scandalous behavior of the Mufti, this led Mohamed to lose faith in religion, he sings:

Je n'ai plus à me prosterner  
Je n'ai plus à prier, ni à jeuner  
Je n'ai plus à m'amouracher<sup>33</sup>.

In addition, the characters have not a fixed identity, the Mufti is a blaspheme and vices behind a mask called religion. He also bribes The Caid and gendarme with presents<sup>34</sup>. The Cadi who represents justice but in reality he defends his personal interests, he sides with the colonizer against the Algerian people and led an unfair trial against Mohamed<sup>35</sup>, and Aisha is named after one of the prophet's wives, but she is represented as a prostitute because accept the advances of the Mufti<sup>36</sup> which shows the ambivalent personality of the character.

Another aspect found in the play is songs, music and rhythm with the popular Arabic language and environment, which belongs to the traditional folklore of Algeria. For instance, when Le Caid said: *Moi, quand j'entends "Aayay"*<sup>37</sup>. And Mohamed : *Hai ! Hai ! Parle-moi des filles de Belcourt*<sup>38</sup>. The significance of the words "Aayay" and "Hai Hai" in Arabic music mode is to provide an introductory performance or event especially to gather audience and attract them.

Stuart Hall given his view about music, it is «*a key to identity because it offers, so intensely, a sense of both self and others, of the subjective in the collective*»<sup>39</sup>. Kateb Yacine aims to revive this aspect and use it to activate the sense of realization of the spectator. In many instances, the playwright introduces words ending with the same words as if it is a verse in a poem, to give his play a poetic form. To illustrate, the last words of the following example ends with the same letters with is "our":

Vous, les enfants du cour a cour  
Chez vous règnent les Beni-gandour,  
Il ne reste plus que le babour  
Et les problèmes d'cartes de sejour<sup>40</sup>.

Songs can bear a political and economic meaning; they are commentaries of the capitalist exploitation and a denunciation of some abuses. Kateb wanted to express the workers' yearnings for release from poverty and colonialism, by the use of the Chorus which is one of the folklore tradition in Algeria as in abroad, is for heightening the audience awareness of the unjust environment in which they live, and push them to react .

CHŒUR :

Voilà l'œuvre de colonialisme !  
Mufti et missionnaire  
Aux nom du Paradis,  
Te mènent en enfer.  
Voilà l'œuvre du colonialisme !

CORYPHEE :

Des siècles sont passés  
Et l'Afrique est toujours esclave  
Du Maroc jusqu'à Bagdad,  
On nous vend comme du bétail.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the historical background and the Islam doctrine of the Algerian community, the social and cultural interaction between the Algerians and the French gave birth to a new fragmented and paradoxical identity.

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- 24- Kateb Yacine, *Boucherie de L'espérance*, 347.
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- 27- Kateb Yacine, *Le Boucheries de L'Esperance*, 290.
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31- Ibid.,223

32- Stuart Hall. *The Questions of Cultural Identity*.

33- Kateb Yacine, *Le Boucheries de L'Espérance*. 223.

34- Ibid., 225.

35- Kateb Yacine, *Le Boucheries de L'Espérance*. 274

36- Ibid., 226.

37- Ibid., 253.

38- Ibid., 301.

39- Stuart Hall, *The Questions of Cultural Identity*.

40- Kateb Yacine, *Le Boucheries de L'Espérance*, 367

41- Ibid., 208

## **Conclusion:**

This dissertation explores the issue of language and cultural identity in John Millington Synge's *The Shadow of The Glen* (1903) and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise* (1971).

Our assumption is that the two playwrights, in spite the distance that separate them both in time and space, they used the colonizer's language in a very similar way. To demonstrate this, we have relied on Bill Ashcroft's et al. *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) especially to their concepts of Appropriation and Abrogation. We have also appealed to the concept of Cultural Identity as developed by Stuart Hall and Homi Bhabha.

The study has shown that the Irish and the Algerian playwright appropriate and abrogate the colonizer's language (English and French) in order to create their own language, to write back to the center and to correct the image that the colonizer drew of their countries.

Our study of cultural identity in both plays has revealed that both authors created characters with a hybridized cultural identity. Synge's characters are Catholics who are at ease with the pagan reminiscences in their religious beliefs and Yacine's characters are not pious Muslims (They drink alcohol, they mock religion). In addition the characters in both plays are ordinary and simple people with non essential identity.

The scope of our research does not cover all the issues that are related to the work of John Milington Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen* and Kateb Yacine's *Mohamed prends ta valise*; yet, we invite other students to explore other issues from other perspectives.

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