ASJP Algerian Scientific Journal Platform

مجلة الآداب واللغات

Al Àdab wa Llughat

Volume : 14 / N°: 02 (2019), pp. 120-133

Received 07/01/2019 Published 30/09/2019

Kamel Daoud's Meursault Contre-Enquête: between Subversion and Allegiance to Albert Camus.

Kenza TEGAOUA[1]

[1] University of Algiers 2, Algeria

Abstract

The present paper deals with the juxtaposition between Colonial and Post-Colonial writings, with a focus on the latter as a response to the former. More precisely, it analyzes Kamel Daoud's reply to Albert Camus' L'Etranger, in his Meursault Contre-Enquête. The method used consists of different parts. The paper overviews the core of Colonialism, that is, Colonial Discourse as presented by Edward Said. The research defines Post-Colonial Studies that come as a reaction to the Colonial Discourse. Finally, the study is limited to one specific field presented by the scholar Helen Tiffin who suggests the Canonical Counter-Discourse as a technique used by several Post-Colonial writers to counter-attack the Colonial Discourse. On the basis of her theory, the current paper aims at discerning Daoud's Counter-Discourse from his alliance to the Colonial one in his novel. Seeking to deepen the study, the paper compares Daoud's text to other Post-Colonial responses to European Canons, namely Aimé Césaire's Une Tempête, and J.M. Coetzee's Foe. By the end, the result of the comparison reveals Daoud's weakness and leniency in his Counter-Discourse: a considerable duality and ambiguity, for he simultaneously denounces and imitates Camus' text.

Keywords

Colonial Discourse; Post-Colonial Studies; Counter-Discourse; Colonizer; Colonized; Other; Subversion; Decolonization; Revolution; Dismantling.

1. Introduction

European colonialism has left a bitter memory in World History, especially in colonized countries. Despite independence, the wounds it caused are yet recovering. Colonizers imposed their language, culture, government, literature and religion, repudiating the natives'. The latter have been subjugated, enslaved, tortured and deprived from any consideration of their identities and histories. Hence, it is not surprising that Colonialist literary productions illustrate their dominance over the colonized. Their texts convey a strong Colonial Discourse that abases the natives and praises the Europeans. Among these texts are William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), as part of English literature; and Albert Camus' *L'Etranger* (1942), as part of French literature. These

texts enjoy the status of canons in their respective cultures. In front of the one-sided and biased vision of Europe, Post-Colonial writers are reacting and responding via literature. Their aim is to denounce the Colonial Discourse, and to provide an alternative perspective, the one that has been denied for so long. Among these writers, we find Aimé Césaire in his *Une Tempête d'après « La Tempête » de Shakespeare. Adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre* (1969), J. M. Coetzee in *Foe* (1986), and Kamel Daoud in *Meursault Contre-Enquête* (2013). These novels are respectively Post-Colonial reactions to the aforementioned European canons. Beyond their Post-Colonialist tone, they also share the same approach which Helen Tiffin calls the Canonical Counter-Discourse. Accordingly, the latter and the Colonial Discourse are at the core of this study.

Over fifty years after the Algerian revolution, Kamel Daoud publishes his novel as a reply to *L'Etranger*'s Colonial Discourse. In *Meursault Contre-Enquête*, the Algerian writer reprimands Camus' unfair treatment of the anonymous Arab. The novel focuses on how the French author manages to make the reader forget about killing the Algerian. Meursault shoots an Arab, whose name and identity are denied, even during his trial. On the one hand, Haroun, the Arab's brother, provides with the missing parts of Meursault's narration. For instance, he gives the name of the Arab (Moussa) and talks about his daily habits. Haroun makes of the Arab a person, with a name and a history. On the other hand, he seems to be so upset and obsessed by Moussa's death that he too commits a crime by killing a French man. This act raises ambiguity in Haroun's and Daoud's intentions. In fact, while Haroun accuses the abominable crime of Camus, he ends up perpetrating the same delinquency. This makes of both Meursault and Haroun killers who are not different from each other. Departing from such ambiguities, the aim of this study is an inquiry about the duality in *Meursault Contre-Enquête*. In the light of Colonial and Counter-Discourses, we would like to know whether Daoud's text is only a subversion of Camus' or rather a continuity, not to say a tribute. In the attempt to distinguish revolution from evolution, a comparison to Césaire's and Coetzee's texts is needed. In order to proceed in the study, an overview of the context of Colonial Discourse and Post Colonial Studies imposes itself. We will, then, study how Daoud responds to Camus' discourse. Finally, we will depict the homologous tone towards Camus.

2. Colonial Discourse vs. Counter-Discourse

Throughout History, several countries have experienced the atrocities of European colonialism. The latter dominated the colonized psychologically, politically, economically and culturally. It is not surprising that many scholars and theoreticians have studied colonialism and its impact on the colonized and World History. Among those, there is Edward Said and his *Orientalism* that introduces the concept of the Colonial Discourse, on the basis of Michel Foucault's theory of Discourse. Said explains how the division between the East and the West has promoted colonialism along with its superiority and dominance(Said, 1979). In *Post-Colonial Studies, the Key Concepts*, Colonial Discourse is defined as a set of words and deeds that shape colonial society in relation to the colonizer (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2007: 37). It means that its influence is ubiquitous in both the colonized and the colonizer. Hence, the Colonial Discourse is the hegemonic tool that the West has used to oppress and control the East. Its effect is so serious that even the colonized may look upon themselves from such a demeaning perspective (Ashcroft et al: 37).

Colonial Discourse gloats about the superiority of the colonizer over the colonized (the Other) and the mastery of the West over the East. As Said puts it: “There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated” (Said, 1979: 36). Therefore, the colonized must be subservient to the colonizer. Said proceeds in explaining the process with which the West has maintained its control over the East. According to him, the machine of colonialism and its discourse were promoted by “the colonial encounter… developing sciences… [and] a body of literature” (Said, 1979: 39-40). Hence, we understand the extent of the West’s ascendency and control of the East. It first starts with a physical confrontation between the Colonizer and the Other, in which the latter is subdued by the former. Then it spreads to reach knowledge and studies, where the ‘Master’ examines the ‘Subject’, providing biased theories on the Other. Finally, there come literary productions that describe and promote colonialism. The aim behind these approaches is to hail and to enforce the Colonial Discourse, along with the colonizer’s superiority. Said adds that the Other is controlled and views him/herself from the colonialist’s perspective (Said, 1979: 40). This results in muteness which deprives the Other from any possibility to express his opinion or to answer back. Accordingly, this Other is the silent and submissive figure.

On the basis of the Colonial Discourse, the Colonizer has the upper hand, compared to the Colonized. He is the cultivated and educated one, as opposed to the ignorant and ‘savage’ Other. Using Said’s words, “The West is the actor, the Orient a passive reactor. The West is the spectator, the judge and jury, of every facet of Oriental behavior.” (Said, 1979: 44) We understand the West’s centrality and the Orient’s periphery. The colonizer is an active individual who knows best the Other’s deeds and conducts. Following Colonialist perspective, the Westerner enjoys a privileged and prestigious position. He is the one who decides and executes, while the Other undergoes and does not complain. If we come to illustrate this with literary productions, we can cite William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, and Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe.* Both Prospero and Crusoe are depicted as archetypal Colonizers. On the one hand, Prospero has full control of the island and its inhabitants, including Caliban (the Other). On the other hand, Crusoe is the supreme King on his island, and he is Friday’s Master. The two men manage the wilderness of their respective islands and live comfortably. They also control the Other by instilling their superiority over Caliban and Friday. Therefore, Prospero and Crusoe comply with the Colonial Discourse. The latter elevates and illuminates them, while shadowing and marginalizing Caliban and Friday

As a reaction to Colonialism and Colonial Discourse, emerged Post-Colonial Studies which aim at countering and resisting the Colonial power, or decolonizing the colony. After independence, many Post-Colonial writers and academics took their pens to lead a revolution against Colonialism and its impact on the Other. For example, Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is a reaction to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899). The novel focuses on the Other’s context and story, for the events take place in Africa, and characters have African names such as Okonkwo, Ezinma. Moreover, African culture, folklore and traditions are presented to the reader, namely the Tortoise tale. Therefore, Achebe retrieves the Other’s oppressed voice, identity and history. He went by a process of decolonizing the British canon. Edward Said, in his *Culture and Imperialism*, comments on that as follows:

> The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them. Most important, the grand narratives of emancipation and enlightenment mobilized people in the colonial world to rise up and throw off imperial subjection; in the process, many Europeans and Americans were also stirred by these stories and their protagonists, and they too fought for new narratives of equality and human community. (Said, 1994: xiii)

Based on this, we come to assert that one instance of the colonizer's domination of the colonized is preventing them from speech, as previously mentioned. This reminds us of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Friday has no tongue and this facilitates his subjugation. In fact, he cannot respond to his Master's supremacy and domination. Likewise, Albert Camus' *L'Etranger* mutes the Other too gives him no name; he is simply referred to as an Arab. Following Said's words above, in prohibiting the Other from a parole or a name, the colonizer omits his identity and history, making the process of Colonization easier. Reacting to that, Post-Colonial writers and scholars, such as Achebe and Gayatri Sprivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* have looked for liberation and freedom by giving voice to the Other, in their writings. They launched a literary revolution with the aim of retrieving balance and equilibrium.

In the *Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, editors define Post-Colonialism as a continuous process of scrutiny of Colonialism, which involves an analysis of the techniques that overthrow colonial discourse (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1995: 117). Based upon that, we understand the authors' attempts to sabotage the Colonizers' deeds and discourse. Accordingly, editors comment on the subversive agenda of Post-Colonialism in breaking apart the binary opposition (such as Centre/Margin) (Ashcroft, et al. 1995: 117). Therefore, Post-Colonial writers attempt at destroying the basis of the Colonial Discourse that consists of the binary oppositions such as "Us/Them", "East/West", "Civilized/Savage. Thus, Post-Colonialist studies are "textual/cultural expressions of resistance to colonization" (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 2). They are academic studies that call to action against Colonialism. As champion of Post-Colonial studies, Edward Said suggests the contrapuntal method to counter Colonialism and to retrieve the imbalance it provoked. According to him, contrapuntal reading requires an awareness of the Colonial Discourse within the colonial text. The reader has to discern the subjugation of the "Other" at the expanse of the Colonizer (Said, 1994:66-67). The contrapuntal reading is a process upon which Post-Colonial studies rest. It necessitates a realization of the injustices of colonialism. Accordingly, this reading, forcibly leads to another targeted and precise reaction against the Colonial Discourse: Counter-Discourse.

The editors of *Post-Colonial Studies the Key Concepts* recall Richard Terdiman's introduction of the term Counter-Discourse as a practice of "symbolic resistance" (Ashcroft et al, 2007: 50). Its target is the Colonial Discourse in colonial literature; its aim is denouncing and resisting it. Terdiman writes that "no discourse is ever a monologue" (Terdiman, 1985: 36). On the one hand, this conveys the one sidedness of the Colonial Discourse, on the other hand, it insists on the necessity of a response to that discourse. The former aims to be subversive and denouncing. It is the Other's Discourse which attempts to retrieve balance by

answering back to the degrading discourse of the colonizer. As Salman Rushdie puts it “The Empire writes back with a vengeance.” (1982). In her article ‘Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter-Discourse’, Helen Tiffin studies the process of decolonization and insists on its subversive, “radical dis/mantling and appropriation of the dominant European discourses” (Tiffin, 1987: 17). Based on that, we understand the revolutionary tone of Post-Colonial studies. She also highlights the absence of homology of such approach (Tiffin: 18). This means that Counter-Discoursive texts should not imitate colonial literature; on the contrary, they ought to reveal and to “erode” the stereotypes of Colonial discourse (Tiffin: 18). This increases the agenda of the Counter-Discourse approach. In fact, it has to undo the colonizer’s prejudices as well as his dishonorable discourse; it ought to be contrapuntal, serving post-colonialist interests.

Tiffin proposes a specific type of Counter-Discourse that she calls Canonical Counter-Discourse. She defines it as follows: “it is one in which a post-colonial writer takes up a character or characters or the basic assumptions of a British canonical text, and unveils those assumptions, subverting the text for post-colonial purposes” (Tiffin: 22). Hence, when applying Canonical Counter-Discourse, writers depart from the same colonialist setting. However, they provide, from the Other’s perspective, an alternative narration and discourse. Therefore, they appropriate and decentralize the colonialist discourse, shifting it to meet the demands of post-colonialist decolonizing process. Tiffin explains the modus operandi of such an approach. According to her, writers have to recognize the prevailing discourse. This reminds us of Said’s call for ‘awareness’. Then, they have to pinpoint and to unveil the conveyed meaning so that to crash the colonialist prejudices (Tiffin: 23). In other words, this method suggests a counter-attack using the same tools (pens and words) as the ones of the colonialist, which makes it an ‘even battle’.

Accordingly, several Post-Colonial writers have chosen Tiffin’s Canonical Counter-Discourse to ‘answer back’ the colonizers. Aimé Césaire, a Martinican writer, provides an alternative to Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. As a title, Césaire opts for *Une Tempête d’après « La Tempête » de Shakespeare. Adaptation pour un théâtre nègre.* Césaire’s play adopts almost all of the original Shakespearean plot and characters. However, the playwright instills his work with a strong subversive Counter-Discourse. By making of his Caliban a more resistant Other, compared to Shakespeare’s Caliban. Moreover, he portrays Prospero as a greedy colonizer, whose despotism angers Caliban. Other than Shakespeare, Daniel Defoe was also approached from the angle of counter-discourse. J. M. Coetzee’s novel *Foe* is a response to the canon *Robinson Crusoe.* Like Césaire, Coetzee takes the same characters in Defoe, Robinson and Friday. He proposes a sort of continuity of the original narration; however he unveils Defoe’s Colonial Discourse, namely Friday’s muteness. Albert Camus’ *L’Etranger* has also triggered the same approach. In fact, the Algerian writer Kamel Daoud publishes his *Meursault Contre-Enquête* as a reaction to Camus’ Colonial Discourse. This point represents the core of this paper, which attempts to analyze Daoud’s counter-inquiry. The subject of this study is a comparison between Daoud’s text and Césaire’s and Coetzee’s. The first attempt is to discern the process of Counter-Discourse, with its dismantling and subversive tone; the second is to unveil reliance on Camus.

3. Countering Camus

In Algeria, French colonialism has left a sour taste in the Algerian collective memory. Algerians suffered from unfair treatments, harsh punishment and a degrading Colonial Discourse. As Edward Said puts it, they were assigned to periphery and poverty (Said, 1994: 171). In his study of French colonialism in Algeria, Said asserts Camus' colonialist discourse, which dominates the Other (Said, 1994: 173). Therefore, Camus, being French born in Algeria, inevitably, conveys the Colonizer's assumptions of the colonized. Said illustrates with one of Camus' novels, *L'Etranger.* He brings the attention of the reader to the fact that Meursault killed an Arab, who has neither a name nor a history (Said, 1994: 175). This shows the author's Colonial Discourse. Then, Said impels for an Algerian response to this discourse. He writes: "Camus's incorporations of and assumptions about Algerian history would have to be compared with histories written by Algerians after independence, in order to get a fuller sense of the contest between Algerian nationalism and French colonialism" (Said, 1994: 175). Said expects a response in order to retrieve the balance of discourse between France and Algeria. This would allow a deeper study of the histories of both countries. Accordingly, Daoud responds to Said's call throughout his *Meursault Contre-Enquête*. (Meursault's Counter-Inquiry) (All translations are mine)

In his Yale Lecture (2015), Kamel Daoud describes his novel as an *Unfortunate Robinsonade* that he refers to as the myth of humanity, asserting his desire to revisit it (YouTube). The 'Robinsonade' stands for the illustration of the colonial binary oppositions: Colonizer/Colonized, Civilized/Savage, where the Westerner is the dominant figure. The scholar Ayobami Kehinde in his study of Coetzee's *Foe,* comments on this particular myth as follows:

> Crusoe, his kith and kin, and Defoe, the author, are guilty of ethnocentrism, logocentrism, protoimperialism, and even megalomania. Crusoe is not a role model in this multicultural, pluralistic world of ours. Instead, he plays a role that begs to be rewritten -thus the existence of alternative versions of the Robinson myth in post-colonial fiction. (Kehinde, 2006: 103)

Not only this asserts the Colonial Discourse of the myth, but it also triggers post-colonial's interest in re-writing the myth from the Other's perspective. Accordingly, Kamel Daoud indulges into the same contrapuntal and decolonizing intentions of Aimé Césaire or J. M. Coetzee. So, on the basis of Canonical Counter-Discourse, how does he dismantle the colonial discourse?

At first glimpse, Daoud's novel seems to fit the features of Post-Colonial novels given by Franz Fanon for whom Post-Colonial literature is "fighting", "revolutionary" and "national" (Fanon, 1963: 223). In accordance with Fanon's description, Daoud fights back the Westerner's basic assumptions of the Other, subverting him and unveiling the truth, advancing Algerian culture. To begin with, the story is told by Haroun the brother of Meursault's victim, Moussa. Haroun provides us with Moussa's description and daily habits. This is to remind us of Meursault's neglect of Moussa (Daoud, 2013: 20). First, Haroun asserts that they were only two brothers, with no sister, as presumed by Meursault. They lived in Algiers with their

mother, who agonizes from her son's death. He proceeds in describing Moussa as being tall and thin because of hunger (Daoud: 20). Then, he continues to share with us some memories with his brother, who was the pillar of their family (since their father left them) (Daoud: 21). Haroun also insists on the name of his brother, repeating it multiple times. By retrieving the identity and history of the Arab, Haroun counter-attacks Meursault's colonialist discourse which diverts the reader's attention from the Other. He also questions his alibi (the sunstroke) for killing his brother, and condemns the nonchalance of his crime (Daoud: 17). Therefore, Haroun highlights the futility and absurdity of his brother's death with which Camus diverts his readers' attention. On that, he writes: « *Le premier savait raconter, au point qu'il a réussi à faire oublier son crime, alors que le second était un pauvre illettré.* » (Daoud: 13). (The first mastered narration to the point of sidetracking his crime, while the second was a poor illiterate.) This implies the injustice between the colonizer and the colonized. The former's advantageous position allowed him to commit murder and to exempt himself from it. In fact, in Camus' text Meursault is mostly judged for not mourning his mother properly (Camus, 2014: 126). This justifies Haroun's outrageous tone vis-à-vis the colonialist discourse. The latter is so biased that even the court did not judge Meursault for his murder. This explains Haroun's call for « *non la justice des tribunaux, mais celle des équilibres* » (Daoud: 18). (Not the court of justice, but the justice of equilibrium.) Accordingly, Haroun indulges in a fairer trial in defense of the Arab/ Other.

On the basis of Colonial Discourse, Meursault describes the Arabs as being constantly silent and indifferent (Camus: 55). Hence they are "passive reactors" (Said, 1979: 44), dull and useless. This legitimizes his removal of their speeches; they are simply part of the scenery. As a reaction to that, Haroun replies back and explains their silent stares which according to him are due to their inner intuition that the colonizer's presence will not last forever. They will leave, for sure (Daoud: 84). This hints to the successful Algerian Revolution, which ousted the French colonizers from the country. Haroun goes further by praising the revolution which avenged all the Arabs that were killed during French colonization (Daoud: 132). Therefore, he praises and reminds us of the brave Algerian martyrs' prestigious achievements. Using the same tone, Haroun says: « *Cette histoire devrait donc être réécrite, dans la même langue, mais de droite à gauche* » (Daoud: 19). (This story should be written with the same language, but from right to left.) This conveys that even if the story is written in French, it should be read from an Algerian perspective. This stands for Daoud's assertion of a national literature, via his inclusion of the colloquial language. Despite his use of French, the novel contains a myriad of Algerian words that describe local traditions, customs and culture. For instance, Haroun often refers to Moussa as '*Zoudj'* (two) (Daoud: 15); while Meursault is le '*Gaouri'*, (Daoud: 30) '*El-roumi'*, the stranger as he translates it. (Daoud: 52) Furthermore, he mentions traditional Algerian clothes, like his mother's '*Haik'*, (Daoud: 35) or his '*Kachabiyate'* (Daoud: 62). Then, he hums a local song: '*Malou khouya, malou majache. El b'har eddah âliya rah ou ma wellache'* (Daoud: 78). He also refers to his mother's frequent visits to '*Sidi Abderrahmane'* (Daoud: 54). Based on his mentioning of Algerian culture, Daoud asserts the Other's denied culture and tradition. He does not content with simply naming the Arab, he also shapes his history, tradition and culture. By instilling the colloquial language, which is pregnant with Algerian culture, he subverts the French language, "Algerianizing" it. This reminds us of Césaire's Caliban who goes through the same process. In fact, he introduces an African God

(Eshu) to the play, and makes of Caliban a polyglot who masters French, Creole, Swahili and English. In the chapter entitled 'The Languages of Resistance', Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins comment on the language used by Post-Colonial writers: "while some post-colonial dramatists eschew the imperial language altogether, many more use it as a basic linguistic code which is necessarily modified, subverted, or decentred when indigenous languages are incorporated into the text" (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 170). Therefore, Post-Colonial writers, intentionally, chose the language of the colonizer to better master it. In fact, by modifying it and 'exoticizing' it, they reshuffle it, making it theirs. Accordingly, Daoud's introduction of colloquial language aims at subverting that of the colonialist and strengthening the identity of the Other. Daoud, like Césaire, manages to reverse the silence and passiveness of the Arabs in Camus' text. Not only does the Other speak, he also masters his and the colonizer's language.

In *L'Etranger,* Meursault relates the Arab to a sister, the one involved with Raymond. He refers to her as solely a Moorish woman (Camus: 38). Abiding by their colonialist discourse, the two men consider the fact of punishing the girl as justified. According to Raymond, the woman disrespected him, therefore he chooses to hit her in order the 'tame' her. This strengthens their views on the Other as being 'wild' and 'savage'. Camus also associates the woman to prostitution and Raymond to her 'pimp' (Camus: 42). This furthers the negative discourse towards the female Other. This stands for another angle from which Daoud conveys his Counter-Discourse. In fact, Haroun denies having a sister. He writes: « *Nous étions seulement deux frères, sans sœur aux mœurs légères comme ton héros l'a suggéré dans son livre* » (Daoud: 20). (We were only two brothers, with no sister, as your hero suggested.) This stands for his dismantling of the colonizer's assumption. In fact, Meursault does not have tangible proofs that the Arab is her brother. He simply supposes it, following his Colonial Discourse. Based on his assumption, the Arab comes to avenge his sister, after being hit by Raymond. For him, the "vendetta" is part of Arabs' activities. Haroun clarifies that Moussa simply wanted to defend the honor of the woman because she was beaten by a French man. For him it was a simple matter of settling of scores (Daoud: 33), with attempts at defending a defenseless woman, not avenging her. Then, he accuses Meursault for turning her into a prostitute, which he takes as an insult to Algerian women, especially in comparison to Marie. He writes: « *…la fameuse Marie, élevée dans la serre d'une innocence impossible, et la prétendue sœur de Moussa/Zoudj, lointaine figure de nos terres labourées par les clients et les passants, réduite à être entretenue par un proxénète immoral et violent. Une pute dont le frère arabe se devait de venger l'honneur* » (Daoud: 86-87). He laments the degrading image of the Algerian woman given by the colonizer. While Marie is immaculate, the 'Moorish' has to be taken care of by an immoral and violent pimp. In front of such biased stereotypes, Daoud proposes another reflection of the Algerian woman, via Meriem. The latter is different from both Marie and the 'Moorish.' In fact, she is far from being a conservative, submissive woman who begs a man to marry her; as she does not need to be taken care of, let alone be beaten. Meriem is an educated woman, a teacher. She even prepares a thesis on Camus' novel. She is the one who taught Haroun the French language, and introduced him to reading. She is free, dominant and not submissive (Daoud: 179). Therefore, Meriem is the opposite of Marie and the 'Moorish', and contradicts Camus' assumptions on Algerian women. By introducing

Meriem, Daoud voices the previously muted feminine Other. This reminds us of Coetzee's Foe that also adds a female character to his narration. Kehinde asserts that Foe,

> reworks Robinson Crusoe's representation of black identity in general, and female identity in particular; of the values of the colonizer and those of the colonized; and of the forces of patriarchy. Friday (the archetypal black man, the oppressed race) and Susan (the womenfolk) in *Foe* transgress social taboos, as part of Coetzee's depiction of colonized/ female resistance to colonial/ patriarchal power. (Kehinde: 111)

Hence, Coetzee's Counter-Discourse expands its scope by including the female's voice that is inexistent in Defoe's text. Accordingly, Daoud adopts the same 'duty' of defending the Other, regardless of their gender. We conclude that his Counter-Discourse is wide for it includes the issue of women, allowing them a better representation and status. Hence, Daoud counter-balances the Colonial Discourse of Camus.

The final counter-response that Daoud displays concerns Moussa and Haroun. In Camus' text, we only have Meursault's story, in which he skips the details of his murder. Among the few instances he comes with is the description of the inert body, which was shot four additional times (Camus: 67). In front of that unfair animosity vis-à-vis the Arab's death and body, Daoud decides to get back to Camus. In fact, Haroun asserts that Moussa died a hero, in his neighborhood. He even enjoyed the status of a hero's brother (Daoud: 39). Therefore, Daoud creates a 'better' and honorable alternative to Moussa's death, as opposed to the demeaning one that Camus suggests. As for Haroun, he is described as a traumatized man and another victim of Meursault. He suffers from both his brother's loss and his mother's pressure upon him. The former represents his role model and a paternal figure, while the latter is a constant reminder of the burden of the deceased. Haroun suffers both from the ripped father image, and a neglectful mother who substitutes him for Moussa, and obliges him to wear his clothes. He even complains about the destiny that Meursault/Camus casted upon him. He considers both Camus and his mother as his murderers that both deprived him from a better life (Daoud: 156). Being torn apart between Moussa's death and his deadly life, Haroun commits himself to violence and ends up killing a man too. This reminds us of Césaire's Caliban who wants to kill Prospero too; or Coetzee's *Foe* that kills Crusoe right before finally reaching England's shore. It seems that Post-Colonial writers express a desire for vengeance, like Rushdie's suggestion. Hence, Haroun kills a French man, Joseph, who sought refuge in their house, during the earliest moments of Independence. Before committing the murder, Haroun describes an interesting reversal of the binary oppositions, colonizer/colonized, Master/Slave and Westerner/Other. In fact after Independence, several French colonists fled the country, leaving behind 'their' houses. Like other natives, Haroun and his mother took one of those lodgings, where they became the masters. As he puts it: « *Nous étions donc les nouveaux maitres des lieux* » (Daoud: 111). (We were the new masters of the house.) This event is significant in Daoud's counter-approach, for it dismantles the basis of colonial discourse: the binary oppositions. He points to, and hails, how the French became the strangers, and how the Algerians retrieved their lands and freedom. He destroys the binary opposition, for the French

became the Other. In fact, Joseph is assigned the role of the Other in Daoud's narration, while Haroun is the Master of the house. Accordingly, the former's intrusion led to his death. Haroun explains that his murder is not a crime, but an act of restitution (Daoud: 105). For him, and mostly for his mother, only by killing a French can Moussa be avenged, and rest in peace. Haroun shoots two bullets, but he counts seven shots, including Meursault's, to recall his revengeful agenda. After that, he describes how his mother, the initiator of the murder, finally rejoices her life, and how she becomes nicer to him. She is simply celebrating Moussa's resurrection (Daoud: 131). As for Haroun, he is relieved because he no longer has to carry his brother's body; for Joseph was only a stranger (Daoud: 109). For him, it is less painful to carry a French body, than Moussa's. This stands for Daoud's resolution in his attempts to counter-attack Camus. He chooses to abide by the principle of *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a* tooth: revenge. However, in the Camus/Daoud dichotomy, the spirit of opposition and subversion is surrounded by that of admiration, dependence, not to say tribute and imitation. In the following section, attempts are made to unveil the idea of continuity in Daoud's text, in relation to Camus.

4. Aligning with Camus

In his Yale lecture, Daoud speaks of how a Lilliputian enjoys the sight of the broad horizon over the giant's shoulder (YouTube). This imagery seems to illustrate Daoud's stand towards Camus, where he appears as an admirer of the French author. In fact, Daoud, before being a novelist, is a journalist, specifically as chronicler. He even entitles his set of chronicles as "*Chroniques Algeriennes.*" This forcibly reminds us of Camus' chronicles about Algeria, published under the same title (1958). Moreover, in the same lecture, Daoud admits that his novel is more of a tribute to Camus' *La Chute*, (1956) than an 'attack' to *L'Etranger.* (YouTube) What follows is an attempt to uncover *La Chute*'s influence on Daoud's *Meursault Contre-Enquête*.

To begin with, Haroun is sitting in a bar, drinking and talking to an unknown interlocutor. This highly recalls Jean-Baptiste Clamence and the Mexico-City, the bar he drinks in. Clamence, like Haroun, is involved in a long speech with a stranger. The latter comes from Paris to Amsterdam, where Clamence presently lives. Haroun's interlocutor is a Parisian too (Daoud: 97). On the one hand, Jean-Baptiste fled to Paris because of the burden of a past event that triggered his downfall. In fact, before, he used to be a successful and generous lawyer, until an incident happened. One night while he was walking in the streets of Paris, he saw a woman about to jump from a bridge. Instead of intervening, Clamence kept on walking until he heard the scream of the woman, when she dived into the water. His witnessing of the suicide and his passivity in front of it ushered the man to his moral downfall. Clamence feels guilty and condemns himself to isolation and drinking in Amsterdam. The latter with its many bridges are his reminders of the woman and his cowardice. On the other hand, Haroun carries the burden of his crime, which pushed him to flee to Oran. He sometimes conveys a feeling of regret mixed with pride when he recalls that he killed during the cease-fire after independence (Daoud: 108). These ambiguous feelings may suggest remorse for boycotting the revolutionary war. Hence, Haroun feels guilty for not joining his brothers in the Revolution. It is true that killing Joseph liberated him from Moussa's burden. However, it also added a new burden, that of being a 'coward' in the eyes of his compatriots. Moreover, he notices that killing has closed a door upon him and that he was condemned for eternity (Daoud: 121). At some level, he

admits the wrongness and his mistake by committing a crime. Therefore, Haroun shares approximately the same downfall as Clamence's; he too regrets his murder and his cowardice. Based on the above, it is clear that Daoud has indeed used Camus' *La Chute* as a ground for his novel.

Moving to *L'Etranger* and *Meursault Contre-Enquête*, one forcibly thinks of a strong tie between the two texts. First of all Daoud's title reminds us of Césaire's *Une Tempête d'après « La Tempête » de Shakespeare. Adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre.* The two titles convey a link to the canons they addressed. On this, Russell West, in his study of Césaire's play comments, "the title announces first a relation of dependence" (West, 2007: 2). Similarly, Daoud's title, especially the word 'Meursault', inevitably sends back to Camus' novel. Even Daoud indirectly admits that when his book was published in France, it boosted the sales of Camus' (YouTube). Second, one notices in Haroun several aspects of Absurdism namely "opposition and ambiguity" (Sleasman, 2011: 2). In other words, Daoud walks in Camus' shoes, abiding by his philosophy. In fact, the novel depicts a myriad of sceneries that are either identical or parallel to the canon. For instance, Daoud deliberately inserts sentences and passages from Camus' *The Stranger* (Daoud: 147, 189, 190). While Meursault, in his cell, bursts against the priest; Haroun behaves similarly with the Imam. One wonders about the purpose behind that choice. Once more, if we compare to Césaire and Coetzee, Daoud's intentions appear to be ambiguous. It is true that Césaire uses almost the same characters, plot, and setting as Shakespeare; however, this 'imitation' does not result in confusion or ambiguity. On the contrary, Césaire's Caliban differs from Shakespeare's Caliban. He is strongly subversive to Prospero and succeeds in getting his freedom back. He becomes "a revolutionary hero" (Holland Sarnecki, 2000: 282). It is true that in *Foe*, Coetzee suggests a follow up of Defoe's novel. Nonetheless, his novel is a "reaction against imperialism and white supremacy" (Kehinde: 110). As mentioned before, it is centered on Friday and Susan, to denounce their respective subjugations. Not only that, Kehinde also asserts that Coetzee's choice of these two characters is to shift Defoe and Crusoe to a secondary position (Kehinde: 109). In other words, in *Foe,* the 'spotlights' are casted away from the colonizer, pointing to the Other. This consists of the author's voluntary reversal of the situation. Therefore, Césaire's and Coetzee's tones are crystal clear, whereas Daoud's is misleading. What follows is a comparison between Césaire's Caliban and Haroun in order to highlight Daoud's ambiguous tone.

As mentioned before, Césaire's Caliban appropriates the language of the colonizer, making it serve his interest. On that, Judith Holland Sarnecki confirms: "Caliban beats Prospero at his own game, mastering his language so well that he can bend it to his own revolutionary purposes" (Holland Sarnecki: 281). Therefore, Césaire's Caliban uses Prospero's language as a way to impose his identity and culture. In fact, by inserting Creole, Swahili and the African God, Césaire's Caliban sheds light upon his African origins, hailing his 'blackness' or as Césaire calls it "*Negritude.*" Joseph Khoury summarizes this as follows, "In short, Negritude is not only the *active* attempt to reject racism, but also the *active* attempt to assert African heritage by resisting assimilation into the West by narrating the African culture *to* the West, even using the language of the West" (Khoury, 2006: 27). Not only does Caliban transform and reshuffle the colonizer's language, he also manages to 'advertise' and promote his African origins in front of the Westerners' gaze (this reminds us of Achebe's novel). As demonstrated before, Haroun, too, inserts Algerian language along with traditions and

customs, in his narration. This is also an attempt to advance and assert his Algerian heritage. Nonetheless, other instances create confusion in his discourse. When speaking about Algerian towns, post-independence, his tone is somehow pejorative and accusing. For instance, he deplores the unfinished constructions of houses in Hadjout (Daoud: 49), and the dilapidated view from his balcony, in Oran (Daoud: 100). These instances convey the writer’s criticism of Algeria, after the departure of the colonizer. Is he nostalgic for the latter? Even if he denies it, (Daoud: 49) suspicion remains. Haroun is detached from his compatriots, he is marginal; (Daoud: 93) and he keeps himself distanced from them (Daoud: 100). Hence, his identity seems to be ambivalent, compared to Césaire’s Caliban. The latter’s stands are firm, for he is Black and claims it loudly. Unlike him, we feel that Haroun is torn apart within the binary opposition: Colonizer/ Other. He is the mimic man, a “contradictory figure who simultaneously reinforces colonial authority and disturbs it” (Ashcroft et al, 1995: 99). Accordingly, Haroun paradoxically criticizes and denounces the injustice of colonialism; at the same time he restraints in advancing Algerian culture and progress. His criticism might be true or justified; however in the context of Counter-Discourse, it seems ‘inappropriate’ and diverts the initial objectives.

Following our comparison between Césaire’s Caliban and Haroun, the last point under scrutiny is their raging attitude towards the Colonizer. From the beginning of Césaire’s play, Caliban displays a violent tone towards Prospero. He does not hesitate to answer him back or to insult him. When Ariel warns him about Prospero’s avenging plans to punish him, Caliban is not afraid. He even welcomes the possibility to confront him and to fight back. In contrast to Ariel’s peaceful approach, Caliban’s reaction is fierce and courageous. In their confrontation, Caliban rushes towards Prospero with a gun. However, the latter does not move and displays his chest. In front of such behavior, Caliban stops his ‘assault’, ordering Prospero to defend himself. He says: « *Défends-toi! Je ne suis pas un assassin* » (Césaire : 37). (Fight back, for I am not a murderer). At the end, Caliban does not kill Prospero. Despite this backing off, he manages to free himself from the despotism of Prospero, without displaying the stereotyped violence of the Other. Sarnecki comments: “Césaire’s Caliban eschews physical violence—he does not strike down Prospero when he has the chance—but instead uses a volcanic eruption of words to destroy his adversary’s self-delusions” (Holland Sarnecki: 282). Hence, Césaire brilliantly destroys the Colonial Discourse, along with the binary opposition of Civilized/Savage-Violent. He avoids the traps of mimicry and stereotypes (imposed by the Colonizer), countering Shakespeare using the same ‘weapons’: pen and language. Caliban does not cross the path of vengeance and retaliation. Therefore, Césaire reverses the balance and dismantles the binary oppositions, for Caliban is free and innocent, while Prospero becomes the prisoner. In fact, he has lost the Other whom he depends on to assert his position as a Master. On the contrary, Haroun kills a French man, claiming his revenge over Moussa’s death. Hence, he is not different from Meursault who killed a stranger too. Joseph did not display violence; he simply sought a refuge. Similarly to the Arab who did not openly attack Meursault. This places Haroun at the same level as Meursault, the colonizer. Both men killed defenseless individuals. Furthermore, both murderers are not properly judged. Like Meursault, who was judged for not mourning his mother properly, Haroun is accused of not killing during the revolution (Daoud: 147). Accordingly, he falls in the trap of mimicry, which deepens his downfall and his anxieties. Instead of creating balance, his crime furthers the stereotypes

against the Other. It shows the latter as vindictive, and justifies, not to say reinforces, the Colonial Discourse, instead of dismantling it. Therefore, Daoud's initial attempts of countering Camus prove to be 'weaker' compared to Césaire's. For Haroun's crime creates more confusion in narration. One wonders about his intentions, especially when he says: "*L'Autre est une mesure que l'on perd quand on tue*" (Daoud: 124). (The notion of Other disappears when one kills.) If he is no more the Other, one wonders about what has become of him, after he committed a crime too. Does he aspire to become like Meursault? Is he a hybrid man, lost between the Other and the Westerner? This requires further scrutiny. In short, based on the above, we conclude that Daoud should have contented by simply giving the Arab his identity back.

5. Conclusion

From what precedes, we have identified both the Colonial and Counter-Discourses in Post-Colonial Studies. While one provides with a specific perspective, that fits Colonial interests; the other comes with the omitted view, in favor of the Colonized. In literature, we have seen that Post-Colonial authors have developed different methods of approaching the European canons. While Césaire's and Coetzee's counter-approaches to Shakespeare and to Defoe display a firm discourse, Daoud's reply to Camus appears to be ambiguous. Given the significant historical tie between France and Algeria, Daoud has the merit of answering back Camus, an emblematic French figure. In fact, the Algerian author has brilliantly taken Said's call. He has given a voice to the Arab who has been neglected for so long. He also advances Algerian history, language and culture. Not only that, but within his struggle to recognize the Other, he manages to provide a defense for the Female Other. This is to be hailed and applauded. He also allows a heroic death for the Arab who respects women. It is probably this part of his book that Algerians liked the most, as he mentions it in his lecture in Yale.

Ironically, the other part provoked an avalanche of criticism in Algeria. This asserts the duality of his text along with ambiguity concerning his stand vis-à-vis Colonial Discourse. By comparing to Césaire and Coetzee, we have seen that Daoud's second part of the book creates confusion to his initial Counter-Discourse. He imitates Camus, paying a tribute to *La Chute*, and deliberately quoting from *L'Etranger*. In his 'blind' admiration of Camus, he consciously or unconsciously accrues the Colonial Discourse that crashes the Other's culture and deems the Arab as a violent individual and a criminal. This may explain the French literary recognition and appraisal of this second part, which fits more their perspectives on Algerians. What we can conclude about Daoud is that he is a cunning writer who grasped a golden opportunity. He knew how to thrust his career from a journalist to an author. The fact is that he, the Lilliputian, simply used Camus's book as a breach to launch his writing business, and that is worthy of 'applause'.

References

- Ashcroft, B, Griffith, G, and Tiffin, H. (2007). *Post-Colonial Studies The Key Concepts Second Edition.* London and New York: Routledge.
- Ashroft, B, Griffith, G, and Tiffin, H. (Eds.) (1995). *The Post-Colonail Studies Reader.* London and New York: Routledge.

- Achebe, C. (1994) *Things Fall Apart.* New York: Anchor Books.
- Camus, A. (2014). *L'Etranger.* Bejaia: Talantikit.
- Camus, A. (2011). *La Chute.* Ebooks Libre et Gratuit.
- Césaire, A. *Une Tempête Théatre d'après "La Tempête" de Shakespeare Adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre.* Editions du Seuil. Retrieved from <https://is.muni.cz/el/1421/jaro2014/FJI3B777X/tempete.pdf>.
- Coetzee, J. M. (1986). *Foe.* London: Pinguin Books.
- Daniel, D. (1999). *Robinson Crusoe.* Irvine: Saddleback.
- Daoud, K. (2013). *Meursault Contre-Enquête.* Algiers: Barzakh.
- Dover, W. J. (Ed.) (2009). *The Tempest The Cambridge Dover Wilson Shakespeare Volume 33.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press .
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth.* New York: Grove Press.
- Gilbert, H. & Tompkins, J. (1996). *Post-colonial Drama Theory, Practice, Politics.* London and New York: Routledge.
- Helen, T. (1987). Post-Colonial Literatures and Counter-Discourse. *KUNAPIPI, 9*(3), 17-34. Retrieved from <https://introtopostcollit.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/module-2-tiffin-post-colonial-literatures-and-counter-discourse.pdf>.
- Holland Sarnecki, J. (2000). Mastering the Masters: Aimé Césaire's Creolization of Shakespeare's The Tempest. *The French Review, 74*(2), 276-286. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/398722>.
- Kehinde, A. (2006). Post-Colonial African Literature as Counter-Discourse: J.M. Coetzee's Foe and the Reworking of the Canon. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies UCLA, 32*(3), 94-122. Retrieved from <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4ph014jj>.
- Khoury, J. (2006). "The Tempest" Revisited in Martinique: Aimé Césaire's Shakespeare. *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies, 6*(2), 22-37. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339571>.
- Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism.* New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, E. W. (1994). *Culture and Imperialism.* New York: Vintage Books.
- Sleasman, B. C. (2011). *Albert Camus's Philosophy of Communication Making Sense in an Age of Absurdity.* Amherst, New York: Cambria Press.
- Terdiman, R. (1985). *Discourse/ Counter-discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth Century France.* New York: Cornelle University Press. Retrieved from <https://books.google.dz/books?id=1kr3opRnM0C&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false>.
- West, R. (2007). Césaire's Bard: Shakespeare and the Performance of Change in Césaire's "Une Tempête". *Journal of Caribbean Literatures, 4*(3), 1-16. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40986206>
- [Yale University]. (2016, Febuary, 25). *Kamel Daoud: The Yale Lecture*. [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF5kWeLGRv8>.