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Salhi, Sourour

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Published online: 16 Nov 2023.

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Farewell to Tensions for Post-independence Algerian and Nigerian Populations: 'Hybrid Affirmation' as a Postcolonial Proposition

Sourour Salhi

University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

ABSTRACT

Through the novels of Maissa Bey's *Bleu Blanc Vert* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*, this article examines the legacy of colonialism on post-imperial societies. Both novels engage with the relationship between culturally hybrid people and their compatriots, who are against the cultural colonial legacy in post-independence Algeria and Nigeria. This article contends that these texts can be interpreted as an appeal to settle tensions *vis-à-vis* the colonial legacy in post-independence societies, and to create a bond of solidarity between members of the same society. The article examines the social tensions that the culturally hybrid subjects experience in the novels, and proposes the concept of 'hybrid affirmation' as a way of coming to terms with the cultural colonial heritage. Although displacement, alienation, and rejection characterise the nature of the everyday life of Algerian and Nigerian post-independence people, affirmation of the self, trust and stability mark the attitude of the culturally hybrid characters by the end of both novels. Such an attitude is defined as the 'hybrid affirmation' of the postcolonial individual. The concept of 'hybrid affirmation' is intended to eliminate the gap that has long been widened by conflicts about the cultural colonial legacy. 'Hybrid affirmation' seeks to reframe postcolonial criticism so that characteristics such as strength and determination become attributed to the postcolonial individual instead of loss, disillusionment and displacement. Finally, 'Hybrid affirmation' implies ceasing conflicts about the cultural colonial heritage that exist between members of the same society in Algeria and Nigeria.

During the second half of the twentieth century a new era arose when many countries gained independence, transitioning to the status of fully independent nations, at least from a political perspective.[1] One of the most preoccupying

CONTACT   Sourour Salhi   ✉ sourour.salhi@outlook.com

issues of this period was the construction of the postcolonial identity. This article engages with the cultural conflict that emerged in post-independence Algeria and Nigeria, and sheds light on the unease culturally hybrid people experience, through Maissa Bey's *Bleu Blanc Vert* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*. Within these contexts, social relationships are characterised by tensions between members of the same society: those who inherited cultural aspects of the coloniser (language, and habits) and those who proclaim to seek the purification of indigenous culture through the systematic elimination of the colonial legacy.[2]

In an attempt to address the problematic traits of cultural hybridity displayed in the novels, and the apparent incompatibility between groups of the same society, this article focuses on the culturally hybrid characters of the novels to assess their ability to transcend social tensions.[3] The selected novels, in French and English respectively, have opened themselves up to the concept of 'hybrid affirmation', which involves the affirmation and the assumption of cultural hybridity instead of sinking into endless disillusionment because of it. In this article, the concepts hybridity and affirmation are combined to interpret the postcolonial novel from a new perspective. Through the lens of 'hybrid affirmation', analysis in this article demonstrates how post-independence individuals, who are culturally hybrid, manage to handle their lives in spite of occupying an in-between space and being socially alienated. By establishing the notion of 'hybrid affirmation' within postcolonial literary criticism, this article seeks to demonstrate how this state of hybridity can serve to reconcile post-independence nations with their colonial legacy, rather than leading subjects to enact a radical rejection of it, which leads to social conflicts and tensions. In this article, the term post-independence is not used as a near synonym for the term postcolonial; the latter indicates the conditions of colonised societies from the colonial rule and occupation until post-independence.[4] However, the term post-independence refers to the condition produced by the rupture between the imperial and the local nations.[5] That is, it refers to the life conditions of Algerian and Nigerian nations starting from the 1960s.

The key texts that this article will examine are set in Algeria and Nigeria. Despite the religious and political differences that characterise both these nations (e.g. with regards to religion Algeria has predominantly been a Muslim nation before, during colonisation and today[6] whereas in Nigeria different communities worshipped different deities until Islam and Christianity gradually penetrated into areas that now constitute the state of Nigeria; Islam accessed the northern parts of Nigeria through Trans-Saharan trade in the eleventh century while the spread of Christianity dates back to 1562 – the period of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.[7] Moreover, with regards to politics French and British practices of colonisation were different; France adopted the direct rule in Algeria, where it acted as the central government to control the legislature, the executive and the civil administration of Algeria.[8] However, Great Britain

adopted the indirect rule in Nigeria where indigenous rulers were appointed to operate the law legislated by the British government),[9] there are several reasons for developing this literary and historical cross-linguistic dialogue. First, the postcolonial literatures of these two nations share similar characteristics, in the sense that they have remained consciously or unconsciously closely bound to the ex-colonies (France and Great Britain). Additionally, they are among the two best-known countries of Africa, each famous for specific characteristics: Algeria for being the largest country, for the richness of its natural resources, and its cultural diversity; Nigeria for its economic power and linguistic superdiversity. Both share the feature of being colonial constructs: Algerian borders were delineated by French colonial authorities,[10] while Nigeria was established as a political entity by Lord Frederick Lugard in 1914.[11] As a result of the occupation of Algeria by France and Nigeria by Great Britain, the populations of both countries experienced colonial subjugation; they experienced the rise of nationalism that led to independence, and finally lengthy periods of turmoil during the post-independence period. It is therefore apposite that Algeria and Nigeria are to be considered in a comparative postcolonial literary study.

From Cultural Hybridity to 'Hybrid Affirmation'

The world is currently witnessing an ever-growing number of people who are displaced due to war, political persecution or economic aspiration.[12] This condition is known as globalisation wherein the world becomes an interdependent place because of technology, trade, politics and culture. As a consequence, these world connections explain the fact that cultural hybridity is gradually becoming more and more common.[13] To analyse the link between cultural hybridity and 'hybrid affirmation' as mentioned in the title, we need first to understand the relationship between globalisation and postcoloniality because both gave rise to cultural hybridity. In light of studies about globalisation and postcoloniality, Krishnaswamy contends that it is unclear whether the global and the postcolonial are the same in the sense that they are concerned with the exchange of different aspects of the society (such as culture and trade) as a result of the interactions of people.[14] Moreover, Gikandi argues that it is unclear whether globalisation precedes and prepares the ground for postcoloniality, or whether postcoloniality creates the conditions for globalisation.[15] As a matter of fact, while postcoloniality is determined by Radhakrishnan as the historical period representing the aftermath of western colonialism,[16] Ashcroft sees that postcoloniality refers to the effects of colonisation on the culture of the colonised societies from the period of colonisation to its aftermath, post-independence.[17] My point is that postcoloniality, in either definition, is the consequence of colonisation. While the colonial era is characterised by the establishment of boundaries, globalisation indicates the decay of these boundaries in favour of

transnational economic and cultural exchange.[18] Although globalisation is said to start earlier than Columbus' voyage in 1492,[19] it has expanded to every corner of the world because of colonisation wherein migration, cultural and political transformation, trade, and investment have become widespread.[20] The crucial difference that we discern between postcoloniality and globalisation is that the first is a period of time while the second is a process by which commodities and people cross borders.[21] As for the colonial period, we see that the subject is now mature, and 'detailed studies and theoretical understanding about the field are provided'.[22] What is important to us is not the colonial process per se but its consequences that have drastically transformed the conditions of the colonised societies, changing them into postcolonial and global societies.

In light of these conditions of transformation (postcoloniality and globalisation), on which this article leans for the conceptualisation of 'hybrid affirmation', examples are provided to show the way cultural hybridity resulted from postcoloniality and globalisation. In 1858, the French colonial administration implemented a military base in Ouled Mimoun, Tlemcen, which was named *Lamocière* village not only to place its European settlers and control the region and the indigenous inhabitants, but also to expropriate the lands and usurp their richness.[23] Also, Britain's suppression of the slave trade in 1850 helped the British administration to gain momentum in Nigeria, and resulted in exploiting more foodstuff, minerals and raw material that were tremendous for western industrial development.[24] Therefore, due to the economic plans implemented by the French and British colonial processes, new industries were created, and labour activity grew, causing ethnic mixing and, eventually, cultural hybridity. The contribution of the French and British colonialism to the transformation of the Algerian and Nigerian indigenous societies is not only resumed to economy but also to education and religion. That said, France denied Algerians of their legitimate cultural identity and imposed French cultural norms via language, methods of instruction and curriculum that instil French ideologies, culture and religion.[25] Likewise, the Christian education was an essential part in the Nigerian case: it remarkably contributed into the spread of the British culture over the Nigerian people.[26] In other words, it was a way of winning more converts who themselves were trained to establish religious influence and prestige over the majority of the Nigerian populace through education.[27]

I am evoking these historical facts by way of arguing that postcoloniality and globalisation show us the many ways in which cultural hybridity has been shaped in Algeria and Nigeria. This article looks to post-independence through literature, in particular, individuals and societies involved in negotiations of belonging during times of change.[28] What happens in post-independence is in many ways a continuation of what has taken place during colonisation.[29] That said, the nature of the relationship between and the attitude of postcolonial individuals and communities is linked to a series of

changes in the locations of power dynamics imposed by the colonial systems. The latter already created a social gap between members of the same community by privileging groups such as the *harkis*,[30] or the *évolué*,[31] terms commonly known as the local collaborators in postcolonial texts.[32] There are frequent references to *harkis* in the franco-algerian postcolonial text. For instance, Mehdi Charef depicts Azzedine, a *harki*, as a traitor and a turncoat who, despite being granted access to living in France, was neither accepted by the French society, nor by the Algerian one.[33] The condition of *harki*s is similar to the *évolués*', Bernard Dadié presents *Monsieur Thôgô-Gnini* as the king's right-hand man during colonialism.[34] *Monsieur Thôgô-Gnini* is an *évolué* because he is privileged by the king, and thanks to his position *Monsieur Thôgô-Gnini* builds important economic connections for his own benefit. As stated earlier, this category of privileged locals is commonly referred to as collaborators, an example can be seen in Karanja, who betrays the uprising movement and works with the British to impress Mumbi and start a relationship with her.[35] Arguably, the *harkis*, the *évolués*, and the collaborators aspire to reach a superior position, one that is equal to the white man's. However, they serve as mere copies that can never be genuine. These instances illustrate the imbalances in power relations between the privileged locals and the masses created by the colonial administration. The social gap continues after independence, wherein cultural divergences are accentuated by the condition of globalisation, and social tension elevate between individuals rejecting the colonial legacy and those defending it.

In these respects, the encounter of colonial cultures and Algerian and Nigerian indigenous societies create a 'third space',[36] where the foreign culture (French or British) intermingles with the local culture (Algerian or Nigerian) to form a new hybrid individual (the Francophone and the Anglophone). What is important here is that the experience of people born following the imperial encounter is ambivalent: Nick Harrison has argued that 'the indigenous child … is incapable of having a place between a civilisation that abandons him/her and a barbarity (of the indigenous culture) that takes him/her back'.[37] Hence, the culturally hybrid individual finds it difficult to adapt to the culture of the imperialist or that of the indigenous populations. The social division and the disillusionment that occur within the colonised society because of cultural differences sit at the heart of the present article. As a response to this disillusionment, 'hybrid affirmation' is proposed to address the negative stances such as rejection and intolerance towards cultural hybridity, and to shed light on the resilience, strength and affirmation of the self of the culturally hybrid subject.

In large part, these circumstances apply to the characters analysed in this article: they are exposed to the coexistence of two distinct cultures – French/Algerian and British/Nigerian – as a result of colonisation. When the war for independence ends in Algeria and Nigeria, the characters migrate overseas (to America, England, and France) because they feel displaced in their home countries. At this stage, they encounter the problems faced by the diaspora

that flee their countries because of social pressure, war, and disasters.[38] The diasporans – Ali, Lilas, Ifemelu and Obinze – flee to destinations which have a link with their home countries – language and colonial history in this case.[39] The diasporans integrate without being truly assimilated in the host countries – France, England and USA in this case.[40] Thus, they are rejected and alienated; they are displaced and start to develop a resistance to retain their identity.[41] This implies the development of a linking sentiment towards their origins, memories and community life.[42] This phenomenon was experienced by V. S. Naipaul, who is born in Trinidad, migrates to England and is of Indian-Caribbean descent.[43] Naipaul affirms having experienced displacement for a long time, which is why he seeks to move from one country to another to find stability.[44] Naipaul asserts that:

> 'If there was a place, at this stage of my career, where I could fittingly celebrate my freedom, the fact that I had made myself a writer and could now live as a writer, it was here, on this island which had fed my panic and my ambition and nurtured my earliest fantasies. And just as in 1956 at that first return, I had moved from place to place, to see it shrink from the place I had known in my childhood and adolescent, so now I moved from place to place to touch it with my mood of celebration, to remove from it the terror I had felt in these places for various reasons at different times. Far away in England, I had recreated this landscape in my books. The landscape of the books was not as accurate or full as I had pretended it was; but now I had cherished the original, because of the act of creation.'[45]

Naipaul's sentiments are the result of a long journey of experience. This passage shows that to seek stability does not necessarily mean to escape one's reality because displacement, anxiety and alienation are sentiments that accompany people wherever they go. The point here is that stability is a sentiment that people create themselves regardless of their environment. In the analysed novels, the characters assume they can easily integrate into life in a western context if they migrate to France, Great Britain or the United States because they were enrolled in the colonial educational systems, French and British respectively. However, the result is that they are rejected by western societies, they are always ' … stranger[s], … foreigner[s]'.[46] The diasporans face these challenges because they are culturally alienated and live a terrible reality of homelessness.[47] Arguably, migrating to the metropole creates a feeling of discomfort and insecurity to the diasporans, which is why they are forced to return home and learn how to handle their selves within the often agitated surroundings of their home countries.[48] In an attempt to interpret these postcolonial texts from a fresh perspective, the notion of 'hybrid affirmation' is coined in this article to analyse the ways in which characters challenge disillusionment, displacement and alienation to live their cultural hybridity peacefully. In other words, through 'hybrid affirmation' we examine the inner force of the postcolonial characters by interpreting attitudes such as resilience, acceptance and self-affirmation.

The notion of cultural hybridity is introduced by Homi Bhabha,[49] then it extends to serve linguistic purposes. For example, Mikhail Bakhtin, proposes a 'linguistic version of hybridity' that is associated with the concepts of 'polyphony', 'dialogism' and 'heteroglossia'.[50] According to Bakhtin, 'hybridisation is an on-going process while hybridity is the end result'.[51] Hence, for Bhabha and Bakhtin, hybridity refers to all kinds of results that are engendered because of religious, linguistic, political or ethnic intermixing which give way to a 'third space', where different elements coexist, creating the particularity of the new hybrid element. Here, it is important to note that arguing in favour of cultural hybridity does not eradicate our acknowledgment of cultural difference. In truth, 'anthropologists … speak of cultures in the plural rather than of culture as the singular career of humanity … . Each culture was regarded as a traditional way of life'.[52] Therefore, to speak of 'a third space' where different cultural elements coexist encourages the idea of coexisting peacefully in the postcolonial society, where people of the same community are involved in a social world devoid of tensions despite the presence of colonial legacy.

Logically, no entity remains static or unchanged over time, be it culture, languages or human relations. Bakhtin, like Bhabha, contends that the world is not composed of single essences. Rather, the world has reached a stage where cultural intermingling is unavoidable, and where people have become *translated men*[53] because of imperialism and globalisation. Salman Rushdie explains that etymologically, the term translation – which is of Latin origin – means bearing across. Rushdie uses the word 'translation' intentionally – 'having been borne across the world, we are translated men'[54] to explain that *translated men* are people who are situated in a border-crossing space, that is, culturally hybrid people. Accordingly, Bhabha, Bakhtin, and Rushdie's views support the concept of 'hybrid affirmation', which implies the need to assume one's cultural hybridity, and the need to accept it by the postcolonial society. While indigenous groups – such as the *moujahidin*[55] and *ulema*[56] in Algeria,[57] and nationalists in Nigeria, such as the writer Chinua Achebe – urge the return to the past and call for the preservation of indigenous traditions,[58] Bhabha and Bakhtin propose finding a common ground where the two cultural components can coalesce without creating tension and anxiety. Their call reflects an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of earlier attempts to pursue a hypothetical form of cultural purity, which created social tensions, frustration, displacement and disillusionment.

Bill Ashcroft has also engaged with the idea of hybridity, which he has termed 'transnation'.[59] Ashcroft's concept is based on the premise that the transnational citizen is someone who holds the elements of two different cultures: his/her native culture and the culture of the nation he moves to. According to Ashcroft, the individual that 'transnation' refers to is someone who belongs to the second-generation of a diaspora who finds themself born into 'a transcultural space and indicates an interesting way in which the borders

may be crossed'.[60] Arguably, Ashcroft like Bhabha points out that there is a figurative space in-between cultures. This 'in-betweeness'[61] is not particularly related to any culture, rather it is a new form of culture which encompasses a mixing of cultural traditions and languages, and it is the culture of contemporary generations who experienced colonialism. This is the case of Ali and Lilas (in *Bleu Blanc Vert*) as well as Obinze and Ifemelu (in *Americanah*), the characters this article analyses.

In this regard, the characters in postcolonial fiction are seen as suspended in-between a hypothetically western form of modernity and indigenous traditions. That said, they are neither truly 'native' nor authentically westernised:[62] they are caught in a space where the feelings of unbelonging and ambivalence reign. However, this raises the question of whether it is possible to settle tensions about postcolonial heritage if literary criticism continues to focus on issues such as rejection, displacement and unbelonging? When will postcolonial subjects be exempt from being portrayed as disillusioned and tormented? This article suggests a positive assessment of the cultural hybridity of post-independence individuals by applying the new concept of 'hybrid affirmation'.

There have been attempts to reconsider hybridity positively; for instance, Jacquie Lo has coined 'happy hybridity', where the by-product (the hybrid person) absorbs the differences between the two initial cultures and constitutes a new culture, it is a kind of synthesis of the primary cultural elements.[63] However, 'happy hybridity' is used to describe and call for peaceful living together between Asian-Australians: both Asian migrants and Australian-born. Therefore, although 'happy hybridity' and 'hybrid affirmation' hold the principle of the settlement of social tensions, 'hybrid affirmation' is designed for postcolonial individuals to serve in a postcolonial context. That said, it is a concept that appeals to the 'tormented selves' of the post-independence era, and it aims to find common ground when it comes to problems of identity in post-independence nations such as Algeria and Nigeria.

> 'Hybrid affirmation' is the affirmation of the hybrid individual – where the self does not enter into a conflict with tradition and modernity, the local culture or colonial heritage (Algerian or Nigerian in this case). 'Hybrid affirmation' calls for post-independence subjects to reconcile and come to terms with cultural differences caused by colonisation. That said, 'hybrid affirmation' encourages the affirmation of a hybrid identity and reunites post-independence nations with their imperial cultural heritage which forms part of their history.

'Hybrid Affirmation' as Post-traumatic Growth

Cultural Hybridity as a Fact in Algeria and Nigeria

Algeria has been the cradle of many civilisations: 'Punic, Greek, Roman, Arab, Turkish, and, of course, French.'[64] As the previous list of civilisations implies, in the late modern period, Algeria was mostly known for and influenced by

French colonisation. Today, and in spite of the statement of cultural and spiritual homogeneity made in its Constitution, it is generally observed that Algeria is a multicultural country where French culture still has its faithful supporters amongst Arabs and Amazigh who live within the Arabo-Islamic country.[65] Likewise, Nigeria's history has witnessed 'many waves of human travels … since the Paleolithic period, [and] according to the 1952/53 census there were more than 200 distinct ethnic groups' that have different customs, traditions and languages in pre-colonial Nigeria.[66] By the end of nineteenth century and beginning of twentieth century, the British influence marked Nigeria due to British colonialism. Thus, besides being a culturally diverse and a multi-ethnic society, Nigeria was deeply influenced by British culture.[67]

Historically, – *l'Algérie Française* – (or French Algeria) is an expression that finds its origins in the colonial period; it covers the era from the seizure of Algiers in 1830 until independence in 1962.[68] This period is also known for the presence or the occupation of the French.[69] Ali, the protagonist of *Bleu Blanc Vert*, attended the French school in colonial Algeria, and the Arabic school in post-independence Algeria. About this chequered linguistic trajectory, he says:

> We did not learn Arabic in the primary school. We started only last year because we have to learn our mother tongue, but I know French better. The Arabic we learn in school … is more difficult. However, my father says that we have to gain back our language. By any means.[70]

The passage describes the transition from colonialism to independence. Although Ali is exposed to Arabic, he confesses that he masters French better than Arabic. In addition, the Arabic taught at school is more difficult than the one spoken at home. Noticeably, independent Algeria brings together disparate elements of its nation: an everlasting French culture which is exhibited by Algerian francophone people besides the newly restituted Arab culture.

Years after Algerian independence, the question of taught and spoken Arabic still constitutes a problem for post-independence generation. For instance, Alya, the daughter of Ali and Lilas (who are the protagonists in BBV: Ali is a lawyer and Lilas a psychologist), is enrolled into the new Algerian system of education; i.e. at a school where she learns Arabic as a principal subject, and where French is introduced only in the fourth year; 'Alya already recognises letters, and even reads some words. In Arabic of course … Learning the French language starts in the fourth year of primary school.'[71] Despite the fact that the educational system changed, French is still included in the curriculum. Here, the postcolonial child finds it difficult to acquire and cope with both subjects: Arabic in the morning where they write from the right to the left and French in the afternoon where they write from the left to the right. Arabic and French are drastically distinct, that said, syntactically they do not follow the same order of words in a sentence (noun and verb are inverted).

Also, orthographically they have completely different alphabets, and they are written in opposite directions. Although translanguaging as a language education pedagogy is a solution to help bilingual students such as Alia grasp the lesson,[72] Bey does not evoke any means that shows that the newly established Algerian system of education encourages such methods. Therefore, it is logical that students find it difficult to grasp linguistically, grammatically and syntactically divergent languages at the same time. Besides, the hostile socio-cultural context in which these students live constitutes a source of disillusionment. Alya is exposed to this difficulty:

> Alya has also been disorientated during the first days … The Arabic used by the teacher does not look like the spoken Arabic … it took time to explain the difference between spoken language and written language … How to explain to a child the metissage, intermixing, interpenetration of languages in a country that has undergone so many occupations?[73]

Besides the ideological conflict around the coexistence of French and Arabic, there seems to be another reason that further contributes to the disorientation of the second generation after independence. Alya faces problems because at home she does not speak the Arabic she studies at school. She contends that al fus'ha[74] (classical Arabic, also known as the language of the Quran) is difficult, and questions the necessity of learning it. Outside the school, Alya is used to al darija[75] (dialectical Arabic used in everyday life) and French. Thus, when she is exposed to classical Arabic at school, she becomes confused. Although being exposed to different languages stimulates the brain,[76] in the case of Alya – who stands for the Algerian population – it is different. That said, in Algeria during colonisation the use of Arabic language is prohibited and punishable by the colonial authorities.[77] However, after independence debates about Algerian identity take place, and Arabic becomes the country's official language.[78] Thus, indigenous Algerians are confronted with the 'frenchification' (the act of making French the official language of the country) and the 'Arabisation' (the act of making Arabic the official language of the country) – which are cultural and educational processes – against their will.[79] The implementation of these processes results in confusion and disorientation,[80] as well as tensions and conflicts which occur between groups of indigenous peoples adhering to different cultural orientations (Francophone or 'Arabizers').[81]

French colonisation has played a significant role in the cultural hybridisation of the Algerian people. However, French colonisation is not the only reason for cultural hybridity. If we consider the Algerian dialect, then it can be assumed that Algeria was a hub of cultural intermixing. In support of this assumption, Bey writes 'the owner of the shop is an extraordinary person. When he speaks, he mixes Arabic, Kabyle, French and Spanish, and he even uses some words in English to talk about the decay of civilisations and the immorality

of art'.[82] Evidence of cultural hybridity is clearly present in this passage: the merchant switches between different languages as he speaks Arabic, Kabyle, French, Spanish and English. What is important in this passage is that Bey refers to the merchant as extraordinary because of his cultural hybridity. Her conviction that cultural hybridity is a positive characteristic, instead of being problematic, is in line with the philosophy of H. K. Bhabha, Mikhail Bakhtin, Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul and Bill Ashcroft. Unlike the negative interpretation of cultural hybridity that focuses on the ambivalence of the indigenous people,[83] these thinkers contend that the coexistence of different essences simultaneously different cultures, in this context is not problematic. In agreement with these thinkers, this article contends that cultural hybridity brings a unique cultural richness where different cultural components peacefully coexist.

In a similar context, we observe that the characters of *Americanah* also occupy a space somewhere between the Nigerian and Anglophone cultures. This is obviously one of the consequences of the colonial encounter between two different societies, the Nigerian and the British. The liminal space that characterises the sequences of this novel, allows us to question the extent to which colonialism and colonial hegemony could transform the identity of the indigenous population and create hybrid identities in Nigeria. By considering the situation of hybrid characters such as Ifemelu, Obinze and Ginika, we notice that cultural hybridity is as common in Nigeria as it is in Algeria.

Ifemelu and Obinze (the protagonists of Americanah: Ifemelu is a famous blogger in the USA, and Obinze is a toilet cleaner in England), grew up in post-independence Nigeria, and went to a Nigerian school. After graduation, Ifemelu decides to move to Princeton, New Jersey, to study. Ifemelu decides to go to a hair salon, where she finds only African Americans. She notices that:

> They were full of Francophone West African women braiders, one of whom would be the owner and speak the best English and answer the phone and be deferred to by the others … The conversations were loud and swift … and when they spoke English to customers, it was broken, curious, as though they had not quite eased into the language itself before taking on a slangy Americanism.[84]

This passage shows the cultural hybridity in America where African American people talk with multiple accents and a range of dialects. They switch from one language to another: most of the time they use improper English mixed with local African dialects. Ifemelu was then witnessing a scene rich with speech varieties or what is linguistically known as 'pidgin'.[85] Apart from the pidgin African Americans use, Ifemelu herself does not speak accurate English. The rationale behind this suggests that even if she lives in America and is a cultivated person, the Nigerian origins of Ifemelu are always a part of her identity. In addition, Ifemelu shows an exceptional ability to absorb both cultures: she

easily grasps American culture without losing her knowledge of the Igbo language. In a conversation with Obinze, she says:

> 'But I bet I speak Igbo better than you.' 'Impossible,' he said, and switched to Igbo. 'Ama m atuinu. I even know proverbs.' 'Yes. The basic one everybody knows. A frog does not run in the afternoon for nothing.' 'No. I know serious proverbs. Akotaifekaubi, e lee oba. If something bigger than the farm is dug up, the barn is sold.' 'Ah, you want to try me?' she asked, laughing. 'Achoafuadiakon'akpadibia. The medicine man's bag has all kinds of things.' 'Not bad,' he said. 'E gbuo dike n'oguuno, e luonaoguagu, e loteya. If you kill a warrior in a local fight, you'll remember him when fighting enemies.' They traded proverbs. She could say only two more before she gave up, with him still raring to go. 'How do you know all that?' she asked, impressed. 'Many guys won't even speak Igbo, not to mention knowing proverbs.' 'I just listen when my uncles talk. I think my dad would have liked that.' They were silent.[86]

According to Herbert Igboanusi, the phenomenon of Igbo English is said to be found in creative writing (in novels) 'as a deliberate but significant stylistic device, which arises from the influence of the Igbo language and culture on English … African literature today is characterized by … cultural diversity'.[87] This indicates that Adichie wants to show how Nigerian people interchange languages in their communications by switching from Igbo to English and *vice versa*. In Nigeria, diglossic situations and code switching occur very often in informal situations because people have been exposed to western culture and education.[88] The above passage shows Ifemelu and Obinze competing to find out who knows more Igbo proverbs. According to Ifemelu, the use of Igbo expressions shows the strength of the Nigerian culturally hybrid subject. For instance, she contends that Obinze is unlike other boys who fervently exhibit the culture of the coloniser, rather he proudly competes with her in saying as much Igbo expressions and proverbs as he can.[89] Therefore, Adichie uses Igbo expressions as spoken by Nigerian characters to explain that either or both of the native culture (Nigerian) or the culture exhibited by the individuals (English) can be simultaneously assimilated and integrated by postcolonial subjects; the distinct cultural elements (Igbo and English) can coexist and enrich one another in several ways without creating conflicts at the level of the self or the community.

In-betweenness as a Major Source of Disillusion

> 'Edmund Fuller remarks that in our age man suffers not only from war, persecution, famine and ruin, but from inner problems.'[90] Therefore, this section analyses passages of *Bleu Blanc Vert* and *Americanah* to explore characters' inner problems, and to consider the extent to which life in a liminal space can be tormenting. As the plots develop, Lilas and Ali (in BBV) as well as Ifemelu and Obinze (in *Americanah*) are coming of age and are trying to find their way in newly independent countries, namely Algeria and Nigeria. During this period, the newly independent people had no major objective other than reconstructing the indigenous identity, this clearly appears when Ali's teacher says:

> Now, you will use the green pen to underline. I [Ali] have asked why? Why shall we stop using the red pen … [the teacher] If we write in a blue pen on white paper and we underline with red, it will be blue white and red. These are the colours of the French flag. He [the teacher] said we are free now. Free for four months. After a hundred and thirty-two years of colonisation. Seven years and a half of war. A million and a half martyrs. He said that we should forget France, the French flag, and the French national anthem.[91]

The passage which is addressed to the freshly emancipated generation reveals the rejection of any trace that reminds the culture of the ex-coloniser. The teacher firmly forbids his pupils from using the red pen anymore because together with the blue ink and the white paper the colours of the French flag reappear surreptitiously. Hence, it is no longer permitted to revive the spirit of the coloniser even through its national colours. The teacher then focuses on numbers to amplify the importance of the information and to inform the young generation about the long period of injustice their parents endured to free their land.

Maissa Bey adds that this deeply felt longing for freedom was not the aspiration of adults solely because Ali:

> At colonial school in Algeria … sung the French anthem every morning … but he changed some words. For instance, instead of saying 'the day of glory has come', [he] said 'the soup is ready, come to eat.' It was … a way of resisting. It was the war of words … Now, after coming back to school, [Ali] sings Kassaman.[92]

In this passage Ali confesses how he used to resist colonialism: as a child, Ali had no power over his environment, all that was in his possession was a symbolic barrel full of words, and that was what he opted for. That said, he substituted the core meaning of the French national anthem by inserting infantilising sentences and words of opposite meaning. The importance of this substitution is that Bey wants to show that colonial hegemony did not fully control children. Although Ali was a pupil at school, his declaration was a form of resistance. It was a war of words. The new generation seemed to hold the seeds of an affirmed identity that Algeria needed in order to grow stable and powerful. As part of the colonial project, Ali 'learned correct French because Algeria was France. And the teacher always repeated: 'to be French, one must deserve it".[93] However, after independence the new Algerian teacher inculcated with pupils nationalist ideals which would have been subversive under the old regime, such as 'to be Algerian, one must deserve it'.[94] Noticeably, Bey engages in subversive reasoning, so she mentions two conflictual elements and opts for writing back: French culture versus Algerian culture. Ali is aware of the coexistence of these two essences since he has inherited the Algerian culture from his family and the French culture from colonisation. Rejecting colonialism has been inculcated in him by his Algerian teacher after independence, but this rejection does not mean that he forgets French or that he gets rid of French cultural influence. Consequently, he is culturally hybrid.

Thus far, it is important to consider the impact of rejecting the culture of the coloniser, which is already part of these persons' daily life, even beyond their personal choice. Thus, we will see how this rejection constitutes a distressing and consequential event in the lives of newly independent people. For example, when they grow up, Ali and Lilas start to face society, and as a sign of transition towards maturity and independent thinking, both Lilas and Ali enter into multiple episodes of reflection. Lilas declares that:

> [her] future is becoming clearer. [she] is advancing in a road with the illusion of having traced the route, but [she] is still full of doubts. In fact, [she] has the certainty of having built reasonable dreams. Without getting caught in the trap of the unexpected, the unpredictable.[95]

Although Lilas, now, has the capacity of planning her future, and the plans she sets are reasonable and achievable, there seems to be an outer force that complicates the realisation of her dreams. At the same time, Ali is preoccupied with finding answers to questions that are evident and simple, but despite them being evident, he still cannot find the response. He says that '[his mind is tormented] with the obvious absurdity of a question to which [he] do[es] not cease to seek answers.'[96] Consequently, both Lilas and Ali are disillusioned. Their similar psychological states of mind stem from the unexpected and violent events Algeria experiences after independence – the black decade when the Algerian state wanted to create 'mechanisms towards a controlled liberalism.'[97] As a result, this conflict has ignited sentiments of disillusionment in the sense that although they had recently experienced the struggle for independence, they did not have enough time to taste freedom. They were involved in a violent spiral between the state and terrorists where the only loser was the people.[98]

In the early 1960s, the actual state of Algeria caused many people's projects to crumble, the life of Ali and Lilas was disorientated because of political reasons. As aforementioned, post-independence in Algeria was characterised by the imperious objective to re-establish an idealised native Arabo-Islamic culture, among teachers as well as politicians:

> To remind everyone at every moment of life that we must not deviate from the path marked out for us. I am an Arab and a Muslim, and I am not allowed to forget it. I hear it over and over again. From the sweetest to the most threatening.[99]

The previous passage shows the pressure Ali and his generation lived through because of the constant desire to preserve an Arabo-Islamic identity. Ali is not against the Arabo-Islamic identity, but the inherited colonial culture is part and parcel of his person, and the same applies to his generation. Yet, being exposed to continuous pressure causes him inward troubles. He says that 'they taught me a language, French. They repeated to me that the only things that matter are the level of education, the desire to bring to the country what it needs most, and the skills and knowledge to propel the country to the level of

developed countries.'[100] Ali is justifying his position by saying that he has not chosen to learn French, he was taught French because that was the only option available during colonisation. He adds that all he has been told is that what matters most are the competences and knowledge a person possesses. However, after independence, Ali is faced with a contradictory principle – the importance of learning Arabic and rejecting French. As a result, Ali becomes disillusioned and isolated from the society.

At that time, it was hard to live in Algeria where the only recognised and acceptable culture was the Arabo-Islamic culture. Culturally hybrid individuals are marginalised and looked down upon. Ali, Lilas and those who are in their situation are 'a few who want to shake up prejudices so that things change within society itself. Starting with [their] own families'.[101] However, it is impossible for Ali and Lilas to have an influence over their environment because they are different: most of the generation of Ali and Lilas is culturally hybrid while the rest of the population is closer to Arabo-Islamic culture. As a consequence, both Ali and Lilas feel homeless within their homeland. Ali declares that:

> I have less and less confidence in the future … I have the impression that there is nothing left of the momentum that carried us, that carried a whole people just a few years ago? There is also nothing of this prodigious desire to remake the world, to shape our lives to the measure of these promises that we all made together in the euphoria of a hard-won freedom. Yes, I have the impression that there are only empty shells left, emptied of their contents by an increasingly sterilising reality.[102]

In the previous passage, Lilas was full of hope like all the people who fervently struggled to get their freedom back. However, post-independence brought about a sterile reality. Lilas regrets the past when hope still enabled people to survive. In her tone, Lilas seems to be disappointed. Instead of growth and progress, the post-independence era sees decay and a serious alienation of the self from society: Lilas is detached from her society because she is different from the majority but her scepticism about the future makes her feel detached and isolated from the community she lives in. Disillusionment is one of the greatest problems confronting the newly independent societies due to local political and social uprisings.

Ali, on the other hand, suffers because of his attitude which is judged to be incompatible with the Arabo-Islamic culture.[103] He has been accused of betraying the ideals of the revolution amongst his peers at work:

> I protested against the obligation to plead in classical Arabic on the injunction of an Arabic-speaking judge who did not support my intervention in a language he described as French Arabic. It is true that it often happens to me, like many of my peers who have had the same academic background as mine, to begin my pleadings with the agreed formulas in Arabic, but to finish them in French, only language in which I can clearly state the facts and refer to the law. The magistrate threatened me with contempt proceedings because I immediately replied that I was not directly

involved in the history of Algeria, and that I had nothing to do with French colonisation. Everything is happening today as if we had to pay the price for this colonisation, of which we embody, despite ourselves, a legacy.[104]

In the above statement, Ali is marginalised and looked down upon because of a fact he is not responsible for: his cultural hybridity has been the by-product of a progression from colonialism to post-independence. As a consequence, Ali is denounced and belittled by his young colleagues. According to Fanon, if someone uses the language of the coloniser, then s/he begins to adopt that culture and adhere to its standards. Hence, Ali as compared to his fellow Arabic-speaking colleagues has a different world view that is not compatible with theirs. 'That is, we not only speak in particular languages, but, more fundamentally, become the person we become because of the particular language community in which we grew up.'[105]

Accordingly, language is an important constituent of people's personality. Language in particular resonates with people's 'distinctive ways of being in the world.'[106] Ngugi wa Thiong'o adheres to Fanon's position, contending that 'the bullet was the means of physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation.'[107] The common theoretical claims Fanon and Ngugi share are in line with the principles Arabic speakers use in order to justify their positions towards Francophone Algerians. With this context in mind, the hybrid generation became disillusioned because of the radical and urgent need to go back to Arabisation and Islamism. This generation feels rather positive about hybridity: Ali is at ease when he joins French with Arabic because it is the best way he can express his ideas accurately and evocatively. The abrupt implementation of Arabisation caused confusion, because of this culturally hybrid people were assumed to be in the wrong place. As a result, Lilas and Ali start to consider fleeing the country because 'the Algerian revolution guarantees the right of asylum to all those who fight for freedom'.[108]

The feeling of disillusionment is also experienced by Ifemelu and Obinze in *Americanah*. Before going to America, Ifemelu imagines that the streets and houses will be like those shown in Black American serials like *The Cosby Show*. However, when she arrives, Ifemelu feels like she is always waiting for the 'real America' to disclose itself because reality does not resemble what is shown on TV. In the book, Ifemelu realises that she:

Came from a country where race was not an issue; [she] did not think of [herself] as black and [she] only became black when [she] came to America. When you are black in America and you fall in love with a white person, race doesn't matter when you're alone together because it's just you and your love. But the minute you step outside, race matters. But we don't talk about it. We don't even tell our white partners the small things that piss us off and the things we wish they understood better, because we're worried they will say we're overreacting, or we're being too sensitive. And we don't want them to say, Look how far we've come, just forty years ago it would have been illegal for us to even be a couple blah blahblah.[109]

This passage shows how Adichie 'expands her boundaries to expose the relationship between blacks and whites in different parts of the world.' For Ifemelu, 'who grew up with romanticised notions of the West', 'race' has never been an issue in Nigeria where she comes from.[110] Her notion of being black starts from the moment she arrives in the USA.[111] Ifemelu describes a subject that has been and still is a very sensitive issue – racism. She states that if a black person falls in love with a white person, race should not be an obstacle in their relationship. However, this starts to attract attention and criticism the day it becomes public. In the United States, Ifemelu belongs to a minority group whose image is marginalised and deemed 'inferior'. Such a situation becomes obvious because:

> Nigeria particularly has experienced mostly negative exposure in global media, a major negative aspect being the myth creation of what its people are perceived to be contrary to what they really are. Decades after Africa's colonial experience, the victor's right to history persists in perpetuating false claims about the basic humanity of Blacks.[112]

According to the above passage, Ifemelu is a victim of the propaganda spread by the media. In a country like the United States, race and class are social parameters that either grant respect to any human, or deprive them from it. Van de Berge explains that 'the Negro was defined as subhuman, a disenfranchised part of the polity, as a special form of chattel, assessed as three fifths of a man by constitutional compromise between South and North'.[113]As a consequence of these social and political facts, the question of identity occupies an important space in the life of Ifemelu.

The problem of unbelonging is faced by the characters in both Maissa Bey's *Bleu Blanc Vert* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* when they believe that they will be better off if they migrate to the west. In *Americanah*, Ifemelu leaves Nigeria in order to study in the USA while Obinze travels to England because of a profound dissatisfaction with his life in Nigeria. In *Bleu Blanc Vert*, Lilas and Ali are faced with serious social and political problems in Algeria, so they decide to go to France where they can hope to find an environment inoffensive to their culture. However, the idea of fleeing their own countries to find refuge in the west tremendously impacted their personalities: Ifemelu becomes depressed mainly because of racism and individualism, whereas Obinze is subjected to humiliation because he is clandestine in England. Likewise, Lilas and Ali, despite being respectful and educated, are the victims of prejudice because of their Algerian nationality. Thus far, both Bey and Adichie depict fleeing to the former coloniser's country as a major source of disillusionment because it creates displacement, alienation and depression. In both novels, the characters consider leaving their country of birth as a way to escape from troubles caused by their hybridity, but in reality, this decision proves to be the source of their trouble. In the end,

these characters find themselves longing for their homelands anew because of racism, anxiety and depression.

Towards an Affirmed Hybrid Identity

This article has demonstrated that cultural hybridity is one of the focal elements Bey and Adichie use to show the extent to which Algerian and Nigerian individuals are torn between two cultures. In both of the novels, the characters find it difficult to live with their hybridity. Also, these characters are distinguished by the fact that they do not deny their origins: they exhibit themselves in the culture of the coloniser because they were born a few years before independence, and they have been subjected to the institutions designed by the French and British colonial administration, in Algerian and Nigeria respectively. The first subsection has shown that cultural hybridity existed in post-independence nations due to the long-term colonial encounter.[114] In the second subsection, this article has shown that cultural hybridity has harmful consequences on the personality of postcolonial individuals, and this can lead to disillusionment.

The majority of criticism around postcolonial novels depicts hybrid characters as psychologically disillusioned and depressed[115] because they are caught in a third space where feelings of 'unbelonging' chase them: in their home country they are subjected to rejection, and in the metropoles, namely France and Great Britain, they are subjected to humiliation. Thus, 'hybrid affirmation' seeks to re-imagine postcolonial criticism by adjusting the interpretations of characters in postcolonial novels to shed light on their positive assets and actions. 'Hybrid affirmation' suggests handling ones' hybridity by ceasing to allege that culturally hybrid people are the victims of colonisation. In *Bleu Blanc Vert* and *Americanah*, by the end of the novels the characters have realised that being culturally hybrid is not that problematic or destabilising. After experiencing social rejection abroad, the characters return to their homelands (Algeria and Nigeria), and start to handle their lives by coping with their environment. Being culturally hybrid has not prevented them from living and succeeding in life, '[Ali] says that the future belongs to those who know how to shape their dreams according to the world around them'.[116]

The last sequences of the novels show that the characters have embraced 'hybrid affirmation', and that they are able to handle their cultural hybridity within their respective societies. Ali and Lila, as well as Ifemelu and Obinze, are more self-confident, and more at ease with who they are. Ifemelu and Obinze reunite back in Nigeria and revive their love. Ifemelu's vision of life becomes clearer, and she finds her way back to Lagos. Ali and Lilas say that they have made a lot of progress.[117] Life has become better, people no longer focus on cultural differences and are now concerned with more serious issues such as 'Discover[ing]. Build[ing]. Found[ing]. Creat[ing]. [and] Shap[ing]' in order to improve their lives and help the country develop.[118]

Conclusion

Several specific feelings arise from the prospect of rejecting the colonial legacy, including disillusionment, alienation, displacement, loss, social tension and cultural conflict. These characteristics are most consistently associated with the experience of postcolonial subjects within the framework of postcolonial criticism. Examining the ways in which Maissa Bey and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novels depict the post-independence condition of indigenous Algerian and Nigerian Populations, allows us to reveal a 'fresher' approach for reading that applies to the selected prose narratives, and to texts dealing with post-independence in general. Despite scholars' attempts to provide positive interpretations of cultural hybridity, postcolonial texts, both Francophone or Anglophone, have until now predominantly been contextualised and analysed within the themes of marginalisation, disillusionment, displacement and alienation. The present comparison of *Bleu Blanc Vert* and *Americanah* has developed a new term related to cultural hybridity: here we use 'hybrid affirmation'. The core principle of 'hybrid affirmation' is in line with existing concepts like 'positive hybridity', which call for social reconciliation. However, while 'positive hybridity' applies to an Asian-Australian group of people, 'hybrid affirmation' is specific to postcolonial societies that experienced imperialism. Therefore, this concept is coined to serve the postcolonial context, and rethink postcolonial criticism to offer a positive interpretation of the characters' personality, by extension postcolonial peoples. It sheds light on the postcolonial character's capacity for post-traumatic growth. It promotes social stability and denounces hostility towards the colonial legacy. In addition, it seeks to demonstrate that there is strength, resilience, hope and positivity that can be detected in postcolonial texts.

> 'Hybrid affirmation' offers a viable solution to some of the imbalances and tensions outlined in *Bleu Blanc Vert* and *Americanah* and, to some extent, by an extensive proportion of postcolonial literature in general. As it has been demonstrated with Ifemelu, Obinze, Lilas and Ali, that when the notion of 'hybrid affirmation' is applied to the texts, many long-held assumptions about problems linked to identity construction, often presented as a painful and tortuous process, are fixed. Despite suffering and being socially alienated, Ali and Lilas, Ifemelu and Obinze manage to overcome these difficulties because of their ability to self-reflect and fully embrace their hybrid identities. Despite the unease and the endless reflections they experience due to cultural differences, they find their way to stability.

Notes

1. Henning, Dag Hammarskjöld, the United Nations and the Decolonisation of Africa.
2. Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria*, 21–3; Larkin, *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria*, 17–8.
3. Douglas, Africa's Social Cleavages and Democratization, 25.
4. Overbey, "Postcolonial," 145–56.
5. Ibid.

6. Cooke, "Tricolour and Crescent," 57–75.

7. Magbadelo, "The Politics of Religion in Nigeria," 64–88.

8. Gerring et al., "An Institutional Theory of Direct and Indirect Rule," 377–433.

9. Ibid.

10. Blais, "La Longue Histoire de la Délimitation des Frontières de l'Algérie," 110–3.

11. McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, 49; Falola, and Matthew, *A History of Nigeria*, 17.

12. Nafziger et al., *War, Hunger, and Displacement*, 3.

13. Ibid., 11.

14. Krishnaswamy, "The Criticism of Culture and the Culture of Criticism: At the Intersection of Postcolonialism and Globalization Theory," 106–26.

15. Gikandi, "Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality," 627–58.

16. Radhakrishnan, "Postcoloniality and The Boundaries of Identity," 750–71.

17. Ashcroft et al., *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts,* 93–5.

18. Liu, "Globalization as Boundary-Blurring: International and Local Law Firms in China's Corporate Law Market," 771–804.

19. O'Rourke and Williamson, "When Did Globalisation Begin?" 23–50.

20. Merry, "Review of *From Law and Colonialism to Law and Globalization*, by Martin Chanock," 569–90.

21. Held et al., "Globalization," 483–96.

22. Ibid., 569.

23. Ouslim, "The Policy of Plundering the Real-Estate in the Outskirts of Tlemcen's Countryside by French Colonialism: The Department of Ouled Mimoun as a Model between 1858 and 1868," 151–67.

24. Charle, "English Colonial Policy and the Economy of Nigeria," 79–92.

25. Heggoy, "Education in French Algeria: An Essay on Cultural Conflict," 180–97.

26. Bassey, "Missionary Rivalry and Educational Expansion in Southern Nigeria, 1885-1932," 36–46.

27. Ibid.

28. Brydon, and Coleman, *Renegotiating Community: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Global Contexts*, 2.

29. Ibid., ix.

30. The *Harkis*, also known as *Harka*, refers to the native Algerian volunteers who served as auxiliaries in the French army during the Algerian war from 1954 to 1962.

31. The *Evolués* is a term referring to the native Congolese who collaborated with the Belgian coloniser in return of particular privileges such as accessing qualified jobs not permitted to the mass.

32. Wamagatta, "African Collaborators and Their Quest for Power in Colonial Kenya: Senior Chief Waruhiu Wa Kung'u's Rise from Obscurity to Prominence, 1890-1922," 295–314.

33. Charef, *Le Harki de Meriem*.

34. Dadié, *Monsieur Thôgô-gnini*.

35. wa Thiong'o, A Grain of Wheat.

36. *Third space* is a term coined by Homi Bhabha in his book *The Location of Culture*. (published in 2004 by Routledge Classics) to designate the metaphysical space that represents the cultural in-betweeness, wherein the contact of two cultures gives birth to a third culture that holds characteristics from both initial cultures to form a new element which is cultural hybridity.

37. Harrison, *Our Civilizing Mission: The Lessons of Colonial Education*, 48.

'On offre à l'enfant indigène une instruction française qui le tire en apparence de son milieu

> mais qui le laisse ensuite désarmé, incapable de se faire une place entre une civi-lisation qui
>
> l'abandonne et une barbarie qui le reprend.'

38. Bruneau, "Diasporas, Transnational Spaces and Communities," 35–50.
39. Ibid., 36.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival*, 150–3.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., 151.
46. Ibid., 55.
47. Haviser and MacDonald, African Re-Genesis: Confronting Social Issues in the Diaspora, 20.
48. This is the case of the protagonists in the analysed novel (Maissa Bey's *Bleu Blanc Vert* and Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie's *Americanah*).
49. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 31.
50. Guignery et al., *Hybridity: Forms and Figures in Literature and the Visual Arts,* 2.
51. Ibid.
52. Ingold. *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology Humanity, Culture and Social Life*, 329.
53. Rushdie, 'Imaginary Homelands,' 17.
54. Ibid.
55. The *mujahidin* is the plural form of *mujahid*. It is an Arabic word that designates those who fight against the enemy, during the Algerian war *mujahid* was not necess-arily a trained soldier. Anyone who fought against the enemy to liberate the country, men and women, were called *mujahidin*.
56. *The ulema* is the plural form of *alim*. It is an Arabic word that refers to thinkers, interpreters, and educators of Islamic religious sciences. In colonial Algeria, they used to teach children Quran and sharia, the Islamic law, secretly.
57. Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria,* 21–3.
58. James Ogude, *Chinua Achebe's Legacy: Illuminations from Africa* (South Africa: Africa Institute of South Africa, 2015): 32.
59. Ashcroft, "Beyond the Nation: Post-Colonial Hope," 12–22.
60. Ibid.
61. Orlando, "Conversations with Camus as Foil, Foe and Fantasy in Contemporary Writing by Algerian Authors of French Expression," 865–83.
62. Yusin. "Postcolonial Trauma," 239–54.
63. Lo, "Beyond Happy Hybridity: Performing Asian-Australian Identities," 152–68.
64. Hannoum, "Writing Algeria: On the History and Culture of Colonialism," 1–19.
65. Ibid., 4.
66. Mayowa, "Pre-Colonial Nigeria and the European's Fallacy," 17–27.
67. Edewor et al., "Managing Ethnic and Cultural Diversity for National Integration in Nigeria," 70, 71; Aito, "National and Official Languages in Nigeria: Reflections on Lin-guistic Interference and the Impact of Language Policy and Politics on Minority Languages," 2–22.
68. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert*, 31.
69. Martin, *Histoire de L'Algérie Française 1830 1962*, 27.
70. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert,* 48.

71. Ibid., 224.

   'Alya sait déjà reconnaître les lettres, et déchiffre même quelques mots. En arabe bien sûr.

   Depuis l'application de la réforme instituant l'école fondamentale, l'apprentissage du français ne commence qu'en quatrième année de primaire.'

72. Fu et al., *Translanguaging for Emergent Bilinguals: Inclusive Teaching in the Linguistically Diverse Classroom*, 76–86.

73. Ibid.

   'Alya a elle aussi, été désorientée les premiers jours … L'arabe que parle la maîtresse à

   l'école n'est pas tout à fait le même que celui qu'elle connaît et parle couramment […] il a

   fallu lui expliquer la différence entre langage parlé et langue écrite. Mais alors, a-t-elle

   rétorqué du haut de ses six ans, cet arabe-là, celui qu'on apprend à l'école, c'est seulement

   pour l'école, on ne peut pas le parler à la maison ? […] comment expliquer à une enfant le

   métissage, le brassage et l'interpénétration des langues dans un pays qui a subi autant

   d'occupation étrangères que le nôtre?'

74. *Al fus'ha* is classical Arabic, the language taught at schools.

75. *Al darija* is dialectical Arabic used in everyday life, in streets, and in markets. It has mixed influences because of the different governments that have ruled the region over history. While its base is Arabic, it also contains Amazigh (Berber), French, Turkish and some words from Spanish and Italian.

76. Liberman et al., "Exposure to multiple languages enhances communication skills in infancy," 1.

77. Decree Chautemps, 8 March 1938: the Arabic language becomes foreign, and its use becomes banned.

78. Benrabah, *Language Conflict in Algeria: From Colonialism to Post-Independence*, 52.

79. Ibid., 55.

80. Ibid., xi.

81. Ibid.

82. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert,* 269.

   'Le propriétaire de la boutique est un personnage extraordinaire. En parlant, il mélange

   l'arabe, le kabyle, le français et l'espagnol, et il incorpore même quelques mots d'anglais à

   ses discours sur la décadence des civilisations et l'immoralité de l'art.'

83. Ourtirane, "Histoire et culture dans *Bleu Blanc Vert* de Maïssa Bey," 93–105.

84. Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah,* 12, 19, 26.

85. Siegel, *The Emergence of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 296.

86. Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah,* 48–9.

87. Igboanusi, "The Igbo Tradition in the Nigerian Novel," 2.

88. Chukueggu, "Diglossia and Code Switching in Nigeria: Implications for English Language Teaching and Learning," 142.

89. Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah,* 49.

90. Mittal, "Theme of Alienation in Modern Literature: The Advent of Existentialism, With Life as Seen Through Indian English Fiction Writers," 1.

91. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert*, 13–4.

'Maintenant vous ne soulignerez plus qu'en vert. Avec un stylo vert. J'ai levé le doigt. Il m'a autorisé à parler. J'ai demandé pourquoi. Pourquoi on ne devait plus utiliser le rouge […] si on écrivait avec un stylo bleu sur la feuille blanche et qu'on soulignait en rouge, ça ferait bleu blanc rouge. Les couleurs de la France. Celles du drapeau français. Il a dit qu'on était libre maintenant. Libres depuis quatre mois. Après cent trente-deux ans décolonisation. Sept ans et demi de guerre. Un million et demi de martyrs. Il a dit qu'on devait maintenant oublier la France. Le drapeau français. Et la Marseillaise.'

92. Ibid., 14.

'A l'école du village, … chantait [la Marseillaise] tous les matins. En saluant le drapeau français … Mais [il] avait … changé quelques mots. Par exemple, au lieu de dire « Le jour de gloire est arrivé », [il] disait « La soupe est prête, venez manger. C'était [une] façon … de résister. C'était la guerre des mots … Maintenant après la rentrée scolaire, [il] chante Kassaman ».

93. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert,* 15.

'Il apprenait le français correct et bien soigné. Parce que l'Algérie, c'était la France. Et le

maître en CM2, répétait toujours : « être Français, ça se mérite ».'

94. Ibid., 20.

'être Algérien, ça se mérite.'

95. Ibid., 128.

'[son] avenir se dessine de plus en plus nettement. [Elle] avance sur une route balisée avec l'illusion d'en avoir tracé l'itinéraire, mais [elle] reste encore pleine de doutes. En fait, [elle a] la certitude d'avoir construit des rêves à la mesure du possible. Sans [se] laisser prendre au piège de l'inattendu, de l'imprévisible.'

96. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert,* 131.

'm'obsède l'absurdité évidente d'une question à laquelle pourtant je ne cesse de chercher des réponses.'

97. Belgacem, "Algeria, a post-dark-decade peace process. From successful experience to reproducible model, the long way," 1.

98. Connelly, *Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era,* 309.

99. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert,* 145.

'Rappeler à tous à chaque instant de la vie, que nous ne devons pas dévier du chemin tracé pour nous. Je suis Arabe et musulman, on ne me permet pas de l'oublier. On me le répète sur tous les tons. Du plus doucereux au plus menaçant.'

100. Ibid.

'On m'a appris une langue, le français. On m'a répété que seuls comptaient le niveau d'instruction et le désir d'apporter au pays ce dont il avait le plus besoin. Des compétences et des savoirs faires pour le propulser au niveau des pays développés.'

101. Ibid., 138.

'quelques-uns à vouloir secouer les préjugés pour que les choses changent à l'intérieur même de la société. A commencer par [leur] propres familles.'

102. Ibid., 163.

'J'ai de moins en moins confiance en l'avenir. Moi-même, j'ai l'impression qu'il ne reste plus

rien de l'élan qui nous portait, qui portait tout un peuple il y a à peine quelques années? Rien non plus de cette prodigieuse envie de refaire le monde, de modeler nos vie à la mesure de ces promesses que nous faisions tous ensemble dans l'euphorie

d'une liberté chèrement conquise. Oui, j'ai l'impression qu'il ne reste plus que des coquilles vides, vidées de leurs contenus par une réalité de plus en plus stérilisante, par un quotidien desséchant.'

103. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert*, 226.
104. Ibid., 225.

'Je m'insurgeais contre l'obligation de plaider en arabe classique sur injonction d'un juge arabophone qui ne supportait pas mon intervention dans une langue qu'il a qualifiée d'arabe francisé. Il est vrai qu'il m'arrive souvent, comme bon nombre de confrères de mon âge et qui ont eu le même parcours universitaire que le mien, de commencer mes plaidoiries par les formules convenues en arabe, mais de les terminer en français, seule langue dans laquelle il m'est possible d'exposer clairement les faits et de me référer à la loi. Le magistrat m'a menacé de poursuites pour outrage parce que j'ai aussitôt répondu que je n'étais pas directement impliqué dans l'histoire de l'Algérie, et que je n'étais pour rien dans la colonisation française. Tout se passe aujourd'hui comme si nous devions payer le prix de cette colonisation dont nous représentons, bien malgré nous, une séquelle.'

105. Siegel, *The Emergence of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 947–50.
106. Ibid., 6.
107. Wa Thiong'O, *Decolonising the Mind*.
108. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert*, 132.

'La révolution algérienne garantit le droit d'asile à tous ceux qui luttent pour la liberté.'

109. Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah,* 212.
110. Jenefer, "Racism in Adichie's *Americanah*," 1.
111. Emig and Lindner, *Commodifying (Post)Colonialism: Othering, Reification, Commodification and the New Literatures and Cultures in English*, xii.
112. Amonyeze, "Writing a New Reputation: Liminality and Bicultural Identity in Chimamanda Adichie's *Americanah*," 2.
113. Ibid., 2.
114. Smith, *Colonial Memory and Postcolonial Europe: Maltese Settlers in Algeria and France,* 99.
115. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mhalanga. *Bondage of Boundaries and Identity.*

Politics in Postcolonial Africa: The Northern Problem and Ethno-Futures, 168.

116. Ibid., 99.

'[Ali] says that the future belongs to those who know how to shape their dreams according to the world around them.'

117. Bey, *Bleu Blanc Vert*, 166–118.
118. Ibid., 207.

'conquérir. Découvrir. Construire. Fonder. Créer. Façonner. Forger. Produire.'

Acknowledgements

Disclosure Statement

Funding

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