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**MARGINALISATION: A STUDY OF JOHN NKEMNGONG
NKENGASONG'S ACROSS THE MONGOLO AND DJAÏLI AMADOU
AMAL'S LES IMPATIENTES**

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DEDICATION

To my late father, Epoge NAPOLEON KANG and my mother, Mejane LEDWINE WANG.

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This work could not have been completed without the help of a number of individuals. I would love to express my profound gratitude to my supervisor, Dr.Judith NGANTU KOME , for her patience, corrections, support and guidance that helped me throughout the course of this research.

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I am also grateful to the NGAPE AND WANG family for their great support and words of encouragement during the writing of this project.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this MA dissertation entitled: « *Marginalisation: A Study of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across The Mongolo and Djaili Amadou Amal's Les Impatientes* »

has been written by Ekune-Kang Laura Epoge .

Dr. Judith Ngantu Kome
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ABSTRACT

This study entitled "Marginalisation: A Study Of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across The Mongolo* And Djaili Amadou Amal's *Les Impatientes* " examines marginalisation as an element with which these authors express the plights faced by characters in their novels. John Nkemngong Nkengasong illustrates Linguistic marginalisation faced by anglophones in the state of Kamangola while, Djaili Amadou Amal illustrates Female marginalisation faced by the women of the Sahel. This work is divided into an Introduction, Four chapters and a Conclusion. In order for these novels to be analysed critically, the theory of Post Colonialism has been used. The study makes use of Post Colonialism to demonstrate how the characters in *Across The Mongolo* and *Les Impatientes* are considered as orientals and subalterns, also, he speaks on how Feminism is used to demonstrate the effects gender discrimination, has on women of the Sahel. It can be seen that Nkengasong and Amal in their novels analyse the harsh realities of linguistic marginalisation and female marginalisation respectively. In addition to demonstrating these realities, this work proved that linguistic marginalisation and female marginalisation have big repercussions on the characters in the novel which further grows into rebellion therefore, John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal play the role of the voice of the marginalised. Both authors sound a wake up call to all to resist linguistic marginalisation and female marginalisation by practicing equality

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude intitulée "Marginalisation : A Study Of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across The Mongolo* And Djaïli Amadou Amal's *Les Impatientes* " examine la marginalisation comme un élément avec lequel ces auteurs expriment les taux auxquels sont confrontés les personnages dans leurs romans. John Nkemngong Nkengasong illustre la marginalisation linguistique rencontrée par les anglophones dans l'État de Kamangola tandis que Djaïli Amadou Amal illustre la marginalisation féminine auxquelles sont confrontées par les femmes du Sahel. Ce travail est divisé en une introduction, quatre chapitres et une conclusion. Afin que ces romans soient analysés de manière critique, la théorie du post-colonialisme a été utilisée. L'étude utilise le post-colonialisme pour démontrer comment les personnages des romans *Across The Mongolo* et *Les Impatientes* sont considérés comme des orientés et des subalternes, il parle également de la façon dont le féminisme démontre les effets de la discrimination fondée sur le sexe sur les femmes du Sahel. On peut voir que Nkengasong et Amal, dans leurs romans, analysent les dures réalités de la marginalisation linguistique et de la marginalisation féminine respectivement. En plus de démontrer ces réalités, ce travail a prouvé que la marginalisation linguistique et la marginalisation féminine ont de grandes répercussions sur les personnages du roman qui se transforme encore plus en rébellion, par conséquent, John Nkemngong Nkengasong et Djaïli Amadou Amal jouent le rôle de la voix des marginalisés. Les deux auteurs sonnent un appel au réveil pour qu'ils résistent à la marginalisation linguistique et à la marginalisation féminine en pratiquant l'égalité.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

For most of human history, one part of a society has always been considered superior to the other. This can be traced as far as the colonisation process where a race deemed itself superior to the other hence suppressing them politically, socially, and even culturally. The advent of texts such as *Long Walk To Freedom* by Nelson Mandela and *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane demonstrate the racial inequality and stereotypes faced by blacks in a society where they are brutalised into a society of marginalisation. These texts are not just based on the society of suppression in which they are faced but also, on the struggles they face to gain freedom and to rise out of the despair associated with their skin colour.

Following the issue of colonisation, we address this in a typical African setting where tribes view their cultures and traditions as wiped out and eradicated by their colonisers in a bid to adopt theirs (colonisers); this situation can be found in the novel *Le Fils D'Agatha Moudio* by Francis Bebey. In this case, we explore the Cameroonian setting where the protagonist Mbenda watches the society around him change and their culture slowly being influenced by the presence of white hunters in their village. The same can be said about the novel *Petals Of Blood* by Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o which presents to us the suppression and exploitation faced by Kenyans due to neocolonial systems and foreign business interests.

The term 'marginalization' according to Brigit M. Carter et al in their study entitled "Overcoming Marginalisation by Creating a Sense of Belonging" describes "structural, interpersonal, and inter group dynamics that perpetuate inequality and exclusion". According to this definition, marginalisation is not only found in race but can also be faced by individuals who are found in the same geographical setting but have cultural differences. This situation can be found in an African setting where several tribes are found in the same setting but one tribe considers herself superior to the other. The Rwanda genocide of 1994 is a good example of this form of marginalisation; this genocide was carried out by extremist elements of Rwanda's majority population, the Hutus, who killed the minority population, the Tutsi. In this process, 800,000 civilians were killed.

Indeed, marginalisation can take several forms dependent on race, tribe, and even gender. Novels such as *Nervous Conditions* by Tsitsi Dangarembga demonstrate that marginalisation can still take the form of female suppression. Through the preview of the protagonist "Tambudzai" and other characters like "Maiguru" and "Nyasha", light is brought upon the fact that women go under marginalisation by their male counterparts. The same can be found in short stories such as *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* by Ola Rotimi. In our study, we illustrate the fact that "the woman's place is in the kitchen" as it is often said; "Liza" is looked at by the other women as a "special breed" because she is emancipated unlike her fellow women who are been looked down upon by their male partner "Lejoka Brown".

Above, we have demonstrated marginalisation as found in individuals of different races and genders, but further research has demonstrated that marginalisation can also be found in powerful Nations who exert their power and influence over the less privileged countries particularly former colonies in order to control them. This form of Marginalisation could be termed as Neo-Colonialism. This can be found in the novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* by Ayi Kwei Armah; here, we are met with a protagonist who is emotionally suppressed by the society around him because he denies acting like the rest of them. The protagonist is disgusted with life in post-independent Ghana and how citizens have resulted to ills and abandoned their culture to pursue "Shiny things which wealth can bring".

Through time, literature has been voiced through several means, it could be through novels, chants, fire-side stories, acts, and even through daily events. A clear case is the country Cameroon, which is made up of two national languages: English and French. Marginalisation in Cameroon goes back to the colonisation period. Following the defeat of the Germans in Cameroon after the First World War in 1916, Cameroon was partitioned between France and Britain; with France taking over 80% and Britain taking 20%. This division led to the implementation of English and French as Official languages in Cameroon at the reunification of 1961. This process of division led to the majority of the population which is French-speaking, to feel entitled over the lesser population which are, English-speaking. Despite efforts made by the government to implement bilingualism such as the creation of a commission in 1973, whose role was to implement the teaching of English and French language in primary schools, this

commission was known as "opération bilinguisme". The presence of marginalisation was still felt by the lesser population. In the chapters that will follow, we will uncover the ways in which Marginalisation manifests itself in the different contexts in which it is found, we will also analyse the intersection between the authors past with marginalisation, how it contributed in unraveling the storyline of both novels and also, highlight the resilience of these communities in the face of oppression.

Statement Of The Problem

In the novels of John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal under this study, the issue of marginalisation be it of gender and cultural heritage stand out predominantly. These authors portray a rampant issue in society which is bound by no geographical site. Existing research on marginalisation has primarily focused on exploring the relation between the dominant and the marginalised groups however, the specific experiences of women and the role of linguistic marginalisation have received relatively less attention. By examining the ways in which : marginalisation affect minorities in *Across The Mongolo* and *Les Impatientes* respectively, this research provides a valuable addition to the existing literature shedding new light on the complex nature of marginalisation.

Research Questions

Concerning the observation given above, a series of questions came to mind.

- In what ways does the historical and biographical background of the realities of each novel lead to marginalisation?
- What forms of marginalisation are found in both novels?
- How do the characters fight against this marginalisation in which they are found?

Research Hypothesis

This work is based on the hypothesis that John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal in their novels *Across The Mongolo* and *Les Impatientes* respectively, make use of marginalisation to bring into light the plight of minority groups that have faced injustice from the earlier years till date.

Objective of the Study

This study aims to study marginalisation as a predominant theme in *Across The Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong and *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. It takes into consideration the different colonial experiences that have birth to different cultures and how these differences enhance the depiction of marginalisation in both cultures as reflected in the texts.

Significance of the Study

This study shows how both authors make use of marginalisation irrespective of their literary and geographical differences to demonstrate oppression in their various societies. In this case, John Nkemngong Nkengasong in *Across The Mongolo* portrays marginalisation of the minority population, Kama by the majority population, Ngola in the country of Kamangola, and, Djaili Amadou Amal in *Les Impatientes* portrays the marginalisation of women in the Sahel community. Despite the fact that Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal's novels are found in different geographical sites, our dissertation discloses that these works are closely related and adopt the same vision of subjugation of a minority group. Both writers are committed to writing about the oppressed and they use their art to bring this plight into light in a bid to fight this societal ill.

Scope of the Study

This study is limited to two novels which are: *Across The Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong and *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. Works by other critics shall be also used to unveil the instances of marginalisation in both these novels. Also, relevant historical facts and sources will be quoted.

Definition of Key Term

The key term to be defined in this work is "Marginalisation" and, we will be diving intricately into both female and Linguistic marginalisation. The term "Marginalisation" can be defined as a process of becoming or being made marginal (less important, powerful, or influential).

The term "Marginalization" according to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary can be defined as a process of treating someone or something as if they are

not important in the same light, the Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary defines marginalisation as the process of making somebody feel as if they are not important and cannot influence decisions or events.

According to "Introduction to Literary Theory Review", marginalisation is defined as the process by which certain groups are pushed to the edges by society resulting in limited access to resources, rights and opportunities(1). This definition of marginalisation emphasizes on the fact that only individuals of non-dominant social positions who lack representation are targeted.

Several authors also shed more light on this definition. One of them is Paulami Kundu in her study entitled "Religion, Culture, Society, and Process Of Marginalization", she defines marginalisation as "a process whereby something or someone is pushed to the edge of a group and accorded lesser importance. This is predominantly a social phenomenon by which a minority or sub-group is excluded and their needs to ignored." (107). Kundu goes ahead to explain that the individuals who face marginalisation face inequality in several sectors of their lives be it socially, economically, or politically. It continues to become a pertinent issue all over the world as marginalisation is not only centered on one geographical site but on diverse communities where minorities are systematically blocked from activities that integrate them into society. Another definition that emphasizes this will be explained below.

According to Ashley Kelly in her article entitled "What does Marginalized Mean and What Does It Matter?", to marginalise refers to treating a person or group of people as though they are insignificant by isolating or dis-empowering them. She goes ahead to state that marginalisation is not dependent on race, language differences, gender, sexual affiliation, and even geographical sites. This definition makes us view the fact that marginalisation can take several forms and in the case of this study, the forms which will be in use are Linguistic and Female marginalisation.

Carolyn Kagan and Mark H. Burton in their research entitled, "Marginalization" state that the term marginalisation is a *multi-layered concept* and a *shifting phenomenon* that is linked to the social status of individuals or groups. . They state "individuals or groups might enjoy high social status at one point in time, but as social

change takes place, so they lose this status and become marginalized. Similarly, as life cycle stages change, so might people's marginalized position."(3)

Kagan and Burton both state that the concept of marginalisation evolves with time and causes a change in social status. Therefore, the privileged might become the marginalised and vice versa.

Furthermore, Jane Jenson in "Thinking about Marginalization : What, Who and Why?" speak on the globalization of marginalisation as it is not confined to just one status. Jenson illustrates that the marginalised people are excluded from integrating activities thereby placing them in full exclusion. She continues by demonstrating to us the multidimensional nature of the concept of marginalisation. It goes way beyond the economic disparity but also social, cultural, and political.

Ram Ashish Giri in "Marginalisation: Our definition, some gaps we have found" takes another stand on the concept of marginalisation by demonstrating that can also be found in the Educational sector. Educational marginalisation is found in underprivileged students who only have limited access to basic levels of learning. These underprivileged students are those who have "socio-cultural, ethnic, linguistic, economic and skill barriers" in education. Giri also insists on the presence of different factors that influence marginalisation such as social status, linguistic minorities, religion, and disability to name a few.

Baah et al in "Marginalization: Conceptualizing patient vulnerabilities in the Framework of social determinants of health" define marginalisation as the ability to disadvantage people by exclusion(371). They divide marginalisation into social, economic, and political. For the social sector, they use the examples of students who when marginalised are socially excluded. They continue with economic marginalisation which prevents the individual from obtaining wealth or a job and finally, they explain the concept of political marginalisation where individuals are excluded from participating in democratic decisions like voting and the right to have political representatives.

Motivation

The researcher's motivation is particularly fueled by the fact that the African societies like other civilisations have experienced slavery and oppression. But unlike most of the other civilisations that live in a more democratic system, most African societies are still lacking in observing societal equity at various levels. This researcher is also of the view that the marginalisation of individuals by their fellow counterparts is a fact that should be brought to light to adopt change and rally against this ill.

Structure of the Work

This work consists of an Introduction, Four chapters, and a Conclusion. The Introduction handles the research problem, the research questions, the hypothesis, the research objectives, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the definition of the key term, the research motivation, and the structure of the work.

Chapter One is entitled "Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature" and explains the theory that will be used for the analysis of this study. The theory that will be used for this study is the Post-colonial theory. Other academic works which have been written on the two texts under study will also be reviewed.

Chapter Two entitled "Historical and Biographical backgrounds" discusses the origin and outgrowth of marginalisation in both settings. We will also present the biographies of the authors John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal, in a bid to relate their life experiences to their writings and also for a better understanding.

Chapter Three, "The Marginalisation of Minority Groups". This chapter discusses the issues faced by the minority groups in both settings. We will divide the chapter into two sections with one section, focusing on the Nkengasong's portrayal of the different forms of marginalisation faced by the characters and, the next section will be focused on Djaili Amadou Amal's portrayal of female oppression through her characters.

Chapter Four, "Resistance to Marginalisation". This chapter will focus on highlighting both authors' use of marginalisation and how the characters fought to resist being marginalised. This chapter will also be divided into two sections, the first will be

focused on Nkengasong's use of characters to demonstrate resistance and fight back and the second section of this study will be focused on Djaili Amadou Amal's portrayal of resistance through the use of his characterization.

The Conclusion highlights the main ideas that were analysed in each chapter. It will also present how this work answered the research questions that were stated in the General Introduction and if the objectives of the study were attained.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter outlines the theories adopted in this study and the literary review. A focus will be placed on the Post-colonial theory . We will attempt to give insights into this theory while emphasizing on the tenets which will be valuable to our study. As far as the literature review is concerned, academic works that have been written on the two texts under study will also be reviewed. We will in the process depict the value of this research by outlining how it stands out from the research already carried out in both texts.

Theoretical Framework

According to Sreekumar, a theoretical framework guides the research process like a road map for the research study. Also, Margaret A. Eisenhart in her study entitled "Conceptual Frameworks for Research Circa" defines a theoretical framework as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory... constructed by using a coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships"(205). Ebong in *The Supernatural in Angela Carter's Nights at the Circus and Toni Morrison's Beloved* goes further to state that "the theoretical framework consists of the selected theories that undergird a person's thinking concerning how he/she understands and plans to approach their topic, as well as the concepts and definitions from that theory that are relevant to their topic"(8). Shadrach A. Abanasom in his study *Education of the Deprived: A Study of Four Cameroonian playwrights* states that

No single literary approach is valid for all works. No matter its claims and supposed validity, one should not carry a single approach blindly to a work of art; it is rather the work that calls forth the type of approach suitable for its apprehension. An approach that is only remotely relevant to a work of art may mislead its conceiver to condemn the creative writer for the wrong crime; it may force the critic to judge and crucify the artist for what he never set out to do in the first place. (120)

A theoretical framework can be considered as the basis of a study because if not chosen correctly will render the study directionless. Following the above statement, this study made use of the Post-colonial theory . According to Daniel Elam in his study entitled

"Postcolonial Theory", "the post-colonial theory is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th Century."(1). In other words, this theory is a critical approach that deals with literature that has been produced by countries that were once former colonies of European countries or the literature written in colonising countries about the colonised countries, their people, and the consequences of colonialism. This theory is centered on the key concepts of resistance, hybridity, mimicry, and orientalism. It is centered on the idea that the colonising countries appropriate the languages and cultures of their colonised countries.

This theory goes ahead to prove the underlying legacies of colonialism which are crucial for the understanding of the texts *Across The Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong and *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. This part of the work is centered on reviewing the Post-colonial theory according to Edward Said in his theory of Orientalism and Gayatri Chakravorty's Subaltern issues. We will now move to Edward Said's theory of Orientalism. The term Subaltern studies was first coined by Ranajit Guha. The key term "Orient" according to Danielle Sered in his study *Orientalism* signifies "a system of representation framed by political forces that brought the orient into Western learning, Western consciousness and the Western empire".

Danielle Sered also goes ahead to define Orientalism as " a manner of regularised or orientalised writing, vision, and study dominated by imperatives, perspectives and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the orient". In other words, Orientalism is a critique of how the Western culture has constructed a bridge of difference between the "orients" and the "occident" or "orientalists"; the orients are considered as the primitive and uncivilised other in a way to show a distinction between them and the developed and civilised "occident". This is done as a means to justify their colonial dominance and maintain their power over their colonies. The occident uses this method as a means to justify the horrors that took place in the period of colonialism since the orients were viewed as lower humans.

Edward Said goes further to explain that it would be misleading to believe that the horrors of colonisation ended with colonization. These horrors have persisted in the forms of civil wars, coups d'états, corruption, and chaos which are visible in the

formerly colonised countries. Said in his study entitled "The Post Colonial Theory and The Literature of Decolonisation" states that,

a powerful coloniser has imposed a language and a culture, whereas cultures, histories, values, and languages of the Oriental peoples have been ignored and even distorted by the colonialists in their pursuit to dominate these peoples and exploit their wealth in the name of enlightening, civilising, and even humanising them.(40)

In this theory, Said brings to light the fact that the oriental people's culture is stereotyped and crossed out as non-existent in a bid to adopt the occident's culture. This dissipation of one culture over the other can also be seen in their literature. Said analyses in his study that the occident's representation of the orients in their literature is distorted and biased, The Orient is described as strange and weak while the occident is described as rational and strong in these texts written by early travelers, explorers, and even by prominent writers such as T.E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell. The pictures painted by the occident about the orients are false assumptions brought up to sabotage the image of colonies in a way for their colonial masters to strengthen their rule and imperial behaviour over them, in this way making them feel like lesser humans.

The Theory of Orientalism perpetrates cultural misinterpretation and appropriation; so in a bid to represent themselves in their form of literature, the orients produced texts and novels which represented the real greatness of their culture. These authors present a part of their culture that was portrayed as lame and backward to the world. Authors such as Chinua Achebe in his novel *Things Fall Apart* showcase the complexity and the vibrant culture of the Igbo people through the use of characterisation, a complex society ruled by a hierarchical system, and also the artistic and cultural achievements of the Igbo people which can be seen in their crafts, music, and dance. This allowed the orients to display a part of their culture that was demonised and, had a chance for the first time to write about themselves outside the pattern they were placed into; a pattern fabricated by the "powerful" western empire.

Despite the relevance of this theory, it was met with several criticisms from Academic orientalists such as Bernard Lewis in "Orientalism An Exchange" where he accuses Said of polluting the term Orientalism and discrediting his view on Orientalism and his inability to be versatile on the topic of Orientalism, Lewis states "While Mr.

Said's main effort is to shift the discussion from the ground of scholarship to that of politics where he feels more at ease, he does make some attempt to confront a few of the specific issues raised in my article"(par. 33). This is viewed according to scholars as hypocritical and misleading. Moreover, we will now move to the Subaltern issues according to Gayatri Chakravorty. The term subaltern studies was first used by Ranajit Guha. "Subaltern" refers to an individual or a thing of inferior rank or status whether depending on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion; in other words the subaltern studies refers to the domination of a particular group of people in the society by ruling classes. The subaltern classes include the peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power. The subaltern studies are made up of two sets of people, the "oppressor" and the "oppressed". The oppressed are the low ranking individuals in the society who have suffered marginalisation and the oppressors are the individuals with the chain of command. Antonio Gramsci also makes use of this word to refer to the working class people in the Soviet Union who are subjected to oppression.

This study aims to excavate the past experiences of groups ignored and marginalised by their former colonialists. In her essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Gayatri Spivak speaks on the fact that the "subalterns" do not have a voice; in her study, she states: "the Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with women a pious. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribed task that she must not disown with a flourish." (308). Gayatri Spivak relates the subaltern studies to Feminism, Deconstruction, and Marxism. She goes ahead to express in her study that the subalterns have gained a spirit of consciousness of their rights by taking action and speaking against the injustice and inequality displayed to them. Gayatri also speaks against the harm and marginalisation professed to women (third-world women) and non-Europeans.

Using her study, Gayatri opines that she wants to give a voice to the voiceless who can not speak and choose to remain silent in the presence of adversity, in this light, we are talking about Indigenous people, laborers, religious minorities and women. According to Bailey Betik in her study "Subaltern Studies", the subaltern studies "analyses the binary relationship of the subaltern and the ruling class and thus, studies the interplay of dominance and subordination in colonial systems" (par.1). Gayatri emphasises the opinion that the subaltern cannot speak in a way that could be

understood and those who tend to represent the subalterns instead reinforce existing power structures rather than genuinely empower the masses that need help. Also, Gayatri speaks on acknowledging the historical, cultural, and colonial contexts in which these subaltern identities are formed.

Gayatri challenges intellectuals and post-colonial historians on the validity of the point that the voices of the oppressed can be recovered, she takes an example using the story of Bhubaneswari, an Indian woman. The story is an example of an Indian woman's inability to express herself and be understood by the society in which she finds herself. According to Anand Maurya in his study "Spivak: Making the Subaltern", he explains that Bhubaneswari was a young woman who was forced to hang herself because she did not want to participate in a particular assassination that she was assigned to commit. She committed suicide, but a protest was formed against this assassination that she disagreed with. Still, the political act of this protest was negated entirely, and the story was rewritten by her family and society differently. Drawing on this event, Spivak speaks on how the subalterns are denied both a voice and the ability to act on their behalf. Gayatri also uses this example to talk about how the western discourse limits the Indian women's ability to act and speak. This example can be generalized to women around the world.

This theory was met with criticisms. An Indian sociologist, Vivek Chibber critiques this theory in one of his works entitled "Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital" by stating that this theory gives an unclear demonstration of the lower class's struggle and also of wiping off of the exploitation of classes from the story of the oppression of the subaltern(1220).

The post colonial theory also shares a relationship with feminism. According to Dr Ritu Tyagi in her article entitled "Understanding Postcolonial Feminism in Relation with Postcolonial and Feminist Theories" states that the "Post colonial theory is a male centered field that has not only excluded the concerns of the women, but also exploited them"(46). Dr Tyagi goes ahead to say that post colonial feminist theorists accuse post colonial theorists of denying the role of the women in the struggle for independence. This lack and bad representation of the female gender is portrayed in many other forms such as the portrayal of women in novels. Dr Tyagi speaks on Achebe's portrayal of

women as "happy, harmonious members of the community even when they are repeatedly beaten and barred from any say in the communal decision making process"(46). He gives another example from Caribbean male writers such as Joseph Zobel who have been accused of portraying stereotypical representations of women in their novels .

The marginalisation of women is consciously or unconsciously propagated by male authors who display the traditional stereotype women. In this case, the women are the subalterns who are excluded from dominant power structures and expected to act like stooges to the men. Tyagi expects the theory of post colonialism to be distinguished from the post colonial Feminist theory . This is in a bid to resist to the misrepresentation of women and also include the struggles of the Third world women while overlooking any issues of sex, race or class. The women aspire to be rightfully inserted into the proper historical and cultural context.

The tenets which will be examined in the course of this study under the Post Colonial Theory are Orientalism according to Edward Said and Subaltern Studies according to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Having dwelled on this, the second part of Chapter One will focus on the review of literature related to the authors and the novels.

Literature Review

According to John W. Creswell in his article entitled *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluation: Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, a Literary review is "a written summary of existing information on a topic, including journal, articles, books and other documents"(79). Thus this part of the work is centered on texts and articles related to the topic of marginalisation. These documents will be centered on the past and present state of marginalisation. The above statement can be understood according to Ebong in her study *The Supernatural in Angela Carter's Nights at the Circus and Toni Morrison's Beloved* , where she opines that "a review of literature is a comprehensive and meticulously crafted written compilation that serves as a detailed summary of scholarly journal articles, books and various other relevant documents."(25) This study builds upon existing works on marginalisation , specifically exploring the connections of female and linguistic marginalisation. By

analysing these two aspects, this review aims to contribute to the ongoing conversation of marginalisation while also highlighting potential approaches for further investigation.

In this novel, we come across the unequal distribution of power between the Anglophones and the Francophones in Kamangola, forcing one group to be victims of violence that stems from their ethnicity and cultural background. Florence M. Nchia in her article entitled "Power, Marginality, and Resistance in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*" buy this point and states that these African societal ills originate from the oppressive use of power by an individual or by a group of a hegemonic group over a minority or less powerful group In the course of the novel, we are introduced to Francophone characters such as Babajoro, Monsieur Abeso Louis Le Vin and students of the University of Besaadi who demonstrate to the readers the domination of one language over the other and thus, the domination of one group of people over the minorities. Nkengasong emphasises this through the use of his character Ngwe who gives the Francophone ruler, Babajoro, a demi-god-like status. He states; "...the man who gives life to men and women and children and takes it away without informing them"(25)

Nkengasong makes use of Ngwe's psychological trauma to shed more light to vividly describe the violence the minority population faces in the Ngola territory. According to Florence M. Nchia in her article entitled "Power, Marginality, and Resistance in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*" she states that Anglophones in the state of Kamangola are going through their second colonisation after being formerly subjugated by the British.

Furthermore, Nkengasong demonstrates marginalisation in *Across the Mongolo* through diverse instances. We come across a character such as Dr. Amboh who is an Anglophone lecturer at the University of Besaadi and is relegated to a sub-post due to his linguistic background. Francis B. Nyamnjoh in his study "Cameroon: A Country United by Ethnic Ambition and Difference" sheds more light on this fact by stating that "some academic positions are obtained by "conceptual rhetoric" used to shore up government rather than by academic credentials, leading a university group to lament the "misere intellectuelle in Cameroon." (qtd. In Ankumah 162). This statement by Nyamnjoh demonstrates the fact that a position of power in a society mostly an African

society, is not backed by academic proficiency rather, it is backed up by conceptual rhetoric whereby language influences the perception and representation of freedom, justice, and power. This conceptual rhetoric has rendered anglophones to be subdued to the levels of second-class citizens.

Moreover, John Nkemngong Nkengasong brings into light how the society promotes social inequality and illustrates how Anglophones have no political voice and are excluded from decision-making choices that can or may affect their lives. This form of inequality faced by characters in the text is subdivided into deeper issues of marginalisation. The first form of marginalisation can be found in social marginalisation. This is supported by Gilda Nicheng Forbang-Looh in her study entitled "Marginalisation And (Un) Belonging In John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across The Mongolo*" who opines that Anglophones suffer from subalterns and are considered inferior to the popular masses. Forbang-Looh states, "Anglophones suffer marginalisation because they belong to a subaltern political and cultural group where the people are, according to the dominant Francophone majority, supposed to accept their inferior or "other" status and dare not assert themselves in any way." (81) Through a proper reading of the novel, *Across The Mongolo*, readers are brought to the reality that Anglophones in Kamangola are sidelined from the social perspective. As Forbang-Looh states, "the Anglophones' numerical inferiority leads to their oppression, subjugation, humiliation, and marginalisation from the political and cultural centre of Kamangola which is highly Francophonised." (81)

Tantoh Keline Muyang in her work entitled *Identity Crises And Emancipative Strategies: A Study Of James Joyce's A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man And John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across The Mongolo* states that the Francophones believe the Anglophone culture should be erased since they are considered the inferior masses. Muyang highlights the fact that Anglophones stand a low chance of fighting against this marginalisation because they belong to a low-ranking group. Anglophones in the novel, *Across The Mongolo* are expected to denounce their culture and accept to be assimilated for them to be considered as "fit" citizens. This can be seen through the guise of characters like Minister Wankili who denounces his cultural background for him to be accepted as a "fit" minister. The constant use of derogatory words by

Francophones when talking about Anglophones such as "anglofou, esclave, salaud, idiot" (108) and the ruthless brutality from uniform officers faced by Anglophones,

Assois-toi la bas, vieux babouin! thundered the gendarme, slapping the old man on the face. The old man's buttocks reasoned faster and found their seat on the ground as if to say that if the head remained stubborn, it would continue to receive the blows but the buttocks had already obeyed the government man. (38)

Highlight the dehumanization of Anglophones in the social context of Kamangola. Haslam and Loughman in their article entitled "Dehumanization and Infrahumanization" share more insight on this form of action by stating, "dehumanization is sometimes associated with predatory forms of aggression that are not direct responses to provocation" (415). This aggression toward the minorities stems from the francophone's intent to display themselves as predators and the Anglophones as the weaker prey.

To continue, Nkemngong also dives from a historical perspective to illustrate the perpetual subjugation of Anglophones in the political context. Sarah Anyang Agbor in her article entitled "Memory and Trauma in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*" assesses that the novel *Across the Mongolo* "is a representation of memories and conflicting identities in Cameroon society" (189). Agbor makes use of the author's personal experiences and how they blend in to portray historical truths. She also speaks on Nkengasong's ability to use his imagination to bring to light the challenges and difficulties faced by Anglophones in the society in which they find themselves. Agbor further states: "through his creative imagination, Nkengasong reveals the tensions and predicaments of the minority in the nation. It is in this wise that we refer to the Anglophone Cameroon as the "other-other" (189). Anglophones being referred to as the other furthermore strengthens their subjugation since they are overlooked as sub-citizens. We also have political marginalisation. This type of marginalisation makes the masses consider more barbaric decisions in a bid to be seen and heard.

In addition, linguists like Shadrach A. Ambanasom in his work, *The Cameroonian Novel of English Expression* relate Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo* to the real-life context of Cameroon's past. Ambanasom compares Ngola to the former

French Cameroon and Kama to British Cameroon. His study is focused on the themes of resistance and oppression, how they depict the Cameroonian past and current society, and how these symbolic settings aid in the interpretation of the novel.

In the same light, Chenyi Oscar Labang in his study entitled "Experience and Marginalisation" explains that the novel *Across the Mongolo* and its protagonist are an allegory of the Anglophone problems. Ngwe's struggles with the ills of society and how these issues affect his personal life portray the experiences of other Anglophones who undergo the same subjugation due to the society that surrounds them. Talking about Marginalisation in the novel, *Across the Mongolo*, several critics applaud John Nkemngong Nkengasong's ability to highlight the marginalisation and traumatic experiences of the lower masses through characters such as Ngwe. Eunice Ngongkum in her review article entitled "John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*: A Review" analyses that Kama and Ngola are a representation of a world where two opposite entities are tied together through the ironies of their history. In the same light, Oscar Labang in *Riot in the Mind: A Critical Study of J. N. Nkengasong* states "Nkengasong's concern with historical realism cuts across all his works through an aesthetic dimension" (143). Labang praises Nkengasong's ability to dive into the country's political history and use it as a means of expression. He commends his representation of historical events like the Plebiscite and the Fouban conference (Fombala Conference). He also views the protagonist Ngwe as "as one who has traced the metamorphosis from a federated state to the United Republic with all the accompanying dissatisfaction." (144)

Having examined some of the critical works related to Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo*, We shall now examine those of Djaili Amadou Amal's *Les Impatientes*. When analysing this novel, the first type of marginalisation we come across in this novel is that of gender bias, in other words, the marginalisation of the female gender. The female characters found in this novel are relegated to having an inferior position in the society. They are seen as mere "assistants" and inferior to the men. DW in an article titled "Cameroonian Djaili Amadou Amal is 'Impatient' " agrees with this claim as they state that the women of the Sahel have only one purpose for existence as imposed on them by their society, "a woman should exist only to make those around her happy, to sacrifice herself so that everyone is well. But the problem is that no one

has ever asked how she is doing with that."(par. 4) Amal demonstrates how the traditional role imposed on these women places them into a series of misfortunes such as forced marriages and domestic violence. Amal breaks the traditional rules and brings to light the normalized marginalisation of women in the Sahel.

Anastasie Amboulé Abath's "Djaïli Amadou Amal, Les Impatientes" examines how this feminist novel denounces the ills practiced by the patriarchal society that deprive women of their liberty. The women who face this abuse are obliged to practice patience (*munyal*) or their purpose will not be complete. Abath sheds more light on this by stating ;

selon ce maître mot et la mentalité qu'il traduit, les femmes déçues par autant d'abus doivent accepter volontiers toutes les violences et autres maltraitances subies, se conformer aux ambiguïtés culturelles oppressives, aux injustices et aux inégalités sociales qui les entourent, prendre leur mal en patience, faire preuve de résilience pour exister, ne jamais se plaindre, même sans aucune leur d'espoir de sortir un jour de ce tourbillon de souffrances.(332)

According to Abath, women must gladly accept all the violence, conform to oppressive cultural rules and show resilience to exist, never complain in order to be considered as fit by their society. In the course of this novel, we come across three protagonists, Safira, Hindou and Ramla who all face conflicting situations they can not escape from because of their female status in the Sahel region. The women in the novel live in constant fear and submission to their male counterparts. The women are not expected to question their partners as the power of expression and decision-making are in the hands of the man.

Hannah Attar in ""Les Impatientes", de Djaïli Amadou Amal" speaks on the inability of women to make decisions on their own and are forced to a domestic sphere despite the willingness of the women to go to school and get a job. Attar analyses this by using Amal as an example, She states: "Djaïli Amadou Amal, qui ambitionnait de devenir pharmacienne, a elle-même été mariée de force à l'âge de 18 ans, après avoir obtenu – en grande privilégiée – son baccalauréat"(1). Amal amongst other women of the Sahel were forced to abandon their dreams. Another example is Ramla who had to

abandon her studies to be betrothed to a rich older man. Women have limited power and are depicted as having less authority and power as compared to men. The women are confined to the domestic sphere, are condemned to household duties, and are asked to demonstrate patience to this "heavenly role" that has been given to them but, where is the line drawn between patience and prison? Attar explains that the traditional woman is torn between her happiness and the principles set to her by her tradition. This situation goes ahead to demonstrate the patriarchal view of the society around them.

Research from Stella Attiogbe entitled, ""Les Impatientes" de Djaili Amadou Amal, trois histoires qui révoltent.", discusses that in the novel *Les Impatientes*, the women do not realise the chain of oppression in which they are set in instead, they adopt this abuse and in turn, transfer it to their female children. She states

Mais triste est de constater que les femmes elles-mêmes ne réalisent pas l'état d'oppression dans lequel elles sont, et à quel point elles reproduisent cette oppression, pour l'exercer à leur tour sur leurs filles. Inconsciemment, elle participent à perpétuer les mariages forcés et les violences conjugales. Les mères font vivre à leurs filles ce qu'elles ont vécu. Les belles mères se vengent sur les brus et les regardent souffrir sans réagir. Quant aux coépouses, elles sont de véritables rivales et n'hésitent pas à se lancer des sorts.(4)

Attiogbe encourages the women of the Sahel to remain united in order for things to change. Amal also notes that as long as the women keep being at loggerheads, nothing will change "*Tant que les femmes ne vont pas se serrer les coudes et se feront la guerre les unes les autres, rien ne changera.*"(4)

Laurence Clerfeuille's article, "Les Impatientes par Djaili Amadou Amal(Review)" does research on the marginalisation of women of the Sahel through the guise of *patience*. Clerfeuille speaks on the author's persistent use of the word *Munyal* which forces women into constant silence and submission. He claims, "Sans cesse martelé par les hommes pour exhorter les femmes à tout supporter dans le silence et la soumission, "munyal" n'est autre que le mot d'ordre qui ponctue la vie des femmes tout au long de leur vie lors de moments décisifs, et en particulier celui du mariage"(254). Clerfeuille also goes ahead to commend Amal's intrepidity in bringing

to light the horrors women face in marriages and giving a voice to the women while using a clear tone and literary language. He affirms this by stating;

le roman montre l'horreur du mariage forcé au nom de l'islam et donne la parole à ces femmes courageuses, intelligentes et perspicaces, en expliquant bien la complexité de cette situation sans issue pour elles. Dans un langage parfois poétique, l'auteure trouve toujours le juste ton, la juste note, et parvient à rester nuancée et accessible tout en abordant un sujet difficile, sans jamais tomber dans les amalgames religieux.(254)

Furthermore, viewing this patriarchy and female marginalization, from the point of view of polygamy, Jean-Loup Samaan in his study, " Femmes de Maroua" discusses the negative effects polygamy has over the women of the Sahel while using Safira as an example. Safira is an illustration of the psychological toll polygamy takes on the women of the Sahel. He speaks on the way Amal uses her character Safira to portray the feelings of diverse women. He asserts:

Elle semble épanouie jusqu'à ce qu'elle assiste impuissante à l'arrivée d'une nouvelle épouse que son mari lui impose. Celle-ci n'est autre que Ramla, cette jeune fille que nous avons laissée au début de l'ouvrage alors qu'on la forçait à abandonner son amour d'adolescence...les femmes au sein du foyer. Cette fois-ci, le récit permet de mesurer les dommages de cet environnement traditionnel sur le temps long : Safira n'est pas une jeune promise comme Hindou et Ramla ; angoissée par sa relégation au rang de « première » épouse, elle est prête, à son tour, aux manigances les plus cruelles pour se débarrasser de sa rivale.(2)

Laïth Ibrahim in his article entitled "Les Impatientes de Djâili Amadou Amal: fiction et argumentation" suggests that in this Sahel society, the discrimination between the men and the women is deeply rooted in the customs of the society and is bound by religion. Tradition and religion work hand in hand to perpetuate this existing social order and keep women at the bottom. Ibrahim states that the discrimination against women is an ongoing issue which gives the women no consolation for a better end. He claims "Cette discrimination, qui se perpétue à travers les générations, réduit la femme au silence et à la soumission, ne lui laissant que la patience-munyal- pour seule consolation."(127) Amal makes use of her novel to depict how the female gender has

been depicted as worthless, they were not given a seat on "the table of decision making". Time and again women have been neglected and exploited. It is a man's world and the women just exist in it.

This present study departs from the above works in the light that it does not only handle the marginalisation of anglophones in or the Subjugation of women in ; it also shows how John Nkemngong Nkengasong through his character, Ngwe and Djaili Amadou Amal through her characters, Hindou, Safira and Ramla make use of the concepts of Orientalism and Subaltern studies to lay emphasis on the gender and linguistic discrimination which these characters face and their struggle to rebel against their oppressors. These comparative works, *Across the Mongolo* and *Les Impatientes* study the idea of marginalisation by utilizing the concept of feminism and rebellion as tools to fight against the dominant powerful structures they are faced with, which no other critic nor researcher has written about. This present work therefore comes to add to the body of the interpretative arts of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo* and Djaili Amadou Amal's *Les Impatientes* as a comparative study.

This chapter was concerned with the Theoretical Framework that will be used for this study and the review of literature that is related to the authors and the works under study. It has provided a multifaceted view of marginalisation. It has explained that Orientalism and Subaltern studies are necessary for this study because not only do they highlight the experiences of Marginalised groups by challenging orientalist stereotypes, they also aid in promoting a more equitable platform by giving the "subalterns" a voice which was slowly being erased by the dominant party. It has also provided the interconnectedness marginalisation has with the social, political, and cultural context of the novel in which it is found. The point is not just to read and understand them but also for it to serve as a pillar to dismantle these systematic inequalities that have built-in for years and also create a more equitable society for all.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUNDS

This chapter focuses on the historical, political, and socio-cultural effects of past events which are linked to the realities each novel has on the outgrowth and widespread marginalisation in the different contexts in which it is found. We will also be examining the author's life experiences how their perception has influenced the course of the novel and also how this has paved the way for the readers to understand the context of the texts under study.

The History of Marginalisation In Cameroon

The term Marginalisation was coined in the 1970s to describe a set or a group of people who were systematically oppressed and excluded from society by another group, Jennifer M. et al in an article entitled "Discrimination, Violence and Healing Within Marginalized Communities" states ,marginalisation can stem from racism, sexism and religious differences (135) . Marginalisation can also be seen in the Economic, political and Social sector as further examined below.

Economic marginalisation refers to disparities in the level of job seeking and major opportunities placed between a certain group over another. In this form of marginalisation, one group is discriminated against and has limited job opportunities due to stereotypes that linger about that group. Examples of groups that suffer this type of marginalisation are black people and women. The unequal access to education and jobs leads to a prevalence of poverty and cripples their economic mobility rendering them to remain stagnant at the lower level of the hierarchy table.

The next form of Marginalisation is political marginalisation. Political marginalisation is concerned with limiting a particular group from participating in civic processes such as voting hence reducing their rights as citizens of that country. These groups lack representation in the political sector hence, do not have any representative who stands for their needs and interests. An example of this is the "Jim Crow laws" which were passed in the United States in the 1870s, this law relegated blacks to second-class citizens. These laws purposely limited African American's ability to partake in political activities and also sit freely in public spaces.

The last form of marginalisation is the social form. Social marginalisation deals with purposely preventing a group of individuals from participating in everyday leisure activities. In this form of marginalisation, the individuals are stigmatised and barred from accessing essential social services such as health care, education, and even daily leisure activities. The marginalised group of people in this case is separated physically and socially from the broader community.

Above, we have analysed several forms of marginalisation. We will now expatiate on the two forms that are related to the literary texts used for this study. These two forms of marginalisation which will be analysed below are: Linguistic Marginalisation and Female marginalisation which both stem from political, social, and economic marginalisation.

Linguistic Marginalisation is greatly perceived in the novel *Across the Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong. Language is a powerful tool that can unite people of different identities and cultures; the same way it can unite is also the same way it can cause disparities between these communities. In most countries where one group of people are considered second-class citizens, this situation can be traced back to their colonial legacies and to the series of historical events that have shaped the country. A study of this form of marginalisation cannot be done without research on the advent of this marginalisation. In this case, this novel illustrates the plight of the English-speaking in Cameroon. This can be traced as far back as the colonisation of Cameroon. For 77 years, Cameroon was colonised by different European powers before eventually becoming independent in 1960. Cameroon was initially colonised by Germany after the German explorer Gustav Nachtigal signed treaties with the Duala kings in 1884 hence rendering Cameroon a German colony called Kamerun. They ruled Cameroon until the period of World War 1 which went from 1914 until 1918 when they were defeated by mainly the British and the French forces. After their defeat, the League of Nations mandated the territory of Cameroon between the British and the French. The partition of Cameroon led to the French controlling 80% of the Cameroonian territories leading to French being the most spoken language in Cameroon and the British controlling a smaller portion of 20 % which consisted of two regions at the extreme border of Nigeria, leading to English being the least spoken language in Cameroon.

Mark W. Delancey and George Benneh in "British Cameroons (1916-61) and French Cameroun(1916-60)" state that with growing economic and political development in French Cameroon, the French began facing growing political movements that came into light after World War II. One of these political movements was the UPC (Unions des Populations du Cameroun) led by Charles Assalé, Léopold Moumé Etia, and Jacques René Bidoum among others. The objective of the UPC was for Cameroon to obtain independence from its colonial masters and also for the reunification of British and French Cameroon. The French part of Cameroon was granted Independence in 1960 but, the fate of the British side of Cameroon was still to be decided. They had two choices, the first one was either to merge with Nigeria or merge with the already independent French Cameroon. For this decision to be made, a plebiscite was organized in 1961. The Northern part voted in favour of joining Nigeria while the Southern part voted on joining the independent French Cameroon based on a federation. This union of the two states of Cameroon led to the creation of the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

Mark W. Delancey and George Benneh go ahead to explain that in 1961, a French-educated Fulani Cameroonian named Ahmadou Ahidjo was chosen as president of this federation. During his regime he successfully suppressed every political party except his, including the UPC rebellion which went on at that time, he captured their last important rebel leader in 1970. Ahidjo in 1972 placed a new constitution that changed Cameroon from a federal state into a Unitary state called the United Republic of Cameroon. Mark W. Delancey and George Benneh believe this stemmed the strain between the English and French speakers of Cameroon because, the southern Cameroonians suppose that the terms they gave during the Foumban conference were not respected. The historical context of Cameroon and the political developments which later unfolded led to the slow marginalisation of the Anglophone communities in favour of Francophone dominance. This marginalisation of the English-speaking over the French-speaking in Cameroon can be observed in several sectors such as political and social factors.

According to Kristian Mbipgo in the *Guardian post*, Anglophones have been victims of Xenophobic statements such as "Anglo fool", "les bamenda pensent toujours

a gauche" which relegates them to the point of being second-class citizens in a country they consider as theirs. Despite being an officially bilingual country, the Cameroonian government and administration have undoubtedly favoured the French-speaking over the English-speaking, this has been stated by scholars such as Kah Walla, a Cameroonian civil rights activist who pointed out that the entrance exam into Cameroon's Ecole Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature was only in French and it was not until 2017 was English implemented. This did not give equal chances for English and French-speaking students to participate in this common exam.

The lack of opportunities in the public service, electoral irregularities, lack of development, and very little or no political representation have led to long-term dissatisfaction on the part of the English-speaking population of Cameroon. Verkijika Fanso in his article entitled "History Explains Why Cameroon is at War with Itself Over Language and Culture" opines that.

Anglophones have long complained that their language and culture are marginalised. They feel their judicial, educational, and local government systems should be protected. They want an end to annexation and assimilation and more respect from the government for their language and political philosophies. And if that doesn't happen, they want a total separation and their independent state.(1)

This statement demonstrates the plight of the English-speaking in Cameroon and how these several instances of marginalisation have led to the outbreak of a crisis in Cameroon since the year 2016. This crisis known as the Anglophone crisis is an ongoing civil war which is fought by Anglophone separatists who are trying to establish the English-speaking side of Cameroon into a state known as "Ambazonia".

The genesis of this crisis resulted from peaceful protests by lawyers in 2016 which was later taken over by teachers. They protested the neglect of English-speaking individuals in their sector despite having the same qualifications as the French-speaking citizens. They ignited this process to express their dissatisfaction on the fact that Francophone teachers, prosecutors and judges are appointed in Anglophone areas. Michaela Pelican

in her study entitled "The Anglophone Conflict in Cameroon—historical and political background" states

Since 2017, the Anglophone regions are in a state of civil war with regular encounters between the military and separatist forces that often lead to human rights violations against civilians. By 2022, over 6000 people have been killed , 592,600 have been internally displaced, 77,400 have taken refuge in Nigeria and

417,500 have returned . Less than 30% of schools in the North West and South West regions are operational and 700,000 children have been affected by school closure. 2.2 million of the North West and South West regions' population of approximately five million are in need of humanitarian assistance. The economy in the English-speaking regions has faltered and caused a significant drop in agricultural production. Thousands of jobs in the agricultural and service sectors have been lost, the regions' GDP has declined by more than 30%, and tax revenues of up to 800,000 USD

annually are no longer applicable due to a 90% drop in imports from Nigeria".(7-8)

The ongoing after-effects of the crisis are leaving permanent marks on the English-speaking Cameroonians who suffer from this crisis politically, socially, educationally and even economically. English-speaking students are seen disrupted from their educational parcours, business owners are seen deprived of their means of income, individuals are forced to flee their homes and lives are lost in the process. These actions lead to the exclusion of anglophones from the main stream society as they are socially isolated and this furthermore increases their vulnerability for more exploitation, subjugation, violence and abuse.

Furthermore, crises like this have long existed but were suppressed till the point it had to burst into the chaos it has unleashed today. Rogers Orock in his study entitled "Cameroon: How Language Plunged a Country into Deadly Conflict with No End in Sight" explains that

A main reason for Anglophone calls for separation is their resentment of the authoritarian rule by the country's mostly Francophone leadership And, when

Anglophone Cameroonians protested, they were met with force. This happened first under Ahmadou Ahidjo's administration (1960–1982) and then under Paul Biya (from 1982 onwards).

Since 1990, protests in the Anglophone regions have often been met with swift and deadly violence. The same happened in the 2016-2017 protests. Unarmed protesters were shot and killed by soldiers. Those detained also face abuse. (3)

We can understand from this statement by Rogers that the growth from marginalisation into violence is inevitable. The individuals considered as subalterns are subjected to long periods of subjugation which eventually leads to a violent outcome. By addressing the root cause of the issue, it reduces the likelihood for the subalterns to violently rebel.

Orock is not the only scholar who shares this point of view, we also have an *International Crisis Group* with their study entitled "Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis at the Crossroads" states

Generally little understood by Francophones, the Anglophone problem dates back to the independence period. A poorly conducted re-unification, based on centralisation and assimilation, has led the Anglophone minority to feel politically and economically marginalised, and their cultural difference is ignored. The current crisis is a particularly worrying resurgence of an old problem. Never before has tension around the Anglophone issue been so acute(3)

All these catastrophic consequences stem from the dissatisfaction of the English-speaking over their treatment in Cameroon. The English Cameroonians have long time complained of French in every sector of Cameroonian life and government. The realities of English-speaking in Cameroon is that of second-class citizens. The marginalisation of this group of people and their suppression have opened the way for great consequences which could have been avoided.

The next form of marginalisation which we shall be working on is the female marginalisation. The novel *Les Impatients* by Djaili Amadou Amal earlier published under the title *Munyal: Les larmes de la Patience* uses a pun to display the life of a woman in an African society. "Munyal" is a peule word that signifies patience; In this novel, we are introduced to three characters, Safira, Hindou and Ramla who refuse to

submit to the rules in which they have been set hence do not have any "Munyal" thus, they are called *Les Impatientes* (the impatient).

Les Impatientes by Djaili Amadou Amal demonstrates the odds, violence and injustices fufuldé women have to go through stemming from polygamy, broken dreams, rape, domestic violence and slavery. According to Djaili Amadou Amal, through the means of the French newspaper "Le Monde", she states that her novel is "a weapon to fight against polygamy, forced marriages and domestic violence". Gender-based violence stems from the early years, women have time and again been subjected to systemic marginalization. This inequality between the two genders has made women relegated to subordinate roles in society; women have limited access to education, to health-care and disparities are also found at the level of employment opportunities. African norms and cultural practices have further deepened this subjugation, women have been denied the resources necessary for them to be part of the growth of the society and this perpetuates a cycle of disadvantage that has persisted across time and generations. Addressing this marginalisation of women across time will broaden our understanding of the novel *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. Gaining an insight into the history of female marginalization will enhance our comprehension of Djaili Amadou Amal's *Les Impatientes*.

The journey towards women's rights and liberation has been a struggle since the 18th century. Women's rights advocates such as Mary Wollstonecraft, a British writer and philosopher who challenged societal norms by fighting for women's rights were relegated and confined to a domestic sphere. This early activism later raised a platform for subsequent movements that permitted women to gain basic rights, equal job opportunities, and suffrage. By the early 20th century, Western women began seeing much change and advancements in their rights, African women could not be considered that lucky. The colonial legacies and the African traditions delayed the recognition of women's rights in Africa as, they were viewed as puppets, "baby makers" and tools to demonstrate an African man's wealth. Despite the delay and the challenges faced by African women, they have still played a vital role in the growth of their communities and continue to be at the forefront of change. While reviewing female marginalisation from different geographical spheres, it is important to recognise the unique struggles faced by these women and how they have risen from it to date.

Women's fight for freedom began as far as the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 18th century, women did not have rights permitting them to either vote, have property, or even obtain a divorce. Ideas of women obtaining equality and individual rights began to circulate inspiring early advocates for these rights. The first women's rights convention was held in 1848 in the United States at the Seneca Falls. This Convention was made up of female rights advocates such as Elizabeth Cady and Lucretia Mott who drafted the Declaration of Sentiments which states equal rights between both genders.

In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to grant women the right to vote. This was a bold step forward in the liberation of women from a patriarchal society. Positive changes continued as the United States created the 19th Amendment in 1920 also granted women to vote in their respective states. These achievements went on until 1972 when President Richard Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendments into law. This amendment constituted banning any form of discrimination based on sex in education programs that receive federal funding.

The next wave of Feminism goes from the 1960s until the 1980s. During this period, there was a struggle for civil rights movements which led to increased activism. We have activists like Betty Friedan, who published a book entitled *The Feminine Mystique* which is presumed to have sparked the second wave of feminism, as she uses her work to challenge the traditional roles of women in society. We also had the passing out of acts such as the "Equal Pay Act" of 1963 which aimed at ending the unequal pay gap between men and women.

This increase in changes later led to a third wave of feminism which moved from the 1990s till the present. This wave was concerned with a global perspective of feminism. It was focused on diversity and recognized the fact that women's experiences vary based on class, race, and other factors. This wave led to the First conference held on women in Mexico City in 1975. This conference led to the creation of an *International Women's Day*.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." This statement from Margaret Mead

demonstrates that with solidarity and resilience, the women fought for a better future for themselves. Unlike the Western women, the fight for equality by African women was a much more tremendous one.

According to Louise Jousse in her article entitled, "Discrimination and gender inequalities in Africa: what about equality between women and men?" "Equality of fundamental rights between women and men is not yet a reality, regardless of the region. Various African countries are no exception and are still largely affected by gender inequalities in the social, economic, and political spheres." (1) Jousse states that despite the several fights by women to implement their rights, equality is still not a reality. Women in the African context still face gender-based violence and inequality from their counterparts. African women are subjugated to domination by their husbands. According to Article 444 of the Congo Family Code: "The husband is the head of the household. He owes protection to his wife; his wife owes obedience to her husband", this goes ahead to perpetuate the fact that women are viewed as lower humans as compared to their husbands. Still based on the issue of marriages in the African context, female kids and teenagers are forcefully married to older men. According to UNICEF, two out of three girls are forcefully wedded to partners at least 10 years older, this situation occurs in Gambia, Guinea and Senegal. Also, Africa has the highest percentage of underage marriages with countries like Niger and Mali having a percentage of 77% and 61% respectively.

These early and unwanted marriages make the girl children to be forcefully withdrawn from school. According to Louise Jousse in her article entitled, "Discrimination and gender inequalities in Africa: what about equality between women and men?"

out of 916 women married at an early age in Mali, 366 had to leave school and 294 others never went to school; Whether at the primary or secondary level, girls have less access to education, with a 4-point difference in 2017 for secondary education compared to boys.(2)

The girl child loses her access to education because her future is decided upon by a patriarchal society. The literacy gap between both genders is clear and wide due

to this injustice faced by girl children. The 2018 World Bank states that the literacy gap between young boys and girls in Africa is 72% for girls aged between 15-24 and 79% percent for boys, a difference of 7 points can be noticed.

This difference in literacy between the men and the women can also be seen in the economic sector. We take an example in the farming sector, according to Louise Jousse in her article entitled, "Discrimination and gender inequalities in Africa: what about equality between women and men?" Women represent 70% of the active population in the agricultural sector despite this, the women remain at the butt of the economic ladder, they work in poor conditions and receive low incomes as compared to the men. For every dollar earned by a man, a woman earns only 70 cents. The 2016 UNDP report brings light to the substantial economic consequences caused by gender inequality in sub-Saharan Africa, estimating annual losses at US\$95 billion from 2010 to 2014, culminating in US\$105 billion in 2014. This goes ahead to prove that the results of this gender inequality stop Africa from reaching its full economic potential as, one part of their population which is the women, is not being used to its full capacity in a bid to enhance national growth.

When it comes to the political sector, women are underrepresented in most legislative and executive bodies. Nevertheless, some countries over the years chose to stand out in their representation of women. An example is, Rwanda where women make up more than half of the parliamentarians, in 2018 women represented 61.3 percent of parliamentarians. The same goes for other countries like Ethiopia where women hold 47.6% of mid-level positions in the year 2019. To continue with this new reformation, Mozambique elected her first female Prime Minister, Luisa Diogo in 2004. However, this progress doesn't spread to the rest of the African countries, we have examples such as Morocco, Nigeria and Sudan where women represent respectively 5.6%, 8% and 9% of middle-level positions in the political sector.

Cecilia Poggi, a French economist, and Juliette Waltmann, a researcher for the French Development Agency (AFD) in "La (re)production des Inégalités de genre dans le monde du travail des discriminations légales à l'autonomisation", state that

it is essential to consider women as full-fledged political actors and that they must be able to have the same representation and participation as men, and hence become

female role models to inspire other young girls. This goes ahead to demonstrate that these little changes in all sectors encourage African women to further fight for their equality. For example, countries such as Benin, Botswana, Gambia, Guinea, Lesotho, Mauritania, and Namibia passed out girl-specific policies that improved their access to education. Also, policies have been passed out to reduce school fees in public elementary schools in public areas and this has considerably reduced the disparity in education levels between men and women; for example in Benin, the educational gap between young boys and girls reduced from 32% to 22%.

The emergence of Feminist movements also played a great role in the women's fight for equality and justice in Africa. These feminist organizations have opened the eyes of African women to the fact that their voices can be heard. We have an example of the country South Africa; in 2019 the police registered 110 rape complaints. These complaints can just be considered the tip of the iceberg because so many female-related crimes are unreported but, this action proves that women finally had a voice to report injustice happening to them. These reports yielded fruits as, the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa set in place an emergency plan to combat violence against women in 2019.

In this same light, Robert B. Zoellick, President of the World Bank Group(2007-2012) stated that in 2011 the World Bank contributed 65 billion dollars to promote the girl's child education, health, access to credit, land, agricultural services, employment and infrastructure. Related to this goal, the World Bank created the Africa Human Capital Plan which aimed at improving human Capital outcomes, this included 2.2 billion dollars invested into women's empowerment. The goal of this plan was to improve female access to health care and employment opportunities. In this light, the World Bank's 2020 annual report states that this plan provided Vocational training to 100,000 women, trained 6,600 midwives, and provided education to more than 100,000 girls.

Female marginalisation in Africa stems from colonialism and patriarchal traditions. Despite these inequalities, several strides have been made to overcome gender discrimination. The creation of movements and the immersion of feminists have fought to dismantle oppressive systems. Now, gender equality stands as the fifth goal of the

United Nations Development Goals and are priority for many countries including Africa. The resilience of African Women to fight this ill offers a light of hope to women looking up to them but, a lasting change requires a sustained effort.

Authors' biography

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John Nkemngong Nkengasong is a Cameroonian author, poet, playwright and scholar who was born in 1959 and found his demise on the 11th June 2023. Charles Ngiewih Teke, in his work entitled "Postcolonial Innovative Creativity and Transformational Poetics: An Interview with Nkemngong Nkengasong", calls Nkengasong an "ardent upholder of innovative creativity and crusader for the truth"(1), Nkengasong proves this in his work which portrays the rich and splendid Cameroonian culture.

Nkengasong spent his early childhood in Lewoh , a native village of the Nweh tribe found in the Lebialem division in South west of Cameroon. He completed his primary education and later enrolled in the school Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College Fontem to further his secondary education. Being a prolific writer, his skills began from an early age. Nkengasong began writing poems which were published in the College magazine, he continued with this skill until High School. Nkengasong later enrolled in the University of Yaounde 1 to study English Literature while taking elective courses in Theatre Arts. Within these years in the University, his skills didn't die down but further improved. Between the years 1979 and 1982, Nkengasong wrote poems that gained more light since they were published in Journals such as *The Mould*, a journal of creative writing created by Bole Butake, and also in, *The New Horizons*, a journal of creative and critical writing created by Tala Kashim Ibrahim. Nkengasong in the year 1982, obtained a Bachelor of Arts in English and, in pursuit of greater opportunities enrolled in the Second Cycle of Higher Teacher Training College at The University of Yaounde 1. In 1984, he graduated from the Higher Teacher Training College earning the title of a High School Teacher. Despite the fact his career began in high school, he forged for better, pursued advanced degrees and earned a "maîtrise" in 1985 and a "doctorate de troisième cycle" at the University of Yaounde 1 in 1993.

His career took a giant step as he was recruited as an Assistant lecturer at the University of Yaounde 1 in the year 2000. He continues his educational prowess by obtaining a PhD in English Literary Studies. His subsequent career as an assistant lecturer fostered his creative writing and talents which resulted in national and international recognition for his plays, prose, poetry and essays. Some of these awards are "Honorary Fellow in Writing" which was awarded in 2008 by the University of Iowa, in 2013 he was awarded the "Eko Prize for Literature" and, in 2016 he was rewarded with the "Knight of the Cameroon Order of Valour". He writes many plays and novels, his first novel entitled *Black Cap and Red Feathers* was published in 2001, Shadrach Ambanasom in his book entitled *Education of the Deprived: Anglophone Cameroon Literary Drama* calls this work of art "a remarkable two-act play that constitutes the author's insight into the human condition".(101) He followed with his most known novel entitled *Across the Mongolo* which was published in 2004, he went ahead to publish a collection of poems in 2009 entitled *Letters to Marion*, these poems handled a handful of African ills which subsequently destroyed the African image.

Nkengasong's works were inspired by the diverse and multicultural complexity of Cameroon. He was particularly interested in how Cameroon's colonial past affected its present. His novel, *Across the Mongolo* subtly expressed the marginalisation, subjugation, and humiliation faced by minority groups in Africa due to colonial geopolitics. Earlier in this work, we spoke of the impact of English-speaking individual's marginalisation in Cameroon and how it has led to the ongoing Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, critics, readers and scholars believe Nkengasong in his novel *Across the Mongolo* represents this crisis. When asked about it by Oscar Chenyi Labang and Oscar Ande in their interview entitled, "Interview With John Nkemngong Nkengasong Author Of *Across the Mongolo* and *The Widow's Might*", he states

I drew my experiences from the immediate environment which seems to me to be a model for the world of extremes, a world of deprecating values. I set out with the intention of illuminating these ills, to prick human consciousness towards meaningful existence...(2)

Nkengasong still goes ahead to state when asked vividly if his novels are related to the Anglophone problem in Cameroon.

I drew my inspiration from my immediate environment which can serve as a model for deprecating values in other parts of the world. The two novels may be talking about Cameroon just as they may also depict what is happening in other countries. Thus a fictional work is never restricted to any particular region. Fictional works stretch the imagination far and wide. As to my novels' relation to the Anglophone problem, I don't think as a writer I have a right to assess my works. Let the critic do so. I have always said that as a writer, I am only an agent of creativity and the critic is the real author. It is the critic who determines the pulse, tone, and spirit of a fictional work. It is the critic who decides the meaning or blurs it. It is the critic who builds monuments of praises on the works and it is he who causes the monuments to crumble with a destructive phrase. The creative work exists. Let the critic get to task according to his/her valued judgments.(2-3)

Nkengasong believes that readers have the right to relate their literary work in a way that suits their imagination without down-rightly relating it to a particular incident. In this case, Nkengasong explains that the realities in his novel are gotten from the society in which he is faced with. The purpose of this fictional work is to depict the issues which are not bound by any geographical setting.

Bennui in his study entitled, "Some Syntactic Innovations in New Literatures in English." It opens that literature in English mirrors the identity of African writers who are eager to weave linguistic and thematic elements in English so that their nationality, which appears in the characterization and various literary devices, would contribute to the uniqueness of new varieties of English. This goes ahead to confirm that Literature represents the culture, nationality and history of the author. He may portray them through his use of characterization, themes and literary devices such as dream techniques. John Nkemngong Nkengasong through the use of his novel portrays the African tradition particularly the Nweh culture and the Cameroonian Anglophone situation. He makes it a point in his novels to showcase the life of a Cameroonian in the present society and the consequences of its historical background on its people. Nkengasong's lifestyle in the Nweh village provides insight into his portrayal of the Cameroonian and the Anglophone culture throughout the novel.

Nkengasong is an author who is interested in post-colonial Cameroonian society, he uses the means of his novel *Across the Mongolo* to address the complexity of the Cameroonian society. In this novel, Nkengasong depicts the Francophones as dirty, unkept, and having an unstructured society; ironically, they view themselves as privileged and civilised as compared to the Anglophones who they view as awkward, stupid and naïve individuals. Nkengasong uses his years spent in Yaounde and at the University of Yaounde 1 to represent power relations in The Republic of Kamangola and the University of Besaadi. The population of Besaadi(ngola) believes they are superior to the people of the other side of the Mongo(Kama). The recurrent issue in the Cameroonian setting of Anglophones being stigmatised is linked to the population of Ngola who see themselves relegated to the part of second-class citizens and are being oppressed psychologically, economically and politically.

According to Muke Njeba Bianca in her study entitled *The dialectics of "self" and "others" in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across the Mongolo* implies that history is subjective and, literature can be used as a tool for historical verity. It is now the role of the critic to interpret it to arrive at his/her truth. Nkengasong goes ahead to confirm this in an interview by Charles Teke entitled "Postcolonial Innovative Creativity and Transformational Poetics" by stating that

Life in the present is a continuum of experience; thus, a clearer vision of the future must of necessity require a thoughtful revision and or recreation of history. Therefore a writer's reliance on history is not just the result of his/her inability to extricate himself from the past but that of the inability of society as a whole to disentangle itself from its history... Historical references in a work are drawn from society's history but they may also serve as symbols for universal experiences. Literature has the potential of wielding past histories, contemporary histories and future histories together more than history as a subject can do.

Thus great literature deals with historically informed myths.(par 1)

Nkengasong recreates the Cameroonian history by demonstrating the history of Southern Cameroon. A lot of similarities can be brought out when comparing the fate of the people of Kama to that of the Anglophones in Cameroon. Views, ideas and identities are constructed by their past. The issue now comes in when history is

disfigured or distorted in a way to favour one group over another. Literature does not develop from a void as it is affected by the political, social and economic factors that surround it. It is earlier stated that extracts of history are found in literature, this is evident in *Across the Mongolo* where the plebiscite turned Cameroon into a Unitary state. As stated in the novel:

Is not the same case with our Premier his Excellency, Achiangu Neha? Was he not responsible for the mess today so-called unitary state? Wasn't it his greed and his treachery? Or, as he claims he was tricked at the Fombala Congress? History shall judge these people! (124)

This statement made by one of the characters in the bus mimicked the feelings of some Anglophones who believe to have been tricked into becoming a Unitary State and were cheated of their rights of equal citizenship. The second-class position is repeatedly demonstrated in the novel. We have examples when Ngwe and Nwolefeck go to register at the University of Besaadi. Their language is discredited and they are stripped of their rights as citizens of Kamangola: "les Anglo aiment toujours les annouilles. Sort, monsieur, suivant!"(56) "parle en Français, mon type. Je ne comprends pa ton pareitre partois la"(57). This discrimination and humiliation from the secretary towards Ngwe and Nwolefeck because they are Anglophones globalises the general marginalisation encountered by the Anglophones in Cameroon.

Nkengasong furthermore goes ahead to demonstrate the dual colonisation and subjugation. Firstly by the white man during the period of colonisation and secondly by their Francophone counterparts. Anglophones are dominated even by foreigners in their country, the same foreigners who exploited them, divided them and rendered them in the situation they find themselves in today.

Moreover, Nkengasong gives us insights into the struggles and aspirations of his community to escape the bond in which they have been set. As an Anglophone Cameroonian, his writings represent the struggles of the Anglophone people in a French-dominated society. We are brought to the fact that to feel entitled as first-class citizens, Anglophones are forced to denounce their tribe and culture to embrace one that is not theirs; Nkengasong uses the example of Minister Waikiki.

He was using the opportunity to thank His Excellency, The Head of State, the President of the republic..he warned that his office was not a gossip house for Anglophones or a place where he would listen to Anglophone complaints or solve Anglophone problems. Let me make it clear, I am an English-speaking Cameroonian and not an Anglophone, my duty is to serve His Excellency the Head of State ...and not discontented political factions. (121-122)

Nkengasong demonstrates Anglophones who have been assimilated into French society to the point that they deny their brothers in a bid to fit into French society. Nkengasong earlier states that he is a man of the culture and culture plays an important role in his works.

In an interview with Oscar Chenyi Labang and Oscar Ande entitled, "Interview With John Nkemngong Nkengasong Author Of Across The Mongolo And The Widow's Might", Nkengasong states,

I am a man of culture. It is culture that gives one a sense of being, that takes one into the heart of the universe. Unfortunately, our cultural values which are the link between our beings and our souls and between life and the external universe are being abandoned in hot pursuit of misconceived modernity. Culture to me today remains symbolic or symptomatic of the enchanting values of existence.(3-4)

He uses the medium of his novel to depict that. We see the use of aspects of the Nweh culture such as the forms of greeting and salutation, communal life and hospitality. These aspects are not found in the Ngola side of Kamangola. Nkengasong replicates instances of his childhood experiences to demonstrate to the reader how this affected the course of the novel.

Epoge Napoleon in his study entitled "Rhetoric And Culture In John Nkengasong's Across The Mongolo" demonstrates the several aspects of the Anglophone tradition in general and the Nweh tradition in particular. The state of a family structure where respect is given to who due, encourages the clear growth of the society in a respectful way. Epoge Napoleon illustrates this by stating "In these

polygamous homes, the father is venerated and has the natural duty of upholding a stable grip on the household and enforces discipline by preventing and settling disputes"(13) despite being in a polygamous society, unity and oneness prevail in Kama as compared to the people of Ngola .

This situation contrasts those of the people of Ngola who demonstrate clear disorganisation, disarray, and unruliness. Nkengasong does not present the Ngola's hospitality as a simple virtue but as a virtue that is universally practiced by the Anglophone culture. We have examples such as: The showcase of traditional forms of hospitality such as offering food and drinks to guests such as cola nuts and palm wine. Guests of higher ranking are received in the "lemoo", a traditional hall at the center of the compound also used in times of ceremonies. The hospitality of the Kama people is equally noticeable in their usage of language. Epoge Napoleon in his study entitled, "Rhetoric And Culture In John Nkengasong's Across The Mongolo" states "African literature today is characterized by linguistic diffusion and cultural diversity."(12) Language plays a great role in African literature as culture and language are intertwined. We have an example of the word "Ashia"(117). This term is used by Anglophones to demonstrate sympathy over a particular situation. We move into the showcase of organised society in the Ngola society as compared to the Ngola through the presence of a Fon, who maintains order in their various orders. This presence of a diligent hierarchy maintains peace and coexistence of individuals of different cultural backgrounds. The Fon is looked upon as the highest hierarchy and the custodian of culture. Cultural practices associated with hospitality illustrate to the reader the sense of belonging and connection found in Kama. Ironically, Ngola being the bigger and more civilised side of Kamangola lacks these qualities hence rendering it a home for chaos most especially to the Anglophones.

In Ngola we are illustrated with a different style of living. Ngwe upon his arrival in Ngola is stolen from. While in Kama everyone is accepted as having a different identity, in Ngola Anglophones have to adopt an identity that is not theirs to fit in. An example can be seen through the character, Mr Kwent, an Anglophone secretary in charge of scholarships at the Ministry of Education. Ngwe thinks this a sign of hope for him unfortunately, Mr Kwent treats them shabbily: I do not give scholarships... Go and see the Minister if you want to, he said, we tried to plead. Kwent shouted us down and

ordered us to leave his office this time speaking in French. (93).This can also be explained in Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* , as he opines that

There is a fact: white men consider themselves superior to the black men.

There is another fact: Black men want to prove to the whites, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect ... however painful it may be for me to accept this conclusion, for the black man there is only one destiny and it is white. (30)

In this case, we can relate this to Anglophones and Francophones. While being in a better system than them, the Anglophones have to copy the Francophone living, system and language in order to feel accepted into a society that is not theirs. Nkengasong uses Ngwe to demonstrate the frustration faced by several Anglophone individuals over non-representation in all sectors and even where represented, they are still disowned by their counterparts. Ngwe expresses his displeasure by stating;

My Brother, Kwenti had disowned me because I spoke the language of pariah and I was probably going to contaminate him with the vapour of the English Language. My brother, Kwenti, who travelled like me across the Great River from Kama had disowned me in the middle of the stream. These thoughts ached my mind as we descended the University slope towards the Resto ... I was unable to reconcile myself with the struggle for survival when every attempt in struggle rejected me. (93)

The stigma of being a second-class citizen follows them even till their classrooms. Ngwe himself recognises this fact as he denies speaking English on campus so as not to be recognised as a second-class citizen, as a pariah, and as a slave whose voice had an impact on society.

John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *Across the Mongolo* stands as a testament to the long-enduring struggle of the Anglophone community in Cameroon. The subjugation of anglophones and their culture had a profound influence on his representation of Kama and Ngola in his novel. He demonstrates the resilience of a community that is facing cultural erasure and stigmatisation. He uses his experience and growth as an anglophone Cameroonian to portray the challenges faced by this

community but also to call for change and raise a wake-up call for Anglophones to demonstrate unity amongst themselves. Nkengasong also makes use of his childhood in his native Lewoh to demonstrate the Anglophone culture and traditions. In other words, Nkengasong mirrored the society around him in his novel *Across the Mongolo*.

To continue with this work, we will now be examining Djaili Amadou Amal's Biography and how this affected the course of her novel.

Djaili Amadou Amal is a Cameroonian author and a feminist activist, who was born in 1975 in Diamare, a department in the Far North Province of Cameroon. She spends most of her life in Maroua and this is evident in her representation of the people's culture and social problems. Her work is concerned with the problems faced by women in the Fulani society. All these problems stem from discrimination, violence, and forced teen marriages. Amongst her novels, we have "*Walaande*" which is a ffulde word that means conjugal unity. This novel is focused on the issue of polygamy which is common practice among the Fulani people. This novel is similar to her other novels which present the ills of Fulani women from time till date. Her works gave her a lot of recognition in and out of the diaspora over the years. On the 2nd of December 2020, with her book *Les Impatientes*, she won the 33rd French Literary Award *Prix Goncourt des Lycéens* as the first female African writer to reach the finals of the literary competition.

This work of art also gained more recognition such as the *Choix Goncourt de l'Orient* on the 8th of December 2020, this same work continued to gain recognition in more countries such as the UK, Tunisia, and Germany. These awards were entitled the *Choix Goncourt UK* which she was awarded on the 18th of March 2021, the *Choix Goncourt Tunisia* which she received on April 3rd, 2021 and a German translation of the novel *Les Impatients* was nominated in March 2023 for an award to be presented in October by the youth jury of the *Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis*.

In a Fulani society, women face abuse daily, abuse that the society around them refuses to address. Amadou herself is not exempted from this abuse, she was forced to marry an older 55-year-old politician at the tender age of 17. She divorced this older man to remarry another man who turned out to be abusive. Amadou believes that this abuse moves hand in hand with emotional blackmail. The family of the girl child abused

convinces her to accept her fate not only for herself but also for her family. This pressure from their families forces women not only to keep their abuse to themselves, prevent female solidarity, and encourage the increase of abuse such as disastrous marriages and physical violence. In a bid to find freedom from the society all around her, she turned herself to books and writing. Djaili Amadou Amal in an interview with DW "Cameroonian Djaili Amadou Amal is 'Impatient'" states "I was completely lost. The only time I was okay was when I opened a book. I developed a passion for everything that was far away. Novels about the Middle Ages, Turkey, India, and China. There I could be a heroine from any era." (par 10) Amadou states it took her years to pick up a pen and start writing, this writing gave her a sense of peace which removed her from the situation of abuse in which she found herself. This was her first time writing something that brought her peace despite the fact she had done a lot of drawing and writing poems before this. Djaili Amadou Amal goes ahead to state in the same interview with DW that this writing of hers was a "survival instinct". "I wrote myself. I let out everything that was inside me. I was screaming out how unhappy I was." (par 12)

Amal states writing was her only key to freedom and to break free from her abusive marriage. Amadou Amal's writing gave her the strength to flee from her abusive marriage and concentrate on her gift. She since wrote several novels which include : *Walaande, l'art de partager un mari* (Walaande, the Art of Sharing a Husband) in 2010; *Mistiriijo, la mangeuse d'âmes* (Mistiriijo, the Eater of Souls) in 2013; *Munyal, les larmes de la patience* (Munyal, the Tears of Patience) in 2017; *Les Impatientes* (The Impatient) in 2020; *Coeur du Sahel* (Heart of the Sahel) in 2022 and *Le harem du roi* (the King's Harem) in 2024. When asked during an e-mail interview with Global Voices entitled "Women's plight in the Sahel: A central issue in Djaili Amadou Amal's works" about how the plight faced by the women of the Sahel inspires her, Amal states

My novels are based on the plight of women in the Sahel. I put their plight and eagerness for emancipation into perspective by making the readers aware of this plight and letting women know it is up to them to take responsibility for their collective struggle for emancipation. My life is one of resilience and self-sacrifice. I'm a great believer in fundamental humanitarian principles. All this has contributed to my outlook on things and, in a way, determines the rationale

behind and priorities of my literary commitments. The characters in my novels echo my sensibilities and draw on my aspirations and desires to improve women's plight in the Sudan-Sahelian culture, from which I originate, and beyond.(1)

Amal time without number has demonstrated her will to combat the ills faced by women of the Sahel from early childhood. Not only does she make use of her novels she also creates an association named "*Femmes du Sahel*" which is focused on women's progress in the Northern part of Cameroon.

The novel "Munyal" published in 2017 is Fufulde for patience. This "patience" is what Sahel women are pressured to have. Patience in abusive marriages, patience in non-consenting and early marriages. Amal in an interview with DW believes that after this patience, the final destination is heaven(death); this patience of hers almost drove her to suicidal thoughts and, this is the fate of a lot of Women in the Sahel.

In this novel, we come across three women who are forced to expert "munyal": Hindou who is forced to marry her violent cousin, Ramla who is also forced to abandon her dreams and marry a much older man and finally Safira, a man's first wife who has to be contented to see a girl old enough to be her daughter, be her husband's second wife. A woman's only existence in a Sahel society is to satisfy everyone around her except herself; this is the image Amadou is trying to paint in her novels to raise awareness of the issues of the Sahel women.

Amal's painful past leads her to understand the full problems faced by the Sahel women and hence gives her influence in the French-speaking world(monde francophonie). Amadou demonstrates how the African tradition suppresses women from their dreams, Ramla is a symbol of all the African women who are forced into abandoning their education and dreams into submitting themselves to a patriarchal society.

DW in an interview with Amal states that according to the principle of Munyal , which applies throughout the Sahel, "a woman should exist only to make those around her happy, to sacrifice herself so that everyone is well. But the problem is that no one

has ever asked how she is doing with that and if possible, she shouldn't ask about it herself. "(par 4)

Unfortunately, that is the life of a Sahel girl child and woman. Amal's views towards literature are seen by some critics as taboos since all these are a part of the African culture. Her response to these accusations is clear in an interview with Jean Sovon entitled "Women's plight in the Sahel: A central issue in Djaili Amadou Amal's works"; here, she declares

I don't limit myself to specific issues or question whether the issues I address are taboo. For me, this is unnecessary, especially when it comes to issues that cause women's suffering. What good is remaining silent on these issues, given the tremendous suffering they cause for women stripped of their humanity on the grounds of some doctrine? Let's be clear: any tradition that causes suffering or alienates community members is inappropriate (2)

The plight faced by women in the Sahel is not "taboos" because they violate the women's rights, inflict suffering and pain on them, and silence them to a state of "Munyal".

Amal's writing brings up a new voice for African Literature in a spectrum of World literature. Growing up in a society where gender inequality is prevalent Amal uses her experience and the experiences of all the women around her to paint a real image of the women's struggle in a Sahel society. Amal addresses the themes of oppression, the quest for autonomy, and patriarchy, the authenticity of her novels comes from the fact that she has lived up to these narratives. This authenticity makes women who are oppressed feel themselves in her novels and gives them hope to raise their voices against these challenges.

Les Impatientes by Djaili Amadou Amal is a combination of broken dreams and slavery. According to Amal, her novel is a "weapon against polygamy, forced marriages and domestic violence". While speaking in the French newspaper *Le Monde* Amal states her work is the voice of the voiceless. She states that she had to embody a voice that was sufficiently strong and influential enough to one day oppose herself to arranged marriages.

This novel illustrates the female marginalisation faced by three women in the Northern part of Cameroon. The cultural and Historical context surrounding Djaili Amadou Amal greatly influenced her engagement with writing about the marginalisation of the women from the Sahel region. Amal was influenced by the zeal of the upheaval of feminist ideas in a bid to challenge patriarchal structures. Amal's personal experience with the abuse of women in the Sahel provided her with a realistic ability to explore and relate women's stories and experiences in a male dominated society. Through the use of her characters, themes, and narratives, Amal sheds light on the struggles women face to assert their autonomy and identity. *Les Impatientes* not only invites readers to reflect on the systemic barriers that prevent women's growth in the Sahel but also calls for a collective awakening of the women to stand and fight for what's right for them.

This chapter was concerned with the history of marginalisation and the biography of both authors. Literature is determined by the society and history of the authors and that of the society that surrounds them. John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal make use of the society around them, and the plight of the society around them, including themselves to raise awareness of the ills of their society.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MARGINALISATION OF MINORITY GROUPS

In this chapter, we will delve into the intricate world of marginalisation in *Across the Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong and *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. We will be making use of characterisation, themes, and narration to make a profound examination of identity, culture, and language and how it leads to the exclusion and alienation of one group over another. Through our analysis, we hope to shed light on how authors use these different forms of marginalisation to express the afflictions within their society. By unraveling these complexities, we gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the different minorities and encourage the reevaluation of societal values, and an inclusive future and urge the minorities to resist this systemic oppression. Together we will explore the beauty of expression found in these outstanding works of African literature.

Linguistic Marginalisation

In exploring marginalization in *Across the Mongolo*, we embark on the realities faced by a minority population who see their culture eradicated in front of them. The narrative of this novel illustrates how language is not only a source of communication but also a vessel for cultural identity. Through the experiences of Ngwe Nkemassah, Nkengasong highlights the struggles faced by Anglophones who find themselves overshadowed by the francophones in the Republic of Kamangola. This marginalisation takes several forms including limited access to education for Anglophones, social stigmatisation and erosion of cultural and linguistic heritage to adopt another which allows them to be socially acceptable. As Ngwe traverses the World of Ngola, he is confronted with challenges asserting their identity while fighting with the pressure of conforming to a dominant linguistic narrative.

Nkemngong's work serves as a means of exploration of the intersections between language and identity hereby shedding light on the endurance of the marginalised minorities who are striving to reclaim their identity and preserve their cultural heritage amidst the marginalisation and assimilation which they face. By understanding these dynamics, we can better appreciate the importance of linguistic

diversity and heritage in the face of adversity. As the narrative unfolds, we are brought to the diverse instances of Linguistic marginalisation which are found in the novel, *Across the Mongolo*. These instances will be further explained and illustrated in the paragraphs below.

Across the Mongolo tells the story of an Anglophone student Ngwe Nkemassah who lives in the Anglophone part of Kamangola. Ngwe's dream is to become like Babajoro, the president of the country. Ngwe is an intelligent young man who after having brilliant results at the Advanced level decides to advance in his academic parcours and pursue his dreams on the other side of the River Mongolo. Ngwe hoping for a brighter future goes to the University of Besaadi, his dreams are soon shattered as he is tortured physically, socially, psychologically and intellectually. This torture leads him to have a tragic end. Ngwe's marginalisation can be traced as far back as his first coming to Ngola. Ngwe is robbed in a train while on his journey to the other side of the Mongolo River. He is mocked by the Francophones on the train. These Francophones use slurs to make fun of his situation. "pauvre Anglo! Ashia ya! Ashia petit anglo!" (44) "Anglo! Anglofou! Anglobête!" (60). These derogatory terms allow us to paint a picture of the Anglophone situation in Cameroon. The use of slurs can be given different meanings. It can be related to expressing French dominance by using terms that reinforce French linguistic and cultural dominance. It could also be related to a form of othering and dehumanisation. The use of slurs by Francophones could be to portray them as outsiders and inferior citizens. This instance used by Nkengasong is not the only instance that demonstrates the incivility of the Francophones and, how they use this method to exert their dominance.

On his way to Besaadi, Ngwe and the passengers were stopped for an identity control check and the actions performed by the police officers bring more light on the maltreatment of the Anglophones in Kamangola: "the old man did not understand French, He was dragged out of the vehicle and forced to sit on the ground. 'Assois-toi la bas, vieux babouin!' thundered the gendarme slapping the old man on the face." (36) This instance demonstrates the microaggressions anglophones go through for the mere inability to articulate and communicate in French. The Francophones create a hostile environment for the Anglophones hence denying them equal rights. This same case is

seen later with Ngwe who is brutalised for inability to respond to the officer and understand him in French.

Impôt,' he ordered.

"I don't understand you, sir.' I said.

«Je dis bien, impôt!' he shouted again, this time looking very aggressive. I became very disturbed.

"I mean, I don't understand you, sir.' I struggled to say.

He gripped my collars so tight that I could not breathe freely.

He dragged me towards the bus, talking and swearing lengthily in French with his colleague. One of the passengers told me in Pidgin that the gendarme was accusing me of escaping control because I had no tax, and that when he asked for it, I insulted him in English. The gendarme spoke and swore and threatened. Then he hit me on the head. I could discern from his countenance that he was very angry.

**'Assois toi!' He thundered. I tried to complain. The other one fell on me, hitting and cursing, and forced me to the ground on my buttocks. One of the passengers asked me to show the gendarmes my student identity card. I produced it as well as my national identity card. The fellow looked at it grimacing.(38)*

Nkengasong demonstrates the power surge Francophones have over the Anglophones. This is done in a bid to keep the Anglophones in the lower part of the hierarchy making it easy to control them and enforce their subjugation and complete alienation from power and society.

Through the instance of Ngwe among other characters, Nkengasong navigates a world where Anglophones see their language and customs being disrespected and sidelined. This creates a broader image of the Anglophone marginalisation in Kamangola. Nkengasong demonstrates the irony of the Kama and the Ngola side. He takes the example of the University of Besaadi. Ngwe thinks of an image of grandeur once the University comes to mind. I saw the university as an exemplary place for the people who mattered in the government system, for the caterpillars of the country, the bulldozers of the republic. (48) He is later faced with the reality of the situation once he sees the site. Ngwe describes the University of Besaadi as making use of great imagery:

At the university, the stone-walled buildings of the faculties slanted into the armpits of the slope in disorder. Wild bushes surrounded the halls and the amphitheaters. Some vegetation found shelter on most verandas or leaned on the windows of the halls. Grass coiled or crept on the banisters of the staircases and pillars. Where the vegetation was scarce, old rubbish heaps with assorted ordure rose indiscriminately in varied sizes, filled with waste papers and diverse objects that had been left in the rains for months until they had become mouldy green. Multitudes of young men and women could be seen moving about briskly or sitting or standing idly on the pavements in clusters conversing in French.(51)

Ngwe goes as far as describing the students he met at the university campus.

The boys' dirt-greased jeans trousers and worn-out shirts, torn, mud-stained canvas shoes were very adaptable to the environment. Their fluency in French as I thought, quite contrasted with their outlook. Some of them might have gone for months without bathing: the contours of sweat under the armpits of their shirts, and the dirt on their tattered wears, their brown dusty legs forced into chopped cracked slippers or battered shoes, their heels cracked into deep furrows, their toes pregnant as if they were once the womb for jiggers. Their odd manners and battered foot wear and tattered, stinking dresses gave them a very repulsive look; and most offensive, if any of them opened his mouth a little close to your nose, the smell hit you frontally. The smell hit your senses like a hammer. The stench invaded your nostrils like the mouth of a pit latrine.(51)

Nkengasong demonstrates the contrast between Kama and Ngola; in Kama, using the example of Wysdom College, the students are described as wearing "glistening white shirts and ties and blue trousers." (62) This is a complete contrast to how the older Francophones present themselves. Kama is much more civilised and cleaner as compared to Ngola so, it is rather ironic that the citizens of Ngola consider themselves superior linguistically, socially, and in all other sectors to the citizens of Kama. The narrative portrayed here by Nkengasong demonstrates the absurd domination of the people of Ngola.

Furthermore, we come across several instances which depict the alienation of Anglophones in society. The first instance is brought up when Ngwe and Nwolefeck go to the *préfeture*. They are addressed rudely by a secretary who makes it clear she does not work for Anglophones. "Ne m'annouille pas! Je ne suis pas la pour les Anglo." (53) Ngwe's experience at the University of Besaadi gives a multitude of underlined experiences of subjugation anglophones go through in the hands of their fellow citizens. We come across another instance when Ngwe finds himself at the University's *scolarité*. He is criticised for having left his town or sector to come to theirs. Ngwe is called slurs and mistreated by the majority population, Ngwe embodies the role of several anglophones who have gone through the same plight of oppression and out-casting due to language barriers. The altercation between Ngwe and the workers at the *scolarité* goes thus :

'When at last I entered the office, the man at the first table collected my documents and looked through them with a sour expression on his face. Relevez de notes, monsieur!' He barked. I stared at him blankly, fidgeting in my mind and trying to understand what he meant.

"What, sir?" I asked. He sighed and flung the documents at me. The papers in the file rustled and fluttered plaintively in different directions. Hot urine hurried to the tip of my penis. I held it back and gathered the papers. I went on my knees and pleaded.

'Les Anglos aiment toujours les annouilles...The excited students at the door jeered at me. 'Pauvre Anglo!' 'Anglo for Koromba. Tu ne pouvez pas rester chez vous a Koromba, Anglo?' They mocked at me... Les Anglos sont des idiots muttered the man at the door (56)

This interaction demonstrates the subjugation of English speakers in a French-dominated society. Anglophones are viewed as outsiders who are subjected to derogatory terms and stereotypes which hereby reinforce their exclusion from society. English in the state of Kamangola is a useless language. Fluency in the French language is important in this society to acquire aid, education, and employment so, it is considered more important than the latter. Once Ngwe expresses himself in English, he is shunned by his fellow French counterparts. "parle en française, mon type . Je comprends pas ton parêître partois là" (57). This situation despite being despicable is

rather ironic and humorous. A French speaker with a poor mastery of his language shuns a perfect English speaker for his inability to speak the same language.

Again, the linguistic marginalisation of Anglophones can also be traced to the sidelining and complete ignoring of English-speaking students in classrooms. Anglophones have no mastery of the lessons given to them because the lecturers do not pay any heed to the fact that the Anglophones in class face communication and expression issues. Ngwe's only alternative was to translate every lesson into English, Ngwe states: "I spent a good part of the year translating notes from French to English. "(59)

Every effort made by an Anglophone to pose their issue ended up with them being mocked. An instance can be demonstrated in the novel when Ngwe explains his ordeal.

None of the Francophone lecturers seemed to have any interest in the English language. They stressed that all answers had to be in French and not in English. I even feared asking questions in class because I did not speak French. On one occasion I gathered courage to ask to be explained a notion in Constitutional Law, which I did not understand. As soon as uttered the first words in English, the lecture hall broke into a tremor of booing and jeering 'Anglo!' 'Anglofou!' 'Anglobête Cat-calls and screaming came out from all directions. Twisted papers and assorted objects flew from every direction and landed on me. I stood transfixed, bemused, dumbfounded...(60)

This ordeal is that which Anglophone students face in a Francophone-dominated University. This creates a situation of marginalisation because the students can not participate fully in academic discourse, this enforces the marginalisation of one group of language speakers because they cannot express themselves properly in their preferred language. This leads to instances of questioning self-worth and importance. After the social humiliation, Anglophones tend to feel embarrassed by their culture and assimilate themselves into Francophones to be *socially acceptable*. Ngwe later sees the reality of being an Anglophone in a site that is dominantly French. Ngwe complains about his struggle : "I questioned myself if I had no right to express myself in one of the two official languages in a bilingual country. "(61)

Furthermore, we continue with the exclusion of Anglophones in political sectors in the state of Kamangola. This is brought up by Ngwe's lecturer, Dr Amboh who declares to Ngwe and his fellow Anglophone students that: "it was government policy eliminate the Anglophone culture in the country using the university as one of its weapons, we had no choice but to give in to complete assimilation into the Francophone culture." (60) Dr Amboh is an English lecturer who has denied the shackle of being assimilated into the French sector. His refusal to teach French has relegated him to the post of teaching minor courses despite his intellect as compared to the other lecturers. The system in which Anglophones are found in Ngola is indeed not inclusive and is of great favour only to French speakers. Dr Amboh amongst many other Anglophones represents the under-representation of Anglophones despite having good or better qualifications than the Francophones. In many cases, appointments and jobs have prioritized the ability to communicate in French over expertise and proper qualifications.

Dr Amboh in this case possesses the job performance and competence to be a good lecturer but, is denied a position of power because it will place an Anglophone in power over Francophones. Ngwe asserts this by stating; "...Dr Amboh who in spite of his rich academic background in legal matters was never given a main course, and So he could never have had any influence on the Francophones" (60)

This system fosters the marginalisation of Anglophones in Kamangola by keeping them at the lowest stage of the hierarchy. This is done to furthermore alienate the Anglophone communities.

Again, the next Anglophone who suffers from this political subjugation due to being an Anglophone is Minister Wankilii, an Anglophone minister appointed as the *Minister in charge of Special Duties*. The unwillingness of Francophone authorities to appoint Anglophones to "posts of power", makes them create unreasonable ministerial titles to appease the anglophone's mind. Minister Wankili's new position is seen by fellow Anglophone brothers as a menial attempt to keep them as second-class citizens. They state:

'Sheer rubbish.' said the one called Doctor. ' And what is in the ministerial post? Minister in charge of Special Duties — what are the special duties apart from acting as a spy against Anglophone patriotism, monitoring Anglophone quest

for self-government, to slander their leaders to his Francophone masters, to destroy the Anglophone heritage planted by the British colonial masters for so many years?(123)

In order to get to this post, the Anglophones are forced to be assimilated to the Francophone way of life, they are expected to speak French and, they are expected to "lick the butts" of Francophone politicians in order to get promoted and advance in their life. This is demonstrated in the novel when a high-ranking Francophone individual, the Director of the Civil Cabinet, arrives at Minister Wankili's party. Minister Wankili puts a mediocre act.

One of the guests arrived and drew the attention of everyone. The very relaxed atmosphere changed to an anxious yet formal one. 'The Director of Civil Cabinet' someone whispered. Minister Wankili hurried towards him, and greeting him stooped so low that his forehead almost touched his knees.(118)

Nkengasong demonstrates how assimilated Anglophones turn to abandon their culture and language so as to be socially acceptable. Minister Wankili turns to the French language while talking to the Director of the Civil Cabinet to prove he is a "first-class citizen".

Minister Wankili conducted him into the sitting room speaking French with him and occasionally answering him "Oui Monsieur le ministre! Oui monsieur le ministre!" Indoors, Minister Wankili ushered his guest to a seat in a section that looked like a high table (119)

Minister Wankili declares and demonstrates his assimilated nature while making a speech during his reception. He states that; "his office was not a gossip house for Anglophones, or a place where he will listen to Anglophone complaints or solve Anglophone problems..."(121-122). He completely denies his origins and culture to accept one that is considered superior. Anglophones in a quest to attain power and feel included, some Anglophones adopt the oppressor's culture and suppress themselves to their rule in order to fully participate in civic life. A good example of this perception is also Minister Wankili when he states:

Let me make this clear," he said emphatically, "I am an English-speaking Cameroonian and not an Anglophone." He said his duty was to serve His

Excellency the Head of State, President Babajoro and not discontented political factions.

When he finished his speech, some people seemed to clap for the sake of it. I could see the clear disappointment on some faces. (122)

Minister Wankili's Anglophone guests are visibly disgruntled at this clear display of disrespect to them, their language and their culture.

The continuous mental exhaustion and manipulation causes Ngwe to seldom get into a trance so as to forget about his surroundings. This marginalisation goes from being physical to also being mental. The feeling of one's self and culture being continuously devalued creates doubt in the mind of the Anglophones thereby fostering the feelings of inferiority among Anglophones and forcing them to adopt the Francophone mode of living. An example of this form of marginalisation can be found in the "*resto incident*" at the University campus. In a bid to get food, Ngwe and Nwolefeck are forced to drop "*their coats of civility and discipline*"(70) and, adopt the Francophone method which consisted of fighting barbarically for what they wanted:

Many times when the disorder moved into the kitchen, food was ransacked in great quantities and the most savage manner. Cooks, men and women and the Resto authorities fled for their lives or stood at a distance and watched with excitement how the esteemed undergraduates, in the savage onslaught, invaded the barrels of food and filled their mouths with the booty. Some roasted their hands in an attempt to remove the chicken from the steaming oil. Others looted raw foodstuffs and disappeared in the thick undergrowth that surrounded the campus. Yet, these were future Divisional Officers or préfets as they were called, or the Babajoros of the country.(70)

This is the case of several anglophones who have to conform to the rules of the dominant population even if it entails abandoning their culture. This concept of assimilation is a form of cultural and moral imperialism as, the anglophones are forced to inculcate the francophones values in order to survive. This action forces the anglophones to erase their own cultural identity and helps perpetuate their marginalisation. In an attempt to adopt his Francophone brother's way of acting, Ngwe is faced with a dilemma that almost costs his life.

I wrestled in the crowd to slip through the narrow steel door. My body from the shoulders to the feet went through but my head got stuck in the mass of students who had blocked the narrow door, struggling to go in. My hands and feet kicked at the other end, my head squeezed in the cluster. My senses gradually faded until I lost consciousness. I started having a sense of life again only when I felt some fresh air blowing systematically in my face. (71)

It can be noted from this situation that for an Anglophone to get something as basic as food, he has to conform to the Francophone society and act like them. Anglophones face these subjugation difficulties in every frame of the Francophone society.

Moreover, we move to linguistic marginalisation as seen in the novel *Across the Mongolo* while focusing on the character, Ngwe. A riot held by the students of the University of Besaadi led to an ensuing war where students were arrested and brutalised. Unfortunately, Ngwe was caught up in the riot and faced unnecessary violence from the soldiers. It can be observed in this situation that, Ngwe's brutalisation is further aggravated because he is an Anglophone.

C'est une Anglo même. Là, tu est morte!" he grunted and stared at me as if to fish out sin from my soul before my lips ever said a word. He tightened the grip on my neck and pushed me towards the other policemen who blocked the road leading to the Cité Université. "Un Anglo, Chef?" he told them confidently as though he had captured the commander of the Queen's army." Un de leader de la grève qui fuite", he said.

"I am not a leader," I pleaded. "I don't even know what is happening, sir. Please, allow me to go. I know nothing, sir." I went on pleading. Instead they fell on me, hitting my jaws with the butts of their rifles, with baton and sticks, kicking my shin bones, smashing my toes with their heavy boots.(98)

Marginalisation is affected by factors such as the social identity of an individual and , if one is faced with a social identity which places him or her in a state of a *second class citizen*, they are likely to experience violence at the hands of the law enforcement. In this case, Ngwe who carries the status of an anglophone in a francophone dominated society is profiled and brutalized without just cause. Nkengasong uses this instance to

demonstrate the experience of many more anglophones who are discriminated upon due to their language disparity.

This linguistic discrimination goes ahead to create a hostile environment for Anglophones. The use of slurs to describe Ngwe demonstrates the lack of respect the Francophones have for Anglophones and their culture. "Anglofou, esclave, idiot, salaud, Anglo! "Mon dieu! Un Anglo? Un esclave? Il est finit!"(99) The use of these derogatory terms to describe an Anglophone highlights the linguistic inferiority Anglophones face. Ngwe laments about his plight as an Anglophone in Kamangola.

" Then, leaning on the wall I cried. I could not say what I was doing there. What offense had I committed against man, against God? Why did they treat an innocent child that much? Why was I made to suffer assault and brutality without cause? Why was I born an Anglophone?"(100). Marginalization can result in mental issues such as depression as Anglophones continue to struggle for recognition. These instances can take a toll on the person's psychological well-being. Serge Bebulah Ludwick in his study entitled "Southern Cameroon Anglophone Marginalization" opines that;

for Cameroonians to embrace true harmony, there is need for emotional and structural transformation. Though the release of bitter emotions is fundamental, it becomes useless if the structures, which permitted and supported the bitter experiences, remain unchanged. (1)

Serge Bebulah Ludwick states that for change to occur, Anglophones have to stand in solidarity and change the power structures that suppress them. This caused Ngwe and his fellow Anglophones to create an organization called the YAM and riot against this oppression. This YAM is used as an opportunity by the Francophone establishment to arrest, torture and detain Anglophone students. According to Nwolefeck, "Anglophone students who were arrested were undergoing the terrifying ordeal in detention and mentioning names."(13)

The situation of an Anglophone in Kamangola regression. The political sector is dominated by Francophone leaders. In this case, the Francophone leaders have a say in what happens in the anglophone's life. An illustration of this can be seen when between Ngwe and Monsieur Abeso Louis Le Vin. Monsieur Abeso Louis Le Vin is Ngwe's opponent in the quest of Shirila's love . After an altercation, Monsieur Abeso

Louis Le Vin feels disgusted *an anglo* stands against him for a woman. He states: "Quoi? Ici a Besaadi? Un petit Anglo? Un salaud? Un idiot? Non, non, non. On verra! Salaud! Sa-laud!" (177)

Monsieur Abeso Louis Le Vin believes in Francophone superiority especially in *their territory*, Besaadi. This centralisation of power on one side renders Anglophones unable to make decisions. In a bid for an act of revenge, Monsieur Abeso Louis Le Vin ends up making Ngwe fail major courses at the University of Besaadi. This goes ahead to prove the Anglophones have no dominion or a say in Kamangola. Their destinies can be altered by the mere fact that they are Anglophones. Ngwe's experience describes the plight of many Anglophones in Kamangola

Through vivid storytelling and characterisation John Nkemngong Nkengasong illustrates the marginalisation of Anglophones on the other side of the Mongolo River. We are demonstrated to the socio-political dynamics Francophones use to keep Anglophones alienated and subjugated. Nkengasong emphasises the fact that these inequalities have not only silenced the voices of the Anglophone community but also caused conflict. By talking about these injustices, Nkengasong hoped to shed more light on them and call for collective awakening and solidarity on the part of the Anglophones.

Female Marginalisation

Female marginalisation is a major part of Amal's *Les Impatientes*. As presented in previous chapters, Amal's work is centered on the challenges faced by the Sahel women in the patriarchal society. The three characters this work will be centered on are Hindou, Safira, and Ramla who each suffer different plights. Ramla is the first narrator of the novel. She had to abandon her dreams, education, and the man she loved, Aminou, to marry a much older man. Her uncle offered her to Alhadji Mussa, a very rich man who wants to take Ramla as his second wife. Amal uses Ramla as a symbol of women not having any liberty to make choices of their own. They are just tools used in exchange for money and power

Hindou represents the women who go through domestic violence. She is the second narrator and is Ramla's step-sister. Hindou is quite unlucky as she is married to a drunk, violent and alcoholic man who turns out to be her cousin. This man not only maltreats her physically but also psychologically. He cheats on Hindou regularly and forces her to watch and reenact pornographic movies. Hindou attempts to flee this abusive marriage unfortunately, she is caught by her family members, beaten and resented of her abusive marriage by her father. She does not receive support from her family and is asked to practice "Munyal" (patience).

The last narrator is Safira. Safira's struggle is concerned with polygamy. Despite being a great part of the African culture, polygamy remains an issue that is downgraded to the women found in it. Safira is Ramla's co-wife but, she does not appreciate Ramla because she believes Ramla is stealing her husband from her. Safira was used to a monogamous marriage now, she is not given any choice but to accept a much younger woman as her *amariya* (co-wife).

Ramla is the first narrator of the novel, from the start of the novel she is asked to practice "Munyal"(patience).

Patience, mes filles ! Munyal ! Telle est la seule valeur du mariage et de la vie. Telle est la vraie valeur de notre religion, de nos coutumes, du pulaaku. Intégrez-la dans votre vie future. Inscrivez-la dans votre cœur, répétez-la dans votre esprit ! Munyal, vous ne devrez jamais l'oublier ! » fait mon père d'une voix grave. (1)

All the women in this situation have one thing in common, their lives are being controlled by men. They move from being controlled by their fathers to later being controlled by their husbands. They have to accept to be corrected without showing any emotions and, adopt patience: C'est un droit divin, me souffle un jour une femme érudite. Il est écrit dans le Coran qu'un homme a la légitimité de punir et de battre son épouse si elle est insoumise.(66) .The women are not allowed to make choices of their own including their spouse. It is the role of a man (their fatherly figure) to select a spouse for them and give them out to marriage whether consenting or not. This can be demonstrated in these instances: "la coutume interdit aux filles d'éconduire un

prétendant" (13) "Ces hommes sont censés nous transmettre leurs derniers conseils, nous énumérer nos futurs devoirs d'épouses puis nous dire adieu"(1)

Instances of the marginalisation of women will be further explained in the paragraphs below:

The women in this novel are forcefully robbed of their autonomy. In African societies, traditional gender roles are deeply enrooted in the system, women are relegated to subordinate positions in the society. The women see themselves trapped in cultural norms that dictate the ways they should be wives, mothers and daughters. This can be illustrated in the novel when Ramla's uncle Hayatou gives her and her sister, Hindou rules to follow in their marriages :

Soyez pour lui une esclave et il vous sera captif.

« *Soyez pour lui la terre et il sera votre ciel.*

« *Soyez pour lui un champ et il sera votre pluie.*

« *Soyez pour lui un lit et il sera votre case.*

« *Ne boudez pas.*

« *Ne méprisez pas un cadeau, ne le rendez pas.*

« *Ne soyez pas colériques.*

« *Ne soyez pas bavardes.*

« *Ne soyez pas dispersées.*

« *Ne suppliez pas, ne réclamez rien.*

« *Soyez pudiques....(2)*

In all these rules, Ramla is forced to conform to rules that neither favour her but force her to abandon her aspirations for independence and self-fulfillment. This narrative of a woman being just a subordinate to elevate the man highlights the long-time physical, emotional and psychological sufferings the girl child suffers in the Sahel society.

Djaïli also speaks on the downgrading of women to the point that their life is centered on men. Ramla is used as an example here, her husband is described as her "paradise" to whom she should kneel at his feet. "Le paradis d'une femme se trouve aux pieds de son époux."(4)

The African societal belief that a woman's worth is tied to her ability to satisfy her husband perpetuates a cycle of self-doubt and shame thereby ensnaring the women further into this cycle of subordination and marginalisation. They have no say in the decisions made concerning their life and their future. This is apparent in the novel when Hindou tries to beg to not be married off to Moubarak but these complaints are thrown on deaf ears.

À la surprise générale, Hindou se jette en pleurs aux pieds de notre père, médusé, et supplie :

« S'il te plaît, Baaba, écoute-moi : je ne veux pas me marier avec lui ! S'il te plaît, laisse-moi rester ici.

Mais qu'est-ce que tu racontes, Hindou ?

Je n'aime pas Moubarak ! fait-elle, en sanglotant de plus belle. Je ne veux pas me marier avec lui. »

C'est à peine si mon père lance un regard sur la jeune adolescente courbée à ses pieds.(4)

This scenario of Hindou begging her father to revoke her marriage symbolizes the struggle of many more women in the Sahel who are condemned because their lack of autonomy. In this society³, the women have to adhere to the societal expectations even against their will. Hindou's emotional outburst represents the fear of many women of the Sahel who find themselves in a conflicting position.

We come across this instance again with Hindou who shares her displeasure with getting married to her cousin. She wonders if her accord is of no importance. "Ô mon père, pourquoi moi ? Te serait-il venu à l'esprit que je pourrais ne pas être d'accord ? Et que j'en avais le droit ? Je n'aime pas Moubarak. Pire, je le déteste"(40). This cycle of subordination goes on for years, Djaili Amal states in an interview with DW.

We're falling years behind at every little opportunity. I tell girls all over the world: your mothers and grandmothers had to fight for what seems to be given to you. If you are not careful, your daughters will no longer have your rights.(par 19)

This cycle of forced marriages has happened in the past, and present and will continue in the future if nothing is done to fight against it. We have the story of Hindou's mother

to explain this situation further. She explains her forced marriage at 14 years old to her late sister's husband.

Amraou, toi aussi, tu es une fille sage et obéissante. Tu as toujours su te tenir, et je sais que je peux te faire confiance. Tu es déjà en âge de te marier. Tu prendras donc la place de ta sœur ! Tu élèveras ses enfants et tu les protégeras comme elle l'aurait fait. Tu occuperas sa chambre et hériteras de ses effets. Tu épouseras Alhadji Boubakari dans une semaine.(61)

This happened to Hindou's mother and now to Hindou. This cycle of marginalization persists in every generation.

Also, this is not the only instance in which women are denied the position of decision-making. Ramla is denied the ability to marry the man she chose for herself, Aminul. She is bethrown by her uncle to Alhadji Issa, a rich elderly business partner. Ramla states the choice does not depend on her as she only has to go ahead with the fate the elders have decided for her: "Au-delà de la bonne éducation qui exigeait de moi que je me retienne, il y avait en moi ce désir de révolte refoulé. Je ne l'avais pas choisi. On ne me laissait pas le droit de l'accepter ou de le refuser. Il était donc inutile qu'il me plaise ou non."(17)

As earlier stated by Amal, a woman's role is to make those around her happy, to sacrifice herself so that everyone is well, this element is represented in the novel, the women have to place the interest of each of their family members before thinking about themselves. This can be seen when Ramla's uncle reprimands her for opposing her marriage with Alhadji Issa.

Tu ne te rends même pas compte qu'à cause de ton comportement et de celui de tes voyous d'amis, tu mets en péril mes affaires et celles de ton père. Toi qu'on disait intelligente. Tu veux que les impôts nous tombent dessus si cet homme politique se fâche ? Tu veux que ce principal fournisseur refuse de nous livrer ? Tu veux peut-être même nous voir ruinés ?(21)

We are demonstrated here by Amal, that women do not deserve to put themselves first. Ramla's uncle reprimands her for not putting her family's challenges above hers. The

lack of agency and societal pressures imposed on the women force them to denounce their autonomy and comply to familial and societal expectation.

We continue further with the plight of the Sahel women regarding the lack of education. Women are denied education because it is of "no use" to their gender. Amal portrays the obstacles women go through in their quest for an education. Male education is prioritised over female's. These challenges are intertwined with tradition which believes women should be concerned only with their traditional roles rather than on their academic aspirations. This is demonstrated with Ramla who tells her suitors she would like to wait two to three years to obtain her "BAC" before thinking of marriage and the responses worthy of a traditional African man. "Deux ans ! Mais tu seras vieille fille, ma jolie. À quoi te servirait d'avoir le bac ? Une fille doit avant tout se marier. Je suis trop pressé pour attendre deux ans"(13). Ramla is told her education has no use and her main goal as a woman is to get married. This is the plight of several women from the Sahel who are deprived of education. The society around them convinces them that their true values lie in the ability to marry quickly and birth children for their husbands.

The marginalisation of Women in *Les Impatientes* is not only concerned with the young girls but also with the older women, an example in this case is Ramla's mother Dadiyel. Dadiyel embodies the struggle of women who are burdened by societal expectations and blame her for situations that are not her fault. Her children's misfortunes are attributed to her being a bad mother and wife. This is rather ironic because she has limited control over what happens in her children's lives. Patriarchal norms prevent her from building her children's destinies yet she is still held responsible when the outcomes do not turn out fruitful. This is present in the novel when Ramla and her brother, Amadou show resistance to her getting married to Alhadji Issa, their father accuses the mother of this insolence.

Si jamais ta fille ou ton fils prononce encore un seul mot de travers, je te répudie. Non ! Sur la tête de mes frères ici présents, je te répudierai plutôt trois fois qu'une. Je pense avoir été plus que patient jusqu'ici. Est-ce que c'est clair ?(21)

It is important to note that in this society where a woman's dignity is present only when she gets married and has kids, being "répudié" thrice will lead to a divorce;

this will bring great shame to her and is the highest form of punishment a woman can receive. In this patriarchal society, the men escape accountability and blame it unfairly on women. Ramla's father, Alhadji Boubakari for example, is implied to have flaws as a husband and as a father yet he is not judged with the same scrutiny in which the women are judged. This point highlights the restrictive and marginalised nature of traditional expectations.

This same case can also be examined with Hindou's mother, Amraou. After her daughter, Hindou escapes from her marriage to come back home; Hindou's father reprimands her mother for this disrespectful act committed by "her" daughter: "Tout ça, c'est de ta faute. Tu dorlotes trop tes enfants et tu les gâtes. Normal qu'ils ne sachent pas se tenir. Si tu étais un peu plus ferme et sévère, elle ne se serait pas comportée ainsi."(58)

Moreover, another instance can be seen when Hindou's mother is being punished for her daughter's defiance, she escapes her marriage for a second time to Gazawa. She is given strokes of a cane and punished because she is incapable of training her daughter properly.

Quand mon père estime la punition suffisante, il retourne sa rage contre ma mère. Elle ne bouge pas, ne pleure pas et reçoit stoïquement les coups sans ciller. Seuls ses yeux, noyés de larmes, brillent plus fort qu'à l'accoutumée. Elle ne se protège pas (74).

The weight of societal expectations falls solely on the women's heads, they can only lament the impending future. Ramla laments the injustice that is being served to her. An injustice that came befall her because she is a woman, Ramla laments that if she were a boy then everything would have been different.

Ô mon père ! Je ne peux même pas t'en vouloir. Je suis une fille pour mon plus grand malheur. Je ne pourrai jamais, comme un garçon, me réfugier un jour dans ton giron ou pleurer sur ton épaule. Cela ne se fait pas. Une fille ne peut se rapprocher de son père, une fille ne peut embrasser son père. (34)

This statement made by Ramla further perpetuates the discrimination and a broader image of gender inequality. Amal exposes a society that denies women their basic rights and freedom. This inequality is not only a matter of individual experiences but is a systemic issue interwoven into the Sahel society. Ramla's story ends with her being driven to her marital home still lamenting her present situation.

Sauvez-moi, je vous en supplie, on me vole mon bonheur et ma jeunesse ! On me sépare à jamais de l'homme que j'aime. On m'impose une vie dont je ne veux pas. Sauvez-moi, je vous en conjure, je ne suis pas heureuse comme vous voulez le croire !(37)

This cry emulates the cries of all the young girls of the Sahel who have to abandon themselves, their education and their dreams to obey tradition. Ramla's. Experience highlights the similar situation children her age go through. Despite her defiance and her desperate attempt to fight against her marriage, the powerful societal structures and lack of support from her immediate family make the task impossible.

The next narrator we come across in this novel is Hindou. Hindou as earlier explained is betrothed to her violent cousin, Moubarak. She too alongside her sister is asked to practice "Munyal"(patience). A virtue that is expected by every woman of the Sahel according to the patriarchal society in which they are found. Hindou represents the violence that women of the Sahel go through daily. Hindou is sexually assaulted by Moubarak

Moubarak m'a alors entraînée vers sa chambre. Je me suis débattue pour qu'il me lâche mais il a commencé à m'embrasser sans vergogne. Je l'ai mordu violemment, écœurée par son odeur fétide. Il sentait l'alcool. Profitant d'un instant d'inattention, je me suis échappée. Il était fou de rage et jurait (41)

She escapes from this situation but does not tell the story to anyone including her mother for fear of being reprimanded. "Ce n'est pas un sujet qu'on évoque avec sa mère, tu le sais"(31). Reporting assault as a woman will be futile and further lead to the victimization of the woman. The stigma of being accused forces the woman to keep quiet and hence prevent her from getting justice. Being a male-centered society, the system often fails to protect women and favors the men instead. This instance is one

amongst other instances where Hindou is sexually abused by her husband. Another example is during their wedding night where he forces himself on her twice.

Il se lève brusquement et, d'un mouvement imprévisible, me jette brutalement sur le lit et arrache mes vêtements. Je me défends autant que je le peux. Quand il déchire mon corsage, je le mords farouchement. Il retire sa main d'où perlent des gouttes de sang. Furieux, il se met à me frapper. Je crie, je me débats, quand un coup violent m'assomme, et je tombe en travers du lit.

Quelques heures plus tard, je n'ai plus de force pour crier ni de larmes à verser. Le silence règne dans la chambre. J'ai tellement crié, tellement pleuré et supplié que je n'ai plus de voix... Il abuse encore de moi. La douleur est si vive que je tombe dans une bienveillante inconscience."45-46)

In this society the male dominates, whatever he does is right. Women being sexually and physically abused has been so normalized that the women do not realize they are being abused. They believe it is the men's right to correct their wives. According to Ifeoma E. Odinye in her study entitled *"Female Sexual Abuse and the Violation of Human Rights in African Fiction: An Example of Chika Unigwe's On Black Sisters' Street"*, sexual abuse remains a persistent problem that occurs in African society, she states sexual abuse has been so frequent that it becomes inured to the female gender. Hindou believes the abuse that was committed to her is justifiable because it was from her husband instead, she should feel honored she did not dishonor her family.

Personne ne fut scandalisé par mon état. Ce n'était pas un crime ! Moubarak avait tous les droits sur moi et il n'avait fait que se conformer à ses devoirs conjugaux. Il avait certes été un peu brutal mais c'était un jeune homme en bonne santé et viril. En plus, j'étais belle comme un cœur ! Il ne pouvait que perdre la tête face à tant de charmes. Il était surtout très amoureux ! Je méritais aussi des félicitations car j'avais su me garder pure. Je n'avais pas déshonoré ma famille.(46)

She was being brainwashed by her peers into accepting this act of abuse as an act of love and always she is asked to demonstrate "Munyal".

Ce n'était pas un viol. Tout s'était déroulé normalement. Je suis juste une nouvelle mariée plus sensible que les autres. Mon mari est jeune et amoureux ! C'est légitime qu'il soit ardent ! C'est habituel que ça se passe ainsi. D'ailleurs, qui a osé évoquer le mot « viol » ? Le viol n'existe pas dans le mariage.(47)

Amal highlights the powerlessness of the Sahel woman towards abuse. Their silence is not just an act of passive acceptance but a strategic means of survival within a system which does not favor the women. Instead of being treated like a victim, the society turns it against the woman. The woman is blamed for the situation and for having brought shame upon her family. The same case goes for Hindou; "C'était de ma faute si j'avais souffert plus que les autres. Si je m'étais laissé faire, je n'aurais pas eu à subir tout ça !" (47) The powerlessness of the woman and victimisation of the man is also seen when Moubarak attacks his wife a night after getting drunk and the family accused Hindou of sleeping in her chambers and without her husband's approval.

on me reprocha de m'endormir avant le retour de mon époux. D'ailleurs, pourquoi étais-je dans mon appartement la nuit ? Je n'avais pas de coépouse à ce qu'on sache, fit remarquer la mère de Hamza. L'usage voulait que je sois chez moi seulement la journée. Une épouse est censée partager la couche de son époux. Je l'avais donc bien cherché ! (53-54)

She is being accused of her assault and judged by the society around her. Her family prioritizes the family's reputation over the woman's well-being.

The marginalisation of women in *Les Impatientes* extends beyond being physical and psychological, the subtle ways in which they share food demonstrate the subordinate status of women in the novel: "les hommes dînaient à part. Un cuisinier, engagé par mon oncle, préparait un repas spécialement pour eux, plus varié et plus riche que celui des femmes." (50) "Pendant ce temps, nous, les femmes, mangions aussi ensemble." (51)

The men and the women do not eat together. The men's meal is much more refined as compared to the women's. Through this ritual, Amal demonstrates the power

imbalances and subtle control of women in every sector, physically, mentally, and socially. As earlier said, the torments women of the Sahel go through in their marriages take several forms. In this case, Hindou goes through mental and physical torture from her husband. She is forced to reproduce sexual pornographic scenes with her husband. He not only does this as a fantasy but to torture her further into depression.

Il possédait aussi un lecteur dvd et n'hésitait pas à se procurer des cd classés x. Ce fut pour lui un nouvel accessoire qu'il dénicha pour mieux me tourmenter. Car il m'obligeait à reproduire les scènes qu'il regardait. C'était l'occasion de m'insulter, de me blesser en relatant ses multiples aventures qu'il me mettait au défi de raconter à toute la famille (51)

We now move into the physical abuse faced by Hindou. An abuse which is a symbolism of the abuse faced by several women in the Sahel. À peine avais-je ouvert la porte que je reçus un coup de poing dans l'œil droit...Hamza, l'un des jeunes frères de Moubarak, se précipita hors de sa chambre, juste à temps pour empêcher Moubarak de m'asséner un deuxième coup"(52). Hindou physical abuse serves as an illustration of the themes of gender based violence and the oppression faced by women . Amal demonstrates how women are treated like objects and not as partners . According to Ramla and Hindou's father, the man is his wife "paradise" and her sole purpose is to carter for him. This "right" of the man permits him to treat his wife as his subordinate. A good example is Moubarak , Hindou's husband . When asked by his brother,Hamza why he treats his wife so shabbily, "Moubarak, qu'est-ce qu'il t'arrive ? Elle ne t'a rien fait ! Regarde à quelle heure tu réveilles ta femme pour la frapper ! (53), Moubarak states: Mêlé-toi de tes affaires. C'est mon épouse et j'en fais ce que je veux."(53). Ironically, when a man treats his wife as a partner in this patriarchal society, he is mocked by his peers . A good illustration of this in the novel is Hamza , Moubarak's brother, he states;

Oui, c'est ton épouse. C'est pour cela que tu n'as pas à la frapper. Un peu de considération sinon pour ta cousine, du moins pour ton oncle, son père. Si l'un de vous devait se fâcher, c'est logiquement elle. Tu viens de rentrer à deux heures du matin.(53)

To which Moubarak retorts

Ce n'est pas parce que tu as peur de ta femme que je devrais aussi craindre la mienne. Regarde-toi, petit Hamza, toujours obéissant, bon garçon. Ta femme n'a aucun respect pour toi. Tu es comme son petit chien. Tu fais honte à tous les hommes ! (53)

A good man is seen by his peers as an unfit man who is ashamed of his masculinity. He is believed to be a dog who is trained by his wife. Through every ritual or action performed the subjugation of women is always put at the forefront.

Moreover, we now move into the emotional violence Hindou goes through. Her husband Moubarak blatantly cheats on her. Instances of this can be seen in the novel when girls over to their marital home.

Soudain, le vrombissement d'une moto me fait lever la tête. Moubarak arrive, accompagné d'une jeune fille à l'allure effrontée, vêtue d'une robe moulante en tissu bazin suggérant ses rondeurs. La vingtaine, elle est perchée sur des talons aiguilles qui, dans le sol sablonneux, exposent ses chevilles à une foulure certaine. Moubarak me toise du regard, puis installe son invitée au salon. (55)

Hindou can only further sink into despair because reporting him to his family members will further just put her into problems as she will be accused of his infidelity. The absence of joy in women's lives in the novel *Les Impatientes* is tied to the oppressive structures that command their existence. Their stories describe a history of despair and disappointment. The women scramble between tradition and societal truth that favor only the man. Hindou's mother laments this fact, she tells her daughter:

Il est difficile, le chemin de vie des femmes, ma fille. Ils sont brefs, les moments d'insouciance. Nous n'avons pas de jeunesse. Nous ne connaissons que très peu de joies. Nous ne trouvons le bonheur que là où nous le cultivons. À toi de trouver une solution pour rendre ta vie supportable. Mieux encore, pour rendre ta vie acceptable. C'est ce que j'ai fait, moi, durant toutes ces années. J'ai piétiné mes rêves pour mieux embrasser mes devoirs. (64)

The woman's life in the Sahel is that of misery. Women navigate a life that leaves them unfulfilled and trapped. The women see themselves in a situation where their value is tied to their ability to keep their husbands faithful. When men go astray, instead of the man being judged and criticised the blame is being pushed on the woman for her inability to serve her husband properly.

According to Olive Uwamariya in her study entitled « Is Marriage a Punishment for Women »

The institution of marriage is still as patriarchal and as old as the hills. In Rwanda today like in most societies across the world, women still do the bulk of unpaid and care work, whether they live and work in rural areas or the city. Their work remains largely undervalued in macroeconomics. In addition, women are expected to ensure men are washed, fed like babies and be sexually satisfied. Meanwhile, men who make very little effort to be parents or husbands are praised for being exceptional. (par 8)

A national survey that took place in Rwanda, in 2015 indicated that 35% of women aged 15-49 have experienced domestic violence at least once in their lives. Olive Uwamariya while interviewing rural women of Rwanda, states; « a man's sexual appetite cannot be tamed so it's up to a woman to ensure he gets to have sex whenever he wants. »(par 10). Ideologies like this tend to shape the minds of the younger generation into believing that man is always right. Sexual education is influenced by biased religious and moral structures that require the woman to tame herself. Hindou in this case has to tame herself to accept abuse and practice patience even if it leads to her death. After escaping her abusive marriage to Gazawa, Hindou is found by her family. Her action is seen as a form of dishonor to her family and, she is blamed severely for escaping. Even after exposing her injuries, she is told to have practiced « Munyal ». « Qu'as-tu fait à Moubarak pour qu'il abatte sur toi une telle fureur ? fit froidement ma tante. Qu'Allah nous préserve. Franchement, toi et ton époux, vous vous valez. Pas la peine d'entrer dans vos histoires »(7). Hindou is blamed by her aunt for her husband's sudden outburst. Hindou faces pressure from her family members to conform to her husband's abusive tendencies because, as a woman, she must serve her husband. The women in this Sahel society have normalised abuse to a point where a woman escaping

from abuse is seen as a taboo. Hindou is punished by her father. « La lanière du fouet me lacère la peau, déchirant le pagne que je porte. »(74).

This pressure from society and relatives tends to render the woman vulnerable mentally. We take the case of Hindou who loses her mind at the thought of her monotonous life. She is accused of having a malicious spirit controlling her but, the abuse she has faced from her society has rendered her miserable and delusional.

On confirme que je suis folle. On commence à m'attacher. Il paraît que je cherche à fuir. Ce n'est pas vrai. Je cherche juste à respirer. Pourquoi m'empêche-t-on de respirer ? de voir la lumière du soleil ? Pourquoi me prive-t-on d'air ? Je ne suis pas folle. Si je ne mange pas, c'est à cause de la boule que j'ai au fond de la gorge, de mon estomac si noué qu'aucune goutte d'eau ne peut plus y accéder. Je ne suis pas folle. Si j'entends des voix, ce n'est pas celle du djinn. C'est juste la voix de mon père. La voix de mon époux et celle de mon oncle. La voix de tous les hommes de ma famille. Munyal, munyal ! Patience ! Ne les entendez-vous pas aussi ? Je ne suis pas folle ! Si je me déshabille, c'est pour mieux inspirer tout l'oxygène de la terre. C'est pour mieux humer le parfum des fleurs et mieux sentir le souffle d'air frais sur ma peau nue. Trop d'étoffes m'ont déjà étouffée de la tête aux pieds. Des pieds à la tête. Non, je ne suis pas folle. Pourquoi m'empêchez-vous de respirer ? Pourquoi m'empêchez-vous de vivre ? (79-80)

Hindou's ultimate despair and dwindling hope are not a unique action but represent an outcome that is quite possible for women and young girls facing similar societal constraints. She serves as a microcosm of all the silenced experiences faced by young girls like her. Hindou's tragic and pitiful end calls for a call for action, a call to stand against injustice, and a call for women to have solidarity to fight these several acts of marginalisation and subjugation.

The third and final narrator is Safira. Safira is Ramla's co-wife and Alhadji Issa's first wife. Safira demonstrates the plight of Sahel women who suffer from the devastating consequences of polygamy. As one wife among many, Safira competes for

her husband's attention and resources. Safira laments at the thought of sharing her husband with someone as young as her daughter.

Mon Dieu, comment faire face à cette fille à peine plus âgée que ma propre fille et qui s'arroge le droit de me prendre mon époux ? Comment pourrais-je le supporter ? Comment montrer bonne figure comme l'exigent les convenances ? Que faire pour ne pas perdre la face ? (84)

Safira embodies the feeling of pain and jealousy that is part of a polygamous marriage. According to Olive Uwamariya, marriage is not simply an expression of love between the man and the woman. It is a contract that favors the man despite the woman's feelings. In this patriarchal system, a woman has to be grateful to have been chosen so, has to endure all her husband's actions as a form of payback.

Moreover, Safira's feeling of betrayal from her husband represents the emotional toll that polygamy has on women. Amal goes on to critique how these norms limit women's autonomy. Amal goes hard to demonstrate the difficult living between the wives and how they do not have a say in the marriage. Safira has to bear the pain of seeing her husband take another wife while pretending she is happy about it.

C'est fini. L'appartement de mon époux ne m'est plus accessible. Je dois désormais attendre mon walaande avant d'y pénétrer, comme je dois aussi attendre mon tour pour le voir et pour discuter avec lui. J'ai le cœur serré. Je ne suis plus seule dans ma maison. Je ne suis plus une femme aimée. Je ne suis plus à présent qu'une épouse, qu'une femme de plus. Alhadji Issa, mon amour, n'est plus mon amant. Dès ce soir, il sera dans les bras d'une autre et, rien qu'à l'imaginer, je me sens défaillir. Quoi qu'il en dise, rien ne sera plus jamais comme avant. Le cœur d'un homme peut-il vraiment se partager entre deux femmes ? (88)

Several human rights activists and committees have fought against polygamy as it is said to be a violation of women's rights. For example on 29 March 2000, the Human Rights Committee, the body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the ICCPR(International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) issued a general

comment on the interpretation of article 3 of the ICCPR which is concerned with equality between the men and the women, the Human Right committee stated the following:

It should also be noted that equality of treatment with regard to the right to marry implies that polygamy is incompatible with this principle. Polygamy violates the dignity of women . It is an inadmissible discrimination against women. Consequently, it should be definitely abolished wherever it continues to exist. (par 24)

This initiative among others has not stopped the propagation of polygamy since it is rooted in African customs and traditions.

Safira was contented with a monogamous lifestyle but is criticized by the society which believes a traditional African man should have more than one wife. In between a "broken" marriage and sudden divided attention, Amal demonstrates the difficult existence of several African women which tradition suppresses daily.

This situation forces women to see each other as rivals hence, removing the notion of solidarity among the women. Once the principal subjects being subjugated are at loggerheads, patriarchy will continue to be enforced and women will retain the role of second-class human beings and subordinates.

La mariée est là, certes ! Mais pourra-t-elle rester ? C'est à toi de faire en sorte qu'il regrette sa décision et te revienne rapidement. Le plus important n'est pas la cérémonie du mariage mais la suite. Rien n'assure qu'elle sera une bonne épouse, qu'elle pourra même le supporter.(89)

This statement made by Halima, Safira's friend fosters the animosity between the co-wives which will inadvertently reinforce patriarchal power structures. Amal uses the figure of Safira to demonstrate the reality that the decisions made in a marriage do not concern the women in any way. Polygamy is viewed in an African context as a form of wealth and importance. Alhadji Issa speaks to his wife Safira on the image of polygamy in the Sahel context.

Ouvre les yeux, Safira ! m'a-t-il dit. La polygamie est normale et même indispensable pour le bon équilibre du foyer conjugal. Tous les hommes importants ont plusieurs épouses. Même les plus pauvres en ont. Tiens ! Ton

père est aussi polygame, non ? Si ce n'est avec moi, Ça sera toujours avec un autre. Jamais tu ne seras seule chez un homme. Si tu étais un peu reconnaissante, tu remercieras plutôt Allah d'avoir été seule pendant toutes ces années. Tu as bien profité de ta jeunesse sans partage. C'est égoïste à présent de montrer de l'amertume. Et puis, serais-tu plus sage que le Tout-Puissant qui a autorisé les hommes à avoir jusqu'à quatre épouses ? Es-tu plus importante que les épouses du Prophète qui ont accepté dignement cette polygamie ? Penses-tu être un homme pour affirmer qu'on ne peut aimer plusieurs femmes à la fois ? (93)

Safira among many other women is brainwashed into accepting the fact that they should be happy to have been chosen to be part of a marriage, especially a polygamous one. These women repay this gratefulness to have been chosen as potential spouses by being treated as stooges who have no say in any decision-making actions even if the decision affects them emotionally, economically, and socially.

Safira presents to us the frustration that turns to anger and then bitterness the Sahel women go through in a state of polygamy. In a society where a woman's value is tied to a man, sharing a husband diminishes the woman's rights and freedom. Safira demonstrates great desperation which later forms into evil thoughts. She sets up a plan with her brother Hamza to get rid of Ramla.

Je donnerai tout ce qu'il voudra. Je ferai tout ce qu'il demandera. Je veux seulement qu'elle parte ! Immédiatement ! Qu' Alhadji la répudie ! Reste là-bas le temps qu'il faudra. Tu as cinq cent mille francs dans cette enveloppe. N'hésite pas à dépenser. Même s'il demande un bœuf en sacrifice, fais-le ! L'argent n'est rien. Je veux qu'elle se casse ! Rappelle-toi bien son nom, celui de sa mère et celui de son père aussi pour qu'il lui jette un sort." (96)

Safira's humiliation is asked to be tamed with "Munyal". Polygamy is embedded in to the native culture and it fosters glorifying male dominance over female subservience. The idea of polygamy perpetuates the woman's dependency on the man. This reinforces the idea of patriarchy and destroys any form of solidarity among women since they are always in competition for their husband's love. We're brought back to the title "*Les Impatientes*", which demonstrates Safira's impatience to cope with

societal norms. A polygamous marriage is in no way a taboo in an African society. Safira's mother confirms this thought by stating. "La polygamie n'est pas une honte pour une femme" (96). This statement agrees with the view of polygamy in a Sahel society.

The lack of solidarity between women and the impacts of polygamy on the women in the novel *Les impatientes* could also be seen through the instance of Safira's mother. Her plight just like every other Sahel woman is that of suffering while being under the polygamous regime

Elle connaît aussi les travers de la polygamie et en a souffert. D'ailleurs, elle en souffre toujours. Mon père, depuis son remariage avec une jeune fille de vingt ans, n'a plus d'yeux que pour sa nouvelle épouse. À peine cinquante ans, et ma mère a été reléguée au second plan. Maintenant, mon père l'ignore complètement. La nouvelle venue la méprise et ne se gêne pas pour aller chez mon père à toute heure, peu importe que ce soit son défunt ou non. La seule fois où ma mère a osé se rebeller, mon père l'a tellement abreuvée d'injures devant sa rivale qu'elle s'est jurée de l'ignorer à jamais. Depuis cinq ans, ma mère n'a plus de walaande et regarde, impuissante, sa coépouse s'accaparer complètement son mari.(98)

The constant silent competition for her husband's affection and the ensuing jealousy leads to eventual emotional and psychological trauma. This transition from a monogamous marriage to a polygamous one not only challenges Safira's sense of identity but also her self-worth. Safira is marked by internal conflict as her pleas are turned to deaf ears because polygamy is a societal norm.

Through Safira's struggle, we come across the challenges of love, and freedom in a world where women's personal choices are overshadowed by traditional practices. Safira is stripped of her agency because of the husband's choices. Her identity and worth are tied to her husband's choices. It is clear Safira has disdain for Ramla but she can't act as her person for fear of igniting the wrath of her husband. She has to conform to his choices and accept her role without argument. Safira acts as a pillar to fortify patriarchy by creating division between her and Ramla instead of forging solidarity to reclaim their autonomy.

After several failed attempts to bewitch Ramla and, in a bid to reclaim her freedom, Safira steals money from her husband's coffers so as for it to cause disagreement and divorce. Alhadji Issa ends up divorcing them both due to lack of proof to accuse anyone.

Dans la voiture qui me ramène dans la concession de mon père, je réfléchis à toute allure. Mon objectif est atteint. J'ai réussi à faire répudier Ramla ! Mais je me brûle aussi les ailes. Je pars mais l'enjeu de ma répudiation est autrement plus grave. Mes enfants encore jeunes, ma famille modeste qui dépend de moi(111)

Safira laments at this fact. Amal demonstrates to us that the course of Safira and her children's existence is based on Alhadji Issa's actions and choices. In a society where a woman's value is tied to her ability to satisfy her husband's needs. The constant stress and competition take a great toll on Safira's mental health and she has to change herself physically and intellectually in order for them to correspond to her husband's wishes.

Je me faisais belle, m'offrais de nouveaux pagnes. Je devenais hardie dans le choix de mes sous-vêtements. Sensuelle, je n'hésitais même plus à arborer des colliers de reins en perles. J'achetais des chemises de nuit de plus en plus osées et, à ma grande surprise, tout cela plaisait à mon mari. Je rajoutais discrètement des mèches ou des extensions capillaires à mes tresses régulièrement renouvelées. J'investissais également dans les crèmes de toilette et les savons de luxe, n'hésitant pas à utiliser tous les nouveaux produits éclaircissants pour réussir à rendre ma peau déjà claire aussi blanche que celle de Ramla. Je me procurais les encens les plus forts et les parfums les plus précieux. La plante de mes pieds et mes ongles étaient toujours noircis au henné. Et mes tatouages étaient renouvelés régulièrement avec des motifs différents à chaque fois. J'osais des dessins aux endroits les plus insolites. Le creux des reins, le haut de la cuisse ou même la rondeur du sein. Coquine, je me faisais écrire ses initiales, flattant son ego surdimensionné.(124)

Amal uses Safira's situation to depict the way women feel trapped in their marriages and have to be confined to the marital structure even if it does not prioritize their happiness. Safira has to drop her desires to adopt what the husband will term as

good. To continue, the marginalisation of women in the Sahel context is also seen in the form of physical abuse. Apart from Hindou, Ramla also faces domestic violence from Alhadji Issa. Ramla is set up by her co-wife Safira making Alhadji Issa believe she is a cheat. Ramla was abused and almost killed.

En rage, il se met à la battre violemment, lui demandant d'avouer immédiatement. Elle crie, pleure et jure qu'elle est innocente. Exaspéré, il sort par-dessous le canapé un long couteau et le lui met sous la gorge, en la menaçant :

« Écoute-moi bien, petite pute, tu vas avouer maintenant. Qui est cet homme qui t'appelle ? Vous vous moquez de moi, n'est-ce pas ? C'est le petit voyou qui voulait t'épouser, c'est ça ? Si tu ne me dis pas la vérité, je vais t'égorger et, crois-moi, ça ne me mènera même pas en prison. Dans ce pays, les riches ont toujours raison. Tu vas avouer, oui ! (124)

Any attempt made by the woman to question or resist a man's authority can be led to her being condemned or worse killed. The woman's silence is imposed as she has to conform to societal rights and rules. In this society, the man is always right.

Amal demonstrates to us that the reign of patriarchy will be long if women keep transferring anger from generation to generation instead of doing the right thing to combat this ill. Djaili Amadou Amal in an interview with *Global Voices* entitled, "Women's Plight in the Sahel: A Central Issue in Djaili Amadou Amal's Works" states "D'autre part, en disant aux femmes que c'est à chacune de prendre ses responsabilités dans la lutte collective pour leur émancipation." Amal believes that on the one part society should forge for female emancipation but on the other part, women should fight for themselves because they are the ones going through the constant subjugation and marginalisation. Society has controlled the minds of the women, painting false narratives against each other. This instance is seen with Ramla and Safira.

— Comment ça ? J'ai entendu tellement de choses à ton propos. On m'a même dit que tu projetais de prendre ma place. Que tu étais contente d'avoir réussi après toutes ces années à l'embobiner et à le convaincre de t'épouser, lui qui était toujours resté monogame !

— On t'a dit beaucoup de choses, sauf la vérité ! Tu en es bien loin...

...— *Tu vois ! Comme toi, j'ai eu le cœur brisé le jour de ce mariage. Comme toi, je ne suis qu'une victime. Je ne suis qu'un caprice pour lui. À peine m'a-t-il aperçue qu'il a décidé que je lui appartenais, peu importe ce que j'en pensais. Mes parents non plus n'ont pas tenu compte de mes sentiments et n'ont pas entendu ma détresse. Je n'ai pas choisi d'être ta rivale ou de te prendre ton époux. (127)*

The women whom society puts in conflict face the same challenges every day even if they do not share the same age. The same predicament is felt just for the fact that one is a woman from the Sahel. So it is a sense of urgency for women of all ages to come together.

Djaïli Amal's *Les Impatientes* exposes the interconnected view of female marginalisation in the Sahel. The systemic marginalisation of women takes several forms forced marriage, domestic violence and polygamy among others By stating the struggles of Safira, Ramla and Hindou, Amal compels the readers to fight against this oppression and also consider the urgent need for both personal and systemic change.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESISTANCE TO MARGINALISATION

In a world where societal structures oppress minority groups, the spirit of resistance serves as the only source of hope for the minorities' troubled minds. Throughout history, marginalised groups have demonstrated great resilience in the face of this subjugation. These resistances manifest in a myriad of ways, they can range from subtle acts of defiance to artistic expression to the creation of organisations that support the quest of minorities. The painful situations which the characters in *Across the Mongolo* and *Les Impatientes* face, leave the characters wanting a society where they dismantle oppressive systems and reclaim their agency, dignity and culture.

This chapter focuses on highlighting the author's expression of marginalisation in both novels. We will demonstrate how the authors make use of characters to challenge the plights addressed in Chapter Three. John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaïli Amadou Amal make use of the different forms of resistance be it individual and group resistance. John Nkemngong Nkengasong makes use of social movements and individual defiance while Djaïli Amadou Amal makes use of her female characters who demonstrate remarkable resilience to challenge oppression and highlight their determination to fight for their rights and dignity. The first section of this chapter will analyse John Nkemngong Nkengasong's use of large-scale social movements and personal experiences in his novel *Across the Mongolo* to fight for their rights and induce collective action while, the second section will work on Djaïli Amadou Amal's use of women's defiance to tradition in her novel *Les Impatientes*, to resist the generational trauma of women in the Sahel.

Resistance to Linguistic Marginalisation In *Across the Mongolo*

John Nkemngong Nkengasong makes use of his characterisation in his novel to resist linguistic marginalisation . Nkemngong introduces characters such as Ngwe Nkemassah who is the protagonist, Dr Amboh, and Minister Wankili amongst others who consciously or unconsciously face marginalisation by their French counterparts. Ngwe demonstrates great resistance to this regime of subjugation both personally and by the creation of an association to fight for the Anglophone right, this shows that

Nkengasong believes that linguistic discrimination can be resisted even if it turns out that they are the minority population. With an effort of solidarity, the ill can be brought to an end.

Ngwe, an Anglophone student from the other side of the river Mongolo at the University of Besaadi faces diverse forms of violence as an Anglophone in a Francophone dominated society. To survive in this society, one has to create a hybridised self that adopts the majority of the French structure and the lesser of the Anglophone structure.

At the start of the novel we are brought to a traumatised Ngwe who begins his accounting his stating "I have never done anyone any harm, not even Monsieur Abeso. I am a University student...what is the meaning of this world? Have they no consciences Babajoro and his acolytes?" (7) This plea from Ngwe demonstrates the plight of several Anglophones who have gone through trauma and torture at the hands of the French Regime. Gilda Nicheng Forbang Looh in his study entitled "Dehumanisation, Resistance and Hope in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across the Mongolo", states that even though

Dehumanisation can happen between individuals, it especially exists between groups and is a form of othering of one group by another where the in-group attributes certain characteristics to the out-group as in the inferior-superior paradigm respectively.(219)

This is the case of Anglophones in Kamangola who are considered the inferior group in the face of adversity, it is only necessary for the victim to counterattack after years of endurance. This resistance gives an ounce of hope that the Anglophone situation might improve with time. Alexander Pope in his poem entitled *Essay on Man* emphasises the importance of hope he states that "Hope springs eternal in the human breast"(6) which means a glimpse of hope renders the human optimistic for the start of a better future.

Ngwe Nkemasah leaves his hometown to Besaadi in hopes of becoming the next Babajoro. In his excitement, Ngwe states

The conversation was mostly about the university and that made me have the desire to reach Besaadi soon enough Besaadi was the place where Babajoro lived and controlled the universe of Kamangola. I was getting closer to Babajoro succeeding step by step to the wishes of my father, seeing myself becoming the Babajoro of Kamangola one day.(32)

These great dreams fueled by hope are crashed due to suppression, bad governance, and marginalisation. The presentation of hope though of a great concept is overshadowed by a bigger ill. This goes on to say hopes should be backed up by determination, solidarity and resilience on the part of the suppressed minority. The Anglophones have a choice of either getting assimilated and adopting the Francophone lifestyle or resisting the Francophone domination. The Anglophone or Ngwe's resistance in particular can be observed through the means of several instances.

Firstly, Ngwe denies suppressing himself to the Francophone way of living and maintains himself to the cultured and civilized Anglophone way of life. An instance can be seen in the novel when Ngwe refuses to give a bribe to the dean's secretary because it is not part of the Anglophone culture. Ngola is a corrupt state but Ngwe does not accustom to this culture. He states;

She noticed that I was becoming stubborn and would not bribe her, what she had wanted from me for the past week. I had no money. Even then, I had never known how to give bribes. I wasn't brought up in that tradition, giving extra motivation to people who were duly paid a salary. I was brought up in a tradition where merit and respect for public interest were supreme.(111)

A second instance of Ngwe's refusal to conform to the Francophone rules can be seen when Ngwe is asked to give a bribe of two hundred francs so that they should let go of him and his documents. Ngwe declines this process and stands firm on his decision not to give them a dime. In the midst of this altercation, Ngwe declared that he was not a criminal hence that no need to pay money to be released like one. "The driver came and whispered in my ears that I should give them two hundred Francs or they were going to put me into more problems. I did not move. Why should I move? What crime did I commit? And I had to give money to be released?"(39). Ngwe seeing that his surroundings are completely different from expected, takes solace in flashbacks

which give him a feeling of hope and nostalgia. This is not the only instance in which Ngwe demonstrates great resilience and sticks to his customs.

Moreover, Ngwe denies speaking in French to be accepted by his peers. He preserves his identity as an Anglophone by refusing to fall for societal pressure. Ngwe is seen speaking French only in times of necessity in the novel. Nkengasong also has a role to play in this by making Ngwe speak the most humorous French to mock. An example can be seen in Ngwe's reply to a fellow French classmate. "Je t'allez bien"(68). Ngwe demonstrates great resilience by sticking to his roots instead of adopting another unlike characters like *Mr Kwent*i, who has adopted the rude and cultured French way of life by accepting bribes and speaking solely in the French language, and Minister Wankili who has disassociated himself from the Anglophone community, swore his allegiance to his Francophone counterparts. Ngwe remains faithful to his people and culture throughout the novel, *Across the Mongolo* .

To continue, Ngwe demonstrates his persistence to instill hope in fellow Anglophones by refusing to accept or buy exam questions for him to make it to the Third level. Despite it being a common phenomenon, Ngwe refuses to partake in this act of theft. Shirila attempts to get him questions about the main courses but he blatantly refuses. "Don't bother", she said. 'I have the questions, Ngwe. It is a secret. If you want the examination questions for the main courses, I shall give you.' "Don't bother about that. I shall work on my own, I told her plainly."(179) Ngwe prefers to fail his term even though it is important for him to pass just to conform to his culture. Ngwe paves the way and gives hope to a lot of Anglophones who go through the same struggle as him. After spending several years in Ngola and not reaching his initial goal, Ngwe still succeeds in preserving his identity and, this sets a pace for every other Anglophone to follow and to believe solely in their hard work rather than counting on illegal help.

Apart from Ngwe, we come across other characters such as Dr Amboh who demonstrates love for his culture and his language. Dr Amboh denies teaching in French to be "awarded" main courses. Dr Amboh like many other Anglophones is fit and has the required competence for his job but, because the Francophones of Ngola do not want to see an Anglophone occupying a post where he or she can control them. They give the Anglophone the choice of either staying in one spot with no upgrade

whatsoever or adopting the French culture and language to be accepted by them, just like Mr Wankili is. Dr Amboh states that; "He preferred to resign than to teach in French which was what was expected of him before he could be given a main course to teach"(60). Nkengasong uses Dr Amboh's plight to paint a picture of all other talented Anglophones who have been denied their rightful opportunities because of their inability to speak in French. In a world where an Anglophone has to be cautious of the language he or she speaks in a bid to avoid being alienated from society, standing firm to the English language and heartily adopting the Anglophone culture demonstrates a glimpse of hope for change and equity in the future of Kamangola.

In accordance with this new form of rebellion, West Cornel in his book entitled, *Hope on a Tightrope: Words and Wisdom* believes that

When ordinary people wake up, elites begin to tremble in their boots. They can't get away with their abuse. They can't get away with subjection. They can't get away with subjugation. They can't get away with exploitation. They can't get away with domination. It takes courage for folks to stand up (11)

The oppressed have to stand for their rights or remain under the light of abuse. In this case, the Elites represent the Francophones in Kamangola and the Ordinary people are those who have been subjugated in all sectors of the society that is, the Anglophones. Ngwe alongside other characters in the novel such as Nwolefeck have tolerated abuse from their fellow Francophone citizens. These instances of oppression forced Ngwe to remain in a cocoon for fear of being mocked. An instance is brought out in the novel after Ngwe suffers another ordeal of mockery and alienation. He states; "And so I kept a low profile for the rest of the year, avoiding any language confrontation with any of my superior brothers with the most conscious consideration"(68). It is obvious that during this period of marginalisation, Ngwe adopts an identity of self-hate and downgrades himself before his "superiors". Ngwe acted small expecting the waves of subjugation to pass over him but the unjust humiliation of Anglophones such as the old man who was embarrassed by police officers due to his inability to understand the French language which is considered the master's language. The gendarmes command:

Assois-toi la bas, vieux babouin! Thundered the gendarme, slapping the old man on the face. The old man's buttocks reasoned faster and found their seat on

the ground as if to say that if the head remained stubborn, it would continue to receive the blows but the buttocks had already obeyed the government man.
(36)|

This animalistic dehumanization of Anglophones confirms their positions as secondhand human beings in a country that is considered to be theirs. Anglophones are called slurs such as "anglobête, anglofou" and there has been no intervention for years to stop this act of barbarity. John Nkemngong Nkengasong makes use of characters who are on a quest to recover their identity. Ngwe who had once decided to be cautious with his way of speaking and acting such as asking questions in class to avoid being ridiculed in Ngola finally decides to assert his identity by sticking up to a powerful Francophone personnel such as Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin.

Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin is the Director of Civil Cabinet in Ngola . He represents the powerful Francophone power structures which Anglophones have to bend to to be classified as first-class citizens. An Anglophone who does not conform to these rules is seen as insane and outrageous by the Francophone community. Ngwe is in a power competition with Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin on who should conquer Shirila's heart. After several frail attempts to act sober, Ngwe finally stands up to himself and develops the courage to confront both Shirila and Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin.

Despite several pleas from Andas, Ngwe goes ahead to demonstrate his willingness to finally confront his oppressor :

'Please, Ngwe,' pleaded Andas, holding my hand and trying to pull me back.
'You may go there and create trouble.
Let's retreat,' he begged.
"I have nothing to lose," I told him. "Where else does the man lying on the ground fall apart from his grave? I shall lose nothing. Let's go and see Shirila," I said and shot forward. My friend followed, still advising that I retreat. (173)

Ngwe asserts his tone to finally fight for what is right despite being coaxed out of it. Ngwe's confrontation provides other Anglophones in a quest for emancipation with a tendency that they are moving toward humanisation of Anglophones and also

provides them with hope. Actions should always be backed out by words; in this case, after Ngwe retreats to Shirila's room, he meets Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin and Shirila in a compromising position but, being a *second-class citizen* Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin does not acknowledge Ngwe's presence and still talks with a lot of confidence. Ngwe in a bid to assert dominance serves food to himself and intentionally takes the gizzard. In the African tradition in general and the Cameroonian culture in particular, the gizzard represents authority and is only served to the head of the household or the highest authority in the room. Ngwe eating this part demonstrates his will to unchain himself from the shackles of oppression and gain the once-awaited superiority. As earlier stated by *West Cornel*, elites begin to tremble in their boots when ordinary people wake up, this is the case of Monsieur Abeso Liouis le Vin who is shaking a poor Anglo can stand up to him. He states: "Quoi ?Devant moi?... Quoi? Ici a Besaadi? Un Petit Anglo? Un salaud? Un idiot ?Non Non Non On verra! Salaud! Sa laud!" (177)

The Francophone dominance is asserted by relegating the Anglophones to have feelings of low self-esteem and unbelonging. Once the Anglophones start believing they do not merit to be first-class citizens, they are treated as such but, as soon as an Anglophone breaks this cycle, the Francophone is perplexed and turns to their normal nature of barbarity and insults. Ngwe's assertiveness is a shock to the Francophone structure and this decision paints a brighter future for the fate of Anglophones in Kamangola.

Despite Ngwe's ability to stand up for himself, he is faced with the consequences of his rebellion. According to the popular civil rights activist Malcolm X, "Sometimes you have to pick the gun up to put the gun down", this means that sacrifices must be made for one to attain his goal, and in this case, the goal is justice. Ngwe has to sacrifice his studies for the sake of having stood up to his oppressor. Ngwe repeated his academic year after doing some research and discovering that Docteur Ateba, the lecturer who taught the two main courses in his faculty gave him zero in both courses. Though no claim is made by John Nkemnong Nkengasong to assert that Monsieur Abeso Louis le Vin had a hand in this, it is clear that his threats "*On verra!*" were not in vain. Ngwe in a fit of rage and desperation goes insane. This leaves us wondering as the readers if this confrontation was worth it.

According to Gilda Nicheng Forbang-Looh in his study entitled "Dehumanisation, Resistance and Hope in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across the Mongolo" he states

...the declaration that he will go through a lot of stress and difficulties to rescue his people brings to the limelight the symbol of the mythical hero in the traditional African context who undertakes a risky journey to bring back good things to the community. When this mythical hero enters the mysterious jungle, it is believed, he contends with beasts and monsters. If he succeeds in defeating them and comes back alive, it is believed by the community that he has learned some lessons about life which will eventually be useful to the community.(232)

Ngwe in this situation is the hero who has gone through a risky journey of being tormented by Francophones and marginalised Anglophones in Ngola. The mysterious jungle Ngwe has to face is Ngola, the beasts and monsters represent his oppressors and he succeeded even though not physically, but by learning valuable lessons, lessons which stay in the minds of other Anglophones going through the same plight. They can learn and re-strategise from Ngwe's story.

Again, we come across the rebellion of Anglophones to their continuous alienation from all sectors in Ngwe's persistence to continue University no matter the forms of marginalisation he encounters in the course of his *Mandat*. Ngwe has had his fair share of trials moving from repeating his first year of Education due to poverty and the presence of the French language in all their courses. Ngwe is tempted to abandon his courses because he considers himself a burden to Nwolefeck. Ngwe declares that

Andi, for that was the way we called each other... Andi, you have done your best. You cannot stretch your generosity and care for me forever. Besides, both of us cannot lose both our education and money. We are repeating the first year and I think poverty is greatly responsible for our failure. (91)

Ngwe is later convinced by Nwolefeck to stay till the end of the year. Ngwe and Nwolefeck live from the scholarships awarded by the school unfortunately for them, in the next academic year list of scholarships was long overdue causing a riot amongst

students. This riot was so big it led to Ngwe being wrongfully detained for participating in the riot. He is treated as a "Leader de la grève qui fuite, anglofou, anglo, esclave, élément subversif"(99). Another demonstration of the fact that Anglophones are sabotaged and maltreated due to their language culture. Ngwe suffers in this case as he is wrongfully accused because he is an Anglophone. Upon his release Ngwe has to write his mid-year exam fortunately for him, at this time the list for scholarships is finally available. This situation still is not presented as an easy ordeal for Ngwe because, despite the fact his name is found on the list, it is wrongfully spelt; instead of *Ngwe Nkemasah*, it is spelt *Gwe Kemasah*. Ngwe finds himself in an ordeal of requesting for Francophone assistance who will in turn demonstrate their superiority over his kind to get access to what is rightfully his. After 8 days of unsuccessful attempts, Ngwe finally gets a solution, gets his scholarship and also successfully makes it in his exams.

Into a new academic year, Ngwe's mind gets more acquainted with the struggles his Anglophones brothers face no matter their rankings. Ngwe and Nwolefeck are invited to Minister Wankili's reception by Dr Amboh. In this reception, Minister Wankili portrays his assimilated nature which has adopted the French culture and its people over his. Minister Wankili states that he is an "English-speaking Cameroonian and not an Anglophone"(122). Here, we come across the consequence of constant subjugation, it leads Anglophone peers to divert to the culture they deem important and appropriate. In a bid to fight this ill, Ngwe forms the *Young Anglophone Movement* to fight for Anglophone rights. The creation of this movement goes thus:

I started by talking to a few Anglophone students like Andas who had often expressed some revolutionary tendencies with regard to the Anglophone problem. They were quite impressed with the idea and before long, the Young Anglophone Movement fondly referred to as 'The YAM' took root. We had our first meeting in the obscurity of an abandoned hall in the Ghetto Mini Cité with a multitude of Anglophone students in attendance. I addressed the little crowd of anxious students, presenting the mission of YAM, its objectives and demands.(129)

This does not go as planned as Ngwe has to abandon his studies to flee to the village because he is wanted by Babajoro's men. While in the village, Ngwe loses his dad and

this line of actions makes him miss his exams thereby repeating in the university for a second time hence also losing his scholarship.

Having no scholarship and no father to support him, Ngwe enters a new academic year forging to do the best he can but, being an Anglophone in a French-dominated society gives him few chances of proving himself intelligent enough. Ngwe fails his last year and loses his *mandate* as a Law student at the University of Besaadi. The main reason for Ngwe's failure is his use of English to write examinations of lecturers who were biased and spoke no English.

I wrote my examinations in the English language against the dictates of my lecturers who demonstrated palpable ignorance and bias for the language. Was it of any use spending one's days and nights reading Law at the British Council Library and the American Cultural Center? Was researching and improving one's knowledge on the subject of any use? My lecturers never wanted such show-offs of knowledge. Students were compelled to assimilate the conjunction of fractured ideas gleaned from French authors hastily compiled into booklets called polycopies, which they compelled students to buy.(147)

The Francophone mediocrity is demonstrated because students are obliged to reproduce *fractured* notes jammed into poly copies which students were required to buy to get good marks. Those who did not want to buy could also buy their certificates from *marché des femmes*. This goes ahead to confirm Shirilas statement, she states that;

it is gambling in this university,' Shirila said Success in this university and the whole country depends on d gambling and not merit. You should know this better than I should because you are a boy. Do you call this a university? Do you think people come here to learn? Here you gamble to succeed. It is not how much you know that makes you pass examinations.(155)

In a fit of despair, Ngwe loses all hope in life and humanity. With the help of Shirila, Ngwe gets back to his mind and his feet and tries into a new faculty, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to do the course History. Ngwe's resilience to persist and go to school despite the torments and ordeals he went through is a form of rebellion against all the tactics set by the different Francophone systems he encountered. The ordeals Ngwe goes through are enough to break a man but he fights against these

repressive thoughts and actions through the help of other characters. His rebellion against the domineering Francophone structures does not prevent him from getting back to his feet after every ordeal.

John Nkemngong Nkengasong makes use of these instances to forge Anglophones to stand against these oppressive structures no matter the times needed for them to get to the required goal. In the face of this severe marginalization, it is the role of the youths to stand for their rights. The adults had already failed to stand for their rights and that of their children. The two men who Ngwe found discussing at Minister Wankili confirm this assertion by stating:

Except the younger generation takes up the challenge themselves. Having failed... We are celebrating our failure this evening as the gentleman's speech implied," said the other... "You are right there. Our role now is to tell the story and spur the younger generation to act. We have to accept our guilt and continue to preach the doctrine to our children. The challenge is theirs. We must accept our guilt and give them the chance," the other cut in. (125)

These characters encourage the youths to take the challenge of removing themselves from this cycle of marginalisation. The elders such as *Achiangu Ncha* sold the rights of Anglophones at the *Fombala conference* which references the *Foumban conference*. These two characters accuse him of greed and how it led to the Unitary state mess which was the genesis of their marginalization. They state:

Is it not the same case with our Premier His Excellency, Achiangu Ncha? Was he not responsible for the mess today so-called the unitary state? Wasn't it his greed and his treachery? Or, as he claims he was tricked at the Fombala Congress? History shall judge those people. Their guilt shall be their curse,' concluded the other.(124)

After all, it is said the youths are the future of tomorrow. Ngwe listens to this conversation and opens his eyes to the wrongs the Anglophones have been accepting for years. Ngwe took the most radical step of creating an Anglophone movement that was concerned with fighting for the Anglophone student's rights and merits. Ngwe decides that he is

"either going to be a man, a full man or nothing, a full citizen and not an assistant citizen"(129)

This revolutionary act performed by Ngwe brings more hope to the Anglophone rebellion. Hope is one of the major factors which influences the course of the Anglophone movement. In the study, *Literary Hope (2012)* it is said that;

Holding on to hope when confronting seemingly impossible odds is another important theme in many texts; hope in these cases may be closely related to faith in human nature, faith in oneself, or religious or spiritual faith. Additionally, faith can be both an emotional state and also a perspective on reality; as the latter, hope is an example of how a world-view can shape one's actions, often in profound and life-affirming ways. (par 1)

After addressing this issue with his fellow Anglophone classmates, it is shown to us the readers that the students just needed a glimpse of hope to finally unite given that a lot of them are convinced to join the union. According to Nkengasong through the means of his character Ngwe, Anglophones have gone through five states of colonization. Firstly the Germans, secondly the British, thirdly the Awaras, followed by the French and lastly the Francophones of Kamangola. These diverse colonisations have led to the constant suppression of the Anglophones in this case, the Anglophone students of Kamangola forcing them to create the *Young Anglophone Movement*.

This movement was aimed at building proper Anglophone Universities, including Anglophones into the government by giving the first-class titles of ministers and not imaginary titles and also making Kamangola return to a Federal state. If none of these wishes were granted, they were going to adopt the zero option. The YAM planned a protest march at the Prime Minister's office, if the protest yielded no effects then they were going to disrupt the mid-term exams.

At this point, we are also demonstrating the lack of solidarity amongst Anglophones. Some Anglophones served as spies and revealed their plans to the oppressor, Babajoro and his men. According to Howard Zinn's memoir entitled *"You can't be neutral on a moving train"*, the title is self-explanatory. In a situation of societal change, an Anglophone must take a stand either to stand with their brothers for change

or side with the oppressors. By revealing their plans to the Francophones, these Anglophones have demonstrated betrayal and risk alienating their community. Aligning with the oppressive structures legitimizes the oppression Anglophones face and undermines the efforts made by fellow Anglophones to stand for change. This lack of solidarity led to the perpetuation of more acts of barbarism towards Anglophones as, both the innocent Anglophones and the members of YAM were arrested and tortured.

We are demonstrated to a Ngwe who once used to hide himself for fear of being marginalised and now decides to assert himself much more confidently. Ngwe demonstrates great courage by stating that he will not be going into hiding even though Anglophones are being captured and tortured. He states to Shirila:

If I escaped, who was going to guide the suffering lot? Why was I to start a battle and escape? Besides, where was I escaping to? From doom to hell? I thought I should remain and die for a glorious cause. Was I of any value when my brothers on this side of the Great River had reduced me to naught? What then was the reason to escape? Where else does a man lying on the ground fall apart from his grave? (131)

This courage is brought to an early stop as he listens to the pleas of Nwofeek and Shirila to escape to the village. The Young Anglophone movement is a symbol of Anglophone emancipation. This act of rebellion against the repressive Francophone regime challenges these injustices which perpetuates a system of oppression of its people. The Young Anglophone is finally dissolved because all the YAM members are forced to run into exile. This is seen in the text when Ngwe states;

While I was still contemplating, Andas, a close ally on the YAM front, sneaked in and hinted that it was hot out there and that I needed to escape. He told me that some of the students arrested had been severely tortured and forced to reveal that I conceived the idea and had rallied the students and indoctrinated them to revolt. It was clear that Babajoro's men wanted my head at all costs. I had to leave for the village that same day before I was fished out and slaughtered. (132)

This attempt by the young Anglophone students is not complete because the participants flee but, flight does not necessarily mean failure but just a way to regroup and plan better strategies. As long as the ill still is existent, resistance will always make an appearance. Moreover, resistance in the novel *Across the Mongolo* is not only centered on the actions of the main characters in the novel such as Ngwe but also on background characters. An instance of this resistance can be found when a character exclaims on the bus heading to Besaadi about the creation of a Unitary state which joins the Francophones and the Anglophones. This character exclaims;

It was a tricky thing, that thing called a plebiscite," st c the Other man sitting in front of me. "It could never have been the will of roun the people. It was a commodity arrangement between the with English and the French colonial masters... Who said the porcupine and cutting grass could share the same hole without eating up each other; that the scorpion and viper can parade on the same floor without exchanging jets of venom? That water and oil can sit in the same calabash hand in glove without separating from each other? It was a tricky follow them, giving thing but only time could tell.(40)

This character which Ngwe describes as *the man sitting in front of me* makes use of verbal resistance to express his displeasure towards the joining of two opposite states. While the rest of the bus stays silent about the outrageous disrespect of their language and themselves as the police officers brutalise them, this passenger demonstrates a spirit of rebellion which the other Anglophone characters do not seem to have. This passenger expresses his grief and this should sound as a wake-up call for Anglophones to either stay in the dark and betray their mission by allowing themselves to be marginalised or fulfil their mission by demonstrating resistance to the oppressive French structures.

Ngwe's plight represents the situations of marginalisation and injustice that a lot of Anglophones face in Kamangola. Being continually marginalised politically and culturally by the Francophone majority keeps them in feelings of unbelonging and despair. The Anglophones who occupy the lower population of Kamangola are oppressed, subjugated and alienated by the majority Francophones who consider themselves superior to the Anglophones despite their barbaric and rustic nature. Through the persistence of Anglophone characters such as Ngwe and Dr Amboh

amongst others a spirit of rebellion is built in the minds of other Anglophones. The marginalised have decided to stand up for what is theirs through verbal altercations to more drastic actions such as the creation of movements to fight for the rights of Anglophones. John Nkemngong Nkengasong through the use of his novel, *Across the Mongolo* emphasises solidarity amongst Anglophones. Some Anglophones are bribed with little meager favors and positions to spy and turn against their Anglophone brothers, this lack of solidarity between Anglophones will cause a never-ending suppression of Anglophones. This strategy is used by the Francophones to penetrate deeper into the Anglophone system, keep them at loggerheads with each other and reinforce their control over them. It is necessary for Anglophones to stand together to reinforce unity equity which will not only be of benefit to the Anglophones but the whole country which will boast of more assets for societal development.

Resistance To Female Marginalisation in *Les Impatientes*

Djaïli Amadou Amal makes use of three of her main characters: Ramla, Hindou and Safira who all go through marginalisation in the Sahel society. Ranging from polygamy, domestic violence, inability to express themselves, and forced marriages the Sahel women have undergone it all. In Sahel society, women are abused on a daily but society refuses to address this matter publicly. Djaïli Amadou Amal expresses that Literature is the only means by which this message can be transmitted properly and widely. The role of literature here is to spread awareness of these injustices and demonstrate the women's eagerness for emancipation. Djaïli Amadou states there is no point in being silent about these topics considered taboo while the women keep suffering in silence. We are brought to the three protagonists who do not practice any *Munyal* which is a fufulde word for *patience*, neither with the societal norms that have been imposed on them. The Sahel women are forced to exert *munyal*, they are expected to be submissive even in the advent of violence. The women self-sacrifice themselves in order to not dishonour their families and later enslave themselves to their husbands for the rest of their lives. In the face of this type of oppression, the subjugated can only fight against this ill which in them and society in general, an ill which is so normalised women do not realise they are being oppressed.

In this case of resistance and rebellion, we are brought to three main pillars which initiate the spread of rebellion to the other female characters. Amal emphasises tools such as emotional blackmail to keep them in their abusive situations. This prevents solidarity amongst women as they have to put the needs of others before theirs. If they do not go as planned they should practice *Munyal*. The instances of resistance will be studied below.

Resistance in *Les Impatientes* is not much of a physical rebellion but much more of a quiet defiance of the oppressive patriarchal structures. We begin with Ramla, a young girl who has been forced into marriage with a much older man by her uncle. Ramla is told to practice the rules of *Munyal* which have been practiced from generation to generation.

Soyez soumises à votre époux.

« *Épargnez vos esprits de la diversion.*

« *Soyez pour lui une esclave et il vous sera captif.*

« *Soyez pour lui la terre et il sera votre ciel.*

« *Soyez pour lui un champ et il sera votre pluie.*

« *Soyez pour lui un lit et il sera votre case.*

« *Ne boudez pas.*

« *Ne méprisez pas un cadeau, ne le rendez pas.*

« *Ne soyez pas colériques.*

« *Ne soyez pas bavardes.*

« *Ne soyez pas dispersées.*

« *Ne suppliez pas, ne réclamez rien.*

« *Soyez pudiques.*

« *Soyez reconnaissantes.*

« *Soyez patientes.*

« *Soyez discrètes.*

« *Valorisez-le afin qu'il vous honore.*(2)

These exploitative rules which expect the women to act as puppets to their husbands are passed from generation to generation, this demonstrates that the marginalisation of women in the Sahel has gone on for ages being passed on from generation to generation.

Ramla is initially defiant about her arranged marriage. This is seen in the novel as she expresses her displeasure to marry an older man and abandon her studies. She rebels against this arranged marriage through self-physical torture. She uses this act as a means to confront her oppressive traditions. She goes ahead to state.

La date du mariage fixée, je traînais à longueur de journée une lassitude et un mutisme dont rien ni personne ne pouvait venir à bout. Je ne mangeais plus, je ne riaais plus. Je maigrissais à vue d'œil. Et c'est sans conviction que j'ai passé mon examen et dans une totale indifférence que j'ai appris mon succès.(25)

These subtle acts of rebellion demonstrate the women's spirit to stand against a patriarchal society. Ramla moves from inflicting herself self-torture to verbal confrontation and claims she will harm herself to resist this imposed act on her. "Deux jours avant la date fatidique, je tente un dernier recours auprès de ma mère venue me tenir compagnie :« Diddi, si vous m'obligez à l'épouser, je me suiciderai !"(26)

Ramla challenges traditional societal norms which have been ongoing for generations. She seeks to assert her identity beyond that which women are given in this Sahel society. She is told by her mother to conform to this unjust activity because it has happened to women before her and will keep happening. "Tu dois savoir une fois pour toutes que tes décisions n'influencent pas que ta vie. Grandis, nom de Dieu ! Cela s'est passé de la même manière pour moi, pour tes tantes, pour toutes les femmes de la famille. Que veux-tu prouver ?"(27).The role of the women in the Sahel has already been drawn out and any woman who goes contrary to this is seen as absurd.

Another form of resistance demonstrated by Ramla is her willingness to go to school despite society's view on women's education. When Ramla talks of her dream of going to school and being a pharmacist, she is mocked for being a dreamer. This instance is seen in the novel when she says

Et j'expliquais aux femmes de la famille mon ambition de devenir pharmacienne, ce qui les faisait rire aux éclats. Elles me traitaient de folle et vantaient les vertus du mariage et de la vie de femme au foyer.

Quand je renchérisais sur l'épanouissement qu'une femme trouverait dans le plaisir d'avoir un emploi, de conduire sa voiture, de gérer son patrimoine, elles

interrompaient brutalement la conversation en me conseillant vivement de redescendre sur terre et de vivre dans la vraie vie.(11)

The women in this society believe the emergence of a woman is seen when she gets married and the husband provides them with all their necessary needs. Ramla explains : "Pour elles, le plus grand bonheur était de se marier à un homme riche qui les mettrait à l'abri du besoin, leur offrirait des pagnes et des bijoux, ainsi qu'une maison pleine de bibelots et de... domestiques."(11)

This view on women's education is not only seen by the women but also by the men who consider themselves, the women's saviours. After refuses the advances of a man because she tells him to wait for two or three years after she has finished school, he retorts : "À quoi te servirait d'avoir le bac ? Une fille doit avant tout se marier. Je suis trop pressé pour attendre deux ans. Tu n'y penses pas sérieusement."(13)

Ramla's initiative to go to school and get a job is a subtle act of rebellion to the cycle of repression women go through in the Sahel. Ramla demonstrates her zeal to be emancipated in a society where a woman's value is tied to getting a husband and serving the husband. Ramla maintains some level of hope despite the psychological trauma of abandoning her dreams. Ramla openly challenges society to adopt a better view of the Sahel woman. Unfortunately, Ramla's attempts are brought to an early stop but, Amal uses Ramla's attempt to build hope in the heart of the Sahel women that they can break the chains of monotony and get access to an education without their lives being centered on a man. Amal also speaks about this putting emphasis on herself during an interview with DW she states "I was completely lost. The only time I was okay was when I opened a book. I developed a passion for everything that was far away. Novels about the Middle Ages, Turkey, India, and China. There I could be a heroine from any era."(par 11). Amal lays emphasis on the importance of education in her emancipation thus encouraging more Sahel women to forge for a better education rather than a better husband.

We continue with emotional rebellion as seen with Ramla. Ramla denies her marriage with Alhadji Issa using several means and one of them is emotional blackmail

to rebel against this forced marriage. Despite her mother's pleas to count herself lucky to have been chosen,

Inutile de te mettre dans cet état. Je te le répète, tu as de la chance, et moi aussi. Crois en mon expérience de femme. Tu es trop jeune pour comprendre l'importance d'une telle alliance. Dans un mariage, on ne recherche pas que l'amour. Le plus important pour une femme est d'être à l'abri du besoin. Protégée, adulée.(17)

The characters in this novel make use of subtle expressions of rebellion. They use several means to express their defiance of the rules imposed on women. In this case, Ramla makes use of her grief to demonstrate her resistance to conform to the rules, rules which every other woman in the Sahel society will feel delighted to be part of. She burst into tears in front of all her relatives during the ceremony "Désespérée, j'éclate en sanglots, sous le regard indifférent de mon père." (37). Ramla expresses her disdain and grief to the people applauding her and demonstrates her quiet resilience. She states:

Sauvez-moi, je vous en supplie, on me vole mon bonheur et ma jeunesse ! On me sépare à jamais de l'homme que j'aime. On m'impose une vie dont je ne veux pas. Sauvez-moi, je vous en conjure, je ne suis pas heureuse comme vous voulez le croire ! Sauvez-moi, avant que je ne devienne à jamais l'une de ces ombres cachées à l'intérieur d'une concession. Sauvez-moi avant que je ne dépérisse entre quatre murs, captive. Sauvez-moi, je vous en supplie, on m'arrache mes rêves, mes espoirs. On me dérobe ma vie.(17)

African women face widespread poverty making them dependent to the man but also heavy labour burdens as society expect them to enslave themselves for everyone. African women have not developed over time and are expected to remain stagnant. During the first conference on women in Mexico City, Rachel Mayanja, a UN Special Adviser on Gender issues stated that "Men have gone to the moon and back, yet women are still at the same place they were... that is, trying to sensitize the world to the unwarranted and unacceptable marginalization of women, which deprives them of their human rights"(3)

Despite the fact that women were also pioneers for the fight for independence from colonialism, they were relegated to domestic duties and were severely controlled by patriarchal structures. Women are stereotyped as weak, uneducated and objects for sexual pleasure. Moubarak demonstrates this when he sexually abuses his wife, Hindou.

Tiens, tiens ! Voilà ma cousine et épouse chérie ! Tu viens ? On va consommer le mariage vite fait. Je t'avais bien dit que cette journée arriverait rapidement.

— S'il te plaît.

— Arrête tes niaiseries et déshabille-toi vite ! Je déteste les femmes pudiques...Alors ? Tu viens de ton propre gré ou tu préfères que je vienne te chercher ?

— Sil te plaît... »

Il se lève brusquement et, d'un mouvement imprévisible, me jette brutalement sur le lit et arrache mes vêtements. Je me défends autant que je le peux. Quand il déchire mon corsage, je le mords farouchement. Il retire sa main d'où perlent des gouttes de sang. Furieux, il se met à me frapper. Je crie, je me débats, quand un coup violent m'assomme, et je tombe en travers du lit.

Quelques heures plus tard, je n'ai plus de force pour crier ni de larmes à verser. Le silence règne dans la chambre. J'ai tellement crié, tellement pleuré et supplié que je n'ai plus de voix. Je me ramasse sur le lit, meurtrie, le corps couvert d'ecchymoses et d'hématomes. Je saigne tellement que le lit en est trempé. J'ai très mal.(45)

Her pleas are met on deaf ears and this is the plight of many women in the Sahel. In this struggle, the women need to amplify their efforts to forge a path of emancipation and healing. As stated above the characters make use of subtle acts of defiance mostly internal to demonstrate their grief and want for emancipation from this patriarchal rule. Amal encourages the women to look toward books and education which will eventually be their key to freedom. Gueye Medoune in his study "Oralité et société dans l'oeuvre romanesque" states that it is the role of the women to paint about the horrors women face using their pen.

... la femme, qui prend la plume en Afrique, va surtout dépeindre une condition féminine que les espoirs placés sur les indépendances n'avaient pas améliorée. Au lendemain de l'indépendance dont la quête qui avait suscité tant de prises de position... la femme s'est retrouvée citoyenne de seconde classe dans son propre pays (18)

As stated above, resistance can be found in diverse forms or actions. Resistance can also be seen in the women's ability to endure the torture they pass through daily. The women's quiet resistance in the face of abuse shows their resistance to forge for their survival. This form of resistance can be seen in the older generation of women in the novel *Les Impatientes*. Ramla's mother demonstrates this resistance by talking about her story under the polygamous system. She explains to Ramla the injustice of polygamy but also how every woman has to face it.

J'aurais voulu t'épargner la polygamie. Moi qui en souffre tous les jours. Mais, de toute façon, si tu ne trouves pas une femme en entrant dans un foyer, tu es rattrapée par une autre, fatalement, tôt ou tard. Mieux vaut finalement en trouver une que d'en attendre une autre ! Une nouvelle qui fera pâlir d'envie et de jalousie plus d'une dans ce repaire de louves. Il me faut déjà penser à te protéger de tes sorcières de marâtres.(17)

Hindou's mother is also one of those who demonstrates great resilience to the injustices faced by women in the Sahel society. She demonstrates subtle acts of defiance firstly by explaining to her daughter her endurance of a forced and difficult wedding and also by openly expressing her anger which is almost considered a taboo in the Sahel society. She starts by recounting her ordeal to her daughter. She states

Tu sais, Hindou, moi non plus je n'ai pas choisi d'épouser ton père. Je n'ai pas non plus refusé de le faire... Je n'avais pas pensé au mariage. Du moins jusque-là. J'avais quatorze ans et ma grande sœur, mariée depuis quelques années à ton père, venait de mourir, laissant trois orphelins..."(67)

She is then instructed by her father to remarry her late sister's husband again, proving that the women in the Sahel do not have any say in decision-making:

Amraou, toi aussi, tu es une fille sage et obéissante. Tu as toujours su te tenir, et je sais que je peux te faire confiance. Tu es déjà en âge de te marier. Tu prendras donc la place de ta sœur ! Tu élèveras ses enfants et tu les protégeras comme elle l'aurait fait. Tu occuperas sa chambre et hériteras de ses effets. Tu épouseras Alhadji Boubakari dans une semaine. Il n'y aura bien entendu ni fête ni autre célébration. J'ai un petit regret de ne pouvoir attendre les vacances. Mais tu es intelligente et tu as appris ce que tu pouvais à l'école. Tu sais lire et écrire. C'est plus que suffisant. La place d'une femme est avant tout dans son foyer. Voilà ce que j'avais à te dire ! J'espère que tu sauras me faire honneur et remplacer ta sœur. »

... C'est ainsi que je suis entrée dans ma vie de femme mariée. Sans tambour ni trompette. On m'a simplement installée dans la chambre de ma sœur. On m'a offert tout ce qui lui appartenait. Puis, la nuit tombée, on m'a conduite dans la chambre de son époux. Je n'ai pas eu le temps d'apprendre à être une épouse ni une mère. Mais ce sont des choses qui ne s'apprennent pas. Une femme naît avant tout épouse et mère.(62)

The women's internal strength, their capacity to endure and to maintain hope despite the circumstances faced represents psychological resistance. Hindou's mother also demonstrates another form of resistance by openly expressing her action of leaving her marriage. In this Sahel society, women are considered fit only when they are in a marriage. This action made by Hindou's mother demonstrates a feeling of change from the picture painted by the patriarchal society of how a woman should be. Hindou's mother tells her daughter after another session of abuse. "Tu en as trop supporté, Hindou. Plus que ce que tu aurais dû peut-être." (74) She uses this situation to generalize both hers, her daughters, and all the women who have allowed themselves to be washed out by the idea of polygamy. She goes further to tell her husband. "tu peux me répudier si tu veux. Je vais d'ailleurs m'en aller, même si tu ne le fais pas. Moi aussi, je suis fatiguée. Moi aussi, j'en ai déjà trop enduré, trop supporté." (75) Hindou's mother seeks to liberate herself from the chains of patriarchy. She gives hope to more women of the Sahel.

We continue with another form of resistance as seen with Hindou. Hindou is forcefully married to her cousin, Moubarak. Hindou demonstrates a strong sense of

rebellion as she refutes the marriage that has been planned for her. Throughout the novel, we are shown a character who denies societal pressure and is marked by her refusal to be part of an arranged marriage. Hindou laments to her father.

S'il te plaît, Baaba, je ne veux pas me marier avec Moubarak ! S'il te plaît, laisse-moi rester ici...Je n'aime pas Moubarak. Je ne veux pas me marier avec lui...Alors, je me mets à crier, à pleurer, et je refuse obstinément de sortir. Dans ma terreur de me marier avec l'homme que l'on m'impose, je n'ai plus ni honneur ni dignité.

« S'il te plaît, mon père, s'il te plaît, je n'aime pas Moubarak, je ne veux pas me marier avec lui. »

Je le supplie, sanglote de plus belle et m'accroche de toutes mes forces à un canapé.(42)

Hindou highlights the conflict between tradition and personal agency. She seeks to make choices for herself. She seeks to carve her path by putting up an act of rebellion which is not a common instance in the Sahel society. According to Amal, society coaxes you as a woman to accept the social pressure placed on you not only for your good but also for theirs. Hindou's assertiveness is not only perceived through the usage of words but also through bold actions of passive resistance. This is demonstrated in the novel when Hindou braves all odds to escape from her abusive marriage. Women are asked to adopt *munyal* in the face of abuse but, Amal in an interview with the channel DW states that; "at the end of patience is heaven. That's why death is there" Women who seek to adopt this patience will end up in a state of insanity or worse dead. After an act of infidelity committed by Moubarak which is illustrated in the novel,

Moubarak arrive, accompagné d'une jeune fille à l'allure effrontée, vêtue d'une robe moulante en tissu bazin suggérant ses rondeurs. La vingtaine, elle est perchée sur des talons aiguilles qui, dans le sol sablonneux, exposent ses chevilles à une foulure certaine. Moubarak me toise du regard, puis installe son invitée au salon.(55)

Hindou's quiet refusal to be emotionally neglected and abused is revealed in the novel: "Cela fait seulement quelques mois que je suis mariée et je n'ai pas encore le droit d'aller chez mon père, mais j'éprouve alors une profonde envie de revoir ma mère et de me confier à elle. La rue est déserte à cause de la canicule." (55) Hindou knows

that according to the Sahel tradition and as a new bride she is not supposed to go to her parent's house within a one-year time frame. She braves all odds and builds a sense of rebellion against this tradition which wants her to conform to her overwhelming oppression.

Women following patriarchal rules which do not help the woman in any way help in the outgrowth of their marginalisation. Hindou is not the only character who demonstrates resilience but also Hindou's mother. Hindou's mother forgoes the traditional rules that institute that each woman in a polygamous home has her turn to meet their husband. These turns are known as *defande*, Hindou's mother rebels against this rule of *defande* to explain her daughter's abuse to her husband. Hindou explains this in the course of the novel: "Ce n'est pas son *defande*. Aussi attend-elle patiemment que la troisième épouse qui vient de remplir la bouilloire d'eau destinée aux ablutions de mon père ressorte de son appartement." (57). The support Hindou receives from her mother unlike the lack of support Ramla receives from her mother demonstrates that women when women seek support from one another, form alliances that build up strength and resilience.

Moreover, an instance of female rebellion against their oppressive structures is Hindou's lack of *munyal* regarding her husband's bad attitude. At the start of the novel, the young girls Ramla and Hindou are given a set of rules they have to respect, some of which were

Ne soyez pas colériques.

« *Ne soyez pas bavardes.*

« *Ne soyez pas dispersées.*

« *Ne suppliez pas, ne réclamez rien.*

« *Soyez pudiques.*

« *Soyez reconnaissantes.*

« *Soyez patientes.*(2)

These rules claim women should be patient with all their husband's tantrums. This is the role the patriarchal society has given the women of the Sahel, a role of submissiveness even if it does not favour them. In this case, Hindou forges to drift from this cycle of monotonous abuse by seeking a solution to her husband's tantrums. She

with the help of her mother again, placing emphasis on female solidarity to fight the patriarchal system, seeks herbs, charms and powders from a traditional practitioner.

Des herbes pour me rendre invincible, des gaadé pour me procurer ce charme qui semble tant me manquer, des poudres à mettre dans le thé de Moubarak à son insu afin de me l'attacher, et bien d'autres produits tout aussi miraculeux : voilà tout ce que Goggo Nenné a rapporté de chez le marabout.(65)

By taking the bold action of going to a traditional practitioner, Hindou defies the notion that a Sahel woman has to remain passive and submissive. Hindou seeks a solution hence, she challenges the notion that a woman has to tolerate abuse from her husband for the sake of family reputation and societal expectations. Turning to a traditional practitioner also symbolizes Hindou's search for empowerment and emancipation. She declares her right to seek help from this oppressive patriarchal society and reclaim her rights.

Furthermore, in the light of oppression, the oppressed who have endured can either stand up against these injustices and stay in it and suffer the repercussions. In this case, we come across Hindou who forgoes the traditional roles that expect her to prioritize her family's reputation adopts patience in her abusive marriage, and decides to escape from this abusive cycle.

Avant l'aube, j'ai pris ma décision. Malgré la douleur, je réussis à me lever et je sors en silence de la chambre que je prends soin de refermer délicatement après moi. Il fait encore nuit. Le muezzin vient de psalmodier le premier appel à la prière. Au zawleru, le gardien dort d'un sommeil profond, ronflant à tout rompre. Je revêts mon manteau noir et, sans rien prendre de plus, ouvre silencieusement la porte arrière pour m'engouffrer dans la nuit noire. Je n'ai aucun plan précis. Je ne sais pas où aller. Je sais seulement où je ne dois surtout pas me rendre. Ni ma mère ni mon père ni mes oncles ne me seront d'un grand secours. Je n'ai pas d'amis. Pas suffisamment d'argent. Et nulle part où me réfugier. Mais c'est bien ce qu'il faut que je fasse. partir au plus vite. Loin d'ici, loin de tout.(70)

By denying going to her parent's house but rather to a stranger's house, Hindou rejects the vision that one has to remain tied to those who do not support her and

encourages her to support the abuse. Hindou refuses to succumb to societal norms that expect her to be patient with her husband's abuse. Hindou, forgoing the role a Sahel woman has to have takes an independent solution to seek refuge from the unknown. Patriarchal structures have trained the mind of the woman that they have to rely on the men in every sector of their lives, by leaving her marital home, Hindou challenges this dependency as she seeks to demonstrate her willingness to step out of societal expectations. Hindou demonstrates a great sense of rebellion by breaking the silence of how this abuse is seen as a stigma on the woman's part, she brings more light on this *stigma* hence giving hope to other women who face themselves in the same plight as her.

In these moments of despair, Hindou resigns herself to her fate, this highlights the oppressive nature of the traditional norms imposed on women. While she fights against these injustices, this moments of subtle insanity reveal the toll that such resistance takes. Amal uses her character to demonstrate that the fight against patriarchy is not always straightforward or easy. Hindou incarnates the women of the Sahel who forge for freedom but resign due to the oppressive nature of the system. Hindou laments at her inability to obtain her autonomy, she states

On confirme que je suis folle. On commence à m'attacher. Il paraît que je cherche à fuir. Ce n'est pas vrai. Je cherche juste à respirer. Pourquoi m'empêche-t-on de respirer ? de voir la lumière du soleil ? Pourquoi me prive-t-on d'air ? Je ne suis pas folle. Si je ne mange pas, c'est à cause de la boule que j'ai au fond de la gorge, de mon estomac si noué qu'aucune goutte d'eau ne peut plus y accéder. Je ne suis pas folle. Si j'entends des voix, ce n'est pas celle du djinn. C'est juste la voix de mon père. La voix de mon époux et celle de mon oncle. La voix de tous les hommes de ma famille. Munyal, munyal ! Patience ! Ne les entendez-vous pas aussi ? Je ne suis pas folle ! Si je me déshabille, c'est pour mieux inspirer tout l'oxygène de la terre.(82)

Amal uses this means to demonstrate to the Sahel women that the fight for freedom is met with systemic barriers that limit women's choice and potential. Her desire for autonomy even in the face of hopelessness underscores her struggles against this traditional system.

We move to the next character, Safira who demonstrates a great deal of rebellion against the African polygamous system which is considered a norm in the Sahel. Safira is upset at the tradition which requires her husband to have more than one wife. Safira's aunt speaks on the normalisation of polygamy in the Sahel region. She asks Safira: "...Un homme a-t-il jamais appartenu à une seule femme?"(84) This statement emphasises the view of polygamy as a norm in this society. Safira laments at the fact that her husband gets married to another woman a much younger one who is the same age as her daughter. She expresses her grief by stating.

Mon Dieu, comment faire face à cette fille à peine plus âgée que ma propre fille et qui s'arroge le droit de me prendre mon époux ? Comment pourrais-je le supporter ? Comment montrer bonne figure comme l'exigent les convenances ? Que faire pour ne pas perdre la face ?... Je n'arrive pas à croire que c'est confirmé, que ce que je crains depuis des années a fini par arriver, que je vis maintenant mes pires cauchemars. Je voudrais ouvrir la bouche et hurler ma rage. J'aimerais me réveiller et réaliser que ce n'était qu'un mauvais rêve.(86)

Rather than accepting her fate as a woman in a new polygamous home, she essentially makes her first step towards rebelling at this act by first demonstrating her disapproval of this marriage. Safira views polygamy as a threat that seeks to diminish her worth and identity as a woman and as a wife.

Safira desperately struggles for survival and a place in a society that offers her little to no autonomy. Safira's willingness to express her emotions rather than bottle them up demonstrates her refusal to be suppressed by the traditional rules that expect women to practice *Munyal* in every situation. She expresses her grief before her husband and Ramla, her new co-wife:

Des larmes silencieuses coulaient sur mes joues sans que je pusse les retenir. Bien sûr, je n'aimais pas que ma coépouse voit ma tristesse et ma détresse mais, après cette journée, je ne pouvais que laisser enfin exploser mon chagrin. Je venais d'être congédiée, priée de libérer la place pour la semaine réglementaire.(91)

By openly expressing her emotions, Safira challenges the expectation that women should be submissive stooges who do not have any say.

Also, we are demonstrated to another subtle act of rebellion against the stoic traditional rule is seen in an altercation between Safira and her husband. In the traditional Sahel society, women are not permitted to make decisions on their own, they are expected to follow the decisions that have been made for them without complaints. In this case, Safira denies being submissive and following this rule as she questions her husband on why he wants to take Ramla on her *Walaande*(her turn). She complains

C'est mon tour, ce soir ! Tu es censé être avec moi et non encore avec elle, surtout après une si longue semaine passée ensemble !

...Pourquoi ? Que t'ai-je fait pour que tu me blesses de la sorte ? Pourquoi me brises-tu le cœur ?(93)

Safira defies the traditional laws that have been set for an exemplary Sahel woman. Safira seeks to make choices and make decisions that reflect her own needs and aspirations. By voicing her discontent, she shows her desire to have free speech and her unwillingness to be silenced. As time moves on, we come across a Safira who makes use of other forms of rebellion to reclaim her identity and fight against polygamy. Safira's rebellion is not aimed at Ramla specifically but at the structure that encourages women to be stoic and accept choices that do not favor them in this case polygamy.

Safira further demonstrates the diverse forms of rebellion she directs towards polygamy. She makes use of traditional practitioners called "*marabouts*". Safira uses a darker and more confrontational means of dealing with the situation of polygamy in her home. This action is revealed in the novel when she discusses her plans with her brother.

Dis-lui que je suis prête à tout. Je donnerai tout ce qu'il voudra. Je ferai tout ce qu'il demandera. Je veux seulement qu'elle parte ! Immédiatement ! Qu' Alhadji la répudie ! Reste là-bas le temps qu'il faudra. Tu as cinq cent mille francs dans cette enveloppe. N'hésite pas à dépenser. Même s'il demande un bœuf en sacrifice, fais-le ! L'argent n'est rien. Je veux qu'elle se casse ! Rappelle-toi bien son nom, celui de sa mère et celui de son père aussi pour qu'il lui jette un sort.(96)

The curses Safira wants to inflict on Ramla represent the complexities of the women's emotions in the face of polygamy but they have no choice but to accept it. Safira's choice of engaging with traditional practitioners defines her will for agency within the confines of a patriarchal society. Safira considers polygamy, which is a norm in African society in general and the Sahel society in particular, a humiliation to her kind. This is the situation a lot of women in the Sahel region face but is marginalised into keeping quiet. The women of the Sahel have been brainwashed into believing the fact that polygamy is a benefit to the woman. In the marriage ceremony, Safira is cajoled by the family to accept polygamy as a concept every woman should one day prepare for and adopt a mindset for.

C'est ta sœur ! Ta cadette, ta fille, ton épouse. C'est à toi de l'éduquer, de lui donner des conseils, de lui montrer le fonctionnement de la concession. C'est toi, la daada-saaré. Tu le resteras toujours et définitivement, même si ton mari en épouse dix autres, et c'est une lourde responsabilité. Safira, la daada-saaré est la maîtresse du foyer.(86)

This patience to polygamy is also emphasised by Safira's mother. She recounts a story to Safira for her to cope with her new polygamous family. Safira's mother considers it a norm and requires her daughter to also consider it a norm. The story she recounts to her daughter goes thus:

Un jour, une femme va voir un marabout et lui dit : « J'ai besoin que mon époux m'aime et me soit fidèle. » Le marabout lui demande de lui rapporter trois brins de moustaches d'un lion afin qu'il lui confectionne une amulette. La femme réfléchit et cherche longuement la solution pour approcher sans danger la tanière d'un lion solitaire. Elle a l'idée de poser de la viande fraîche à quelques mètres de la tanière et repart rapidement pendant que le lion mange. Chaque jour, elle fait de même, se rapprochant de lui toujours un peu plus. Au bout d'un certain temps, le lion s'habitue et l'attend. Puis il se laisse caresser et elle finit par l'apprivoiser. C'est ainsi qu'elle peut prélever ses moustaches sans que le fauve montre le moindre signe d'hostilité.

« Quand elle rapporte au marabout ce qu'il a demandé, ce dernier la renvoie en lui disant : « Si tu as pu apprivoiser un lion, ce n'est pas ton mari, un pauvre homme, qui te dépassera. Agis exactement de la même manière avec lui et il

sera à toi à jamais. Si tu as pu obtenir ces moustaches, c'est parce que tu as eu les meilleures qualités qu'une femme puisse avoir : la patience et la ruse.(97)

The story symbolises acceptance and patience. Safira is expected to adapt to her new polygamous family, develop a sense of patience, and find a better way to seduce her husband instead of looking for unnecessary means to get a solution. Safira remains persistent in her rebellion towards polygamy. She retorts to this assertion that she will no longer practice any *munyal* (patience) in any situation pertaining to her marriage. She states:

Je ne veux pas patienter, dis-je très irritée. Ne me parlez plus jamais de munyal. Je ne patienterai pas jusqu'à ce que son caprice finisse, comme tu dis. Je n'ai pas de temps pour attendre je ne sais quel hypothétique moment. Je veux qu'elle parte immédiatement. Je veux que tu fasses un karfa entre eux, que ce mauvais sort les sépare, qu'ils se déchirent à Yaoundé (97)

Safira wants to escape from this cycle of polygamy which every Sahel woman ends up being part of. Her actions take an even darker turn when she engages with traditional practitioners who can kill Ramla so she can go back to a monogamous home. This is demonstrated in the novel when she states: "Qu'ils divorcent ! Sinon, qu'elle s'en aille à jamais, qu'elle perde la raison ou qu'elle meure !...Si elle ne part pas, alors qu'elle meure !"(100)

Safira demonstrates the dissatisfaction and grief a lot of the Sahel women face in the face of polygamy. She expresses her grief towards this pillar of the Sahel traditions. She laments the fact that her husband easily takes another younger wife despite her years of sacrifice. In a situation of desperation, she also expresses her anger towards Ramla who is out to steal her husband from her. She expresses this to her friend Halima.

Dis-moi, Hali, que veux-tu que je fasse ? Que je regarde gentiment cette fille à peine plus âgée que ma fille me prendre mon époux ? Que je perde mon foyer ? Que je prenne le risque de faire souffrir mes enfants en me laissant répudier ? Ils sont trop jeunes pour vivre sans leur mère. Que veux-tu que je fasse, Hali ?...On ne m'en laisse pas le choix. Je me défends, tout simplement. Je l'aimais. J'ai fait de mon mieux pour le satisfaire. J'ai été une bonne épouse.

Une excellente mère. Je lui ai donné des enfants intelligents, en bonne santé, des deux sexes. Je l'ai réconforté, je l'ai aimé de tout mon cœur, de toute mon âme. Que voulait-il de plus ? Je ne suis pas méchante. On m'oblige à l'être. Je n'ai pas choisi de faire cette guerre. Mais m'en laisse-t-on le choix ? (101)

Furthermore, we are demonstrated by Safira's desperation which makes her adopt means of malice to fight against polygamy. She turns from using bursts of emotions, traditional practitioners to using lies and stealing. Safira in a bid to fight against polygamy by making Ramla exit her marriage, steals Alhadji Issa's Euro bills with the help of her friend, Halima. She does this so Ramla can be accused, punished, and repudied (*sent back to her father's house*). Unfortunately, her situation does not go as planned as they are both suspected and interrogated by Alhadi Issa. After an unsuccessful attempt to get the thief, they are both sent back to their parent's houses. "je vous répudie toutes les deux. Car vous êtes complices. Vous vous liguez contre moi pour me voler. Préparez-vous, le chauffeur va vous reconduire immédiatement dans vos familles. Je n'ai plus rien à dire. Vous pouvez partir." (111)

Safira sacrifices her dignity to eradicate this ill. Her will to fight against polygamy is so big she pays no attention to the consequences she leaves behind. She states her goal to wipe away polygamy in her household that is, eradicate Ramla is a bigger quest than any other. She continues to explain that her fight is not against Ramla in particular but against polygamy and her as a co-wife: "Mais, plus que le besoin de posséder cet argent, le désir de me débarrasser à tout prix de ma coépouse avait été le plus fort. Ce n'était pas à la femme elle-même que j'en voulais. Non, c'était juste à la rivale." (115)

We are also, demonstrated to rebellion as it concerns Safira's dependency. Women in the Sahel are dependent on their husbands for their every need most especially financially. Being polygamous, men are the primary breadwinners, and women are relegated to domestic duties. This economic dependency leads to the subjugation of women as they can not survive without relying on their husbands. Safira breaks this stigma by trying to claim her financial freedom from her husband. She tells

Halima to set the stolen euros into a bank account for her fight against dependency on the man.

La vie reprend son cours. Je profite d'un voyage à Dubaï pour discrètement me rendre chez un bijoutier et, forte de mes dix mille euros, pour remplacer mes bijoux perdus en prenant bien le soin de reprendre exactement les mêmes. Quant à l'argent restant, j'organise un voyage à Douala pour Halima afin qu'elle puisse me le changer et le mettre sur un compte bancaire. Un compte secret, cela va de soi. Je suis maintenant déterminée à avancer.(115)

Women in the Sahel depend on their husbands for health care, social services and education for their children. It is for this reason Safira is scared that exiting her polygamous marriage will render her children incapable of having a good education or future. She rebels against the norms of patriarchy which require women to stay fully under the supervision of the men. This is done in such a way that women remain in a state of marginalisation. Women can not fight for their freedom from the men if their lives and those of their children are solely dependent on the men. Safira demonstrates a rebellion that women of the Sahel should adopt in order to fight for their emancipation, refusal to fight against this dependency will render women shackled under the chains of subjugation for a long time.

More instances of Safira's fight against polygamy is seen in the schemes she sets against Ramla. Safira sets new numbers into Ramla's phone so, she can call her at late nights and set her up to be a cheat. Her plan goes this way :

par mon frère, j'ai fait acheter plusieurs puces de téléphone sans laisser d'identification. Car je compte abattre ma dernière carte. Lui donner le coup de grâce ! J'ai commencé depuis un certain temps à instiller dans la tête d'Alhadji, l'idée que Ramla pouvait avoir une liaison...À minuit, je mets une nouvelle puce et téléphone à Ramla. Quand elle décroche, je ne dis rien. J'entends Alhadji lui demander de qui il s'agit. J'ai réussi à gâcher son walaande et je me réjouis d'entendre Alhadji gronder. Et, à partir de là, je m'arrête plus de l'appeler pendant ses defande. Alhadji en est de plus en plus excédé. Et, quand elle crie au complot, on la regarde tous ironiquement.(125)

Her plan is to get Ramla accused and then sent back to her father's house. In this case, this will mean her fight against polygamy is won. Unfortunately for Safira, her plan works a little too well and gets Ramla physically abused and attacked.

Un soir, Alhadji est à bout. Il accuse Ramla d'avoir un amant mais elle nie en pleurant comme d'habitude. Alhadji a déjà passé une mauvaise journée au marché et n'a donc pas besoin de prétexte pour se défouler. En rage, il se met à la battre violemment, lui demandant d'avouer immédiatement. Elle crie, pleure et jure qu'elle est innocente. Exaspéré, il sort par-dessous le canapé un long couteau et le lui met sous la gorge, en la menaçant (125)

While her actions give her temporary feelings of empowerment, the consequences are long-term and lead to personal feelings of guilt. The act of rebelling against acts that disregard the women of the Sahel has to be directed to the men and not to the women. Safira in her rebellion towards polygamy ends up fighting against the wrong individual. This action goes in hand with Paolo Freire's study entitled, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. He states that

...while humanization and dehumanization are real alternatives, only the first is the people's vocation. This vocation is constantly negated, yet, it is affirmed by that very negation. It is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the oppressors (43)

This states that in the quest for freedom, the oppressed vocation is turned to a negative light or an evil light. This is done because of the consequences of the oppressor's violence and oppression which dehumanises the oppressed into wrong and negative actions. In this case, Safira is oppressed who has adopted wrong actions in her quest for freedom from the tradition of polygamy which has been normalised by the society around her.

Also, in a mainly patriarchal society, the goal is to keep women at loggerheads to destroy any form of solidarity, solidarity which can forge the women to stand up against the men. This situation is visible with Safira and Ramla who are both under the shackles of polygamy but demonstrate no solidarity instead are enemies. Safira rebels against this psychological control of women by demonstrating great friendship with Halima. In the course of the novel Halima's complicity in making sure Safira's schemes

to fight against polygamy go on successfully. We can see this in her support of Safira, she hides the euros that cause Safira and Ramla to be sent back to their parent's house:

Peux-tu cacher cet argent ? Je n'ai confiance qu'en toi. Personne ne doit jamais savoir. Tu dois être prudente.

— *Je sais où le garder. Tu peux être tranquille.*

— *Il peut être fou, imbu de sa personne et avare. C'est possible qu'il fasse fouiller chez toi, connaissant nos relations.*

— *Là où je le garderai, fais-moi confiance, Safi, il ne le trouvera jamais. (137)*

Halima's support for Safira's course is seen in different situations as, she travels to see traditional practitioners(*marabouts*) so that they can give solutions to Safira's polygamy situation. In one of these scenarios, she tells Safira:

Tu dois, à chaque fois que tu t'uniras à lui, t'arranger pour recueillir l'eau de ta toilette intime. Cette eau contient ainsi, intimement mélangées, vos deux sécrétions. Si tu lui fais boire de cette eau dans laquelle aura macéré une certaine écorce, il s'attachera définitivement à toi. Il n'aura plus jamais envie d'une autre femme. Même pour honorer ta coépouse, il devra penser à toi avant de pouvoir le faire. S'il y arrive ! Et, même si vous n'avez pas eu de contacts, même si tu n'as plus d'écorce, fais-lui quand même boire l'eau de ta toilette intime. Tout le temps ! (119)

Safira considers Halima as her confidant and Halima confirms this by siding and listening to Safira's worry. Her support for Safira is also demonstrated in the novel through the course of the novel as she aligns with Safira's thoughts: "Halima ne cache pas son indignation quand, assise sur le lit, je lui rapporte la scène du matin avec Alhadji, puis ma conversation avec ma mère.« Il est donc parti avec elle ! En plus, il t'a insultée." (99) Safira and Halima demonstrate that solidarity can exist between the women of the Sahel to fight one common cause. These characters rebel against the spirit of patriarchy which entails that women should be placed at the bottom of the hierarchy. Keeping the women in a spirit of anarchy will further delay their fight for emancipation hence keeping men as the leaders. Safira portrays her disapproval of this.

The theme of solidarity amongst women can also be seen when Safira stands with Ramla. Her insistence to fight polygamy in her marriage made her turn Ramla into

an enemy instead of an ally. She finally sides with Ramla against the injustices they have both suffered due to polygamy. This instance is brought out in the novel.

Comme toi, j'ai eu le cœur brisé le jour de ce mariage. Comme toi, je ne suis qu'une victime. Je ne suis qu'un caprice pour lui. À peine m'a-t-il aperçue qu'il a décidé que je lui appartiendrais, peu importe ce que j'en pensais. Mes parents non plus n'ont pas tenu compte de mes sentiments et n'ont pas entendu ma détresse. Je n'ai pas choisi d'être ta rivale ou de te prendre ton époux. (127)

Even though it may seem as if Safira's actions towards Ramla are in a bid to undermine her as a wife, it also proves to us the complexities of female relationships in the patriarchal system. The women are always placed at loggerheads with each other to prevent any form of solidarity which hereby enforces patriarchy. Safira is advised by her friend, Halima to ill-treat Ramla so she can leave the marriage. She says to her :

La mariée est là, certes ! Mais pourra-t-elle rester ? C'est à toi de faire en sorte qu'il regrette sa décision et te revienne rapidement. Le plus important n'est pas la cérémonie du mariage mais la suite. Rien n'assure qu'elle sera une bonne épouse, qu'elle pourra même le supporter..(88)

Existing social hierarchies and cultural norms between women reinforce the inequalities among women. The first wife of a polygamous marriage is known as the *Dadasarre*, this unnecessary titles that give no power to the woman are set by the men and the society to create divisions amongst women and hinder any formation of alliances against the patriarchal system. Polygamy which is a common practice in the Sahelian society creates competition amongst women for financial resources, status in the household and their husbands' attention. The women have been brainwashed in a system that does not make them realise they are fighting the wrong people and the wrong fight. The need to ensure their survival has prevented the growth of female solidarity hence the growth of female subjugation. Langston Hughes in his book entitled, *Harlem* questions what happens when a dream is deferred, unrealized, and owing to forces to which the dreamer is not responsible and that he is unable to control. The dreams of the Sahel women are being crushed because of the forces beyond their control.

In the case of the Sahelian society, the women have to find it crucial to adopt an Education. Ramla demonstrates her zeal to acquire an education but is mocked by her peers and society which consider her dream absurd; her dream is deferred by the society around her and she is unable to control the turn of events. The women also have to adopt economic dependence. In the Sahelian society, it is the role of the man to take care and feed his wives and kids. This situation of dependence renders the women incapable of standing up for their rights. The men have complete control over the women's lives and hence it is difficult for the women to acquire their independence. In the course of the novel we come across Safira who attempts to acquire her financial independence from her husband. This situation if adopted by a multitude of Sahel women is a major key to challenging the marginalistic society and the patriarchal system.

Djaïli Amadou Amal is a firm advocate for women's rights. She does this using the help of associations such as *Les Femmes Du Sahel*. This organisation symbolises unity between the women of the Sahel. Women coming together creates a safe space for shared experiences, mutual support and also joint action to bring down the oppressive system of marginalisation. Solidarity amongst women and the creation of self-support groups and associations will further ensure the fight against patriarchy.

Djaïli Amadou Amal reveals the cycle of female marginalisation that the women of the Sahel go through for years. In the course of the novel, we are brought to the fact that both the older generations of women (Ramla, Hindou and Safira's mothers) and the younger generations undergo the same plight. A gradual shift from these deeply rooted cultural norms is necessary. These female characters are required to challenge the traditional practices which perpetuate the growth of female marginalisation. The consequences of this marginalisation are long-lasting and will keep going from generation to generation if the women do not fight for their rights. *Quimzade and Lalot* in their study entitled "Animalistic Dehumanisation as a Social Influence Strategy" state that; "animalising an out-group would constitute a very long and lasting justification for mistreatment".(3) The effects of this subjugation are long-lasting and remain engraved in the minds of the women who are mistreated. Activists such as Djaïli Amadou Amal Fight for the rights of women using diverse means to spread more information about the ills women go through. Djaïli Amadou states in an interview with

Griote that, her reason for venturing into writing about the marginalisation in *Les Impatientes* is to have a voice that can create more awareness on this topic of marginalisation . She says: "Il fallait que j'incarne une voix suffisamment forte et influente pour pouvoir, le jour venu, m'opposer à leur mariage précoce et les arracher à ce système néfaste".(par 6) Cultural changes need to happen to fully address the issue at hand. Raising awareness about female marginalisation and emancipation is necessary for creating a more equitable society and working towards social change.

Above, we have spoken about the methods the women of the Sahel can adopt in their fight against the forms of patriarchy. Even though women do have a role to play in changing their situation, society also has a role to play. In the course of each character's introduction in the novel *Les Impatientes*, it is remarked that each character's story begins with the usage of the word *munyal*. Ramla's story begins with the statement:

Patience, mes filles ! Munyal ! Telle est la seule valeur du mariage et de la vie. Telle est la vraie valeur de notre religion, de nos coutumes, du pulaaku. Intégrez-la dans votre vie future. Inscrivez-la dans votre cœur, répétez-la dans votre esprit ! Munyal, vous ne devrez jamais l'oublier ! (1)

It continues with Hindou's story which begins with the statement:

Patience, mes filles ! Munyal ! Intégrez-la dans votre vie future. Inscrivez-la dans votre cœur, répétez-la dans votre esprit. Munyal ! Telle est la seule valeur du mariage et de la vie. Telle est la vraie valeur de notre religion, de nos coutumes, du pulaaku. Munyal, vous ne devrez jamais l'oublier. Munyal, mes filles ! Car la patience est une vertu.

— *Dieu aime les personnes patientes », dit mon père.(39)*

And finally, we have Safira whose story begins with the statement: "Patience, munyal, Safira ! Souviens-toi que personne ne doit soupçonner ton ressentiment. Personne ne doit deviner ton chagrin, ta rage ou ta colère. N'oublie pas. Maîtrise de soi ! Sang-froid ! Patience ! " (84)

In the novel, the word *Munyal* is used repeatedly to encourage the women to remain enslaved. Amal uses the characters of Ramla, Safira and Hindou to demonstrate

the silent rebellion women take over these societal rules which encourage them to remain patient to marginalisation. These three characters demonstrate their rebellion against *Munyal*. They all deny inculcating any spirit of patience and thereby we go back to the title of the novel *Les Impatientes*. Looking at each story it is noticeable that each of these female characters refuses to conform to the roles of a natural Sahel woman. We begin with Ramla who is inspired to get an education, get a job and stand against forced marriages. Ramla demonstrates a state of rebellion by refusing to be *patient* with the rules of society which require women to be uneducated and later on *sold* into marriages at tender ages. She stands up to the injustices set by society for her by leaving her abusive marriage. This act by Ramla is considered a taboo to the Sahel traditions and a disgrace to her family. The woman in these parts of the Sahel has to think of herself last; first comes her husband and then her family; Ramla choosing to pay no heed to this law proves her state of resistance to this patriarchal society. Ramla rebels against the *munyal* of the Sahelian tradition which is centered on keeping women in a state of seclusion. This brings us to the words of popular Frederick Douglass stated in his speech entitled *The West Indian Emancipation Speech* that "If there is no struggle there is no progress". Ramla's story brings up an idea of hope that other women can too stand up and advocate for an education and a right to choose their spouse.

We move unto Hindou who also refuses to follow the law of *Munyal*. Hindou denies the law of patience by fleeing from her abusive marriage. Hindou is advised by society in which she finds herself to adopt *munyal* to her husband's excesses. An illustration is her aunt Goggo Nenné who tells her to adopt patience with her husband's abuse.

Tu n'es ni la première ni la dernière qu'un homme frappe. Ce n'est pas une raison pour disparaître comme cela. On aurait certainement trouvé une solution. Tu n'es pas une feuille morte à la merci du vent. Tu as une famille pour te protéger... La patience est une prescription divine. Elle est la première des réponses. Elle est la solution à tout.(72)

As earlier said by Amal in her interview with DW, the price after *munyal* is death. Hindou rebels against these rules of the society which deprive her of freedom and slowly lead to her death or insanity. Hindou's actions move in hand with Angela Davis's

words, she states "I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change, I am changing the things I cannot accept".

Hindou seeks to change the situation of abuse in which she is found and can no longer accept. Her symbolic action of fleeing not to her father's house but to an unknown location demonstrates that the society in which she finds herself does not accept change. She seeks freedom out of this society and rebels against its rules. Though not successful, same as Ramla, Hindou's actions give a sense of hope to other women of the Sahel found in her situation, hope that they can one day escape from the shackles of abusive marriages.

And lastly we have Safira who is an older woman who like Ramla and Hindou, denies and rebels against the laws of *munyal*. Hindou refuses to conform to the concept of polygamy. Polygamy is a normalized form of marriage in the Sahel region. A man having just a wife is considered a weakling. Safira's husband decides to take another wife, Ramla. This displeases Safira who schemes up several plans to get Ramla to either leave the marriage or die. Safira refuses to follow the rules other women of the Sahel do. She considers polygamy a humiliation even though other women in the Sahel paint it as a blessing. An example is seen in the novel when Safira's sister-in-law states the benefits Safira will have as the *Daada saaré*(first wife):

C'est ta sœur ! Ta cadette, ta fille, ton épouse. C'est à toi de l'éduquer, de lui donner des conseils, de lui montrer le fonctionnement de la concession. C'est toi, la daada-saaré. Tu le resteras toujours et définitivement, même si ton mari en épouse dix autres, et c'est une lourde responsabilité. Safira, la daada-saaré est la maîtresse du foyer. Si la maisonnée vit en harmonie, c'est grâce à son mérite. Elle jouit alors d'une grande estime. Mais si, au contraire, il y a discorde, alors ce sera de sa faute. Et c'est toi, Safira, la daada-saaré. En tant que telle, prépare-toi à tout supporter. La daada-saaré est le souffre-douleur de la maison. Elle est le pilier de la maison et de toute la famille. C'est à elle de faire des efforts, à elle d'être endurante. Elle devra intégrer à jamais la maîtrise de soi, le munyal. Safira, patience ! Tu es la daada-saaré, jiddere-saaré. Munyal, munyal... (87)

Safira rebels against this act of polygamy which is legalized by society, unfortunately for Safira her quest to get Ramla out of her marriage works but, she is immediately replaced by another woman. This keeps us the readers wondering if change can occur. Safira's unsuccessful attempt to wipe away polygamy from her marriage fails but, if she had not faced nor rebelled against this situation, she would not have known if it was possible to acquire change or not. Again, like the two previous characters, Safira gives hope to other women of the Sahel who are faced in the same dilemma like hers through her actions of rebellion to traditions which undermined the woman.

Amal makes use of her three characters to spread awareness of the ills the women of the Sahel go through to be considered submissive and *good wives*. The journey of each character presented to us by Amal reflects a growing awareness of their desires and ambitions apart from the ones the society has set for them. These women rebel from the cultural expectations placed on them such as marriage and motherhood. These resistances can be seen in several forms, rejecting polygamous and forced marriages, insisting on pursuing their education and fighting for financial independence but also in the act of writing and storytelling.

Amal also challenges the narratives imposed on the women of the Sahel by recounting issues that are considered as a verbal taboo in this society. Amal responds in an Interview with Jean Sovon under "Global Voices" concerning the plight of the Sahel women that.

In this respect, I don't limit myself to specific issues or question whether the issues I address are taboo. For me, this is unnecessary, especially when it comes to issues that cause women's suffering. What good is remaining silent on these issues, given the tremendous suffering they cause for women stripped of their humanity on the grounds of some doctrine? Let's be clear: any tradition that causes suffering or alienates community members is inappropriate.(2)

Amal reflects on the challenges of the Sahel women and also on how the ills women go through should not be considered taboos because it is a breach of their basic human rights. By sharing the daily stories of several women of the Sahel, Amal challenges this patriarchal society and gives the women a medium to assert their rights to define their own lives. Amal challenges the traditional rule that has silenced women's voices and

ignored their struggles by giving them a voice through her novel. Amal's focus on the inner lives and struggles of these women works in a great way to validate their experiences and their right to speak and to be heard. Her novel is an act of rebellion against the silencing of women in the Sahel.

In this society, the women's stories have been shaped to fit the patriarchal perspective and recounted by men, Amal allows the women to reclaim these narratives and present them in their point of view which reflects the complexities of their lives. By creating characters such as Ramla, Hindou, and Safira who are multifaceted characters who resist the traditional structures that have been accepted by other women of the Sahel, Amal provides representation to the women who need empowerment to stand up for their rights. By seeing themselves in her piece of literature, the women of the Sahel are inspired to assert their agency and pursue their dreams. This reinforces the idea of rebellion against the oppressive patriarchal structures.

In this section, we are brought to how in the novel *les Impatientes*, the women's internal resistance to their thoughts, dreams, and feelings demonstrate their ability to hope amidst profound suffering and also a refusal to be broken down by a system that is entirely against them. Their inner strength is not only a form of rebellion to themselves but also to all the women who go through the same plight as them and seek a support form. Their failure to get to their expected goals is not in waste as they represent a form of collective resistance against the alienation imposed on them by the patriarchal structures.

In conclusion, this chapter discussed *Across the Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong as a powerful subversion of the French dominance in Cameroon and challenges the linguistic marginalisation of Anglophones in Kamangola. Through the character, Ngwe Nkemasah, the novel presents the constraints of inequality and alienation Anglophones face in a state which is also theirs. Nkengasong advocates for inclusivity and equality of the minor population in Kamangola. Ultimately, *Across The Mongolo* is a groundbreaking work that provides more insight into the marginalisation of Anglophones and continues to inspire minor populations who face marginalisation to resist their oppressors. This chapter also focuses on Female marginalisation in *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. This novel denies the constraints of gender

inequality that women of the Sahel go through daily in these regions. Through the use of characters like Ramla, Hindou and Safira, the novel embraces female empowerment and encourages women to get their agency from the patriarchal society in which they find themselves. This novel also offers a message of Hope to the women who also find themselves in this distress encouraging them to unite and combat this social, political and economic inequality. Ultimately, *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal is a deeply moving work of feminist literature which highlights the ongoing struggle of the women of the Sahel and their quest towards emancipation.

CONCLUSION

This study entitled *Marginalisation: A Study of Across the Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong and in *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal set out to examine the different plights of marginalisation and how both authors make use of characterisation to resist these plights that have been set against them. This work is divided into an Introduction, Four chapters and a conclusion.

The Introduction of this work presents the Research problem, the Research questions, the Research Hypothesis, the Research objectives, the Significance of the study, the Scope of the study, The definition of the key term, the Motivation and the Structure of the work.

The First Chapter entitled , "Theoretical Framework And Review Of Literature" examined the Post Colonial theory as critical tool for this study. The Post Colonial Theory was used in critiquing the dominant narratives that were established during the colonial rule. These dominant narratives continue to influence contemporary times hence perpetuating marginalisation. The post-colonial theory also emphasised the importance of giving a voice to the voiceless, it is visible how literature, art and media produced by the marginalised communities challenge dominant narratives that have been implanted in their colonial history. This chapter also reviewed some related academic works in a bid to show the contribution of this work. Many critics have viewed both works as reflective of the plight of minority groups. Our work has contributed to showing the diverse forms of marginalisation which do not depend on any form of identity be it class, gender, language, or sexuality.

The second chapter of this work entitled, "Historical And Biographical Backgrounds" focused on the historical, political and socio-cultural effects of historical events and how they are linked to the realities found in both novels and also, looked into the author's life experiences, and how they shaped the course of both novels. From the analysis, it was concluded that both of the novels under study are historically related to the past of their society and have also contributed to shaping the present. Both works revisit the ingrown history of marginalisation. This chapter also worked on the life

experiences of John Nkemngong Nkengasong and Djaili Amadou Amal demonstrating how both writers were exposed to a divided and subjugated society.

The third chapter captioned, " The Marginalisation Of Minority Groups" was focused on the problems faced by Anglophones in a French-dominated society in *Across The Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong, showing how Anglophones are alienated politically and socially from the society. This chapter also treated the marginalisation and abuse of women in *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal. We portrayed how female characters are denied their basic rights and forced to be slaves in a society that values only the opinion of men. The women are devalued and tortured physically and emotionally hence leaving them with psychological scars.

The Fourth chapter named, "Resistance To Marginalisation", portrays the resistance of these minority groups to linguistic and female marginalisation. John Nkemngong Nkengasong shows how his protagonist, Ngwe rebels against the subjugation of his kind through both psychological and physical resistance. Djaili Amadou Amal also speaks on resistance regarding her characters, Ramla, Hindou, and Safira and, on how they subvert patriarchy in the Sahel region.

From our analysis, *Les Impatientes* by Djaili Amadou Amal and *Across the Mongolo* by John Nkemngong Nkengasong serves as a poignant exploration of the several forms of marginalisation and both authors shed light on these. Through the lens of their characters, we are demonstrated how systematic oppression, alienation and cultural separation conspire to limit a particular group of people from their full rights, and limit their agency and participation in the several spheres of society. Despite the distinct forms of oppression found in both novels, they both offer powerful testaments to the resilience of the human spirit to marginalisation. While Amal portrays female marginalisation and its weight on the women of the Sahel, Nkengasong speaks on the long effects of linguistic marginalisation in Kamangola. Both novels underscore the urgent need for societal change and transformation, individual acts of rebellion do not go far in acquiring a meaningful change to the oppressed. Nkengasong's and Amal's storytelling-telling skills help in spreading the overlooking realities of minor groups that have endured years of oppression and marginalisation.

Our findings have proven that, by telling the stories of the oppressed and giving them a voice, these authors advocate for a more equitable world. By drawing connections from the oppressed women of the Sahel and the oppressed Anglophones of Kamangola, we recognise the fact that marginalisation is not centered in one geographical location, gender or linguistic group, it is a pervasive issue that continues to grow from different generations into the present and likely into the future if nothing is done by the minorities to acquire their rights. Nkengasong and Amal amplify the voices of the marginalised to achieve a collective call for action both by the minorities facing oppression and the society which needs to apply necessary changes.

Based on the research conducted on Female and Linguistic Marginalisation, several areas for further study can be determined. For Linguistic Marginalisation, potential research directives include analysing how language plays a great role in sustaining social inequalities and providing valuable insights on how language can be used to promote social equity and justice. In the context of female marginalisation, one could investigate the impact of language in perpetuating patriarchy.

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