

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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The Representation of African women in Western Art and African Literature:

A Comparative Study of Eugene Delacroix's Painting and Assia Djebbar's

Women of Algiers in Their Apartment

A Mémoire Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Arts in Anglo-American Studies

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Broad Examiners

Examiner: Hafsa Naima

2015-2016

Dedication

Every challenging work needs self-efforts and guidance of elders especially those who are very close to our heart. My humble work, I dedicate to my sweet and loving parents whose affection, love, encouragement, and prayers enabled me to conduct this research.

Acknowledgment

I have first to thank Allah the Almighty. My gratitude goes to my supervisor Miss Zerrouki Zina for her guidance, help, and patience. I thank you again one thousand times for your support and encouragement. I would also express my feelings of gratitude to all the teachers who taught me over the past few years. Most of all; the support of my dear friends has been invaluable. Thanks to my friends Rania, Samah, and Hicham for their support, no matter how far they might take me. Last and not lastly, I would like to thank my brothers: Amer, Mounir, Seif Eddine, and Wael Nour AL Islam.

Abstract

African women have always been subject to a patriarchal ideology that sought to undermine their value. Several researchers and scholars diagnosed the problems of African women and the typical images of those women in the works of the African male writers and westerners. Our research, however; attempts to break away with previous studies by investigating the representation of African women in art and literature. It is our intention in this study to draw an analogy between Eugene Delacroix's painting and Assia Djebbar's novel *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment*. Our thesis rests on a number of assumptions. The first assumption is that Eugene's painting aims to represent Algerian women as sexual, silent, and obedient objects. The second assumption is that Assia Djebbar has been influenced by the painting of Eugene and her literary narrative comes as a response to Eugene's work. Our aim is to identify the type of relationship between Delacroix's painting and Djebbar's fiction.

Résumé

Les femmes africaines ont toujours été à l'idéologie patriarcale qui cherchait à saper leur valeur. Plusieurs chercheuses et universitaires diagnostiquent les problèmes des femmes africaines et l'image typique de ces femmes dans les œuvres des écrivains et occidentaux et africains. Notre recherche, cependant, tente de rompre avec les études précédentes en enquêtant sur la représentation des femmes africaines dans l'art et la littérature. Nous avons l'intention dans cette étude pour établir une analogie entre la peinture d'Eugène Delacroix et le roman d'Assia Djebbar *Les femmes d'Alger Dans Leur Appartement*. Notre thèse repose sur un certain nombre d'hypothèses. La première hypothèse est que la peinture d'Eugène vise à représenter les femmes Algériennes comme des objets sexuels, silencieux, et obéissants. La seconde hypothèse est qu'Assia Djebbar a été influencé par la peinture d'Eugène et son récit littéraire vient comme une réponse du travail d'Eugène. Notre objectif est d'identifier le type de la relation entre la peinture de Delacroix et la fiction d'Assia Djebbar.

ملخص

كانت المرأة الافريقية دائما عرضة لادىولوجية السلطة الابوية التي تسعى لتقويض قيمتها. العديد من الباحثين والعلماء خصوصا امشاك
للمرأة الافريقية الصور النمطية لهؤلاء النساء في اعمال الكتابة الافريقية والغربية منهم. ومع ذلك يحاولنا الفصل معالدراسات
السابقة من خلال التحقيق في تمثيلات المرأة الافريقية في الفن الادبي. فمناهتمنا في هذا الدراسة استمرسمة مشابهة بين لوحات جيندولا كروا و
سالجز ابر في شقتهما لاسيا جبار. اطر وحتنا تقو معلبا العديد من الفرضيات.
الفرضية الاولى ان لوحات جيندولا تهدف الى تمثيل المرأة الجز ابرية كعنصر جنسي صامت ومطيع.
الفرضية الثانية هي اناسيا جبار قد تاتر تبولوجيات جيندولا عملها الادبي التي تكرر دفعل عمل جيندولا. هدفنا هو تحديد العلاقة بين لوحات جيندولا
كروا والعملا لاديبلا لاسيا جبار.

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List of Achronyms

Women of Algiers in Their Apartment: WAA

General Introduction

African women are women who were born in, who live in, and are from the continent. They come from former colonized states in Africa that include women from Muslim countries like Algeria, Sudan, and Egypt...

Western writers, critics and artists have been increasingly interested in writing about African women in their works as a result of the colonial experience and the phenomenal growth of the orientalist movement. The culture, evolution and history of African women, as the case with non-African women, are related to the evolution and history of the African continent itself.

French Orientalist painting flourished with Napoleon's Egyptian campaign and Eugene Delacroix was one of the most prominent French orientalists of the 19th century. Delacroix's famous oil on canvas painting *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* is notable for its sexual connotations and served as a source of inspiration to later artists and writers like Picasso and the Algerian female writer Assia Djebbar in her novel *Les Femmes D'Alger dans leur Apartment*.

Several critics whose interests extend to African, Muslim, Arab and orientalist studies have been interested in the image of the African Algerian woman as represented in Delacroix's *Les Dammes d'Alger dans leur Apartment* like Michael Marrinan in her book *Romantic Paris : Histories of a Cultural Landscape* also Rose Marie and Rainer Hagen in their book *What Great Paintings Say*.

This research, however, tends to break with the limitations of previous criticism by drawing attention to representation of Algerian woman in both

Delacroix's Painting and Assia Djebbar's Novel of the same title. With this in mind the present study intends to compare the novel with the painting. In other terms, our purpose, in this study, is to investigate whether Assia Djebbar has been influenced by the painting of Delacroix and how? Is her novel a reaction against the negative images of Algerian women portrayed in Delacroix's painting? It is also our intention to highlight the similarities and differences between the two artistic works.

To conduct our study, we will borrow from the methods of comparative literature namely influence and affinity. Therefore, we will attempt to trace the origin of Djebbar's novel in addition to exploring the convergences and the divergences in the works in terms of ideas, characters, and setting. Since both works paint an accurate picture of the life of Algerian women, we will also use the notions of feminist criticism.

In order to implement our comparative study, we shall rely on the following outline. Our thesis will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter is concerned with the portrayal of African women in African and western literature and art. Since our assumption is that Assia Djebbar has been inspired by Delacroix's work, our task in the second chapter is to explore the relationship between literature and other forms of artistic expression. It is our intention to describe the influence of the art of painting on literature. Based on the same assumption, in the last chapter, we will identify the similarities and differences between the two works.

Chapter One

The Representation of African Women in literature and Art

Introduction

A canon of western critical and literary texts has been concerned with the issues of gender identity, the unequal treatment given to women and the differences in the interests between the two sexes. Post-colonial feminist writers, however; are critical of western writers. They accused them of being racists because they developed their ideas in reference to white women and ignored the experience of women of former colonized countries. The present chapter tends to discuss the status of the African women and their representation in African literature and western art.

Female Experiences in African literature

During the periods of revolutions and social change, the rights and freedom of the disadvantaged become critical issues. Women's problems are on the top of these issues. 'Patriarchal Thinking' indicates that men are superior to women by nature. Such idea explains man's domination and the creation of the patriarchy. This ideology underestimates the experience and knowledge of women and this paves the way to male's control over women. Women as muted and silenced group were forced to accept man's authority. The fundamental basis of the patriarchal domination "within the African context is the silencing and suppression of women including

controlling their bodies (Georgiads 23). Gayatry Spivak in her essay *Can the Subaltern Speak* says that: "...in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as a female is even more deeply in shadow" (qtd in Bennai 37).

Many African and non-African writers constructed in their works this typical image of the African woman as that submissive obedient wife, passive social member, ignored creature, and a good mother. Rirhandzu Lillian Machaba states that:

African Women's responsibilities include being mothers, wives and home administrators. In these roles, they undertake all domestic duties including cooking, feeding the family members, keep the home tidy and above all, child bearing. (1)

In other terms, African women's contribution to the political and economic life has been ignored. In short, Literature showed African women as sexual, obedient and silent objects that are in a constant struggle against the oppression of the African man from one side and the oppression of the colonizer from the other side. Accordingly, the suffering of African women appears clearly in the works of the Algerian, Nigerian, Moroccan, and many other African writers. The novels of the Nigerian female writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, for example, reflect 'patriarchy, violence, and intolerance' building upon the theme of colonialism. Her novels are concerned with the materialistic and non-materialistic disadvantages of Nigerian women (Georgiads1). To combat male's control, Adichie's stories are centered around the personal lives of female characters like Beatrice, Aunty Ifeoma, Kainene and Olanna as an attempt to enhance the interests of African women. Kalawole states that:

Women of African continent are tools of distinct forms of subjugation: Patriarchy, tradition, colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, and gender imperialism, all combine to act against the African women's self-assertion. (qtd in Georgiads 24)

One of the essential themes in Adichie's *The Purple Hibiscus* is domestic violence. Women have always been on the receiving end when it comes to domestic violence and the character of Beatrice explores how wives are subjugated by their husbands. She is not entitled to any choice and feelings of her own. One of the scenes that confirm this is when the family visits Father Benedict. Beatrice happens to be unwell and thinks of waiting in the car she says:

'Let me stay in the car and wait, biko', Mama [sic] said, leaning against the Mercedes. 'I feel vomit in my throat'

'Papa turned to stare at her. I held my breath. It seemed a long moment, but it might have been only seconds.

'Are u sure you want to stay at the car?' Papa asked.

Mama was looking down; her hands were placed on her belly, to hold the wrapper from untying itself or to keep her bread and tea breakfast down. 'My body does not feel right', she mumbled.

'I asked if you were sure you wanted to stay in the car?' Mama looked up.

'I will come with you. IT's [sic] really not that bad'. (qtd in Georgiads 27)

We see that the husband's word is final; he ignored his wife's feelings. Although she is sick, she is obliged to obey him and go to the priest's house. Even at home, she has no decision, no choice over what colour of curtains to be hang on the windows. Kambili one of the characters observed that Kevin brought samples for his mother but she could not choose until given the opinion of her husband (qtd in Georgiads 27). This reveals that Beatrice was in a marginalized position. Resisting such husband pushed her to think to poison him because the pain that Beatrice went through cannot be removed unless he dies (27). This depicts the insult that Eugene practices on his wife and the violence that is directed to women in its broad sense and this covers the negative side of patriarchy. The mother Beatrice became powerless, weak and as the narrator say: "I followed her down stairs, she limped slightly, as through one leg shorter than the other, a gait that made her seen even smaller than she was" (28). "The father was always seen as the oppressor" and "Mother [sic] is always captured as having swollen eyes, or face in tears a jagged scar or bleeding from the assault of her husband (28). In the second novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* women are depicted as agents of social change and progress. But women who are not progressive are depicted in a negative way. Alice is one of the characters who stated her position on mistress, concubinage and second wife and she is seen as anti-social. Alice is always taking herself into unfulfilling male relations (43). Mrs. Ozobia is a victim of the negative masculinity since her husband has a mistress and brought her a house.

The Representation of Algerian Women in Literature

Algerian women's experience is clearly recorded in the works of the Algerian writers like: Assia Djebbar, Samira Blili, and many others. Assia Djebbar's fiction

like *Fantasia: an Algerian Cavalcade* explores the link between Algerian women's experience and history in the frame of colonialization and disclose the double oppression experienced by women during and after the colonial period as "colonized and gendered subjects"(Bennai iii).

Woman's body is the major theme in her novel. Djebbar imposes the materiality of the female body and experience it with colonialist setting, feminist discourse through detailed sexual violence that the colonized women has lived in colonial and post independent periods (iii). The writer inscribed the Algerian woman's body. This body which is unrecognizable, it marks woman's presence and appearance which is gazed and stared at by males. The female writer abused distinct told stories of resistance and the physical attacks on the female body to personalize the political issues (37).

In Djebbar's novels, Algerian women face double oppression and marginalization. From one hand, they experienced the abuse by the colonizer through the accessibility to their bodies and from the other hand there is patriarchy (74). Although the colonial discourse excludes women from the "official history of the national independence", Djebbar shows the participation of the Algerian women in the resisting the French colonization through their bodies (74). Moreover, women's body is engaged in politics to present as an alternative reading to the past of Algeria she claims that 'the haughty Morton voice and body gave me a glimpse of the source of all our sorrow: like half obliterated sings which we spend the rest of our lives trying to decipher'(qtd in Bennai 74).

In *Fantasia*, she depends on the historical sayings to study the lives of those subalterns. She recorded a peasant's speech and used it to contribute in the resistance

against male dominance in return she can get her presence, a presence that erased from the official history (74). The novel also presents women's experience of suffering to reveal the immorality of the colonial force. Moreover, she focused on the common shared experience of the colonized women. She also sheds the light on the issue of the veil. Cherifa's story, in *Fantasia*, recounts the physical attack against the female body in the 1950s. Cherifa's body is unveiled against her will and veiled again. She was captured, prisoned and tortured. Her body which was tortured was covered by the veil in order not to dirty the tribal honor (75). However, she challenges the colonial force. Djebbar gives an instance of women's hard sacrifices in the national struggle through the resistance with her body against colonial, physical, and moral violence.

In the Algerian society, the existence of women in public space without veil is quiet unacceptable. So, the narrator Djebbar presents the issue of wearing the veil because it is a symbol that represents the Algerian women's body and society as whole. This body is viewed in a distinct way by many writers (76). Some believe that it is an oppression tool as Amira Jamakani asserts in her book *Imagining Arab Women* "contemporary representation of veiled women cast them as category oppressed" (76).

The Western Views about African Women

Hibah Aburwein believes that if we examine the image of the Arab women as reconstructed in western literature and culture, we will observe a definite combination between "the African woman and negativism". African Women are victims of the 'stereotyping processes' of the western misunderstanding to their status and interests as women (2). They are seen as "imprisoned behind a veil of powerlessness by a

patriarchal society and a strict religion or belly dancers that is the exotic image of women in the harem” (qtd in Aburwein 2). In other terms, they are observed as ‘sexual symbols’ without recognizing the real internal character by the different personal experiences or the perceptions of orientalists. In western literature’s different forms, they are depicted as ‘bosomy belly dancers leering out from their veils, or disposable harem maidens, closeted in the palace’s women’s quarters’ (Aburwein 3). Moreover, Arab women in western literature have ‘no sound, no soul, no identities uncivilized, and being prisoned and silenced by their husbands’ (3).

African Women’s depiction has been a crucial subject to African and non-African writers. Unlike the westerners, the African writers can represent the image of the African women in a more vital way. Chinwa Achebe, Ngugi Wathiango, Rebbeka Njau, and many other African writers have depicted the African women or the third world women in relation to colonial postcolonial discourses. In terms of postcolonial and feminist discourses, Ngugi tries to portray the figure of postcolonial women in relation to their conditions in colonized Africa especially Kenya. Women’s condition and position in African societies is determined according to the familial system that society constructs, in which they live in. In such system, male dominance is clearly seen (Bolat 29). In African colonized countries women have experienced oppression from the colonizers and patriarchy. This double colonization is the result of their womanhood. Combahee River Collective points out:

We believe that sexual politics under patriarchy is as pervasive in Black [sic] women lives as are the politics of class and race. We also find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are most often experienced simultaneously. We know that there is such a thing as

racial-sexual oppression which is neither solely racial nor solely sexual.(qtd in Bolat 32)

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* portrays Africa, particularly the Ibo society, right before the arrival of the white man. Most importantly the writer explains the role of women in pre -colonial Africa and the masculine and the feminine social identity which reflects negative social attitude towards femininity. His work is also a testimony to the social attitudes towards gender. Achebe emphasizes on the weakness of femininity and the benefits of masculine behaviours.

Algerian Women in Western Art

This same depiction or portrayal of the African women is offered in the western paintings, post cards. Dian M. Huddleston states that:

Orientalism is the western perception or construction of the East. This is a one-sided interpretation, which doesn't examine the Eastern point of view at all and is based on superficial observation, which does not consider the deeper cultural significance or meaning of the oriental. This includes all the stereotypes that come to the western mind when thinking about the people of the Eastern land (3)

All these are aspects of orientalism that turned to stereotypes and this includes the sexuality of the Arab men and their relations to women bodies (harem) (5). The first writings of the western literature about the Middle East and North Africa began to appear when the orient was turned to '*The Other*' as it was mentioned in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (5).

In the portrayal of the Oriental Islamic women, Kelly Bloom believes that the existence of the Orient has always been seen as exotic and mythical since the appearance of Islam in the 7th century and still seen the same in the 21st century. It was always the other as Said says (1). Despite the fact that Edward never wrote about art and artists, such western artists as Jean August Dominique, Eugene Delacroix, and Jean Léon Gérôme approved Said's idea of representing the oriental Other as uncivilized including their portrayal of oriental and African women(3).

The views of western artists about Africa and the orient are very crucial in the progress of the view of the East as Lean Sussan says:

Artists never create a vacuum, bringing to their interpretation the opinion and biases of the cultural environment as well as their own life experience. Whether the orientalist painter personally visited the East or not, he was depicting a land he experienced as an outsider. (qtd in Bloom 3)

Jean August Dominique Ingres, for example, had never been to the Near East but rather he used the letters of Lady Mary Montagu's adventure in Turkey (17). Montagu's letters are accounts of her visit to the bathhouse in Turkey which inspired Ingres to paint his famous painting *The Turkish Bath*. 'He turned a public bathhouse into an intimate, private quarter (Bloom17). After her visit to the bath she wrote:

...The first sofas were cover'd[sic] with Cushion and rich Carpets, on which sat the Ladys[sic] ,and on the 2nd[sic] their slaves behind 'em[sic], but without any distinction of rank by their dress, all being in the state of nature ,that is ,in plain English, start naked, without any Beauty[sic] or defect conceale'd[sic] ,yet there was not the least wanton smile or immodest Gesture[sic] 'em[sic]...In short, tis[sic] the women's coffee house, where all

the news of the Town[sic] is told, Scandal[sic] invented ,etc. (qtd in Bloom 17-8)

Despite the fact that Lady Montagu's letter has no 'immodest gestures' and 'wanton smiles', Ingres's painting has an obvious sexual touch especially with the 'lesbian couple' and 'the construction of the picture as peephole into a zone forbidden to male access'(18). Because of the exclusion of Lady Montagu by Ingres Ruth, Bernard Yeazal concluded that the Turkish bath is transformed into a private vision, a dream in which the dreamer himself remains invulnerable to observation. Only By expelling Lady Mary from the picture can Ingres complete his transformation of her public baths into the haremlike enclosure of his fantasy ... What he choose to see in the end was not a collection of living women, but a harem of memory (qtd in Bloom 18).

Like Ingres, Eugene Delacroix draws two of his paintings with no visit to the Near East; *The Massacre at Chios* and *The Death of Sardanapalus*. Both paintings are based on newspapers reports. The first painting represents the massacre that occurred in Turkey and the rebellion that happened in the island of Chios which was the starting point of slavery to their women and children (23). Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus* is considered as 'an extension of the painter's own personal fantasies regarding women (24). This painting is classified among the romantic works based on Lord Byron's play in 1821. It depicts the Assyrian King Sardanapalus when he was sieged by the rebels and he gave orders to all destruction including his mistresses. Delacroix had a deep vision to create an authentic image. As Nochlin says: "he had Come too close to an overt statement of the most explosive, hence the most carefully, corollary of the ideology of male domination: the connection between sexual possession and murder as assertion of absolute enjoyment" (qtd in bloom 25). In addition to this, Nochlin believed that: 'it is not Western [sic] man's power over the

Near East that is at issue, but rather, I believe, contemporary Frenchmen's power over women (qtd in Bloom 25). Kelly Bloom agrees with Nochlin and he says: "The colonization of the Near East was justified by the fact that Western men saw it as female. So, the power over the Near East and the Frenchmen's power over women are analogous" (25- 6).

Jean Léon Gerome, in contrast to Ingres, traveled extensively in Egypt. Gerome represents the Realist tradition; he sought to establish a documentary realism. Gerome's works show much more detail than Delacroix's. Gerome was interested in many parts of the Islamic world, especially scenes of Islamic life and women. Before the opening of the Orient, very little was known about Islam. Many Westerners, after visiting the Near East, responded with a considerable respect to the Muslim faith. Gerome was able to enter mosques in order to complete such works as the Prayer in the Mosque of Amr (Bloom 32). His painting *Moorish Bath* represents a beautiful white woman being washed by her African slave in a bathroom. Gerome emphasizes the textures of the room, from the marble floor, to the towels on the wall, to the tile. Although this is a beautiful setting, it is also showing signs of decay. In *the Dance of the Almeh*, a beautiful belly dancer performs in front of a small crowd while the musicians play to her left. Here instead of dancing in an opulent setting, she dances in the dark, somber interior of an Egyptian café (36). The whiteness of her skin and the brightness of her costume contrast greatly with the setting, emphasizing the decrepitude of the café. Just like Delacroix, Gerome seen here with *The Slave Market*. Although writers have commented on scenes like this happening in the Near East, the reason for Gerome to choose this scene has a lot to do with Orientalist eroticism. Here the naked, powerless woman is analyzed by the clothed powerful men. The

prospective buyer forces the woman's mouth open in order to run his finger over her teeth. Gerome has exaggerated the size of his hand, amplifying the cruelty.

Unlike Delacroix, Gerome's paintings were popular in the Salons of the mid-19th century. Nochlin believes, it is mainly due to their different styles. Gerome's paintings are more remote, rational, objective, while Delacroix's were passionate, subjective and outwardly sensual. Gerome is saying that "Don't think that I or any other right-thinking Frenchman would ever be involved in this sort of thing. I am merely taking careful note of the fact that less enlightened races indulge in the trade of naked women (37).

Conclusion

African women in literature and art have been linked to the subjects of discrimination, oppression, subjection, and sexuality. In terms of double colonization, the Algerian women, in particular, are the best examples.

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Chapter Two

The Relationship between Literature and Art in Comparative Literature

Introduction

The relationship between literature and other forms of artistic expression has always been investigated by scholars in comparative literature. Our task in this chapter is to explore the common characteristics of the two disciplines namely literature and art of painting. To investigate the relationship, we will consider the main concerns of comparative literature, its scope, and its major approaches. The French and the American approaches are to be covered with special focus on the notions of influence, borrowing and imitation, literary and non- literary influence, the image echoes, and intertextuality.

Art as a Form of Artistic Expression

The term Art ‘refers to something skillfully constructed by human artists’ (Goguen 1). Artists themselves, challenging the different perceptions, struggled to define art. The most influential definition is the ‘Institutional definition’ which was firstly proposed by Goerge Deckie in his book Art and Aesthetics:

A work of art in the classificatory sense is (1) an artifact (2) asset of aspects which has had conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by

some person or person acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the art world). (8)

Leo Tolstoy states that one of the most common beliefs about art is that it is essentially a form of expression, the expression of feelings in particular

Art is the communication of feelings from artists to viewers through certain external signs artists are people inspired by emotional experiences, use their skills with words, paints, music, movement, etc. to embody their emotion in a work of art with a view to stimulate the same emotions in an audience.(1)

This definition suggests that all kinds of art including paintings, music, sculpture, and others are aesthetic pieces that enable the artist to express his feelings and share them with the audience and viewer which gives rise to the notion of expressionism. The representative works of this theory include the paintings of Van Gogh and Manet, the romantic music of Grieg and Tchaikovsky, the lyric poetry of Byron and Wordsworth (1).

The names above include writers, musicians and painters who used their pens and talent to deliver their voices. This refers to the same mission of authors and artists. Edgar Allan Poe also tried his hand at drawing. He made his pencil sketch of his childhood sweetheart Fiancée, Elmira Royster. His second attempt in painting is a portrait of Poe himself, it is attributed to the author himself. Poe was described by Bernard Shaw as “this finest of finest artists” and is also called “the founder of the modern detective story” (qtd in Tolstoy 2). Gaster asserts that:

...[F]amous authors as artists, of the many great men and women of letters who have sought to satisfy their hunger for expression not only by writing

novels , plays or poetry but also by sketching , drawing or painting –either as vocation or as an amusing pastime.(5)

Albert Schweitzer also wrote that:

We are in a habit of designating an artist according to the medium he uses to translate his inner life. Musician, if he employs sounds ; painter ,if he uses colors ; poet , if he uses words.one must admit, however ,that these categories established by external criteria are somewhat arbitrary .The soul of the artist is a complex whole in which the gifts of a poet , the painter and the musician are all blended in proportions infinitely variable.(2)

This interaction between artists and authors reflects a deep sense of relation between art and literature. More specifically, the relation between literature and the art of painting and here Schweitzer again wondered if it is the painter or the poet who dominates the soul of Michel-Angelo , he claims that “many artists like Goethe have passed from paintings to verbal description and yet remain what they were, that is artists”(3).

In most cases, the authors genius is obviously to be found in his writings and not in his drawings, still those paintings reveal an important aspect of the author’s character and help to better understanding the author’s writing . In some cases however, the artist reveals his views through both writing and painting.

There are many painters who were inspired by authors like Dante who preparing to paint angel, the English poet Robert Browning wrote recreating Dante’s description of himself when he settled down to his attempt at painting .For borrowing the poet’s desire to express himself is only he was inspired by love and. Again the

Italian painter Michel-Angelo wrote sonnets that became part of the Italian literary heritage (4) .William Shakespeare's Hamlet inspired the British artists Sir John Everett Millias whose painting depicts Ophelia singing while floating in a river just before she drowns. The painting represents Ophelia being absorbed by dark water luxuriant nature. The tragic destiny of Ophelia inspired many painters as being one of the most poetically written death scenes in literature (Khan 4).

Comparative literature

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field that emerged around the beginning of the 19th century. Sussan Bussnett argues that most of scholars do not meet at a definite point when defining comparative literature which gave rise to different contrasting views .Shortly, critics, although disagreed on a fixed comparative method; they attempted to develop well-established theories (Enani 10).

Comparative literature can be defined as the study literature across national borders, across time ,across languages, across genres across boundaries between literature and other arts(music, painting ,dance ,film etc.),across disciplines (literature and psychology, science, history...).In short, comparative literature is the study of 'literature without borders'. Most scholars in comparative literature aim to study literature beyond borders with an interest in foreign languages to preserve the originality of works and achieve authentic comparative analysis. Comparative literature contains two main important schools or theories namely the French and the American schools.

Influence

The French school's founding father Van Teigham defines comparative literature as 'a branch of literary study which traces the mutual relations between two or more internationally and linguistically different literatures' The French school as a broad concept includes many important sub-concepts or sub-notions such as Influence and the Image Echoes (12).

Influence can be defined as the movement of an idea, a theme, an image, a literary tradition, or a tone from one literary text to another .The term itself is subdivided into distinct terms(literary influence and non-literary influence, direct influence and indirect influence). Literary influence seeks to trace the mutual relation between two or more literary works (15) .A very simple example of such influence is the comparative study between B. Shaw's Pygmalion and that of Tawfiq Al-Hakim or between Arab and Persian poetry. The non-literary influence is ignored by the French school on the basis of the influenced receiver does not absorb some of the elements of the literary piece. While direct influence obviously occurs when there is actual contact between writers from different literatures beyond the boundaries of place and language. In other words, this influence happens only when the writer reads another writer's original work or having a direct contact with the writer him/herself. Indirect influence exists between different writers without any direct relation between them because of language barriers, but through specific intermediaries as individuals, journals, periodicals, literary criticism, or translations(16-7).

By Image echoes is meant that how something is represented or depicted in a specific literature in which scholars agreed upon that the image incomparative literature has two essential starting points (28). In Image echoes include both the representation the image of a country in a foreign writer's work, for example, Spain in Arabic Literature or Algeria in French literature and art and the representation of the

image of a certain type of common character or an object in a foreign artistic work, for example, Algerian women in English and French Literature or art. In the image of a country in foreign literature, the use of a 'foreign personae or local color 'is very common in comparative literature. The best example is the depiction of Wagner to the social evolution of Germany in the late of the 19th century as a united republic and the center of knowledge and culture. Concerning the second type of image echoes which refer to the representation of type of character or an object in a foreign work, the comparatist should take into consideration cultural, social, and political communication between the two different cultures .Image has entered into all poetry, drama and novel like the case with the French and English romantic poets. Since foreign images are depicted by writers into their national languages and cultures, it is very important that the comparatist can determine the origin of a specific image in a work of a writer and its imitation by others (29-30).

Intertextuality

The American school emerged in the second half of the 20th century. Its founding father Henry Remak defined comparative literature as "as a connecting link between subjects or subject areas". Remak believes that the comparison should not involve the problem of nationalism. It is the 'Depolitisazation' of comparative study that makes the American school different from the French one. One of the most important theories developed by the American comparatists is Intertextuality. M Enani defines intertextuality as two or more interrelated texts that have an impact on the new read text.

As it is stated above intertextuality is one of the main theories of the American school. It is a polemical notion because scholars have disagreed sharply over the

definition of this key concept. In its broad sense, intertextuality means the reference to or the application of a literary or social text within another literary or social text. In literature, intertextuality occurs when a book refers to a second book by title, scene, character, or story line. This borrowing obliges the comparatist to make a contrast between the understanding of the text in the original book, and its use inside the new book. Intertextuality raises many questions about the author's reasons behind choosing pre-text, how he employed the text in the book and to what effect is the text re-imagined or shaped.

Basically, there are two schools of intertextuality. The first is more practical and traditional which limits itself to study the relationship between the text and its pre-text. Accordingly, the intertextual relationship is interesting only when the link between both is verified; this relationship usually takes the form of allusion, quotation, annexation etc. The second school is more theoretical associated with poststructuralist and theorists as Julia Kristiva, Ronald Barthes and it posits the wider view of intertextuality which says that all texts are intertexts. It is the basis and requirement of all communications, and all communicable texts and discourses are always built upon existing cultural codes and norms (web).

Intertextuality and Literary Criticism

Intertextuality is a concept that emerged in Julia Kristiva's writings in 1960s and remained influential in the field of literary and cultural studies. Originating from the traditions of post structuralism, its main aim was establishing the cultural values and conventional categories of interpretation. Kristiva's essay *'The Bound Texts'* states that 'any text is actually a permutation of texts, an intertextuality is a space of given space, in which several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and

neutralize one another'(36).as a consequence Allen notes that 'texts are seen as lacking in any kind of independent meaning'(1).

The idea of intertextuality goes back to Bakhtin's writings in the 1920s and his idea of *Dialogism* and *Heteroglossia*. Dialogism refers to the clash between different characters, voices or other distinct languages .On the other hand, heteroglossia refers to the recognition of different languages within the society itself. The social aspect of Bakhtin's theory creates the strong link between his idea and Kristiva's notion of intertextuality. Kristiva also was influenced by the idea of semiology of Saussure. It started to be called Semiotics in France .So Kristiva focused on semiotics and she used the term intertextuality to reveal how the text is an 'intersection of texts, signs, and codes from the derived culture'. In addition, she was influenced by the idea of 'production 'created by Marx and the Freudian 'dream work'. The dream work is 'a process...of playful permutation, which provides the very model production (Kristiva 83). She opposes it to economic production characterized by the valorization of the finished work or subject and its exchange value. A single text is productivity analogous to the dream world. More precisely, Kristiva defines text as 'Trans-linguistic apparatus the redistributes the order of language by relating a communicative speech, to different kinds of anterior synchronic utterances (36).its relation to the language in which its situation is redistributive i.e., its both deconstruct and reconstruct that a text is a permutation of text as stated above. Kristiva claims that the intertextual procedure the text can be considered as intertextuality (a permutation of text) within society or history.

Ronald Barthes

Barthes is one of the major writers on the concept of intertextuality. In his essay *Theory of the Text*, he claims that the main short coming of a traditional understanding of the text is the concern for 'objective signification': the meaning that the author aims to convey is the means by which the authority of the establishment of a stable meaning by which the process of interpretation is related to. However, he argues in *The Death of the Author* that texts exist far away from their authors from the « plurality of voices, the other utterances, and other texts ». He wanted to convey the message of that the new textual practice should be seen by significance and unlimited meanings. In other words 'It (the text) deconstructs the language of communication, representation or expression...and reconstructs other language'(37). He notes that 'one of the paths of this deconstruction-reconstruction is to permute texts, scraps of texts that have existed or existed around and finally within the text being considered any text is an intertexts'(29).

In *The Death of the Author* Barthes follows Foucault's idea of decentering the author and states that the notion of the author is a capitalistic one with the creation and the control of the meaning of the work contrasting the importance to the name of the author that permits the work to become an inter of exchange value. As Allen points out 'if we were able to look inside the head of the author ...,we would not discover original thought or even uniquely intended meaning'. So, the author gathers and collects what has already been said, read, or written in various texts. The denial of the author's authority over their texts, Barthes also suggests the retracing of the textual elements, the intertexts that constitute a text pave the way only to the signifier rather than signified. language gives intertextual quality as he stresses 'it is the language only which speaks not the author; to write it ...to reach that point where language only acts; 'performs' ;and not 'me' (Barthes 143). So Barthes suggests the

substitution of decentering the authorial intention with alternative one which is the 'abstract conception of textual voices'. In addition to the participation of the readers in the creation of the meaning and intertextual connections remain unexplored.

Riffaterre's Approach to Intertextuality

Like Kristeva and Barthes, Riffaterre followed Semiotic approach to literature. In his approach he asserts that literary texts has the acquisition of meaning via the link of the semiotic structure that collects together words ,phrases, sentences, themes and rhetorical devices ,in other words literary texts are not referential. Riffaterre creates that Anti-referential approach of intertextuality as well as his claim that texts refers to other texts and signs. He asserts that 'the text refers not to the object outside of itself, but to an intertext. The words of the text signify not by referring to things but by presupposing other texts (288).

The brief explanation of how Riffaterre views the process of reading a literary work leads us to a correct understanding of intertextuality. He provides us with two different stages. The first stage basically is the primary which is naive one. The second one retroactive stage of reading or hermeneutic. Riffaterre also provides us with another important notion within his theory which is the matrix of the work. It refers to a single word, phrase, or sentence and it may be absent in the text. According to him the matrix is' hypothetical being only grammatical and lexical actualization of the structure (19).Furthermore, the matrix is the essence of the semiotic system. Moreover, in intertextuality he shows a clear distinction between intertextuality and intertext. The intertext at the beginning was coined by Barthes and gives it a poetic definition arguing that the intertext is 'a music of figures, metaphors, thought words; it is a signifier as siren' (145).and he presented Kristeva's work as one of his

intertexts. From the other hand, Riffaterre provides us with another definition namely 'one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance' (56). To a better understanding of the meanings of the words, phrases, and sentence she opposes the intertext due to his previous distinction between mimetic and hermeneutic readings. In other instances, intertext is also associated with sociolect i.e., the socially narrative discourse.' An intertext is text like segment of sociolect that shares a lexicon and to a lesser extent, syntax with the text we are reading' (Riffaterre 142). Intertextuality is the webs of functions that constitutes and regulates the relationship between text and intertext' (57).

Moreover, he distinguishes between two types of intertextuality, namely Aleatory and Determinate. Aleatory intertextuality is related to instance where many potential intertexts can be involved, and determinate (or obligatory) refers to the cases where there is an intertext clearly standing behind a text. Aleatory intertextuality is manifested in the way myths and fables are read. These may be seen by readers as variants of themes embedded in the tradition of a culture. While the other appeared to bear no particular problems, the former has been characterized as rather unclear and vague. For example, Allen stated that it would be difficult to imagine how Riffaterre can deal with his notion as it 'seems to return us a poststructuralist emphasis on the readers' production role of reading (130). De Man discusses the distinction using Saussure's work on anagrams and stresses the lack of clarity in determining whether the intertextual relations were 'random or determinant' (DE Man, 43). Riffaterre's distinction captures an important aspect of intertextuality , namely the variety of sources on which individuals rely while reading texts ,and also highlights the

important role of reader's 's knowledge plays in the generation of intertextual meanings.

Conclusion

Our analysis helped to show the definition of Art and the different perspectives over it. Moreover, it examined the key concepts of comparative literature. In short, there has been an overlap between art and literature but this overlap never had a specific definition. For this reason, the field of comparative literature is established with its theories in order to recognize the relation between literature and the other arts.

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Chapter Three

The Relationship between Delacroix's Painting and Djebbar's Novel:

Convergences and Divergences

Introduction

The first two chapters form the theoretical base on which the following practical chapter is to be grounded. Taking into consideration the westerners and Africans view of African Arab women, we intent, in the present chapter, to explore the way Algerian women are depicted by the French painter Eugene Delacroix and the Algerian female writer Assia Djebbar in their works bearing the same title *WAA*. The type of the relationship between the painting and the narrative is also to be investigated in this chapter. The convergences and divergences in terms of setting, themes and characters are also to be considered.

Eugene Delacroix's experience in Africa

In 1832, a change happened in the life of the French painter Eugene Delacroix when he was invited by the Comte de Mornay to visit Morocco and Algeria. His trip to Algeria was not a coincidence, it rather stems from France seeking the help of Morocco to dominate Algeria. Delacroix first created a sketch that represents the Sultan of Morocco and His Entourage. Delacroix's adventures in Africa and his views about the region and its people have been recorded in his paintings and notebooks (Bloom 26). In Morocco Delacroix has found luck of Models like inspiring paintings, and sculptures. He wrote in a letter: 'their prejudices are great against the beautiful

art of painting, but few coins here and there will be appease their (Muslim men's) scruples' (qtd in Bloom 27).

In North Africa, he learned about "costume, setting, lighting ... but rather he knew little about Muslin women". Eugene was very frustrated about Algerian women's inaccessibility; he thought that even a look at them would be very risky (27). As a compensation for this, he painted Muslim men and Jewish women such as: *Jewish Wedding in Morocco* and *Jewess Bribe of Tangiers*. Despite the fact that Jewish women were also inaccessible he studied their 'costumes and jewelry' (27-8).

The Orientalist Delacroix entered to Algeria in 1832 for a short stopover. The chief engineer of the harbor of Algiers monsieur Poirel, a lover of painting allowed him to enter the Harem. He spent only three days in Algiers which was the first destination that attracted him. The Harem was situated in what was known as Rue Duquesne. When Delacroix crossed a dark hallway the harem opened up and Women were waiting him surrounded by "mounds of silk and gold" sitting in different positions. The women were very pretty, young, and sat in the front of hookah. Eugene noted down on his sketches the name of every woman Bayah, Mouni, Zora ben Soltan. They are penciled bodies coming out of "the anonymity of exotism". After he returned to France, Delacroix worked on the painting for two years to finally produce his master piece *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment* (Marjolijn 1).

After fifteen years, the French artist remembers those few days in Algiers and reworks on the painting again and gives another version of *WAA* in 1849.

Assia Djebbar's Feminist Views

Assia Djebbar is an Algerian female writer whose works expose women's problems and defend their rights. Her female characters are a symbol of protest against gender oppression, inequality and sexuality (Nkealah 19). Djebbar uses a more radical approach to the issue of women's rights. Her writing reflects an undisguised revolt against established patterns of female behavior and advocates an assertion of individual identity. This approach exists in many of her novels, such as *Les Impatients*, *Vaste est la Prison*, as well as *WAA* (Nkealah 99).

WAA is a collection of short stories that identifies Djebbar as a 'politically engaged writer' who 'seeks to criticize the repressive structure of the society she examines and to promote the liberation of Algerian women' (Hiddleston 92). As Hiddleston notes:

[S]ocial division is not inherent in Islam everywhere, but has become particularly emphasized in modern Algeria, and it is the violence and oppression that have grown out of this doctrine that Djebbar wants to denounce (93).

Thus, what Djebbar seeks to condemn, is not Islamic culture in its purest form, but the gendered division of males and females in modern Muslim society, which results in the marginalization of women in Algeria, in particular, and in North Africa in general. She is considered as the most contemporary productive Algerian woman and she is also acclaimed to be internationally the second African feminist writer after Nawal el-Saadawi (Nkealah 100). It is very crucial to note that her feminist politics is strongly tied to nationalist struggles in Algeria, for her narratives that represent the Algerian women confronting the "double burden" of "patriarchy and colonialism" (100).

Similarities and Differences between Djebbar's and Delacroix's Depiction of Algerian Women

Setting

As it has been said previously, Eugene's painting originates from his visit to the Algerian Harem in Rue Duquesne and it represents partially the French cultural invasion of Algeria and it was presented for the first time in 1834 in Paris (Solomon 57). The French invaders did not only take control of the Algerian territory but extended to destroying the symbols of the Algerian Muslim Society. Muslim and Arab Women, by the laws of Islam and convention, are a symbol of dignity. Delacroix's presence in the Harem however is a form of colonial and gender discrimination.

Similarly, Most of the short stories in Djebbar's work take place during the turbulent years of postcolonial reconstruction of Algeria (1962 – 1978) (Solomon 57). These stories are told in the form of dialogues. The dialogue takes place in the present and between women of the past and the present. The central issues of those dialogues are "the war of independence and general experiences of life as an Algerian woman" (Boersma 16).

In *Today* there are several meetings between different Algerian women who emphasize the process of "Talking" to unlock their situation. In *Yesterday* there is a fusion of the past and present voices through Djebbar's writing about her own experiences and her family members as well to create a dialogue between both the past and the present (16). The last part *Postface* is quite different from the first two stories because it is characterized by an "essayistic style". Djebbar says "I spent a couple of weeks on the Post face, weaving a kind of textual meditation that would

serve as a reflective background to the stories I had just put together.”(qtdin Boersma 16).

Delacroix’s master piece depicts three women, “two of them sit in the front of the hookah and the third one in the foreground “leans her elbow and some cushions” in addition to a black female servant who was seen from the back as if she was moving the tapestry to cover that closed universe and she is considered as a minor character within the picture (Marjolijn 2; Boersma 16). The real meaning of this painting lies in the relation of those women with their bodies and the place of their enclosures as well (1-2). The painter knows that the inaccessibility of women in the Harem made it the most desirable place to discover and he preserved their mystery by not overexposing those women. Delacroix’s penetration to the Algerian Harem goes in compliance with the admittance of the western to the orient. This creates the devaluation of the orient as a whole not only women and this was justified as the westerners deserve to be there because of their superiority and control over the Arabs (Bloom 31).

Characters

Eugene’s painting represents three women sit in calm and a silent way, but with a strange gaze in their eyes. This depiction shows those women as silent and obedient objects and used only to satisfy man’s desires. In addition, women’s clothes represent the negative image on the reputation of the whole Algerian women.

The literary work of the Algerian female writer represents several female characters that have the ability to challenge and speak out against the silence imposed by national and colonial views toward women. Their voices and speeches were

recorded by Djebbar in which they expressed their “grief and sorrow in emotional outbursts” (Mohanalakshmi 67).

Unlike the women in Eugene’s painting, Djebbar created characters who adopted the struggle to be able to express their own stories. Leila and Sara are the first female characters who attempt to define themselves as women. Leila is fighter of the Algerian War of Independence who was traumatized by her experiences, especially the tortures in prison. Sarah was involved in the war as well and spent her adolescence in prison (Boersma 16-7). Djebbar created such characters in order to recognize their present and past and most importantly can share it. Leila fought for liberation of Algeria together with the male soldiers. She was a part in both processes “of multiple encounters and combinations”. After the end of the war she was in a determined position not allowed to participate in the public spaces with Algerian men and she was as she said: “shadow of her former self” (qtd in Boersma 18). Leila’s process of expressing her experiences and sharing them with others is revealed through the philosophy of Nancy on “being as singular plural”. Once, she was a part of the war of liberation with males; however, after the war ends, she is not allowed to become the “She” I mean the woman that she is supposed to be (18). This part seems to be more focused on the struggle of the characters to participate and the limits they are confronted with. If Leila is able to circulate again in this open space, she can confront the ‘brothers’, the Algerian former soldiers, with her story. This reference to the ‘brothers’ makes the conversation between Leila and Sarah questions the official story of the war. Leila is aware of the importance to talk about her experiences. This is the only way to dismantle the homogenized official story of the war dominated by the male perspective. She could show that there are more versions of the story of the War of Independence.

Eugene's painting depicts women as frozen bodies, silenced creatures, and weak social members with a strange gaze in their eyes. This gaze shows the weakness of those women and the male patriarchy. Unlike the painting, the literary narrative's particular example of Sarah and Leila shows the friction between the desire to express memories and the difficulty to talk about these experiences. Sarah refuses to listen to Leila, though in another part of the short story a conversation is presented of Sarah with her friend Anne, in which Sarah's attitude changes. She becomes aware of the importance of the expressing one's self. She realizes that talking is the only way, Algerian women can succeed in the transition to a different life and moreover question the male-centred official story of Algeria's history:

For Arabic women I see only one single way to unblock everything: talk, talk without stopping, about yesterday and today, talk among themselves, in all the women's quarters, the traditional ones as well as those in the housing projects. Talk among ourselves and look. Look outside, look outside the walls and the prisons! ... The Woman [sic] as look and the Woman [sic] as voice, [...]. (qtd in Boersma 19)

"Woman as a voice" is represented by Leila and Sarah who talk to unblock everything. They will question the official narrative of Algeria's history and moreover the representation of Algerian women as a homogenized totality excluded from participating in public spaces of society. By creating these characters, Djébar challenges the official depiction of Algerian society in which women are absent in the public and work spaces. Even though, this creates an optimistic sphere for the women of Algeria, Djébar troubles her own created counterview of Algerian women right

away. She wants to avoid the creation of a new determined feminine Algerian identity. Hiddleston says about this strategy of Djebbar:

[...] her texts initially strive to unveil or conceive a specific feminine Algerian identity, rescuing Algerian women from occlusion both by colonialism and by Islamic law, and giving voice to this particular oppressed group. This does not mean that they are passively specified, but that they are positioned in relation to a series of specific influences and negotiate between them. Despite Djebbar's belief in the necessity of this project, however, she then troubles the determinations of that position. [...]. (qtd in Boersma 20)

Moreover, the novel's importance is centered on passing the stories from one generation to another and Djebbar herself was inspired by her mother-in-law and she said:

[...] my former mother-in-law, who was able to show me that a woman's memory spans centuries—just one woman. She would talk of an obscure, forgotten old woman she used to know who used to talk of the old days. This is precisely how Algerian women “relay” the past: they tell the (his) story of colonization, but tell it otherwise. (qtd in Boersma22)

The literary work presents Yemma Hadda, an old woman as a character. During her life she reported stories about her experiences as an Algerian woman. “The official story of this part of Algeria's history is male-dominated and excludes the experiences of women” (Boersma 22). Aïcha, the cousin of Hadda promised her to pass her own stories to her grandson Hassan because :“Hadda represents the ‘authentic past’, a harsh unromanticised version of Algerian cultural traditions [...], while her absent grandson, Hassan, who is away fighting with the resistance, belongs to a forward-

looking generation intent on building a new Algeria.”(qtd in Boersma 22). He refuses to listen and the link between the past and the present is partially cut-off. On one hand, the process of restoration of conversation shows how the stories pass according to specific steps. On the other hand, this process also shows the interruption of the restoration of conversation between women from the past and the present due to the male-dominated society. Corcoran said in this context:

The gaze and the spoken word are male-controlled and are policed as tightly as the physical spaces which women are able to occupy. Such is the isolation and marginalization of women, even of supposedly modern, middle-class, ‘liberated’ women of professional status, that the strategies of ‘speaking/listening’ and ‘seeing’ are proposed as mutually supporting, radically subversive strategies of resistance.(qtd in Boersma 23)

The woman is marginalized by the male-controlled gaze and spoken word and therefore cannot take part in the official story telling of the nation. The story of Hadda and Hassan shows how men disrupt the opening up of stories that belong to the nation’s history .The notion of Being as singular plural of Nancy asks for an open space in which Algerian women should be able to participate. However, Algerian women are not welcome in the contingent process of multiple encounters and combinations. The characters struggle to express their experiences and once they have the desire to speak and participate the male-dominated society does not want to listen (23).

The last part is called ‘*Post face: Forbidden Gaze, Severed Sound*’ .Djebbar transforms her voice tone into an “essayistic style of writing”. Her fictional stories are mixed with a deep analysis of the position of the Algerian women. This new style

results in a very well-constructed essay on how the Algerian woman's gaze is still forbidden and her sound severed. The Orientalist's master piece of *WAA* is an essential element for this part. Djebbar views the paintings as a "reflexive background" to the two first stories. He represents a traditional Algerian harem cloistered in a home. Djebbar says: "For the first time, he [Delacroix] penetrates into the world that is off-limits: that of the Algerian women." (23-4). Delacroix froze an image of women that is forbidden to the outside world. The women in the painting are unveiled and parts of their bodies are uncovered. Djebbar tries to make sense of their thoughts and feelings:

Is it because these women are dreaming that they do not look at us, or is it that they can no longer even glimpse us because they are enclosed without recourse? Nothing can be guessed about the soul of these doleful figures, seated as if drowning in all that surrounds them. They remain absent to themselves, to their body, to their sensuality, to their happiness.(qtd in Boersma 24)

According to Djebbar, it is almost impossible to grasp what is going on in the minds of the women in the painting. She says that the painting "still stirs questions deep within us."(24).

Themes

Concerning the most important theme that both works investigate is the way the Algerian women are depicted but each used his own style, techniques . . . etc. The French painter needed to cancel the myth of the harem which constitutes of Algerian prostitutes for the French Army, as they were seen in cartoons of that time. The internal space of the harem is portrayed by Delacroix in a suitable and a very peaceful

way. Even those women would be seen by the viewers in a respected way because each occupies a corner in a logical and calm way. Darcy Gimaldo Grigsby asserts:

The power of the picture resides in its successful integration of discrepant descriptive and generalizing registers. On the one hand (sic), the tableau flaunts Delacroix's newfound knowledge in its plethora of sumptuous details that describe how things look: patterns of tiles, pillows, rugs, jewelry, and fabrics. On the other hand, those details are everywhere subordinated to the self-evidently painterly handling of the composition's overall atmospheric lighting: the dusky late afternoon interplay between golden light and veiling, cushioning shadows. (qtd in Bloom 30)

Susan Salomon asserts that this painting shows a part from the cultural invasion of Algeria by France starting from 1830s; all Algerian social aspects were invaded by the French colonizer using the armed forces, media, and art to fulfill the Algerian society with socio-political aspects of France aiming at vanishing the Algerian culture (Bloom 58). From the other hand, this painting is seen as propaganda for the French's imperialist ambition. After an examination to this master piece from the depiction of the exotic typical of orientalist works of that period. Indeed Delacroix gives a more nuanced message than Said's orientalism might suggest namely as Laurel said:

The civilization of Algeria, though less advanced than France's, was closer to nature and possessed the values of Roman antiquity that had eroded in the West. The painting's numerous contradictions – its simultaneous invitation and frustration of the voyeur's gaze, its slumbering shadows and luminous colors, its calm and intensity – speak to its paradoxical nature as a product of both imagination and reality.(2)

Unlike Eugen, in order to understand the way that Djébar depicts Algerian women in the face of their marginalization in a conservative, patriarchal society, she communicates with the language of the female body in *WAA*. Djébar gives these women an opportunity to (re)present and (re)imagine their subjectivities as Algerian women, as central experiences in both the history and the culture of Algeria, thereby liberating them from the marginalization of the colonial French and postcolonial Algerian patriarchy (2).

In the new version of Eugene's *WAA*, the depiction of the characters is less precise and the element of the setting are less elaborated and all this was made to make those three women more distant from us (Marjolijn 3).

The artistic painting and the literary work also do share what is known as the male domination because from one hand the painting in a way or another is seen as a source that presents prostitutes that are used only to satisfy men's desires with the devaluation of women's self-definition and this shows the patriarchal dominance. From the other hand, within the part of *Yesterday* the male domination is clear when Hassan refused to listen to his grandmother stories and at the time women voices' began to be heard the male domination refused to listen.

Furthermore, the works differ in many aspects among which the painting shows or represents the Algerian women in an unsuitable way and used only for fulfilling male's wishes. The Algerian female writer responds to this bad depiction *Postface: Forbidden Gaze, Severed Sound'* in which she considers the painting as a reflexive background to the stories in *Today* and *Yesterday*. Delacroix represents a traditional Algerian harem cloistered in a home. About the importance of

Delacroix's work Djebbar says: "For the first time, he [Delacroix] penetrates into the world that is off-limits: that of the Algerian women" (23 -4).

The Nature of the Relationship between Djebbar's and Eugene's Works

Both, Eugene's artistic piece and Djebbar's literary work hold the same title. It is obvious that the Algerian female writer took this title from the French Orientalist Eugene Delacroix's painting. This assimilation in titles in the field of comparative literature is called intertextuality which denotes that all texts are intertexts as it was mentioned in the previous chapter. This assimilation in titles also shows the impact or the influence of Eugene's work on Djebbar. This influence is presented in a collection of short stories holding the same title. In her novel, Djebbar tried to refine the image of the Algerian women and Algeria as a whole. She responded by these stories because she provided the right set of female characters that refer to the reputation of the Algerian women and how they contributed in the war of liberation against the brutality of the colonizer. Without paying attention to their femininity because they suffered a lot from the French army's tyranny, they were prisoned, tortured, raped, and killed. Those women experienced double oppression. Despite the fact that they were discriminated, they managed to prove themselves.

Concerning the relation between the work of Eugene and Djebbar, it is an influence relationship because influence is the movement of an idea, a theme, an image, a literary tradition, or a tone from one literary text to another. In this case Djebbar adopted the title to her own narrative and this confirms such influence. In such relation, this influence is non-literary and it is ignored by the comparatist of the French school on the basis of the influenced receiver does not absorb some of the elements of the literary piece and this is what really happened because Djebbar did

not accept Eugene's depiction in that way. Normally, this influence does not happen only if the writer read another writer's original work or having a direct contact with the writer him/herself and in our case Djebbar is considered as a Francophone writer and it is obvious that she had a look into this painting otherwise she would not produce her narrative bearing the same title of the painting.

Conclusion

The novel of Assia Djebbar and the painting of Eugene Delacroix belong to the colonial and postcolonial literature and art. We attempted to study the works in parallel so that to prove the nature of the relationship between them. Each work depicted the Algerian woman in a different way. Both bear similarities and differences in relation to Eugene's view to the Algerian women and Assia Djebbar's concern with women's issues.

General Conclusion

This paper covers many of the aspects of comparative studies. It examines the key concepts of comparative literature and the interactions between both. These overlaps are showed through the theories of comparative literature to recognize the nature of the relation between both. African women in literature and art have been to subjects of patriarchal ideology, oppression, and discrimination. These women belong to the African continent and considered as third world women and they have been subjected to terms of male domination this domination paves the way to double oppression. Since they are from decolonized countries they have been exposed to their colonizers' abuse and exploitation. Such exploitation was adopted or depicted by the westerners' literatures and arts and this is what was done by the French Orientalist in his masterpiece *WAA*. Such depiction raised feminist views by the Algerian Female writer Assia Djebbar who was clearly influenced by the artist's work. Her influence pushed her to respond with a literary narrative having the same tile as Eugene's painting defending women's rights and explaining their abuse by their oppressors as a contribution in their country's liberation and to be free their oppressor from one side and to be more free from the other, from their own patriarchal society and get their voices heard.

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