



THE AUTHOR AS COMPRADOR INTELLECTUAL: A POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS OF *THE MEURSAULT* *INVESTIGATION* BY KAMEL DAOUD

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ABSTRACT:

The present research aims to analyze Kamel Daoud's *The Meursault Investigation* from postcolonial perspective in the light of Dabashi's theory of comprador intellectual from colonial perspective. This theoretical concept was presented by Iranian theorist Hamid Dabashi in his book *Brown Skin, White Masks* in 2011. This study examines Daoud's compradorial approach in the light of this theory. Under this theoretical perspective, all those writers are comprador intellectuals who visualize their native land from European perspective. Under colonial impression, they present their own cultural values in such a degrading way that they fulfill the purpose of their colonial masters. Their ideological sympathies are always attached with the white man. They consider it essential to have connection with the imperial forces for their bright future. But they do so at the cost of their own culture and people. Kamel Daoud serves the purpose of his colonial masters by presenting dismal picture of Islam. He disowns his own native culture through negative portrayal of Algerian society. He does not give balanced picture of Algeria and describes only one-sided view of his native land. He ignores all the positive aspects of his dwelling place and keeps focus only on its negative elements. He always finds fault with his native land and its people. Along with it, he ridicules the established values of Islam and tries to distort its image by challenging its basic doctrine. This abdication of Islam and Algerian society in his work under study shows author's compradorial approach. The present research contends that Daoud visualizes his native land and religion from the Western perspective. He writes in a way, the white man wants him to write. His literary outcome ultimately supports colonial agenda in one way or the other. It signifies that the roots in his native land and culture are mere skin deep. He is native in color and blood but European in thinking and ideology. His intellect always stands aligned with European interests. This shows that the author uses his mental faculties to please his colonial masters and supports white man's standpoint through his intermediary access. He hurts the feelings of Muslims and creates doubts about Islam in readers' minds through negative depiction of Algeria and Islam. This study imparts enlightenment in general masses to be aware of the dynamic of authors like Daoud who work for the interest of their colonial masters in

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their native guise. They make more harm than good to their native land and religion due to their compradorial approach.

Key Words: The Meursault Investigation, Kamel Daoud, Comprador intellectual





1. Introduction

Daoud is an Algerian writer. His novel *The Meursault Investigation* (TMI) is a retelling of Albert Camus' (1946) *The Stranger* from the postcolonial angle. Meursault is the main protagonist of the French narrative who kills an innocent Arab on a beach on his friend's behalf. He is arrested but the French court does not punish him for killing an Arab. French court overlooks his crime and starts to investigate his indifferent attitude towards his mother. In the French narrative, Arab characters have been marginalized. They are being deprived of their identity and French court fails to give them justice. Daoud rewrites this story from Algerian perspective and criticizes Camus for marginalizing Arab characters in his work. Daoud individualizes Arab characters and exposes Camus' prejudiced approach towards them in this novel. His protagonist Harun reveals the troubles and sufferings faced by his family as a result of his brother Musa's murder. He also uncovers Meursault's inhuman character who is Musa's killer. But Daoud deviates from his original purpose in the work under investigation and starts portraying his own native Algerian society and Islam in the negative way. On one hand, Daoud raises voice against Camus' indifferent attitude towards Algerian natives through his counter narrative. On the other hand, Daoud himself becomes subjective while representing his native land and religion. This one-sided and negative depiction of Algerian society and Islam by Daoud in his work under study creates strong impression that he wants to please his intended Western readers through this biased and compradorial approach. In this way, he supports the very narrative of colonial masters against which he intends to write.

Daoud's compradorial approach in his work *The Meursault Investigation* can be analyzed in the light of Hamid Dabashi's theory of comprador intellectual. Dabashi is an Iranian theorist who presented this theory in his book *Brown Skin, White Masks* in 2011. From postcolonial perspective, a comprador intellectual is a writer, theorist or a critic who becomes mouthpiece of white man in his absence from the particular area. He favours white man's cultural values and looks down upon his own native identity. Daoud's narrative under study is really an eye opener in this regard. He depicts his own culture in a way that it suits the parameters of his colonial masters. His compradorial approach from postcolonial perspective can be analyzed at certain points in the novel. He becomes subjective and presents negative view of everything related to Islam and his native land. Daoud's superficial relations with Islam, his native country, and people can be observed through anti-Muslim and Anti-Algerian depiction of his heroic figure. He blurs the image of Islam and Quran through Harun's blasphemous views. He tries to create misconception about the Holy Quran through following unholy remarks, 'It's a dispute between heaven and creature.' His protagonist, Harun tells the whole story of his deceased brother's murder to an interlocutor while sitting in the bar. He wants to receive condolences for Musa in the bar. The author gives Biblical names of Prophet Moses and Aaron to his Arab characters but deprives them of their Biblical qualities. In this way, he ridicules the sanctity of these religious names. He also raises questions over the prohibition of wine in Islam and challenges the basic doctrine of Islam. The author's compradorial approach clearly reflects through his hero's disliking for the recitation of the Holy Quran. He criticizes the Friday prayers, concept of veil, gives atheistic views about God, and people's religious devotion. By giving such disgusting remarks about Islam, he becomes white man's mouthpiece. He relates Friday with death and makes fun of people's preparation for Friday prayers. He says, 'It's the Friday prayer hour I detest the most.' He relates people's religious





devotion and love for Islam with fanaticism and extremism. He openly expresses his disbelief in the world hereafter. Harun's character has been portrayed by the author quite contrary to Algerian culture and Muslim ideology. This clearly shows that the writer is outwardly Muslim but he lacks the true Muslim spirit.

Daoud also presents the negative picture of the Algerian society through his dismal projection of the Algerian youth, women, and cities etc. He shows that the Algerian women are bad in character and all the time run their animalistic desires. The Algerian youth has been shown as inactive and abominable. Daoud also shows the elements of the Oedipus complex in the members of the Muslim society. Harun says about his mother, 'She'd watch over my body with a practically sinful attention, with a concern tainted by a vague undercurrent of incest.' Daoud's hero shows his disliking for New-Independent Algeria. He also presents the negative view of Algerian cities and describes their ugly picture as cities full of corruption and moral weaknesses. He compares Oran (An Algerian city) with a whore and shows its inhabitants as idle, dirty, corrupt, and treacherous creatures. He matches Algeria with a geological animal and its inhabitants with the lice. He also criticizes his native language but shows great fascination for French language. Daoud portrays a characterless hero who creates illegal relations with a researcher Meriem who comes for his deceased brother's investigation. The author also raises questions over the judicial system of Algerian court. Daoud's protagonist, Harun, has been crafted by the writer in such a subtle way that he metamorphoses him into his antagonist named as Meursault and he becomes an exact copy of Meursault.

On one hand, Daoud displays his protagonist's outrageous attitude towards colonial regime which killed his brother and put the narrative of his killing out of sight. On the other hand, he also shows Harun's displeasure with the postcolonial administration for its least interest in Musa's murder case. Thus, he presents the negative image of the new Algerian government. Finally, it is observed that TMI is an indictment not only on the colonial management but also on Algerian state. In this way, Daoud functions as a comprador intellectual. Daoud's compradorial, anti-religious, and atheistic approach can also be observed from his personal life as well. He gives atheistic remarks about God in his address on Dec 13, 2014 on n'est pas couche in France. Daoud writes, "I still believe it: if we do not decide in the so called Arab world the question of God, we will not rehabilitate the man, we will not move forward." Moreover, Daoud divorced his wife only for the reason that she adopted Islamic mode of life. She started to offer five times prayers regularly and used to take veil on public places. This shows that he has just casual connection with Islam and does not have any regard for Islamic values.

1.1. Thesis Statement

Even a cursory scan over Daoud's work *The Meursault Investigation* creates strong impression that this text is quite suitable for the application of Dabashi's (2011) theory of comprador intellectual. Daoud presents a gloomy picture of his native Algerian society and Islam. He posits himself as comprador intellectual through his self-alienating and self-loathing approach towards his native land and Islam.

1.2. Objectives of the Research

- To expose the author's superficial relations with his native land and Islam.





- To highlight the author's Western mentality behind his compradorial approach.
- To examine the consequences of author's compradorial approach on his society.

1.3. Research Questions

- How does author reflect his compradorial approach through negative depiction of Algerian society in *The Meursault Investigation*?
- How does author denigrate his native identity through his atheistic views about Islam?
- Why does the author support the cause of his colonial masters through his enslaved intellect?

2. Literature Review

Literature review related to the concerned theory and text is given below:

Faheem & Ishaque (2021) in an article titled as *Demonizing Africa: A Bend in the River and Naipual's Comprador Intellectuality* evaluate Naipaul's compradorial approach for providing justification for the imperialists' presence in Africa. In his view, the Africans can only be civilized if they remain closely attached to their white masters. He presents the most demonizing picture of Africa and its inhabitants. He considers colonizers' presence essential for the development of the colonized Africans. Naipaul denigrates African culture by approving colonizers' intervention and their violence against the natives. He demonizes Africa by advocating the colonial machinery in the colonized land. In this way, he plays the role of cultural intermediary.

Raj (2020) in an article titled as *The Role of the Comprador Intellectual: a Neo-Oriental Analysis of a House without Windows* analyzes Nadia Hashmi's role as a comprador intellectual. She supports U.S policies and justifies its presence in Afghanistan for her bright future. She portrays Afghanistan a place of darkness and ignorance that has no connection with civilization due to its worn-out customs and traditions. She considers the Americans as saviors and rescuers for this land who can change its fate. She ignores the destructive and harmful effects of Euro-American invasion in Afghanistan. This is a partial approach on her part.

Iqbal et al. (2015) in an article titled as *An Analysis of the Role of Comprador Class: A Neo-colonial Study of a Case of Exploding Mangoes by Mohammad Hanif* analyses General Zia's damaging role as a comprador elite. Comprador class inflicts irrecoverable damage to the state for its personal gains. President Zia befooled the Pakistani people in the name of Islam and used this slogan to prolong his illegal rule. General Zia abused the religious, moral, political, and constitutional values and inflicted immeasurable harm to Pakistani state to strengthen his unjust rule. Through his apparent attachment with Islam, Zia exploited his own people. General Zia plunged into international politics and became part of metropolitan conspiracies. In fact, he wanted to win his colonial masters' favor in order to secure his rule. This reflects compradorial approach of the bourgeoisie class.

Molina (2021) investigates the effects of doubles and oppositions in her article titled as *Significance of Doubles and Oppositions in The Meursault Investigation*. Daoud revisits Camus's novel and depends upon the concept of doubles and oppositions for its retelling. His narrative plays the role of mirror for Camus' *The Stranger*. There are multiple references in this literary piece being taken from Camus's *The Stranger*, Robinson Crusoe, the Bible, and the Holy Quran etc. Daoud reshapes Camus's narrative from Algerian perspective with the help of these references.





He changes reader's concept about Arab's murder and throws light on those incidents intentionally ignored by French author under colonial discourse.

Tally (2020) in an article titled as *The Absurdity of the Aftermath in Daoud's Meursault, contre-enquete* analyzes bifold relation of this novel with Camus' *The Stranger*. She shows its ambivalent relation with the French narrative. In some ways, this novel is a critique of Camus' work from the postcolonial perspective. It also shares a lot of Camus' philosophical views. So, it favors and disfavors Camus' narrative simultaneously and the element of doubling can be observed in the novel too. It has complex narrative structure due to its dual relation with *The Stranger*. It becomes a combination of colonialism and absurdism.

In an article titled as *Meursault and Musa: An Intertextual Reading of The Stranger and The Meursault Investigation*, Mathew (2019) examines the close connection between both novels in respect of intertextuality. Daoud beautifully connects and interlinks the two novels through this intertextual device. There are certain lines, incidents, and situations which show intertextual relation between both the narratives. Daoud conveys his postcolonial response in relation to Camus's work and challenges its basic fictional and real truths through the lens of intertextuality. He uses different references from Camus's novel to unveil the facts which were kept hidden by French author in his fiction. Daoud's novel is in constant literary tussle with Camus's novel. Both novels have their own identity and are well-crafted in their own place.

All these resources have been explored for better comprehension of Daoud's *The Meursault Investigation* and Dabashi's (2011) theory of comprador intellectual.

3. Theoretical Framework

The present study attempts to analyze Daoud's novel *The Meursault Investigation* in the light of Dabashi's theory of comprador intellectual. This abstract notion was presented by Iranian theorist Hamid Dabashi in his book *Brown Skin, White Masks* in 2011. According to this theory, comprador intellectuals are all those writers, critics, and theorists who visualize their native culture from European perspective. They depict their own culture in such a degrading way that it suits the parameters of the imperial forces. Instead of working for the interest of their motherland and the native people, their entire labor ultimately serves the purpose of their colonial masters. They are physically native but spiritually non-native. They think that their connection with white man is essential for their bright future. They take material benefits from them in response to their ideological sympathies with them. In Dabashi's words, "the comprador intellectual is a cultural broker, a commissioned operator, a ten-percenter paid to facilitate cultural domination and political pacification" (Dabashi, 2011, p.40). He always has close intimacy with the culture of dominant forces and becomes facilitator for the imperial powers to launch their colonial mission.

Basically the word 'Comprador' is taken from the Portuguese language. It originates from comprador which means "to buy". This word was first time used in 1840 for a Chinese agent hired by European business class for its commercial benefits in China. Afterward, it started to be used for any native servant who was in the service of colonial masters and worked for their commercial interests. Oxford English Dictionary defines this character, the comprador in the following way: "to purchase necessities and keep the household accounts". Appiah (1991) remarks about this character, "a relatively small, Western-style, Western-trained group of writers and thinkers who





mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery” (as cited in Dabashi, 2011). This theory comprises of certain features such as lack of self-identity, sense of self-alienation, self-loathing approach, parasitic approach, amphibian character, by-product of colonialism, inclination towards power-center and Nay-sayer etc. The present study is a qualitative research and its mode of inquiry is explanatory thematic analysis.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Negative Depiction of Algerian Society

Daoud is an Algerian writer. He wrote this novel *The Meursault Investigation* in response to Camus’ narrative *The Stranger* from critical angle. He criticizes Camus for his partial approach and ignoring attitude towards Arab characters. Daoud rewrites the story of Musa’s murder from Algerian perspective. But in doing so, he deviates from his original purpose and adopts compradorial approach. He does not remain objective in his depiction of Algerian Muslim society. He portrays negative image of Algerian society and Islam. He misrepresents his native society and becomes invective of his own motherland. He does not give balanced picture of his society as he always finds faults with its traditions and compatriots. He does not show any attachment with his inborn place and sees everything related to his native land through Eurocentric lens. He fails to mention even a single positive quality of his society. Rather, he tries to give negative color to the positive things of his society. He keeps focus only on the negative aspects of his society. He does not think of his own national terms as he occupies Western mentality. In this way, he supports the cause of his colonial masters through his enslaved intellect. The novel consists of plenty of examples, incidents, and dialogues which show author’s compradorial approach. Daoud uses his protagonist, Harun, as his spokesman to convey his disliking for his inherent land.

Daoud’s narrative shows that he has no sense of belonging towards his native country. He always presents its ugly picture in the novel under analysis. He calls it a place full of corruption and moral weaknesses. He compares Algerian land with a prostitute and native people with rapists. He presents his motherland as a place abounds in social evils. Harun says about Oran, ‘It’s like an old whore, nostalgic and chatty.’ He criticizes the structure of its buildings. He also compares it with hell. Harun again remarks: ‘Algiers, in my memory, is a dirty, corrupt creature, a dark, treacherous man-stealer.’ He disowns his motherland by giving critical remarks about the city of Oran time and again. Author’s sense of aversion for his native land can also be seen through his protagonist Harun’s following insulting remarks about Algeria: ‘Algiers, in my memory, is a dirty, corrupt creature, a dark, treacherous man-stealer.’ He expresses his feelings of hatred against Algiers. He is more interested in exposing weaknesses of his country rather than defending it. In this way, he comes before us as a comprador intellectual who does not have ideal relations with his native land.

Daoud’s dissociation with his native land can be observed through negative portrayal of local women. He presents them as sexual beasts that all the time run after their physical lusts. They seek pleasure in making relations without marriage with locals as well as foreigners. The author gives insulting remarks about Algerian women through his protagonist in the following way, ‘Now there were a few skirt-wearing, firm breasted Algerian women who shuttled between our world and the world of the roumis.’ He presents them as lascivious and lusty women who offered sexual





pleasures for the sake of money. Harun informs us that the local women used to seduce men in wedding parties and exchanged glances with men on terrace. Daoud also shows that the Algerian youth is good for nothing. He presents them as dirty, idle, lazy, thieves, culprits, and cheaters and writes, 'Idle young men interested in skirts, cigarettes, and scars.' He relates his people with looters and writes, 'My countrymen don't eat exclusively with their hands but with everything else too: with their eyes, feet, tongue, and skin.' He shows them greedy and materialistic people who are snatching country's natural resources. He also considers them overzealous and fanatics. This negative portrayal of the local people shows author's superficial relations with his native fellows.

Although Daoud has individualized Arab characters but he has not done justice in their portrayal. Anti-Islamic character of Musa and Harun does not match with their Biblical names. Their prophetic names create impression that they are very pious and noble characters but reality is quite opposite to it. He shows them habitual drinkers and anti-religious characters. Hence, their names become ironical, keeping in view their shameful characters. Harun is the main protagonist of the story but he has anti-Islamic approach in every matter of life. He is a regular drinker and spends his maximum time in the bar. He protests against the basic principles of Islam by showing his reservations for ban on wine. He says, 'Why is it treated as though it's of the devil; when it's supposed to be flowing profusely in Paradise? Why is it forbidden down here and promised up there?' He gives atheistic remarks about God, the Holy Quran, Friday prayer, and hell etc. He has been portrayed in the pattern of his antagonist Meursault. He makes fun of people's religious devotion and shows lack of regard and respect for Islamic teachings and values. Musa too, has been shown a bad character person and his character does not match in any way with his Biblical counterpart. This kind of portrayal of Arab characters authenticates his compradorial approach.

Daoud cuts down the size of his native people through the negative depiction of Harun's neighbors. Harun says about his neighbors, 'I have fragmented memories of quarrels between neighbors, of thefts involving blankets and clothes.' None of Harun's neighbors has been portrayed in the positive way. He shows that the Algerian society is full of thieves, liars, quarrelsome, and morally corrupt people. This shows Daoud's sense of loathing for his native people. He gives bad image of Musa's friends. He shows them selfish and unfaithful. Larabi (one of Musa's friends) was eye witness of his case but he disappeared from the scene to avoid investigation. Zubida is Musa's supposed beloved. He portrays her anti-Islamic figure in the following way, 'She was wearing a short skirt and tacky stockings.' Thus, the author feels pleasure in exposing the darken side of Algerian society.

He makes fun of people's efforts to please their God. He gives cynical remarks about the people going to offer Friday prayers. He calls them hypocrites and fanatics through his protagonist. He expresses his extreme hatred against Islam and Algeria. Daoud misrepresents the Algerian society in another way as well. He portrays the oedipal relations between Mama and his sons in the novel under investigation. Musa's mother dislikes his relations with any other woman and wants to have her own hold on Musa. Mama's enmity with Zubida (Musa's supposed beloved) indicates the oedipal relations between Mama and Musa. Harun expresses this bitter reality in the following words, 'something I might call the smell of female rivalry floating in the air, rivalry between Mama and another woman.' After Musa's death, Mama becomes closely attached with Harun. Harun confesses this painful situation in the following words, 'I've known the love of lots of women but it never untied the heavy, suffocating knot of secrets that bound me to my mother.'





Mama feels jealous with Meriem and forbids Harun to have connection with her. She cannot tolerate his relations with any other woman. He says that women would instinctively say about him, 'I was another woman's son and not a potential companion.' This is parasitic approach on author's part because he tries to blur the image of the same land which is a source of his identity and recognition in the whole world.

Daoud portrays Algerian court in a negative way and raises questions over its judicial system. Daoud presents the negative image of the local prison. Harun shares his bitter personal experience of Algerian prison before the investigator. 'I was thrown into a cell, where I had a bucket for a toilet and a tin washbasin.' In this way, he tries to reduce the image of local government which has failed to provide facilities to its prisoners. Daoud gives sarcastic and derogatory remarks about Algerian cemetery. In this regard, he says, 'Today, it's a dirty place, inhabited by fugitives and drunks.' Through this negative description, he tries to devalue and discredit his native land. Daoud's estrangement towards his native culture also reflects through his protagonist's criticism on local people's dressing. He calls the local people ill-mannered who have no sense what to wear and how to wear. While he considers himself civilized and says that sober and well-dressed people like him have become rare in Algerian society.

In short, Daoud seems to be critical of everything that is local in structure. This negative depiction of Algerian prison shows author's disharmony with his native culture. He fails to present true, genuine, and balanced picture of his native society. Along with it, he presents dismal picture of Islam. This shows that he is physically independent but mentally colonized. He sees each and every local thing from critical angle. He does not remain objective while depicting his native culture. This is how, he misrepresents his native culture.

4.2. Author Denigrates His Native Identity through His Protagonist's Atheistic Views About Islam

Daoud conveys his disrespectful thoughts and feelings about Islam through his protagonist, Harun. Author's own personality can be analyzed through his hero's character. Daoud makes fun of Islam and ridicules its established values. His disregard for Islamic precepts can be observed through Harun's anti-religious approach. Prayer is the most important part of Islam but the author gives scornful remarks about this important religious duty through his protagonist's following comments: 'I turned to pray, not toward Mecca but toward the world.' Similarly, wine is strictly forbidden in Islam but Harun criticizes this Divine order. He says to the interlocutor, 'In these parts, you get offered the best liquors after your death, not before. And that's religion.' He also ridicules the concept of life hereafter. He attacks religion and challenges the basic tenets of Islam. Daoud gives blasphemous remarks about Friday prayers through his protagonist. He relates people's religious devotion and love for Islam with fanaticism, extremism, and hypocrisy. Daoud shows his contemptuous attitude towards people's devotion in the following words: 'Today's Friday. It's the day closest to death in my calendar.' He makes fun of people's preparation for Friday prayers and compares it with incivility. The author shows his disassociation with Islam through his protagonist's blasphemous remarks against Friday prayer, imam's address, people's religious devotion, mosque minaret, its structure, and people's act of ablution. He compares Friday with the eternal day which does not come to an end. Daoud ridicules people's act of praying and





supplication. This clearly reveals that though the author belongs to the Muslim community yet he has no genuine attachment with Islam.

Daoud shows his disbelief in the life after death and makes fun of it through Harun in the following way, 'They're distraught, they tell me there's another life after death.' Then he says, 'In my case, I'm not afraid of hell. Daoud's advocate, Harun, gives following sarcastic, derogatory, and insulting remarks about the Holy Quran: 'Sometimes I page through their book, the Book, and what I find there are strange redundancies, repetitions, lamentations, threats, and daydreams.' These lines show author's faithlessness and dissociation with the Muslim community.

Daoud expresses his faithlessness in God through Harun's irritation at the question of God's existence, Harun says 'Ask *him* the question, put it directly to *him*!' Harun again expresses his irreverence towards God in the following words: 'My God, how you love to make fun of your creatures.' He compares the mystery of story of Musa's death with God's biography. In this way, he expresses his disbelief in God because God is beyond biographical accounts. Harun gives the following anti-religious comments about God, 'I hate that word. Its multiple definitions make a lot of noise'. Through these blasphemous remarks, Daoud blurs the image of Islam. Harun gives following blasphemous views about mosque and its minaret. 'There's an imposing mosque. I loathe its architecture.' He says, 'I will not prostrate myself before your pile of clay.' He desires to express his profane views in the following words, 'To bellow that I don't pray, I don't do my ablutions, I don't fast, I will never go on any pilgrimage, and I drink wine.' He says that God is a question, not an answer. This approach on Harun's part indicates Daoud's own lack of reverence for God and Islam. This way of thinking attests his compradorial approach. Macaulay (1835) accurately defines a comprador intellectual, "A class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (p.08).

The author chooses Biblical names of Prophet Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and Mary for his characters but deprives them of their Biblical qualities. In this way, he ridicules the sanctity of these religious names. The author also tries to defame the image of Islam by showing his hatred for the concept of veil. Harun laughs ironically when he sees the girl having proper veil over her head. He expresses his displeasure in the following words: 'Even though she's not old enough to know what a body is, or what desire is. What can you do with such people? Eh?' This approach on Harun's part expresses author's Westernized thought. Harun imagines diverting others by force from the righteous path of Islam. He aspires to divert his neighbor from God's path. He says that people should not waste their time in making preparation for the world hereafter. He is so much misguided that he relates people's act of supplication to God with some mistake and asks for their forgiveness in the following words: 'Forgive them [my God], for they know not what they do?' By portraying Harun's this irreligious approach, the author tries to pervert the accepted norms of Islam.

Daoud defames the image of Islam by showing his hero's close proximity and free mix up with Meriem in a Muslim society. Harun makes close attachment with the researcher lady Meriem who comes to see him to investigate his deceased brother's case. He not only falls in love with her but also tries to have physical relations with her. He is unable to control his lusty feelings and confesses his closeness with Meriem in the following words: 'She'd keep leaning her shoulder against my chest in delight.' He expresses his lusty feelings in the following words, 'I wanted only





one thing: to hear her breathing beside me.’ He tells the investigator that once Meriem was lying beside him putting her head on his thigh when ‘my hand brushed against Meriem’s breasts, almost by accident.’ Then he says that he kissed her on the mouth by leaning over her face. He walks with her putting his arm around her waist. He says, ‘We walked together, like a single body.’ Harun also confesses his illegal relations with the other women as well. This anti-Islamic depiction of hero shows the author’s compradorial approach. Daoud belittles the image of Islam through his protagonist Harun’s belief in existentialism just like his anti-hero Meursault. This indifferent attitude towards life and people shows his disbelief in Islam. Harun’s concept of meaninglessness of life is in fact writer’s own existential view.

Daoud’s anti-Islamic approach can be observed through Harun’s insulting attitude towards Imam. Harun scorns an Imam who tries to make him repent over his sins. Rather he insults him and shows utter blasphemy when he responds to Imam’s assurance for forgiveness in the following way. ‘And yet none of his certainties was worth one hair on the head of the woman I loved.’ Similarly, Harun shows extremely disrespectful attitude towards the people who want to bring him to the right path. So, Harun expresses his lack of faith in God just like his anti-hero. In this way, Daoud distorts the image of Islam through his protagonist’s views.

In short, Harun’s blasphemous remarks about God, the Holy Quran, Friday prayer, and hell etc show Daoud’s atheistic approach. He tries to distort the true image of Islam through these atheistic and blasphemous remarks. This anti-Islamic approach in every matter of life shows author’s skin-deep attachment with Islam. He has the label of being an Algerian citizen but he is deeply invested in European ideology as he gives negative comments about post-independent Algeria. In this way, the author deteriorates his native identity as Algerian and Muslim. In fact, he is nay-sayer and does not seem to conform to his social and religious norms.

4.3. Implied Motives of the Writer behind His Compradorial Approach

There are certain hidden motives behind author’s compradorial approach. Most important motive behind Daoud’s compradorial approach is to please his colonial masters. He tries to be close to the mobilized center of power. On one hand, he shows great fascination for French language and culture. On the other hand, he gives dirty picture of his native society. He also gives the negative view of post-independent Algeria. He shows that chaos prevailed in Algeria after independence. In this way, he justifies French occupation. Along with it, he shows great disgust for Islam and its true followers. In this way, he wants to win the favor of his colonial masters. Daoud tries his best to show dominancy of European culture over Algerian culture. He becomes a mouthpiece of his colonial masters in their absence. He shows superiority of French language over Arabic language. He expresses his hatred for his native identity as Arab. He inferiorizes his native people and culture. Harun is a Muslim but he adopts European life style. He spends nights at bars and openly violates religious orders. Memmi (1957) rightly says in this regard, “They endeavor to resemble the colonizer in the frank hope that they may cease to consider them different from him” (p.59). Through the negative depiction of local culture and religion, Daoud wants to gain importance in the eyes of his colonial masters and seeks Western attention through his compradorial approach. He takes advantages from them due to his compradorial approach. He works in the French news agency. He was given the best French awards for writing this book. He raises questions over the existence of God and prohibition of wine in Islam. He gives insulting remarks about the Holy





Quran. In this way, he tries to create doubts in people's minds about Islam through skeptical views about Islam. In reality, he seems to work on white man's agenda.

5. Findings

It is found that the author is outspoken in his criticism of the Algerian society and Islam. Daoud ridicules authorized Islamic principles and challenges the basic doctrine of Islam. He pleases his colonial masters and leaves harmful effects on his local culture and Islam through his compradorial approach. He sows seeds of doubts and suspicions about Islam in readers' minds. He is physically Algerian but spiritually Western as he lacks the true Muslim spirit. It is found that he is self-alienated native and self-loathing Muslim. He disowns his native society and jeers at the accepted norms of Islam. He hurts the Muslims' feelings through this grim depiction of Algerian society and Islam. In short, his work proves to be more harmful than beneficial for his native people due to the author's compradorial approach.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that Daoud is a comprador intellectual. He takes his native society as a lump and tries to falsify the image of Islam. He analyzes his local cultural and religious values from the angle of the West and always finds faults with them. He wants to make his colonial master happy through this denigration and helps to further imperialist agenda through this novel. He claims to speak on behalf of the natives but reality is quite opposite to it. He disapproves of the Algerian women and the Algerian youth through their worthless, characterless and immoral portrayal. He gives the negative picture of Algerian cities. He considers his country as embodiment of evil, corruption and vulgarity. The story's main characters Musa and Harun have been presented morally corrupt people who indulge in a lot of social evils. Harun is a hero of the novel but he has been portrayed as the anti-Algerian and anti-Islamic figure. He has been characterized in the pattern of his antagonist Meursault. Daoud presents distorted picture of Islam. Being a pragmatic Muslim, he tries to make rational analysis of Islam. He challenges its basic doctrine and raises questions over prohibition of wine in Islam. He declines the authority of God and mocks the belief of life after death. He gives derogatory remarks about the Holy Quran and rejects the concept of hell. He relates Friday with death and makes fun of Muslims' religious devotion. Whatever he writes ultimately goes in favor of the white man. In this way, his book becomes supportive document to promote the Western agenda. This uncanny portrayal of Algeria and Islam reflects the author's colonial ideological impression. Through bleak picture of Islam and the Muslim society, Daoud shows his biased attitude against Islam in favor of the West and his colonial masters. In fact, Daoud seems to be reminiscent of his former colonial masters whose spirit reflects in him. He considers the basic Muslim thought an obstacle in the way to progress. Indirectly, he prefers the Western ways of life because he is deeply absorbed in European ideology. By reflecting anti-Muslim thoughts in a Muslim's guise, he serves the purpose of colonial masters.

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